

This Weekend's Mass arrangements:

Saturday 27th January: 6.00pm at St. Michael's Church
Sunday 28th January: 9.00am at St. Michael's Church
Sunday 28th January: 11.00am at St. Oswald's Church

Candlemas:

Friday 2nd February: 11.00am at St. Michael's Church

Dear All,

My thanks to those from our Tadley Catholic Community who attended the Churches Together Around Tadley Christian Unity Service on Sunday, 21st January on a blustery and dismal afternoon at Saint Mary's Church in Silchester.

The Service was prayerful and exceptionally well structured, with all our Clergy and Church Leaders from the area participating, followed by enjoyable cakes and tea/coffee. The "buzz" was noticeable amongst those coming together as disciples of Christ. The Reverend Karen West has thanked all those who contributed to this time of being together as One Body, and my personal thanks to her for organising the Service so well after only being at Saint Mary's Church for such a short time.

Our thanks to Peter Hughes of the Silchester community, and a member of our Parish, for ensuring that a photograph and report of the event appeared in our Diocesan e-News during the last week. When I was at the clergy formation day in Winchester last Tuesday, Bishop Philip made a particular point in our conversation about his delight in seeing the item, and especially Peter's photograph of the leaders of our various Christian Traditions standing together on the church sanctuary.

What a meeting!

A small group of clergy, including Father Jean-Patrice Coulon from Saint Bede's Church, Basingstoke, and Canon Vincent Harvey, former Parish Priest there, joined Bishop Philip for the presentation on Mission, Leadership and Ecology in Isaiah last Tuesday. The Reverend. Dr. Jeremy Corley, a priest of our Diocese whom I know well, led the day. He is a fine Scripture scholar, who is based at Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth, Ireland. As always, he invited us to interrupt and contribute as he developed the themes for the day. The result was a glorious interaction of those present with him on what the Book of Isaiah from The Old Testament can teach us in our calling to proclaim the Word of God in our place and time – many centuries later!

From the development of the Emmanuel (God with us) prophecy for foreshadowing the coming of Christ; to the call to preach as sinful people ourselves to a generation which often closes its ears to the Good News (as happened with Jesus without sin) to the importance of Creation as a visible manifestation of the presence of God which often we have no time to stop to reflect upon in silence and prayer in our non-stop, technological age. And how important Sacred Scripture will be in the Ten Year Mission Plan, when there may often be no regular Sunday Masses in some areas in the future, and no priests may be available for Funeral Masses or Anointing of the seriously ill as at present. Not to forget the scriptural idea of the Faithful Remnant, those left when Faith reaches rock-bottom! Yet the debate was full of hope, not despair, recognising Christ had to die before he rose. It is no different for us.

IMPORTANT UPDATE! Confirmation Mass - Date & Location

Father John Lee has asked that the following information is made available to those in the Parishes of the Basingstoke Pastoral Area who are preparing for Confirmation this year:

“Bishop Philip will confirm the young people of the Basingstoke Pastoral Area on Friday evening, 26th April at 7:00 PM. The Confirmation Mass will be celebrated here at Saint Bede’s, Popley Way, Basingstoke”.

He explains that this departure from the Sacrament’s normal celebration in our Portsmouth Cathedral is because the submission of the numbers of candidates (84) from our Area was made late to the Bishop’s Office. To avoid groups attending on four different dates at the Cathedral as a result, involving catechists and music ministers making additional visits to the Cathedral, Bishop Philip has kindly agreed to this change for our Area for this year.

The Presentation of the Lord (Candlemas - The Mass of the Candles)

This will be celebrated at Saint Michael's Church at 11:00 AM on Friday 2nd February. Please be in the church 15 minutes before the start of Mass so that arrangements for the procession to take place with dignity are in place.

This day recognises Christ as the Light of the World, the Salvation prepared for all nations and the glory of Israel, God's chosen people. Traditionally, it brought to a final end Christmastide, with the removal of cribs from churches. It was good to see that the magnificent crib in Saint Peters Church, Winchester, was still in place when I prayed there last Tuesday!

