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

Newsletter of the Catholic Parish of St Thomas More



Third Sunday of Advent Year A

14th/15th December 2013

Weekday Masses: Tuesday – Friday 9.30am. *Morning Prayer 9.10am.*

42 Exton Road Bournemouth BH6 5QG. Tel: 01202 485588

Priest-in-charge: Rev. Father Darryl M. Jordan, OLW, BSc, MDiv.

Parish Office e-mail: stmiford@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Local Catholic Youth Worker: Will Hince 07810827606 whince@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
www.facebook.com/bournemouthandavonstourcatholicyouth

St Thomas More website address: st.thomasmorechurch.org.uk.

Week beginning 14th December :		Mass Intention
Saturday 14th Dec. 6.00pm	First Mass Third Sunday of Advent	Martin MacDonald, RIP
Sunday 15th Dec. 9.30am	**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**	People of the Parish
Monday 16th Dec.	—	—
Tuesday 17th Dec. 9.30am	Liturgy of the Day	Martin MacDonald, RIP
Wed. 18th Dec. **9.30am**	***Requiem Mass***	**George Hackwell**
Thurs. 19th Dec. 9.30am	Liturgy of the Day *Lectio Divina in sacristy after Mass*	Bridget Emmel, R,I,P,
Friday 20th Dec. 9.30am	Liturgy of the Day	Charles McKenna RIP
Saturday: 5.15 – 5.45 pm	Sacrament of Reconciliation	
Masses Sat. 6pm & Sun. 9.30am	Fourth Sunday of Advent	

"*Light the Advent candle three …*" The third Sunday of Advent is **Gaudete ('Rejoice') Sunday.**



<u>A BIG WELCOME to Father Darryl Jordan</u>!
- our new Priest at St Thomas More's. We wish you, Lisa and Catherine much happiness!

<u>Father Vitalis' Farewell</u>. Thanks to all of you who contributed to giving Father Vitalis such a great send-off as he starts in his new Parish in Horndean. It was great to have so many of you at his farewell "do" last Saturday. As leaving gifts we gave him a couple of framed pictures of St Thomas More and also a copy of the recently published Bournemouth Echo Book Of Dorset. And we gave him the balance in cash. Many thanks to all who contributed. *PPC Chair, Neil.*

Your chance to pick the Priest's brains!! There will be a Father Darryl Question and Answer Session after next weekend's Masses.
Questions about him and his journey to the Catholic Church…… What is the Ordinariate? ….

Third Sunday of Advent: Thoughts and reflections.

AMBIGUOUS ADVENT

There are two sides to every coin, and for many people the experience of life itself is ambiguous. It involves a fluctuation between good and evil, sorrow and joy. At every party there will be the person who does not fit in, at every wedding there will be the unhappily married, or the lonely un-married. Times of joy can sharpen the grief of those who suffer. The celebration of Christmas can also be an experience of unhappiness for those who have suffered a bereavement or other crisis at this time of year. For them it is difficult to share in a general spirit that seems to offer only superficial bonhomie rather than deep and lasting joy.

Today we might address this ambiguity not simply because it is part of general human experience, but because this sense of grappling with failure, of joy being found beyond suffering, is an essential part of Christian experience itself.

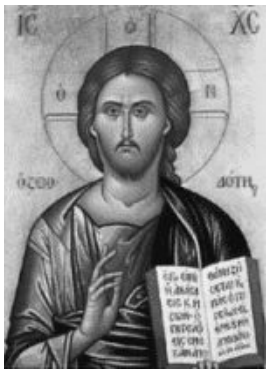
Following the Lord's Prayer in our Liturgy there is a development of the prayer "deliver us from evil." We say "protect us from all anxiety as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our saviour Jesus Christ." There is more than a hint, here, that our advent preparation and Christmas celebration have to work through and beyond the threat of evil and the clutch of anxiety. We are reminded that the Christian celebration of Christmas can never be a merely escapist round of self-indulgent extravagance. Christian joy and celebration cannot afford to be escapist; it must include and accept the problems of life and still find hope. The coming of Christ that we celebrate was itself an answer to the need for hope. The joy promised to God's restored people, joy at the healing of human pain (first reading) was presented as a reality brought about in the ministry of Jesus (gospel.)

And yet, despite his coming to save, to give sight to the blind, raise the dead etc. his good news could still be a stumbling block. Despite his healing achievement, there are still those who cry out "How long, 0 Lord?. How long shall I harbour sorrow in my soul, grief in my heart day after day? (Ps 13:2-3.) The continuation of this human cry two thousand years after the advent of Christ raises questions about the fulfilment of our hopes. Those hopes were concentrated, in early Christianity, in the expectation of the return of Christ (cf. Acts 1:1-11 Thess 4:13-18; Rev 21:1 ff..) They expected this final deliverance to come very soon. It did not come soon, it has still not come, Yet looking in hope for that second coming is still part of the meaning of advent.

