

**15th December 2024**

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (GAUDETE SUNDAY) - Year C**

**Readings and Antiphons**

**Entrance Antiphon: Ph 4:4-5**  
 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed the Lord is near.

**First reading: Zephaniah 3:14-18a**

**Responsorial Psalm: Is 12:2-3.4b-d. 5-6 R.6**

Shout aloud and sing praise, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

**Second reading: Philipians 4:4-7**  
**Gospel Acclamation: Is 61:1(Lk 4:18)**

**R. Alleluia, alleluia!**

The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, he has sent me to proclaim good news to the poor.

**R. Alleluia!**

**Gospel: Luke 3:10-18**

**Communion Antiphon: Cf. Is 35:4**

Say to the faint of heart: be strong and do not fear. Behold our God will come, and he will save us.

**Funerals and Deaths**

**Roberto Matassa RIP**—Funeral Service at Chesil Suite on Tues 17th December at 10.30am.

**Rev Monsignor Canon Nicholas France MBE, Provost Emeritus, R.I.P.**—Requiem Mass at St Edmunds, Southampton on Mon 30th December at 11am.

**Nerina Panner RIP**



**Theodore Denham RIP**

Please pray for their families and friends at this difficult time. May God grant them eternal rest.

**Weddings**



Congratulations to Jimmy Flynn and Nora O'Driscoll, who were married at St Peter's on Thursday.

**Choir Request - Funeral of Mgr Canon Nick France RIP**

There is a request for singers from Winchester who will remember Father Nick and who may like to be involved as part of the choir at his funeral. This will take place at **11am on Monday 30th December** in St. Edmund's, Southampton. The music is all well-known and straightforward and you would **need to be there by 10am**. There may be a rehearsal the day before, but this is yet to be confirmed. If you are interested, please let the parish office know asap

**Prayer Corner**



Let us pray for all those involved in a ministry in our parish during the Christmas period, may their help and guidance offer hope and joy as they bring others closer to Christ.

**Pilgrims of Hope and Joy - Delighting in God's Delight over Us**

**A Message from Fr Mark...**

Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote a short story titled, "The Birthmark." I'm told it is a story about a man who married a very beautiful woman who had a birthmark on her left cheek. She had always thought of it as a beauty spot, but her husband saw the birthmark to be a sign of imperfection, a flaw.

It began wearing on him so much that all he could see was that birthmark. He could not see her beauty, her graciousness, or her great personality. He could only focus on what he perceived to be a flaw. He hounded her until she finally submitted to surgery to remove the so-called flaw. The birthmark eventually faded, but so did she.

In Hawthorne's mind, that birthmark was tied to her identity and shortly after its removal, she died. A man who sought perfection ended up with nothing. As I get older, I begin to become more aware of my own "spots and wrinkles". There are my physical limitations – the need for reading glasses, the receding (or receded!) hairline, the aches and pains at the gym...I also become more conscious of some of the imperfections of my soul – oftentimes, the same old sins to confess each time (not saying all my prayers, not managing to resist finishing the box of chocolates once it's opened, and a few others I won't mention publicly!). And my mental weaknesses too – the intrusive thoughts and temptations and the guilt that follows the failure to stand firm. In a sense these form my own "birthmarks". Sometimes they're genuine flaws; other times, they can simply be part of who I am, my authentic, God-given identity. With the former, I can seek the healing I need. With the latter, it's ok for me to say with Paddington, "I'll never be like other people, but that's alright because I'm a bear".

I may be wrong but I suspect that you too have some of your own "birthmarks". Bits of your body you don't like, or that ache, or bits that other people have told you should be different, and it's stuck. Or the same old sins. Or lies which you've come to believe and which have become entangled with your own self-perception: "Nobody really loves me or cares for me, or at least they wouldn't if they really knew me"; "I'm not good enough and never will be"; "I have to earn love". But this is not how the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ sees us. When we think about Advent and hear words like "repentance" and "perfection," many times we get negative connotations in our minds. .

We need to be reminded that all of these calls to change are in the context of God's infinite love for each and every one of us. In our First Reading this weekend, the Old Testament prophet, Zephaniah, says: On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

*'Fear not, O Sion; let not your hands grow weak. The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.*

At the time when the prophet was writing, Jerusalem had been sacked by the Babylonians, the Temple had been destroyed, and the people led off into exile. Yet here we have the prophet looking forward to a day of overwhelming joy, when the Lord would truly be king in the midst of his people.

