



## *Our Vision is a Person, Our Vision is Jesus Christ* 26th JANUARY 2025: THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### Unity

One of the things I'm doing in the parish is helping to teach Religious Education in Year 6 at our St Swithun Wells Catholic Primary School. And, as we do every January, after reflecting on the meaning of Christmas, we begin the unit called 'Revelation', which begins with the episode of the Conversion of St Paul, celebrated on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January, which marks the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

At the beginning of the lesson, I asked the children "What qualities would you expect from a Church leader?" The answers were very varied: able to listen, merciful, praying, having a relationship with God, good, kind, etc. After writing down all these characteristics, we move on to the episode of the stoning of St Stephen, the first martyr, where it is said that Paul approved of what happened. And also the next part of the Acts of the Apostles, where it says: *Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison.* (Acts 8:3).

At this point I asked the children: "How would you describe Paul?". The answers were the exact opposite of the above. After comparing the two lists of characteristics: that of the Church leader and that of St Paul, I asked the children: "St Paul had none of the characteristics you mentioned. So why did God choose him?". To try to find an answer, we read together the episode of St Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus. A beautiful episode that the children also tried to act out.

So at the end of the lesson, I asked them again: "Of all the people God could have chosen, why did He choose St Paul?". Among the answers, there was one that particularly struck me because it was a topic I had not mentioned during the lesson. One of the children said something like this: "Because He wanted to show us that with His help it is always possible to change. Because His love is greater than our evil".

There are many reasons why the different Christian denominations have chosen 25<sup>th</sup> January, the day of St Paul's Conversion, as the pivotal date for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, but I think that the answer of this 11-year-old boy allows us to look at this week, which has just ended, with a new perspective. St Paul's Conversion tells us that it is always possible to change if we trust God, if we accept the gifts He gives us, and one of them is Unity. Unity is a gift given to us at the Last Supper, where Jesus asks the Father *that all of them may be one* (John 17:21). And we are sure that the Father always grants His Son's prayer. But then, because of our wickedness, we have squandered this gift. Nevertheless, this wonderful gift of Unity is still there, waiting for our conversion to renew it. For His love, which unites, is much greater than our evil, which divides.

*Fr Matteo*

### GEM OF THE WEEK



This week's GEM is "Unexpected Love - an interview about family life" by Eugenia Scabini.  
If anyone has suggestions for GEMs please contact [website.sswp@gmail.com](mailto:website.sswp@gmail.com)

For the next Newsletter, items should be received into the parish office by 10am on Wednesday 29th January 2025, please email your messages/notices to: [office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

If you wish to make a donation to our parish please go to: <https://www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk/financesdonations>

## LITURGICAL INDICATIONS



Sunday 26th January 2025: Year C - Year 1 - Psalter Week: 3

PSALM RESPONSE: YOUR WORDS, O LORD, ARE SPIRIT AND LIFE.

1<sup>st</sup> reading Nehemiah 8:2-4a,5-6,8-10 Psalm 19 (18) 2<sup>nd</sup> reading 1 Corinthians 12:12-30 Gospel Luke:1:1-4:4:14-21

Sunday 2nd February 2025: Year C - Year 1 - Psalter Week: Office Proper

PSALM RESPONSE: THE LORD OF HOSTS, HE IS THE KING OF GLORY!

1<sup>st</sup> reading Malachi: 3:1-4 Psalm 24 (23) 2<sup>nd</sup> reading Hebrews 2:14-18 Gospel Luke:2:22-40

## PARISH GROUPS



### Youth Groups (including First Holy Communion & Confirmation)

Stars of Abraham (school years 3, 4, 5 & 6)

Tuesdays 4pm-5.30pm, St Edward's

Fridays 4.30pm-5.45pm, St Andrew's

Saturdays 10.30am-12pm, Holy Cross R/Centre

Grail Seekers (school years 7, 8, 9)

Student Youth (school year 10 until sixth form)

Fridays 6.30pm-8.30pm, Holy Cross Resource Centre

For more information about the groups please go to our website: [www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk/parishlife](http://www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk/parishlife) (scroll down to Youth Groups).

### Communion & Liberation Groups

School of Community meet weekly at:

Holy Cross every Wednesday at 8pm;

St Edward's every Thursday at 8pm.

