

Newsletter of the Catholic Parish of St Thomas More

Second Sunday of Advent Year A

7th/8th December 2013

Weekday Masses usually Tues.– Fri. 9.30am, Morning prayer at 9.10am

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Parish Priest: Father Vitalis Vaakwagh Kondo, MSP

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www.facebook.com/bournemouthandavonstourcatholicityouth

Week beginning 7th December :		Mass Intention
Saturday 7th Dec. 6.00pm	First Mass Second Sunday of Advent	Martin MacDonald, R.I.P.
Sunday 8th Dec. 9.30am	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Bridget Emmel, R.I.P.
Monday 9th Dec. 7.00pm	IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY	(Thanksgiving Mass Fr Darryl Jordan)
Tuesday 10th Dec.	<i>No Mass</i>	—
Wed. 11th Dec. 9.30am 10.00am - 12.00	of the 2nd Week of Advent Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	Repose of the soul of Bridget Emmel
Thurs. 12th Dec. 9.30am	of the 2nd Week of Advent <i>Lectio Divina in sacristy after Mass</i>	Charles McKenna, R.I.P.
Friday 13th Dec. 9.30am	St Lucy, memorial	Repose of the soul of Martin MacDonald
Saturday: 5.15 – 5.45 pm		Sacrament of Reconciliation
Masses Sat. 6pm & Sun. 9.30am		Third Sunday of Advent

Copies of '**Walk with Me**' for Advent still available if you haven't yet picked up your copy. £1

Don't forget your copy of 'The Link' - see message from Father Vitalis!

There will be a Celebration in the Church

Hall after Mass this Saturday

For Father Vitalis - in appreciation of his time with us and to wish him well as he leaves to take up his new appointment in Horndean Parish.



Father Darryl Jordan will celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

at St Thomas More's on Monday, 9th Dec at 7pm.

Wine and cheese to follow in the Church Hall. All welcome!

Liturgy of the Word with Children

This year it is planned that our children will receive their **Christingles** at the Mass on the Third Sunday of Advent.

PREPARING FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD

John the Baptist is a figure of the role of the church today. With all of the many dimensions of our preparations for Christmas, we, as Christians, must give priority to the preparation of our hearts, of our inner beings. (Jesus didn't come to be locked in a tabernacle. He came to make his home in the human heart.) As with last Sunday, there is a sense of urgency about the call to prepare the way. Not everything in our lives is important, just because it appears urgent. I can be so busy with the urgent that I overlook the important. Preparation for an event and the actual event are not exactly the same thing. John predicts an extraordinary outpouring of blessing from "the one who is coming after me." Our preparation for Christmas is but the beginning of blessings and of gifts that will continue for eternity.

God offers me everything. He offers me peace, but I'm completely free to live in misery, and die of ulcers, if I so choose. He is constantly reminding me, offering me, calling me, inviting me. This Christmas is yet another opportunity to listen to his message, and to respond afresh. I have changed, of course, which is what is supposed to happen, as my life unfolds. The sense of awe of my childhood should now be much more widespread. It should encompass life itself, the sacrament of the present moment, and my own personal vocation to accept the message of Christmas, and integrate it into my daily living.

Life is difficult, and it is very fragile. One heart attack, and it's all over. Life is what happens when you're making other plans. If you want to hear God laugh, just tell him your plans.

Here's another Christmas, where it can be "here we go again," or it can be something beautiful, special, and life giving. Don't just drift into Christmas, and don't allow it become a time of year which most people wish was over and done with. Prepare a pathway for

the Lord's coming. Make a straight road for him. Can you honestly recognise things in your life, in your behaviour, in your relationships, that can be obstacles to this time of love, of reconciliation, of freedom from bondage? What do you find within yourself that spoils or limits the gift that you are, now that we are approaching that time of year when gift giving becomes part of our living?

Why wait until you die to face the judgement of God? Today, this very day, you can come to the Lord with the wheat and the chaff, with all that you are, and allow him separate the chaff, and dispose of it in the furnace of his love. Because of the extraordinary nature of the love expressed by God in the whole story of Christmas, it would be a special and grace-inspired response if I tried to meet that love with an open and honest heart. If he is a Saviour coming in search of sinners, then "Here I am, Lord."

God could have chosen to love us from a distance. However, he decided to join us on our human journey.

When I was baptised, someone else said yes on my behalf. Confirmation wasn't much better, as I was marched up to the altar. Sooner or later, I must say my personal yes. The first time I was carried into a church I wasn't consulted, and the next time I'll be carried into a church, I'm not going to be consulted either. Somewhere in between those two events, I must make a personal, sincere, and conscious decision about my Christian vocation. The greatest calling, or vocation, that can be given a human being is the call to be a follower of Jesus.

