

Dear All,

First, a sincere “Thank you” to those who checked to see if I needed anything during my recent illness and to those who remembered my 41st Ordination of Priesthood on 4th December- celebrated in a dressing gown and pyjamas feeling a little miserable! However, “Blessed be God!” was my central reflection for the day - He has been both good and kind over the years.

One of the worst colds I have experienced hit me very badly early last Friday evening, soon after I had received a message from Deacon Tony Darroch to say that he was unwell and could not help at the weekend as we had planned. Both of us had been suffering with sniffles during the days before, so it was in our systems.

Apologies for no Masses for the First Sunday of Advent and my thanks to Dan for ensuring that Bishop Philip’s Pastoral Letter went out over the system on Sunday evening, after alerting people on Saturday that both Tony and I were unwell. It was not until Wednesday that I began to return to normal, and I’m still very weary, especially by the evening. So, I shall be pacing myself health wise in the coming week, although the Parish Diary has a considerable amount to be dealt with, Christmas being only two weeks away from this coming Sunday. So, off we go, paying special attention to the Christmas Eve Saturday/Sunday Masses, followed by the Christmas Day ones:

- **Saturday, 23 December**

6.00 PM Vigil Mass - Saint Michael’s Church as normal.

- **Sunday 24th December (Christmas Eve)**

10.00 AM One Parish Mass - Saint Michael’s Church for both our communities.

This is an opportunity for us all to gather together on Christmas Eve to celebrate The Day of Resurrection and to prepare as one Parish Family for Christmas (The Mass of Christ). I shall be asking our Parish musicians to come together for this special gathering.

7.30 PM Vigil & First Mass of Christmas - Saint Michael’s Church.

PLEASE NOTE: There is no Midnight Mass in the Parish.

- **Monday 25th December (Christmas Day)**

9.00 AM Christmas Mass – St. Michael’s Church

11.00 AM Christmas Mass – St. Oswald’s Church

PLEASE NOTE: There are no other Masses for Christmas Day in our Parish.

Parish lift, please

I am most grateful to Ann Boon of our St Oswald community for replying so quickly in respect of my request for a lift after the 9:00 AM Christmas Day Mass at Tadley and a lift back from the 11:00 AM Burghfield Common Mass that day. It would be good to have some backups in case somebody falls ill or whatever, so please let me know by this coming Sunday if you can be on “standby” to help if necessary.

This Weekend’s Mass arrangements:

Saturday 9th December:

6.00pm at St. Michael’s Church

Sunday 10th December:

9.00am at St. Michael’s Church - **With Children’s Liturgy!**

Sunday 10th December:

11.00am at St. Oswald’s Church

NOTE: The new Gift Aid Forms will be available for signing at all Masses

Advent Preparation

- **TOMORROW: Saturday 9th December 10.00am - 11.00am**

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & reflections on the Second Coming of Christ at the end of time.

- **Saturday 16th December 10.00am – 11.00am**

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & reflections on the First Coming of Christ at Christmas.

Both are in St. Michael's Church, with an opportunity for Reconciliation afterwards until 11.30am.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Parishioners are asked to book by telephone before Friday 8th December and Friday 15th December if they wish to avail themselves of the Reconciliation times after Adoration on those Saturdays to ensure my availability in respect of numbers. Please do so through the Parish Office leaving a telephone message if necessary. Many thanks to those who have done so already.

No Baptisms in Advent

There will be no Baptisms, excepting emergencies, until February 2024.

Not Available

On Wednesday 13th December we have the Christmas Tea in the parish room, Tadley, so I shall not be available. Our thanks to those from Tadley and Burghfield Common who have organised the return of this social event following the coronavirus pandemic.

Pat Rolt, RIP

It was with sadness that I was informed on Tuesday 5th December that Pat died peacefully early that morning in Saint Michael's Hospice, Basingstoke. Our Parish Condolences to her husband John and to all the family who gathered around her in the days leading to her death.

On Saturday 25th November, a beautifully sunny if cold day, I was with Pat and John and family members in the Hospice to absolve, anoint and give her Communion for her final journey to meet our gracious God. Fully aware of all that was happening, still retaining her particular sense of humour, it was a time of grace, even of laughter at times. John has cared for her devotedly over a long illness and we also thank him for his witness of a deep belief in Christ alongside her. She will be missed. Please keep her soul in your prayers, and also John, family and friends grieving the loss of one who was so great a part of our Tadley Community.

I know that John would like me to thank Deacon Tony for his visits to her before she entered the Hospice. Thanks also to Saint Michael's Hospice for enabling her to make a peaceful death. It was good to see Jo Mellor, who nurses there, on the Saturday I visited and I appreciated greatly the help of the other staff that day.

Gina Poulter, RIP

We keep the First Anniversary of Gina's death this weekend in the Parish. She died on 10th December 2022. At the request of Roy Singh, Mass will be celebrated at our 6.00 PM Saturday Evening Mass for the repose of her soul. Gina played a central part in organising the Christmas Tea celebrations before the pandemic, which you will have noted from the news item above, recommence this coming week.