Lepra Appeal

We have an Appeal this weekend for the work of Lepra as it celebrates 100 years of work to eradicate leprosy and to ensure those suffering from it are integrated into their communities rather than rejected from them. I have been asked to make the Appeal, which will take place within our Masses. If you would like further information about Lepra’s work, please contact LauriceJ@lepra.org.uk There is also a video from Laurice Jarman on our Parish website.

“No Greater Love” – Pastoral Area course

In *No Greater Love*, You Will Experience the Unconditional Love Christ Has for You.

We often hear about Jesus’ passion and death, but imagine experiencing them for the very first time. In *No Greater Love: A Biblical Walk Through Christ’s Passion*, we are going to walk step-by-step with Jesus on his journey from his agony in the garden to his crucifixion on Calvary.

Along the way, we will unpack the biblical background to these events, the prophecies, and most especially, the ways Jesus is inviting us to walk more closely with him today.

No Greater Love is a five-part Bible study program that will begin this Lent on Monday evenings from 7.30 to 9 pm starting on Monday 19th February. For more information and to register, follow this link: nogreaterlovecourse

There are also posters on display in our churches. Our thanks to Hugh Lobo for these.

The Diocese is hosting a Symposium “What does it mean to be Human? Medical Ethics and Social Care Today” in Winchester on Saturday 16th March 2024.

The Symposium will take place from 10.00am – 4.15pm at The Arc (formerly The Discovery Centre) in Winchester (opposite St. Peter’s Catholic Church) & features presentations from well-known experts & will be led by David Wells, the popular motivational speaker. It is open to people of all faiths and none, specialist and lay, to students and to anyone with an interest in medical and social care.

There will be two keynote presentations: “What does it mean to be a Human Being?” (Mgr. Michael Nazir Ali) and “How significant is the Sexual Revolution?” (Ryan Christopher of ADF International).

Participants can also choose two of six workshops on issues to do with the start of life and the end of life, spirituality and mental health, gender dysphoria, respect in healthcare and the value-systems in contemporary healthcare provision.

Tickets cost £20, including sandwiches and refreshments, and are available on-line via Eventbrite [here](#). Information is also on display in our churches

The Synod on Synodality – Feedback requested

The international *Synod on Synodality* is conducting feedback on aspects of the final synthesis report issued after the October 2023 session in Rome, which you can access [here](#).

As part of the preparation for the Synod Assembly in October 2024, feedback will be sought from the clergy, but is also being sought directly from the laity.

We are being asked to consider three areas of the synthesis report related to communion, participation and mission that fit in well with our ten-year strategy *You Will be My Witnesses*. These are **Entering the Community of Faith: Christian Initiation** (PART I: PROPOSAL M and K), the **Church is Mission** (PART II PROPOSAL N and O) and **A synodal approach to formation** (PART III PROPOSAL K and L). In other words, typical questions here would include: How can we better initiate children and adults into Christian discipleship and the life of Christ's Church? How as a Diocese can we be more missionary? And how might we form people more effectively in the Gospel and the teaching of the Church?

Your feedback is therefore invited via email directly to our Diocesan Synod Coordinator, Fr. John Chandler (jchandler@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk). Please mark the email clearly 'SYNOD' and indicate your name, address and parish. Please also keep strictly to the three areas outlined in order to make the task of collation feasible. Although Fr. John and his team will be unable to engage in a discussion, I know they will be very grateful for your input. Our thanks to you - and to him - for this work.

Diocesan Vacancies

Pastoral Coordinator of Evangelisation, Havant - Closing date 9th February 2024

Operations Manager, Winchester - Closing date 9th February 2024

Health & Safety Officer, Portsmouth – Currently there is no closing date

For these & other vacancies visit: <https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/about-us/other/jobs/>

Further reading

Portsmouth Diocese news items:

<https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/communications/news/enews/>

Catholic Bishops Conference of England & Wales news items:

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/news-and-media/>

Caritas Portsmouth Newsletter:

<https://caritasportsmouth.org.uk/news-events/>

Enjoy your weekend!

Father Patrick.

Fr. Patrick Tansey

Parish Priest

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