Roman Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Reg'd. Charity No. 246871

Newsletter of the Catholic Parish of St Thomas More



First Sunday of Advent Year A

30th Nov/1st December 2013

Weekday Masses Tues.– Fri. 9.30am, with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Tues.- Fri. 8.30am – 9.25am and Morning prayer at 9.10am
Weekday Masses Tues. – Fri. 9.30am

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Week beginning 30th November :		Mass Intention
Saturday 30th Nov. 6.00pm	First Mass First Sunday of Advent	Norman Pankhurst, RIP
Sunday 1st Dec. 9.30am	**FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**	People of the Parish
Monday 2nd Dec.	_	_
Tuesday 3rd Dec. 9.30am	of the 1st Week of Advent	Bridget Emmel, RIP
Wed. 4th Dec. 9.30am 10.00am - 12.00	of the 1st Week of Advent Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	Barry Donovan
Thurs. 5th Dec. 9.30am *After Mass there will be*	of the 1st Week of Advent ***Lectio Divina*** *(in the Sacristy)*	Bridget Emmel, RIP
Friday 6th Dec. **11.00am**	***Requiem Mass***	**Martin MacDonald**
Saturday: 5.15 – 5.45 pm	Sacrament of Reconciliation	
Masses Sat. 6pm & Sun. 9.30am	Second Sunday of Advent	

LECTIO DIVINA - in the Sacristy on Thursday mornings after 9.30am Mass during Advent; 5th Dec, 12th and 19th Dec.

Copies of 'Walk with Me' for Advent now available. *Suggested donation £1.*

Cake Sale this Sunday! (In aid of church Christmas flowers)
Home-made Christmas cakes, every-day cakes, preserves



Worldwide Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops :
In preparation for this, we have been invited to fill in a questionnaire **"Pastoral challenges of the family in the context of evangelization"** Visit https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FamilySynod2014 The closing date quoted in the newsletters for the past two weeks was taken from the website for the Catholic Bishop's of England and Wales (http://www.catholic-ew.org.uk/Home/Featured/Synod-of-Bishops-on-the-Family-2014/Questionnaire), but we have been reliably informed that completed questionnaires will be accepted if received by ***Friday 6th December***! There are copies of the **Plain English version of the Questionnaire on Marriage and the Family** on the 'free table' .

After his ordination on the 8th, **Father Darryl Jordan**, who will be taking over as **Priest-in-charge** here at St Thomas More, will celebrate the **Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception** here on Monday, 9th Dec at 7pm. Wine and cheese to follow in the Church Hall. All welcome!

Please see back page for the Weekly offerings figures - but the ***THANK YOU*** for the Cafod emergency appeal collection needs to go on the front page - the magnificent amount of **£760.53** was collected! *Thank you - you are amazing!*

First Sunday of Advent: Thoughts and reflections.

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

Today, the first Advent Sunday, marks the beginning of a period of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Christ, our Saviour, at Christmas. All the readings in the Mass advise us to make ourselves ready, to be on the alert, to turn aside from our sinful ways, and give more time to God in our lives. "Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord," Isaiah says in the first reading. We must not live lives of darkness and of sin, St Paul admonishes his listeners; but let us put on the armour of God's grace, and appear in the light, meaning that our consciences should have nothing to hide at any time, but rather be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit directing them. "Be vigilant, stay awake," the gospel warns, at any moment you may be called upon to make an eternal choice, and that as unexpectedly as the people who were swallowed up by the Flood, in the time of Noah.

Outwardly, people may appear the same, like the men working in the fields or the women grinding at the millstone, but inwardly they have responded differently to the graces God has given them.

It is only when we sincerely try to model our lives on that of Christ that our spirits will experience real freedom. Jesus himself said to the Jews (Jn 8:32), "If you persevere in my word, you will indeed be my disciples. You will learn the truth, and the truth will make you free." Persevering in the word of Jesus demands that we listen to it, as it comes to us from out the scriptures and from within our consciences; also that we think about it and study its requirements, and that we put into action what we have learned. The true disciple of Christ asks the question, "What am I setting before myself as the main purpose of my life?"

The truth of Jesus will teach us what things are really important and what are not. Furthermore, discipleship of Christ brings its own rewards. It brings freedom from fear, fear about oneself, fear about one's ability to cope with life, fear about contradiction and opposition from others, fear about death and the uncertainty of life thereafter. "In love there can be no fear," St John wrote (1 Jn 4:18), "but perfect love casts out fear; because to fear is to expect punishment, and anyone who is afraid is still imperfect in love."

If we end up having no love or reverence towards God, no respect or consideration or pity towards others, then we will have reached the stage of choosing to be lost, as Jesus, in his prayer at the Last Supper, said of Judas. "Father, I kept those you had given me true to your name. I have watched over them, and not one is lost except the one who chose to be lost."

It is necessary for us from time to time to take a critical look at ourselves, at the kind of lives we are leading, the response we are making to God's grace. We should take note of our patterns of behaviour, but far more importantly our sets of values, what we regard as important in life. Advent is a time when we ought to do precisely this.

