

St Joseph's Catholic Church

Parish Priest: Fr. Michael Fava CBE

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FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR C

Sunday 9th March 2025: FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT - YEAR C. Masses at 8.30am and 11.00am.

Monday 10th March: Monday of the 1st Week of Lent. No Mass today.

Tuesday 11th March: Tuesday of the 1st Week of Lent. Mass at 10.00am.

Wednesday 12th March: Wednesday of the 1st Week of Lent. Mass at 10.00am.

Thursday 13th March: Thursday of the 1st Week of Lent. Mass at 10.00am

Friday 14th March: Friday of the 1st Week of Lent. Mass at 10.00am.

Saturday 15th March: Saturday of the 1st Week of Lent. Mass at 10.00am.

Mass Intentions:

Sunday 9th March: 11.00am for Patricia Conway RIP (Oliver Conway's Intention).

Please Pray for the Sick and Housebound of the Parish:

John Horner, John Appicella, Eric and Beryl Thompson, Geoff and Kathleen Wain, Lesley Smith, Joyce Delahunty, Larry Bretz, Yvonne Bradley, Pat and Ron Bird, Theresa Cassidy, Joshua David, Marie O'Sullivan, Liliana Ramalingam, Terry Hamill, Rita Zollo, Kevin McCormack. Additions - please inform Fr Michael.

Collections: 2nd March: Plate collection £765.94; Candles £35.57; Poor Box £41.00. Monthly totals for February – Contactless £1646; Standing Orders £1,912.50. Thank you for your generosity.

Sunday 9th March: FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT Year C: Lent begins with a reflection on the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness. The Church assigns temptation stories to the beginning of Lent because temptations come to everybody, not only to Jesus. We need to confront and conquer temptations as Jesus did, using the tools of prayer, self-denial, and charity.

An update will be given at Masses today on the amalgamated parish to comprise Newbury, Wash Common, Hungerford and Thatcham.

Tea and coffee served in the hall after both Masses. All welcome.

Wednesday 12th March: 12.30 – 2pm: The church is open on Wednesday afternoon for quiet prayer and reflection. All are welcome at any time whilst the church is open.

Friday 14th March: CAFOD Lent Family Fast Day.

10.30am: Stations of the Cross in church following Mass.

Saturday 29th March: Pastoral Area Lent Retreat 11am to 3pm at Our Lady of Lourdes, Hungerford led by Fr. Francis Preston SDB assisted by 2 seminarians and including a programme for young parishioners. All are most welcome. Full programme on posters in the church.

'CAFOD's Big Lent Walk 2025': A team of Confirmation candidates from St Joseph's and the West Berkshire Pastoral Area is taking on the challenge to walk 200km in 40 days in raise money for CAFOD and SCIAF to help fight global poverty. If you would like to sponsor our young people, please go to <https://parishes.walk.cafod.org.uk/teams/west-berkshire-confirmation-groups-big-lent-walk>

Saturday 15th April: 7.30 pm at St Nicholas' Church: Newbury Choral Society, together with a professional orchestra and soloists, will perform **Elgar's 'The Dream of Gerontius'**, a work for voices and orchestra based on the 1865 poem written by St John Henry Newman. Tickets (£16.50 or £5.50 for under 16s) are available via newburychoral.org.uk.

Pope Francis' Lent Message: Lent is ordered to prepare for the celebration of Easter since the Lenten liturgy prepares for the celebration of the Paschal Mystery. Catechumens, (at various stages of Christian Initiation), and all the faithful, do penance and recall their own Baptism. (*Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the General Roman Calendar* 27). Pope Francis' Message for Lent 2025 is available to be read on the Vatican website at <https://press.vatican.va>

"We want to be a Church that serves, that leaves home and goes forth from its places of worship, goes forth from its sacristies, in order to accompany life, to sustain hope,

to be the sign of unity... to build bridges, to break down walls, to sow seeds of reconciliation." (Pope Francis)

PARISH PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES 30th June – 4th July

2025: £839 including flights (Heathrow to Toulouse), transfers, full board, and daily programme of events. (£39 per night single supplement; 10 Euros Sanctuary supplement). Please speak with or contact Anne Paice for further information or to book - email: annepaice62@yahoo.co.uk. The closing date for bookings is Sunday 16th March. Please return completed booking forms to Anne Paice or the presbytery.