For more information please click the link on the homepage of our website. All are welcome!

### Fellowship Group - Wednesdays at St Swithun Wells Church, 7.30pm-9pm.

On 29th January we will be taking another look at one of the Church Fathers - St Basil of Caesarea. Everyone is welcome. If you wish to join us by Zoom please email Peter Baggott for the link on [peterbaggott@aol.com](mailto:peterbaggott@aol.com).

See our website for details of parish groups: Prayer Groups, Little Flowers Baby & Toddler Group, Ark of Fellowship

## MESSAGES



### Bible Sunday - Sunday 26th January,

the Third Sunday of the Year, is the Sunday of the Word of God. Pope Francis instituted this day in 2019 saying that it "is to be devoted to the celebration, study and dissemination of the Word of God."

### Upcoming Second Collections

25th/26th January - St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth

The most recent quinquennial architectural survey (autumn 2023) for the Cathedral indicated work required over the next few years to the roof, windows, heating, and electrical systems, is estimated to be £2 million plus VAT. Never has this annual collection by parishes for the Mother Church of the Diocese been more critical or needed. Your support is vitally important. If you are able to gift aid please use the yellow envelopes for this collection. Alternatively you can give online at:

<https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/campaign/st-johns-cathedral-second-collection-2025>

### Upcoming Readers Retreat - Sat 1st February

For Readers at St Andrew's & St Joseph the retreat is at St Andrew's from 2.30pm to 4pm;

For Readers at Holy Cross, St Swithun Wells and St Edward's the retreat is at Holy Cross from 2.30pm-4pm;

For Readers at OLQA the retreat is at OLQA from 2.30pm-4pm.

### Parish Get2Gether - Sunday 2nd February, 1-4pm Pavilion on the Park, 1 Kingfisher Road, SO50 9LH

An event for all of the parish, especially families. We begin at 1pm, sharing a meal together followed by some activities and a discussion, the topic will be 'Poverty and Charity in Family Life'. No cost, however

we kindly ask you to give a donation to cover the hire of the Pavilion. Please bring some food, beverages or cakes to share with others. We would be grateful if you could please write down the main ingredients and allergens on a piece of paper so people can make an informed decision as to whether the food is suitable for them. Please can you bring your own cups/plates/cutlery. To book your place please go to our parish website and scroll to see the "Next Main Parish Events" section. Next *Get2Gether for your diary: 2nd March*

### Seniors (over 60's) Afternoon Tea - Sunday 2nd February at 2.30pm in St Swithun Wells Church, Fair Oak.

Join us once again for delicious food, free raffle and entertainment. This event is for the whole parish. We do not make a specific charge for the Tea but ask for donations to help cover the costs. Places are limited so need to be booked in advance. For those who have no transport and would like to come along we have a mini bus that can take you. Please mention this when booking. To book a place contact Pat Baggott on 07801 454400 or by email: [baggott.pm@gmail.com](mailto:baggott.pm@gmail.com)

Upcoming Funeral - Please pray for the repose of the soul of Theo Osime and for his family. Theo's Funeral Mass takes place on Monday 3rd February at 10am in St Andrew's church.

### Recommended Reading - The Story of A Soul by St Thérèse of Lisieux.

Story of a Soul is an autobiographical work by Saint Thérèse of Lisieux. In this book, she shares her family life, personal conversion, and years of trials. Thérèse illuminates the "little way" to sainthood, emphasizing childlike simplicity before God and doing small things with great love. We recommend the translation by John Clarke which can be bought online.

## MESSAGES CONTINUED



**Come & See Spring Half Term Club** (for children 7yrs -14yrs) at St Edward the Confessor Church  
**Mon 17th to Friday 21st February, 8.30am-3.30pm**  
Registrations are now open. For more information including costs, times and to register please go to: <https://www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk/comeandsee>  
**Please pay the whole amount by bank transfer by Friday 14th February 2025.**

### **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (18th-25th Jan)**

#### **Churches Together in Romsey**

Rosy Payne Romsey Abbey Youth Worker is hosting a WPCU Youth Session on Saturday 25th January, in St. Swithun's Church, Crampmoor, SO51 9AP, at 11am lasting about an hour.