Jesus is the reason for the Season. Strip back all the tinsel and wrapping, and discover the real gift of Christmas. No matter what gifts or cards you receive from others, the greatest gift of all is one you can choose to give yourself.

CLERGY MOVES**in AVON-STOUR PASTORAL AREA**

As you will know by now, on Sunday 8th December at 3pm, Darryl Jordan will be ordained at Portsmouth Cathedral. Father Darryl is an Ordinariate priest and has a wife and one child. He was previously an Anglican curate at Christchurch Priory. He will be our new Priest in Charge at St. Thomas More's.

Father Bernadine Nsom of Bamenda (Archdiocese in the Cameroon) will arrive to be assistant to Father Gerry Onyejuluwa at Our Lady Queen of Peace, Southbourne.

Father Vitalis will be Priest in Charge at St. Edmund's, Horndean, following on from Canon Terence Healy who has recently retired.

ROTAS for CHRISTMAS

New rotas have been printed out (- copies available in the grey trays on the 'free table') - but there are still some gaps that need to be filled over the Christmas period!

If you could volunteer your services at the **Christmas Masses** then please add your name to the **'Sign-up' list on the notice board.** Many thanks!

40th Anniversary of link with Bamenda

*Almighty, ever-living Father,
You are the Eternal Shepherd
who never leaves his flock untended.
We thank you immensely for the bond
of love and friendship which has existed between the
Archdiocese of Bamenda and the Diocese of
Portsmouth now for forty years.
We are deeply grateful to you for the spiritual
benefits this union has yielded,
through which many have come to experience
inner conversion and the unfathomable warmth
of your love.
Amen.*

*As we celebrate forty years of this bond through
the proclamation of your Word and the guidance
of your Holy Spirit,
may we receive the grace to grow continuously
in partnership and understanding.
Bless those who have made selfless sacrifices to
sustain us, especially the priests who have served
in our diocese. May their work be rewarded
in the abundance of your grace.*

*May Mary our Mother, Queen of Apostles and
Star of the New Evangelisation,
and St Edmund our Patron, intercede for us.
We make our prayer through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

Christmas Eve Vigil Mass: Choir Are there any adults interested in joining a special choir for our Christmas Eve Mass? You would need to be available to join our rehearsals on (provisionally Wednesday evenings) and to sing Carols before the Vigil Mass begins. No auditions, just a will to join with one voice! If you would be interested please speak to Teresa after Mass.

Farewell to Father Vitalis

We wish you -

H **Happiness** – for you in your new Parish
O **Opportunity** – to realise your gifts and talents
R **Reverence** – to inspire, by example, your deep Reverence for the Almighty
N **New opportunities** (... new place, new people – same Mission)
D **Determination** – to follow your conscience and pursue your path
E **Everything that is good**
A **All our love**
N **New beginnings** – a renewal.

Senior Parishioners' Christmas Lunch/Party

The Annual Senior Parishioners' Christmas Party will be held next
Saturday 14th December, 12.00 for 12.30pm.

There is a guest sheet on the “free table” at rear of Church for Senior Citizens and anyone who may benefit from the companionship, to add their names.

New parishioners, people from other religions and those with none are most welcome.

There is also a list of food requirements - **To be completed by this Sunday please.**



As in previous years, there is a box at the back of church for your Christmas cards for your fellow parishioners! Save postage!



CHRISTMAS IS COMING - and we need a tree!

If you can provide a Christmas tree for the parish, please let Father or the Parish Office know as soon as possible.

The tree will need to be in the Church by 22nd December.

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH WEBSITE

The PPC is pleased to announce that St. Thomas More Church now has a website! You can now access Father Vitalis' homilies, download our church newsletters, learn more about our parish history and more. To view some of the content, you'll need to register your details (which only takes a minute); simply log on to **st.thomasmorechurch.org.uk**.



ALTAR SERVERS PANTO OUTING We are thinking of organizing a panto outing to see Scrooge by All Saints Dramatic Society at St Peter's school on Sunday Jan 12th at 2.30pm. If you would like to come please contact Amber or Sandra by Sunday 15th Dec.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: The children are invited to decorate the Christmas tree after 9.30am Mass on Sunday 22nd Dec. We will also be putting out the crib at that time, so need some volunteers to help get the figures down from the gallery. This year we be having a pared down, more simple nativity scene, without the stable, hay etc so as not to distract from the Altar itself. All offers of help welcomed!!

Advent Getting ready for Christmas Apart from activities like those mentioned above, there is plenty more that needs to be done, at home and for our family and friends - as many of you will agree no doubt!