MONTHLY AREA YOUTH MASS
***This Sunday*, 1st December**
6.00 - 9.00 pm
at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church
(18 Douglas Road, Southbourne. BH6 3ER)

This Mass is for all the young people of our Pastoral Areas and will be followed by a social time with music and refreshments!

Confirmation 2014

First meeting for Confirmation Candidates Tues. 7th January 2014, 7.30 pm at St Joseph's Church, Christchurch.
The Sacrament of Confirmation for candidates of the Avon Stour Pastoral Area will be at St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth on Saturday 3rd May 2014 at 3pm.

Who's Who on the PPC CONTINUED….

The newest member of the PPC was not mentioned in the few lines about the PPC a few weeks ago.
Apologies, and ***a warm welcome and grateful thanks*** to **Mariel Adams** who has joined our PPC.

DEACON DARRYL JORDAN'S ORDINATION : The coach for Portsmouth Cathedral will leave from Our Lady Queen of Peace Church, Douglas Road, Southbourne, at 12.15 pm on Sun. 8th Dec. and will return from Portsmouth at 5.45 pm. There are still some places (£17, children free): please contact the Ordinariate at Our Lady Queen of Peace to book.

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.

Farewell to Father Vitalis

As you will hopefully be aware, sadly Father Vitalis will be moving to his new parish of Horndean in December.
In order to give him a good send-off we're planning to hold a **Celebration and Thanksgiving** for his time here at St Thomas More immediately after the 6pm Mass on Saturday 7th December in the Church Hall.
If possible please bring along some food to share and join us in wishing him well for the future.

Senior Parishioners' Christmas Lunch/Party



The Annual Senior Parishioners' Christmas Party will be held on 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 8th December please.

As in previous years, there will be a box at the back of church for your Christmas cards for your fellow parishioners!
(The box will be put out next week.)

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!!

CHRISTMAS IS COMING and we need a tree! If you can provide a Christmas tree for the parish, please let Fr Vitalis or the Parish Office know asap. The tree will need to be in the Church by 22nd December.

CHRISTMAS CRIB: Crib offerings this year will go to support Christians in the Holy Land; the monies collected throughout the diocese will be sent to the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre.

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**.



CHRISTMAS GIFTS – ICONS & RELIGIOUS HANDCRAFTS by the Russian Orthodox Sisters of St Elizabeth's Convent, Minsk on sale after Mass on Wednesday 4th December. Please do come along and have a look. Visit www.obitel-minsk.by for information about the convent and its work.

OPEN EVENING FOR NEW CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL : The school will be in the grounds of St. Peter's Secondary School, Holdenhurst Road, Iford, Bournemouth. This is due to open in September 2014 for 4-11 year olds. You are invited to an OPEN EVENING on Tuesday 3rd December at 5pm at the St. Peter's, Iford site. You will find copies of the prospectus for reference on the 'free table' at the back of the church.

Framework for Collaboration "Forming Teams to Collaborate and Facilitate Practical Action"

Could you (i) Pray for the mission of the Church in our Diocese of Portsmouth?
(ii) Witness to your faith to help others encounter Jesus Christ
(iii) Put your faith into action to allow Christ to transform the world with his justice and love?

If you have answered 'yes' to any of these questions could you consider volunteering to be part of the Framework for Collaboration? If you would like to know more please look on the Diocesan website where Bishop Philip speaks about the Framework for Collaboration. There is additional information including details of teams currently recruiting. If you would like to be involved and are not sure how or in what area the Framework will be running interviews to help you discern whether God is calling you to be involved. These will begin in January 2014. Application forms are on the web site. If you have difficulty accessing these please contact cvir-go@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

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 Kilmington 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 ***directly,*** using, ***in order,*** 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 : (Most) Weekly Youth Holy Hour! 4th & 11th December… 6 - 7pm at Corpus Christi (757 Christchurch Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, BH7 6AN) All young people are invited to join us for this time of quiet prayer & adoration. "From the Eucharist comes strength to live the Christian life and zeal to share that life with others." - Pope John Paul II

'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!

2013 CHRISTMAS PARTY: Roller Disco! Sat.14th Dec.3:30-4:30pm This year we'll be going to the Roll-tate roller disco at Sir David English Sports Centre. £4.50. Afterwards, we may be heading to Pizza Hut… :D For more information on any of these events, contact Will Hince on 07810827606 whince@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or check out www.facebook.com/

MASS OF HEALING: The Mass of Healing at St. Joseph's Ashurst for Monday 2nd Dec. has been postponed.

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.

SLEEPING BEAUTY PANTOMIME : The Twynham Panto Group present Sleeping Beauty. To be held at St Peter's Lower School, Holdenhurst Avenue. 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

KIDS IN CHURCH

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin, aged five, and Ryan, aged four.
The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson….
'If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.'
Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, ' Ryan, you be Jesus!'

THANK YOU for your weekly offerings; 23rd / 24th Nov.

Envelopes :	£ 213.17	Cash :	£ 94.68
Standing Orders :	£ 155.31		**Total : £ 463.16**
CAFOD appeal : (Philippines)	£ 760.53	Thank you!	