

Newsletter for 4th Sunday in Advent, Christmas and New Year to Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

St Michael's Church Tadley and St Oswald's Church Burghfield Common

Parish Priest Reverend Father Patrick Tansey St. Michael's RC Church
Bishopswood Road
Tadley
Hampshire
RG26 4HG Telephone 01189

814572

Parish Secretary Mrs Barbara Davis
Parish website www.stmandsto.org.uk

Mass Times for the next few weeks:-

- Saturday 19th December 6pm at St Michael's Tadley
- Sunday 20th December 10.30am at St Oswald's Burghfield Common
- Christmas Eve 24th December 6pm at St Michael's Tadley – now fully booked
- Christmas Day 25th December 10.30 am at St Oswald's Burghfield Common – a few spaces left
- NO PARISH MASSES weekend 26th/27th December
- Saturday 2nd January 6pm at St Michael's Tadley
- Sunday 3rd January 10.30 am at St Oswald's Burghfield Common
- Epiphany of the Lord, Wednesday 6th January 12 midday at St Oswald's, 7.30pm at St Michael's



Please remember all Masses need to be booked in advance by telephoning the parish office on 01189 814572, leaving a message with contact details. Booking by email is currently suspended as our parish secretary Barbara is still off convalescing from her November operation.

Our parish virtual **Christmas Carol Service** and audio rendering of **A Christmas Carol** are due to be ready for us all to enjoy on Christmas Eve via our Parish website <http://www.stmandsto.org.uk/> - Rick Wallis and Sarah Hunneman and their team have worked hard to make these joyous events available for us all.

Also on the website you'll be able to find out about how **Alpha** is coming to our parish in the New Year. This will be a virtual course organised by Geoff and Gina Poulter open to all, not just members of the parish – do take a look and why not email Geoff on geoffpoulter@hotmail.com to find out more.

We have the traditional Christmas Cribs in our Churches and money donated to the Crib Collections goes to The Knights of the Holy Sepulchre for the support of the Christian Communities in the Holy Land. Go to <http://khs.org.uk/> to find out more about their work.

The Year of the Word -The God Who Speaks

The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales have decided to continue the year for study of the Scriptures into 2021, ending on the 30th September, the Memorial of St Jerome. This 4th century Saint and Doctor of the Church famously translated most of the bible into Latin. St Jerome declared that “ignorance of the scriptures is ignorance of Christ”. Our Catholic Catechism reminds us that the Church venerates the Scriptures as she venerates the Lord’s body. Find out more by going to [Http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/)

A Christmas “Thank-you” from Father Patrick

I would like to express my sincere thanks for all the cards and gifts I have received from parishioners. Also in advance many thanks for the Christmas Collection offerings which form such an important part of all our parish priests’ income at this time of year. I know for many people it is difficult to give financially because of the pandemic so please don’t worry if you can’t contribute as much as previously. I value the support of all in any way- materially or spiritually in prayer.

Thank-you to all!

On-line giving to Church Collections

Online giving is now available in our parish as an easy and secure way of making both the customary Christmas gift to Fr Patrick and to make regular financial contributions even if you cannot come to one of our churches in person.

Please see this link:- <https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/tadley-clergy-christmas-collection> for making a gift to Fr Patrick, and this link:- <https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/charity/st-michael--st-oswald-tadley-catholic-parish> for making either a one-off or regular contribution to the parish .

You can also find these links and more information on how to support our Parish financially on the parish website at www.stmandsto.org.uk

Goodbye 2020, Welcome 2021

“Good-bye” comes from the old English phrase “God be with you”. Many of our everyday terms and phrases are derived from expressions confirming our Christian faith. As we come to the end of an unforgettable year “God be with us” is an appropriate statement of farewell. We ask God to be with all that was good in it and for Him to redeem all that was hurtful and painful.

I think we are all aware of the sorrow and hardship that the coronavirus pandemic has brought, but we should also remember to look beyond this to how people have risen to the task of coping with the “new normal”.

We owe a a great debt of gratitude to our parish secretary Barbara who made sure the parish office stayed open from March until her operation in early November. Hopefully she'll be well enough to return to her post in January. Barbara sends her Christmas wishes to all.

The Evangelization Strategy Team of Sarah Hunneman, Gerry Penfold, Gina Poulter and Rick Wallis alongside myself have given considerable time to looking forward to a new future for our parish despite the continuing pandemic. The have also engaged in other initiatives during the last months.

The Parish Finance Committee have continued to work hard to promote the financial stability of our parish during this difficult time for the Diocese.

The CTAT (Churches Together Around Tadley) banners have been a fixture in the sanctuary of St Michael's Church since last January's Ecumenical Service – the lock-downs have made it impossible to move them! They remind us of the close ecumenical co-operation in the parish both in Tadley with CTAT and also with CTBSM (Churches Together in Burghfield Common, Sulhamstead and Mortimer). Pauline Penfold and Mary Lee deserve our thanks for representing the parish on the CTAT forum – the next is planned for 14th January at 7.30pm. In the meantime CTAT's Tadley Christmas Shed from 21st-24th Decembers is well worth a visit (see our website for more). Pauline has done great work bringing together a choir for the 22nd December Christmas Shed event involving St Michael's Church and Tadley Common Methodist Church at St Mary's Church in Tadley. The Rev Ruth Midcalf and I truly appreciate her efforts for this.

Bill and Joy Reilly and Irene Perry have kept parishioners informed by email so allowing personal contacts to continue virtually. Deacon Tony Darroch has been supportive with advice on health and safety matters and Pastoral Area issues. Tina van Ewyk and Ellen Goodall with the help of their teams have helped keep our churches clean, stewards from the whole parish have made private prayer and public Masses possible in both our churches.

St Oswald's Church and the Leonard Rooms have been kept clean and welcoming for years by Peggy. It is with great sadness that she is now unable to continue with this work because of cancer – do please keep her in your prayers.

I have appreciated much kindness and support during what has been at times a difficult year. I've had dinners delivered for a Sunday afternoon or evening, emails thanking Barbara and myself for the re-arrangement of our churches making them safe spaces and the wonderful though unexpected acknowledgement of my 70th birthday in June. The cards, presents and socially distanced calls to me at the presbytery made what I expected to be a low-key day into one I shall never forget! Thank-you! Bishop Philip too has been supportive of my priestly ministry with personal letters giving thanks, I have sent him our Parish's Christmas greetings and prayers.

A year of many blessings!

HAPPY MASS OF CHRIST!
HAPPY 2021!

