

St Joseph's Catholic Church

Parish Priest: Fr. Michael Fava CBE

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2nd SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS -

YEAR A

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!

Sunday 4th January: SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS, Year A. Masses at 8.30am and 11.00am.

Monday 5th January: Monday of Christmastide before Epiphany. No Mass today.

Tuesday 6th January: THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD (Holy Day of Obligation), solemnity. Masses at 10.00am and 7.30pm.

Wednesday 7th January: Wednesday of Christmastide after Epiphany, or St Raymond of Peñafort, Religious, optional memorial. Mass at 10.00am.

Thursday 8th January: Thursday of Christmastide after Epiphany. Mass at 10.00am.

Friday 9th January: Friday of Christmastide after Epiphany. Mass at 10.00am.

Saturday 10th January: Saturday of Christmastide after Epiphany. Mass at 10.00am followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Confessions.

Mass Intentions:

Sunday 4th January: 11.00am for Joyce & Bill Newman RIP (Maureen Dixon's Intention).

Wednesday 7th January: 10.00am for Margaret Long RIP (Elizabeth Matias' Intention).

Friday 9th January: 10.00am for Martin Cawte RIP (Jill Cawte's intention)

Saturday 10th January: 10.00am for Veronica Tuckett RIP (Deidre McNair-Wilson's Intention).

Please Pray for the Sick and Housebound of the Parish:

Fr Padraig Faughnan, Carol Bartlam, Anne Horner, Angela Jordan, Margaret Saunders, Elizabeth Skelton, Oliver Avery, Kate Kennington, Philip Rowlands, Jonathan Sheridan, Deanna Knight, Eric and Beryl Thompson, Lesley Smith, Larry Bretz, Yvonne Bradley, Pat and Ron Bird, Theresa Cassidy, Joshua David, Marie O'Sullivan, Liliana Ramalingam, Terry Hamill, Rita Zollo. Additions - please inform Fr Michael.

Collections: 21st December: Plate collection £791.96; Candles £27.34; Poor Box £15.30; Repository £22.00. 24th & 25th December: £2107.11; Crib Collection £319.96. 28th December: £485.32; Candles £99.21; Poor Box £18.75; Crib Collection £73.60. Thank you for your generosity.

Sunday 4th January: Second Sunday after The Nativity

(A) This is the second Sunday of the 12 days of Christmas. Today's Gospel text from John Chapter 1 focuses on the mystery of the incarnation in which "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." We are to listen to God's voice and follow where he leads. Like the servant, like Paul, and like John, we are sent to share hope with others.

Tuesday 6th January: THE SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY (Holy Day of Obligation)

Masses at 10am and 7.30pm. In the Western Church, the Feast of the Epiphany celebrates Jesus' first appearance to the Gentiles, represented by the Magi, while in the Eastern Church, the Epiphany event is celebrated in the commemoration of the Baptism of Christ when the Father and the Holy Spirit gave combined testimony to Jesus' identity as Son of God. Later, in the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus revealed himself as the promised Messiah, and at Cana Jesus revealed his Divinity by transforming water into wine. The Church celebrates all these 'epiphany' events on this Feast of Epiphany.

Wednesday 7th January: Open Church 12.30pm – 2pm.

The church will be open for quiet prayer and reflection. All are welcome at any time while the church is open.

Thursday 8th January: 10.30am Grand/Mothers' Prayers

every Thursday at *Newbury Grove Care Home*, 370 London Rd, Newbury RG14 2QH to pray for the needs of our children and grandchildren, and for a strengthening of faith. New attendees are particularly welcome at present. For more information speak with Fr Michael or Elizabeth Matias after Mass.

7.30pm: RCIA Meeting at St Francis de Sales' Parish Hall, Wash Common. Tonight's topic – 'Creation/Humanity'.

Saturday 10th January: 10.00am – 12 noon: First Holy Communion Program Children's Learning Session & Celebration of their first Sacrament of Reconciliation

in St Joseph's Hall and Church followed by a celebration lunch from **12 noon – 1pm**.

Sunday 11th January: FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD – YEAR A. 11am Mass: The First Holy Communion candidates will join us today.