That day came with the incarnation, when God took flesh. The Son of God dwelt among men and his name was Jesus of Nazareth. We hear in today's Gospel from the one who would baptise him, immersing Jesus in water, as the Holy Spirit descends upon him and the voice of the Father calls out from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." The Lord God, Jesus, was in their midst and the Lord God, the Heavenly Father, was rejoicing over his Son with gladness.

Can you imagine God delighting in you? Can you imagine his unbridled joy? Because that's what happens when we are baptised. Our heavenly Father, Abba, sees and loves in us what he sees and loves in his Son, Jesus, whose life we share. The eternal God, who has known you since before the creation of the world, rejoices over you with gladness; quiets you by his love; exults over you with loud singing.

Can you imagine Abba, the Lord of the universe, just looking down upon you from heaven now and grinning from eternal ear to eternal ear? His heart is full of joy when he looks upon you, his beloved child.

Just as importantly, can you let God love you? Will you allow him to beam with joy over you? Will you permit him to delight in your very existence?

Your Father in heaven is looking, right now, with immeasurable joy, birthmarks and all, upon you.

And then, fully conscious of your Father's joy, will you grow in your delight, in God, in others, and in yourself?



**Holy Heros Advent Adventure (Flocknotes)**

Holy Heroes Advent Adventure (Flocknotes)

Advent Adventure is a fun and easy way for parents to help their children grow in faith, hope, and charity, while enjoying a more peaceful Advent! For all who sign up, Fr Mark will send an email for each day of Advent (designed to be sent evening before to give time to review and prepare materials for the next day). Links in the emails lead to short videos, printable activities, and more! You can sign up by following this link <https://stpeterschurch7.flocknote.com/HolyHeroesAdvent> - or by contacting the Parish Office. For parents who wish to receive daily messages from Fr Mark during Advent and Christmas, please sign up to this link - <https://stpeterschurch7.flocknote.com/PilgrimsofHope>



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**Christmas Offerings 2024 -**

Where has the year gone; it can't surely be that time again?

Christmas is one of those occasions when we are able to recognise and support Fr. Mark and Fr. Benedict for all that they do in supporting us and the whole parish. The Christmas Offerings goes directly to them. If you are able to donate something this would be wonderful, if not please offer some prayers which are equally if not more important.

To help with the Christmas Offering we would like to suggest that you can make your donation in one of the following ways

- An Envelope Marked – Clergy Christmas Offering, which can be included as part of the Sunday and/or Christmas Masses
- Using the Contactless Terminals at St Peter's or St Stephen's
- Transfer directly into the Parish Bank Account

Account Name - CDP St Peter & Winchester Martyrs

Sort code: 30-93-04

Account: 00890996

Reference: Christmas Offering

**On behalf of Fr. Mark and Fr. Benedict, please be assured of their prayers and thank you for your very generous gift.**

**News from St Peter's School**

News from St Peter's School Please find a link to this week's school newsletter for all the latest news...  
<https://www.stpetershants.co.uk/to-pic/news-and-events>

**Bookshop**

Further deliveries of the **New Sunday Missals** have been received. We have ADVENT calendars, lots of lovely Christmas cards and decorative items in the bookshop. Please call in, or contact Susan Henry via the Parish Office. Thank you.



**Laudato Si Corner**

At COP29, this year's Climate Change Conference in Azerbaijan, Our Prime Minister made some hopeful remarks about achieving our country's net zero target by 2035 but more generally COP29 was a disappointment.

The Laudato si' movement suggests that Contemplation will allow us to step back from the chaos of our lives and align our hearts with His. As Pope Francis puts it in Dilexit nos 57.."**Love pauses, contemplates mystery and enjoys it in silence**".

Here is a link to the Laudato si' Advent calendar  
<https://laudatosimovement.org/advert2024/>



**Centenary Preparations - St Peter's Church - Update**

Can we please interrupt the busyness of the Advent Season and the preparation for Christmas with an important update which will affect all Parishioners (and visitors) who frequent St Peter's Church.

As a Parish we have received permission for Building Works to proceed and we are in the final stages of appointing a contractor to carry out what we are referring to as "The Dirty Work" which will involve repairs to

- cracks in internal walls
- loose parquet floor and quarry tiles
- rusting ferramenta in stone window frames
- Installation of french drain to reduce damp in narthex walls.



To facilitate this work, it is regrettable that we will need to close St. Peter's on weekdays, but we will re-open allowing for us to celebrate the Sunday Masses. We are currently finalising preparations for the works and anticipate that this will start in early January 2025 and run through until Holy Week. Once we have more definite dates we will share then with you.