What we all have to grapple with is this "delay" in the final realization of the hope Christ has brought us. This means being caught between what Christ has already brought and what has not yet come about, The struggle with this ambiguity is not something new in Christianity, but belonged already in the earliest generations. They too had to learn that their hopes would not be realized in some sudden cataclysmic event (cf. 2 Thess 2:1 ff..) In this "in-between" situation we might all agree with the teacher of proverbs: "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a wish fulfilled is a tree of life" (Prov 13:12), but we also know that this sickness of heart is not unto death. Like the condition of the man born blind it has a purpose which will ultimately be the manifestation of the works of God (cf. Jn 9:3 ff.)

Until that second coming, that final manifestation of the healing works of God (first reading, gospel) we are called to patient perseverance (second reading.) We are called to believe that the good news brought by Jesus is gradually transforming the world, even when this is not always visible. We are called to be patient not only with our own sufferings but also with our own inadequacies and the failings of others. We are called to share God's patience which is giving us all the time to grow (2 Pet 3:8 ff..)

If we believe in the gospel of Christ and try to live it out in all the ambiguities of our experience then we are being transformed into the Risen One who was crucified by the ambiguities of life for our sake.



'Come Home for Christmas'

Visit www.comehomeforchristmas.co.uk

(Could you let someone know about this?)

ADVENT RECONCILIATION SERVICE

Our Lady Queen of Peace Church,
Friday 20th December at 7.00pm.

LECTIO DIVINA

- will be held in the Sacristy after the 9.30am Mass on Thursday.
A chance to explore the 'Word of God' in the Sacred Scriptures and looking particularly at the Advent readings. *Come along!*

CONFIRMATION MEETING at St Joseph's, Christchurch - ***Change of date*** - to **Thursday 9th January**, 7.30pm

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.

CRIB OFFERINGS

Our crib offerings will go to support Christians in the Holy Land.



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 will 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!!

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!

CHRISTMAS EVE VIGIL MASS: CHOIR

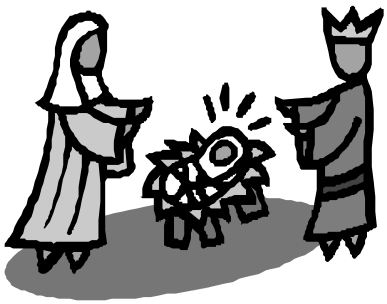
Are there any adults interested in joining a special choir for our Christmas Eve Mass? You would need to be available to join our rehearsals on (provisionally Wednesday evenings) and to sing Carols before the Vigil Mass begins. No auditions, just a will to join with one voice! If you would be interested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



Christmas Eve Mass

The family Mass will be at 6.30pm on Christmas Eve, with Carols in the church 6.00 to 6.30pm.

As in previous years, the children will be invited to come along dressed as a character from the Christmas Story .... Mary, Joseph, a Shepherd, a King, an Angel ..... If you don't have an outfit, don't worry - we have costumes which the children can dress up in! These will be available in the church hall from 6.00pm onwards - you'll need to allow a bit of time for changing.



ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH WEBSITE

The PPC is pleased to announce that St. Thomas More Church now has a website!



You can now learn more about our parish history, download our church newsletters, 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.

Copies of the Bishop's Pastoral Message to welcome 'Evangelii Gaudium' are on our new website! There are a few paper copies on the 'free table' for those who do not have a computer.



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.

The new edition of **'Portsmouth People'** is out now, so please take your (- free!) copy. Also, 'The Link' is still available - please take one - it's a good read!

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

ADVENT and CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE : *This Sunday*, 15th December, at 3.00pm.

The Bournemouth Ordinariate Mission invite you to an Advent & Christmas Carol Service, at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church, Southbourne.

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.

'HOMECOMING' RETREAT: For 16-30 year olds! 29th December to 1st January (Maria Fidelis Lower School, North Gower Street, London, NW1 2HR)
If you've ever had a New Year's resolution to make your faith more a part of your life, this is the way to begin it! It's not too late to sign up! Check out www.facebook.com/Youth2000 for more information! The suggested donation for the retreat is £45

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

THANK YOU and HAPPY CHRISTMAS FROM CAFOD - Lynda and Laura from the **CAFOD Portsmouth Office** would like to wish a happy and blessed Christmas and New Year to all parishioners and thank them for their support and generosity throughout the past year, especially for the recent contributions towards our emergency appeal for Typhoon Haiyan (currently over £116,000 from our diocese). This exceptional support has meant our partners on the ground, Caritas Philippines and CRS, have been able to deliver aid to thousands of survivors, working through local parishes. Thank you all!
We take this opportunity to thank you too for all your invaluable help and support this year, and to wish you a blessed Christmas and Happy 2014.

THANK YOU for your weekly offerings; 7th / 8th Dec.

Envelopes :	£ 236.31	Cash :	£ 143.77
Standing Orders :	£ 155.31		**Total : £ 535.39**
Christmas Cake Sale (in aid of Church flowers)		£ 71.40	*Thank you!*

Brother Lionel Sponsored Walk.
A very big thank you to everyone who sponsored me. I raised a total of £350! Thanks for being so generous especially as we have had so many collections recently! God bless. Jo