#### **Churches Together in Eastleigh**

**Unity Service - Sunday 26th January, 7pm to 8.15pm in Holy Cross Church** - You are warmly invited to the Unity Service. This will be a wonderful occasion where local churches come together as one family to celebrate, pray, and reflect on our shared unity in Christ. We will also have the privilege of hearing inspiring stories and updates from our local Street and School Pastor teams, who faithfully serve and minister to our communities.

#### **Churches Together in Romsey - AGM**

The Annual General Meeting is on **Wednesday 29th January at 7.30pm in Freedom Church**, Freedom Centre, Unit 6, Greatbridge Business Park, Budds Lane, Romsey, SO51 0HA. All are welcome.

**Parish lunch at a new venue, the KING RUFUS, Chandler's Ford, on Wednesday 12th February at 12.30pm.** The huge choice can be accessed by Googling 'Menu, King Rufus'. Look at both the main and the lunch menus. 2 course lunches, of either starter and main or main and dessert from the lunch menu are £12.99. Please let Rosemary (01794 522411) know your choice of meal by Thursday 30th Jan as we have to pre-order.

#### **Happy Monday Club** - Hello and a Happy New Year!

We have a birthday and a jury service summons in February so our first event of the year will be on **Monday 10th March at 2pm in the Holy Cross Resource Centre in Eastleigh.** We will be showing a film, "Shamrock Spitfire". The film is a true story based on the life of Brendan "Paddy" Finucane, a fighter pilot who became the youngest Wing Commander in the history of the Royal Air Force, at the age of 21. Suggested donation of £2 to include refreshments. If you need to know anything please contact Karen or Peter on 07809596831 or [jakeman1966@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jakeman1966@hotmail.co.uk) and we hope to see you there.

#### **Message to Parish Volunteers who are DBS checked**

We would like to remind you of the changes to the government update service. From Sunday 8 December 2024, subscribers to the Update Service will be emailed 30 days before their renewal date to ask if they wish to stay subscribed. Renewal dates are based on original joining dates. In preparation for this change, DBS advises volunteers to check that the email address attached to their subscription is linked to the individual who is subscribed. The renewal email will ask

volunteers to access their Update Service Account and confirm that they wish to continue with the service. For those who confirm, this request will be repeated annually. If no confirmation is made, their volunteer subscription will automatically be cancelled. If you are a volunteer that is subscribed to the Update Service, please log into the subscription service to check that the correct email address is linked.

<https://secure.crbonline.gov.uk/crsc/subscriber>

Please email: [safeguarding@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk) if you have any questions.

#### **Parish Pilgrimage (Fri 23rd - Mon 26th May 2025)**

The pilgrimage to Lisieux, France will be led by Fr Raffaele & Fr Mario. We will visit the place where St Therese lived and the surrounding area. See posters on church noticeboards; the itinerary, booking form and more information are on the parish website. If you have any questions relating to the pilgrimage please email Anne Monaghan: [anne.monaghan@outlook.com](mailto:anne.monaghan@outlook.com)

#### **OLQA Repository Vacancy**

Having run the repository at Our Lady Queen of the Apostles for over ten years, I have decided to stand down. I am looking for a volunteer or volunteers to take over from the end of January. I will be quite happy to guide them through the procedures. *Anne Coleman*

**Retrouvaille** is a Catholic ministry for marriages in difficulty; helping couples whose relationships 'need a little help' to those with more serious challenges and thus are separated or considering divorce. Their next online programme begins on **Thursday 27th February.** For confidential information about Retrouvaille, or to register for the next programme commencing via Zoom from **Thurs 27th February to Sun 2nd March 2025,** call/text 07887 296983 or email [info@retrouvaille.org.uk](mailto:info@retrouvaille.org.uk)

#### **Sacramental Preparation for Adults (RCIA)**

If you, or someone you know would like to be baptised, confirmed or received into the Catholic Church (or know more about the Catholic faith) please email Deacon Paul Owen: [powen@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:powen@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk) or alternatively please speak to a priest.