Firstly, have you heard of the ‘**Come Home for Christmas**’ initiative?
Visit www.comehomeforchristmas.co.uk Could you let someone know about this maybe?

Secondly, the **Advent Reconciliation Service** for our area will be held this year at Our Lady Queen of Peace on **Friday 20th December** at 7.00pm.

TIMES OF WEEKEND MASSES in other Parishes in the AVON STOUR PASTORAL AREA

The Immaculate Conception and St Joseph's, Purewell, Christchurch	01202 483340	Saturday 6.30pm Sunday 9.00am, 10.45am
Holy Redeemer Kilminster Way, Highcliffe	01425 274838	Sunday 8.00am, 10.00am
The Sacred Heart and St Therese of Lisieux, Ringwood	01425 653131	Sunday 11.00am
Our Lady of Sorrows and St Philip Benizi, Fordingbridge	01425 653131	Saturday 6.00pm Sunday 9.00am
Our Lady Queen of Peace, Southbourne	01202 424960	Sunday 8.00am, 11.00am 6.00 pm
Hospital Visit, Urgent requests (usually for poorly patients who have not been visited in the last 48 hours) please call the chaplain or his substitute <i>directly</i> , using, <i>in order</i> , the following numbers: Fr John: Lee 01202 483340 Emergency Mobile: 07850 365897 If these fail, ring St Thomas More's 01202 485588 or the Annunciation Church 01202 513369		

YOUTH HOLY HOUR : 6 - 7pm at Corpus Christi, Boscombe - Unfortunately, our Holy Hour on 11th Dec. **has been cancelled** because of another event in the church that evening.

ADVENT TAIZE SERVICE AT OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE CHURCH: A date for your diary! - A candlelit Advent Taizé Service will take place on **Monday 23rd December** at 7.30pm in Our Lady Queen of Peace church, Douglas Road, Southbourne, with refreshments served afterwards in the church hall (mulled wine and mince pies). Everyone is welcome.

ST PETER'S SCHOOL COMMUNITY CHOIR : Christmas Concert on **Tuesday 10th December** from 7pm to 8.30pm at St Peter's School Hall, (Iford Site), Holdenhurst Avenue. Enjoy listening to the choir and young musical artists and also a chance to sing along too! Please feel free to bring your own nibbles and drinks. Entrance by donation at the door: Adults £2, under 18's free.

ST THOMAS GARNET CATHOLIC INDEPENDENT SCHOOL would like to warmly invite members of the community to their **Christmas Service on Wednesday 11th December** at 7pm in Corpus Christi

THE BOURNEMOUTH ORDINARIATE MISSION invite you to an Advent & Christmas Carol Service on **Sunday 15th December** at 3pm in Our Lady Queen of Peace Church

2013 CHRISTMAS PARTY: Roller Disco! Saturday 14th December 3:30-4:30pm This year we'll be going to the Rolltate roller disco at Sir David English Sports Centre. It will cost £4.50 and afterwards, we may be heading to Pizza Hut... For more information, contact Will Hince (see below)

'HOMECOMING' RETREAT: 'Homecoming' Retreat for 16-30 year olds! 29th December to 1st January (Maria Fidelis Lower School, North Gower Street, London, NW1 2HR) Following on from our youth retreat, Swell@Bournemouth, you are invited to the next Youth 2000 retreat, Homecoming! For more information, contact Will Hince on 07810827606 whince@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or check out www.facebook.com/bournemouthandavonstourcatholicyouth

SLEEPING BEAUTY PANTOMIME : The Twynham Panto Group present Sleeping Beauty, written and directed by Ken Dale. To be held at St Peter's Lower School, Holdenhurst Avenue, Bournemouth. Tickets - £6 adults, £4 children. Performances: Thurs. 19th Dec. at 7.30pm, Fri. 20th Dec. at 7.30pm, Sat. 21st Dec. at 1.30pm, 4.30pm and 8.00pm. Ticket hotline: 07785 927646 Email: tpg@gmail.com
ALL PROCEEDS TO ST PETER'S SCHOOL

WESSEX YOUTH ORCHESTRA'S 'WINTERFEST : 3pm ***This Sunday, December 8th.*** Concert Hall, Lighthouse, Poole's Centre for the Arts. Tickets; £14, £11 & £8 (Senior Citizens £2 off - under 18s half price) Available from the Lighthouse Box Office Tel: 0844 406 8666

THANK YOU	for your weekly	offerings;	30th Nov / 1st Dec.
Envelopes :	£ 202.68	Cash :	£ 101.51
Standing Orders :	£ 155.31	<u>Total : £ 459.50</u>	