From Fr Michael – 'Thank you!' – I would like to express my profound thanks to everyone who has been so very kind and generous to me over the Christmas period. Your greetings, cards, gifts, and Christmas offerings have been truly overwhelming this year, and I am so grateful to everyone – not least all those who gave of their time and talents to enhance our church and its liturgies, and to support me. Please accept my apologies for not being able to thank everyone personally!

The Christmas Crib Collection 2025: The offerings this year go to support *The Friends of the Holy Land* in their work bringing life-changing assistance – food, healthcare, and spiritual support - to families living in the land where our faith began. Even with a fragile ceasefire in place, life remains incredibly difficult for many Christian families. For more information, visit www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk

Papal Proclamation: Pope Leo XIV gave his first '*Urbi et Orbi*' message and blessing to the city and to the world on Christmas Day to pilgrims gathered in St Peter's Square. The Holy Father renewed his plea for peace, reminding the world that it is both God's gift and humanity's shared responsibility. Christ, the Pope continued, is peace because he frees humanity from sin and "shows us the way to overcome conflicts - all conflicts, whether interpersonal or international. Without hearts that have been forgiven", he warned, it is impossible to be "men and women of peace or builders of peace."

From the Diocesan Vocations Team: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." How is the Lord calling you to be light for the world that is cloaked in darkness? If you feel called to the priesthood, diaconate or religious life, talk to your priest or contact Cn. John Cooke, vocations@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or call 01329 318 869.

Have a car and a little spare time? Do you want to make a real difference in your local area? **The Downland Volunteer Group** would love to hear from you. The **DVG** urgently needs caring, reliable volunteer drivers to support local people who are elderly, sick, disabled or in need. Just a few hours a month could get someone to an urgent medical appointment or stay connected in their community. Your spare time could be someone's lifeline. Interested? Get in touch via 01635 578394 or dvg.office@btinternet.com, visit www.downlandvolgroup.org or fill in one of the forms available at the back of church.

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School & Nursery – Consultation on Primary School Admissions Policy 2027 – 2028:

The Governing Body of St Joseph's School are consulting on this policy for the required six weeks between 15/12/2025 and 30/01/2026. School admission authorities must consult on admission arrangements if change is proposed other than an increase to their PAN (Published Admission Number), and if they have not consulted in the last seven years. St Joseph's School Governing Body is required to consult as they are proposing a change to their Admissions Policy oversubscription criteria removing the category "Catholic children who are resident in the parishes of St Joseph's, Newbury; St Francis de Sales, Wash Common; The Sacred Heart, Lambourn; Our Lady of Lourdes, Hungerford;" and creating the category "other Catholic children". This change is in line with changes proposed by the Diocese of Portsmouth CASO (Catholic Academies & Schools Office). The proposed policy is on the school website (Applying for a Place). To comment on the proposed 2027 – 2028 Admissions Policy, e-mail the Clerk to Governors, Mrs Rachael House Gemmell rhousegemmell@stjosephs.w-berks.sch.uk or write to the Clerk via the School Office, St Joseph's School, Newport Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 2AW by 30th January 2026.

Pilgrimage to Medjugorje: 11th-18th May 2026. £799 per person. The price includes return flights from Gatwick, return airport transfers, senior tour guide, fully guided itinerary, 7 nights half board (breakfast and 3-course main meal), shared ensuite rooms, 1 checked-in and 2 cabin bags. Contact: Susan Smith 07737 175476 or Discover Medjugorje 020 39254613 Whatsapp: 07418 610725 email: info@discovermedj.com

From West Berkshire Foodbank: Food and house-hold items will be needed as much as ever over the winter. Donated items can be left in the collection box at the back of church at any time. The shopping list on the Foodbank's website shows that anti-bac spray, fruit juice, Pringles, tinned fruit, tinned meat and pasta/rice are urgently needed. Your generosity is appreciated.

Contactless Donations: Please use your debit/credit card or smart phone/device to donate your chosen amount on our digital collection pads for Sunday collections. Gift Aid details need only be entered once and will be retained for future donations.

AND A FINAL THOUGHT: The New Year is a blank page, waiting for us to write our story. With each day, we have the chance to turn the page towards a brighter, bolder chapter.