#### **At a Glance - List of Upcoming Parish Events**

**24th Jan:** Cultural Friday  
**26th Jan:** Churches Together E/leigh Unity Service  
**1st Feb:** Readers Retreat  
**2nd Feb:** Parish Get2Gether  
**2nd Feb:** Seniors Afternoon Tea  
**12th Feb:** Parish Lunch  
**17th-21st Feb:** Come & See Half Term Club  
**10th Mar:** Happy Monday Club Event

#### **TIMES A PRIEST WILL BE AVAILABLE TO MEET**

**Tuesdays:** Fr Raffaele, 3.30pm-5.30pm, Holy Cross Resource Centre, Eastleigh;  
**Wednesdays:** Fr Luca, 3.30pm-5.30pm, Holy Cross Resource Centre, Eastleigh;  
**Fridays:** Fr Mario, 10am-12 Noon, OLQA, Bishop's Waltham;  
**Fridays:** Fr Pietro, 11am-12.45pm, 26A Abbey Water, Romsey.  
**Fridays:** Fr Matteo, 11am-12.30pm, Holy Cross Resource Centre, Eastleigh

## MASS TIMES FOR OUR CHURCH COMMUNITIES

DATE	TIME	CHURCH	MASS INTENTION
Saturday 25th January <i>Morning Mass: The Conversion of St Paul</i>	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLOA St Joseph St Edward	Steve Chambers RIP  Andrew Russell-Smith RIP Keith Small RIP
Sunday 26th January  <i>Third Sunday In Ordinary Time</i>	8.30am 9.00am 9.00am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 5.30pm	Holy Cross St Edward St Andrew OLOA Holy Cross (also livestreamed) St Joseph Holy Cross	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> People of the Parish Emie Ocaya RIP  Exam Success (Special Intention) Sr Maureen (Wellbeing) Maria Smyth RIP FM
Monday 27th January	9.30am	Holy Cross	Helen Elizabeth Barrass RIP FM
Tuesday 28th <i>St Thomas Aquinas</i>	10.00am 6.00pm	St Andrew St Edward	Ramon & Nelita Hechanova RIP Joan Applin RIP
Wednesday 29th January	9.30am 10.00am	Holy Cross St Edward	Sylvester McMahon RIP FM Mrs Edward Christian RIP FM
Thursday 30th January	9.30am 12 Noon 6.00pm	Holy Cross OLOA St Joseph	Mary McMahon RIP FM  Frances Weaver & Family
Friday 31st January <i>St John Bosco</i>	10.00am 10.00am  12 Noon	St Joseph St Edward  OLOA	Norma & Eustess Guia (Wellbeing) Living & Deceased Members of the Griffin & O'Connell Families Marjorie Harris & Benji Roberts RIP FM
Saturday 1st February	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLOA St Joseph St Edward	People of the Parish  Muriel Matthias (Wellbeing) Mollie & Tom Falvey RIP
Sunday 2nd February  <i>The Presentation of the Lord</i>	8.30am 9.00am 9.00am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 5.30pm	Holy Cross St Edward St Andrew OLOA Holy Cross (also livestreamed) St Joseph Holy Cross	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> Mrs Edward Christian RIP FM Calvin Nel RIP Anniversary  Helen Baxter RIP 1st Anniversary John Gare RIP

## CLERGY & PARISH OFFICE

Fr Raffaele Cossa (Parish Priest)

Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: [rcossa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:rcossa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Fr Luca Speziale (Assistant Priest)

Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: [lspeziale@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:lspeziale@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Fr Mario Toma (Assistant Priest)

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Fr Matteo Pagani (Assistant Priest)

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Fr Pietro Paiusco (Assistant Priest)

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Deacon Paul Wilson

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**Parish Office**

Holy Cross Church, 53 Leigh Road, Eastleigh,  
SO50 9DF Tel: 02380 273882

Opening Times: Mon-Thurs 9.30am-5.30pm;  
Fri 9.30am-2.30pm (see newsletter for changes).

**Holy Cross Resource Centre & Finance Admin:** Fiona Mooney

Email: [accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

**Parish Secretary:** Sarah Goodfellow

Email: [office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

**Website Contact:** [website.sswp@gmail.com](mailto:website.sswp@gmail.com)

**Safeguarding:** Please see Safeguarding posters in each of our churches for details of the Parish Safeguarding Reps. Diocesan

Safeguarding: Ruth Attfield [rattfield@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:rattfield@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)