Pat Welsh thanks

Pat expresses her appreciation for queries over her health from several parishioners during the last few days. I spoke to her on Thursday on the telephone & she said that she has not been very well recently & would be grateful for prayers. However, she has good support from her family & looks forward to speaking with me again in the not too distant future.

REMINDER: CTAT (Churches Together Around Tadley) NEEDS YOU!

On Wednesday 20th December, our local church communities gather to celebrate the return of the Living Nativity at 4.00 PM. This is a new expression of our preparation for the Birth of Our Saviour, wherein we move from various churches in this part of Tadley's Christian church fellowship. Participants will move, starting at Saint Mary's Church, from church to church, reliving the story of Christmas. Actors, a band, animals – all will be engaged in this Christian witness. Will you?

We need volunteers to help with marshalling the journey from church to church, ensuring the safety of those moving in the dark between 4.00 – 6.00 PM back to Saint Mary's Church, after visiting Tadley Common Methodist Church and Saint Michael's Church, joined with Saint Mary's Church, Silchester. After our return to Saint Mary's Church, there will be mince pies and mulled wine as we welcome the animals awaiting the Christ Child.

Many thanks to those who have volunteered so far!

REMINDER: CTAT Tadley Christmas Angels are back! (and not forgetting those in Silchester!)

Last Call from Sue Tull for volunteer help:

The Angels will be set out for display in Tadley Common Methodist Church **TODAY - Friday December 8th (3:00 PM- 7:30 PM)** & **TOMORROW - Saturday December 9th (10:30 AM- 4:30 PM)**. Please do help if you are available.

The Tadley Angels will be hung up around the town on Tuesday 12th December (South Tadley – Meet at the Salvation Army building) at 6.30 AM and Wednesday 13th December (North Tadley - Meet at Saint Mary's Church) also at 6:30 AM. Breakfast will be served at both venues after the distribution is finished.

The Silchester Angels fly on 13th December if the weather is suitable, and further information can be obtained from Jan Hughes or Gill Lawson if you live in the village.

REMINDER: Salvation Army – Christmas Present Appeal 2023

Last year, the Salvation Army distributed more than 76,000 gifts! This year, the number of families requesting help is expected to rise as a result of the cost of living crisis. You can help us spread the joy of Christmas to families whose children would otherwise not receive a gift.

Please support our local appeal by donating new, unwrapped toys and gifts for children who might not otherwise receive a Christmas present. The gifts will then be wrapped and distributed to those in need. Donations accepted at Tadley Salvation Army up to 17th December:

Mulfords Hill, Tadley, RG26 3LJ - Phone: 0118 9815013

REMINDER: CTAT Christmas Day free lunch

Starting at 11:30 AM on Monday 25th of December at the Ambrose Allen Centre, Tadley. See attached flyer or the poster in Saint Michael's Church for full details.

Don't forget to look at the posters in your local churches for Advent and Christmas Joy!

Christmas Clergy Collection

As with previous years, a Christmas Collection has been set-up for me by the Diocese:

<https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/tadley-st-michael-and-st-oswald-catholic-parish-christmas-collection-2023>

REMINDER: New Gift Aid Forms for signature

Clearly, with all Masses cancelled last weekend, there was no opportunity last weekend for Gift Aiders to sign the new forms, however, **THE FORMS WILL BE AVAILABLE THIS WEEKEND.**

Just to recap:

In January 2023, the Diocese changed its Charitable status & Charity Number, creating a new legal entity for the Diocese. To be compliant with HMRC regulations, we now need to ask all Parishioners supporting the Parish through Gift Aid contributions to sign new Gift Aid forms, which show the new registration number of the Charity.

These forms for signature will be available in the porch after Masses at the weekend in both churches & someone will be on hand to provide any assistance/advice needed. There will also be some blank forms available should anyone wish to start contributing through Gift Aid.

The Gift Aid giving is a significant part of the finances raised by the Parish & your continued support in difficult times is greatly appreciated. Please also ensure that your Gift Aiding is within the HMRC regulations.

REMINDER: Missio Red Boxes

Our Missio representatives at both churches are requesting all parishioners who currently have Red Boxes to kindly bring them to Mass for the 2023 banking, by Sunday 17th December.

St. Michael's: Sue Tull.

St. Oswald's: Sarah Hunneman.

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/>

Diocesan Vacancies

Schools Estates Manager - There is currently no closing date on this role.

Health & Safety Officer, Portsmouth - There is currently no closing date on this role.

IT Technician, Portsmouth – Closing date 5th January 2024

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

Enjoy your weekend and a continued Happy Advent!

Father Patrick.

Fr. Patrick Tansey

Parish Priest

St Michael's Church, Tadley

St Oswald's Church, Burghfield Common

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Bringing people closer to Jesus Christ through his Church

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

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