World Youth Day Pilgrimage to Rome - 28th July to 4th August

Join Bishop Philip and young people aged 17+ in Rome. Includes the Mass at which Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati, diocesan Patron of Youth, will be canonised a saint. Cost (£1,350) includes flights, 7 nights accommodation half board, travel in Rome, entrance and participation fees and more. For information and pre-booking, contact youth@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk.

Quiet Garden Days: Tithe Barn Quiet Garden offers you the opportunity to come away from the bustle of normal life and spend a day of peace in contemplation and stillness in a lovely local garden, on one of three days this summer, hosted by Penny Lovelock at Tithe Barn, Stroud Green RG147JA. 10 people limit on any one day. With short introductions by a leader, the day is spent in silence around the garden or house. £20 for full day; £10 on Penny's day (5th Sept). A good lunch is provided!

Fri 30th May: 10.00am - 4.00pm Lead by Fr Peter Bowe

Fri 4th July: 10.00am - 4.00pm Lead by Revd Pat Bhutta

Fri 5th Sep: 10.00am - 4.00pm Lead by Penny Lovelock

Book: pennylovelock44@gmail.com or mobile 07913 358068

Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN): the official agency of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales for domestic social action, is conducting a survey to gather insights into the lived experiences of Catholic families in England and Wales. Specifically, they are focused on understanding the impact of the two-child benefit cap and the broader effects of the current economic climate. The survey is available at the following link: csan.org.uk/news/familysurvey and will close on 25th March. The insights gathered will play a vital role in advocacy efforts to address child poverty and influence policy change. CSAN are eager to hear directly from Catholic families about their experiences. All responses will remain anonymous.

Assisted Suicide Bill: This week the Parliamentary Committee resumed its line by line consideration of the Assisted Suicide Bill. MPs on the Committee rejected (15:8 ratio) an amendment that would have required the patient to have a consultation about palliative care options before being able to have an assisted suicide. The Committee also rejected all 86 amendments to Clause 1

of the Bill relating to the definition of assisted dying as well as refusing to close the loophole which would allow people with anorexia to access assisted dying. All MPs will have the chance to vote on the amended Bill at the Third Reading in late April or early May. Sign the petition at <https://carenotkilling.uk/petition>

CATECHISTS' LENT FORMATION AND NETWORKING

SESSIONS: The diocese will host three online events during Lent for Catechists across the diocese. They offer a chance to connect with other catechists, share experiences, and find inspiration to hand on the faith in our parishes. Each event begins at 7:30 PM - for one hour. Choose from the 3 events based on your area of catechesis: **Thurs 13th March** (Children's Liturgy & First Holy Communion); **Thursday 20th March** (Marriage Preparation & Baptism); **Thursday 3rd April** (Confirmation & RCIA). To sign up, go to <https://forms.office.com/e/VkCdj1SWzA>.

VOCATIONS: "You shall worship the Lord, your God, and Him alone shall you serve." This Lenten season, reflect on your life's direction. Are you being called to serve God with an undivided heart as a priest, deacon or religious brother or sister? Talk to your priest or contact Cn. John Cooke. vocations@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or call 01329 318 869

ST JOSEPH'S PARISH HALL: The hall is available for bookings for social events, classes, or activities. Reasonable hire rates. Please contact Anne Paice to book on email: annepaice62@yahoo.co.uk

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.

If you would like to receive a copy of this newsletter by email each week, please contact the parish office.

Prayer for the Parish of the Sacred Heart: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we praise you, we bless you, we thank you for your infinite love. Thank you for blessing us with the gift of faith. Thank you for blessing us with our brothers and sisters in our various parishes, and for calling us all to join together in one faith community, the parish of the Sacred Heart. Deepen our love and understanding of each other and of you. Fill our hearts with the desire to joyfully and humbly serve you in each other, and in those among whom we live, so that our new parish reflects your own unity and love; proclaims the Good News of Jesus; and draws others to know, love and serve you. We ask this for your glory. Amen.

AND A FINAL THOUGHT: "During Lent, let us find concrete ways to overcome our indifference." - *Pope Francis*