During this time, the intention is to move Weekday Masses and Prayers to the Milner Hall. We will also need to find, on occasion, alternative arrangements for funerals. We are looking at various options and will consider each funeral on a case by case basis, trying to support the needs of the deceased and their family and loved ones as best we can. Thank you for your understanding and patience.

**If you have any queries please contact Gerard in the Parish Office.**

**Admissions Consultation - St Peter's School for 2026 -27**

In recognition of the national decrease in birth rate in recent years, and for the foreseeable future, the Governors have decided to adjust their pupil admission number (PAN) for entry in September 2026 from 60 to 45 children. This is the same number that St Peter's School had admitted each year until the earlier 'bulge' in birth rates, so our proposal is a return to the previous successful arrangements. Over time, year groups will be merged to create a new class structure which will allow the Governors to address the budget constraints which result from the fall in numbers of children in school.

As the Admissions authority for the School, Governors are obliged to consult on this change for a period of 6 weeks, ending on 21st January 2025.

No other changes are proposed and you can **find the policy for 2026-27 on the school website:** <https://www.stpetershants.co.uk/admissions-1/>

To download a copy of our Supplementary Form for 2026-27, please click on the link: **HERE**

Please address any comments you may have to: [admin@st-peters.hants.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-peters.hants.sch.uk) or write to the school at the following address:

Chair of Admissions  
St Peter's Catholic Primary School  
Olivers Battery Road North  
Winchester  
SO22 4JB



**Events & News**

**Filipino Christmas Party - 14th December 2024 from 5.30pm - late** - Everyone invited to join this annual event at Winchester Student Union, Sparkford Road, Winchester, SO22 4NR. The Philippines was hit by 6 cyclones / typhoons consecutively last November with many people from the north and east suffering huge loses . We will be raising funds to help those suffering in the Philippines by having a raffle. If you would like to donate a prize or purchase raffle tickets, please contact Agnes Sitjar via the Parish Office. Thank you.

**Fr Mark's Ultimate Guide to Confession - 15th December 4-5pm, Pastoral Centre** - Which sins do I need to confess? Why do I struggle to forgive myself after God has forgiven me? How do I make a good confession as an adult? If these or similar questions are puzzling you, why not **join Fr Mark for a brief talk and Q&A** about the beautiful sacrament of reconciliation.

**Advent Lectio Divina** - Discover more about the Gospel in Advent - Deacon Tony Darlison invites you to join him for the final evening session on **Monday 16th December from 8:00pm to 9:00pm in the Pastoral Centre**. If you would like to attend, please contact the Parish Office or email: [tdarlison@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:tdarlison@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

**BLUE CHRISTMAS on Friday 20th December at St Peter's Church at 10.30am** - For many people, there are split emotions as Christmas approaches. Some of us feel keenly the pain of loss, bereavement, separation, hurt or regrets. To enable us to recognise these more painful parts of our lives and of our world, not to cheer each other up, or wallow in pity, but to offer God the whole of who we are. You are most welcome to come and make use of this space, and pray with us for healing and wholenesspy.

**NIGHT OF LIGHT - Friday 20th December at St Peter's from 5.30pm - 8pm** - Come and join us at St Peter's as we give thanks to the light, and celebrate Christ our light. **Let peace and calm find you...**



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**Peterpost - Newsletter**

Peterpost newsletter is now being distributed via Churchsuite. We are aware that a number of recipients have not received the newsletter correctly. Can we kindly remind you check your spam/junk mail box! If you do not receive your copy, please complete the details on the link below:

[New Contact Details - ChurchSuite Forms](#)

**St Stephen's Travelling Nativity**

This Advent, Mary and Joseph are travelling with the little donkey to Bethlehem. On their way they are hoping to find a different inn to stay at every night. **They still need accommodation just before Christmas from 20th - 24th Dec!** Could they come to stay at your house?



Please let me know if you would like further information or to participate. If you would like to be added please send your name, email address, home address and a contact number as soon as possible. You can contact me via the Parish Office. Thank you. Lidia Otero.

**Parish Bank Details**

If you wish to make a payment/donation, please use the following details: Parish Bank Account Name: **CDP St Peter & Winchester Martyrs**, Sort Code: **30-93-04**, Account Number: **00890996** & Reference details (eg offertory, SVP, etc). You can also use the Contactless machine at the back of St Peter's or visit our website.

**Contacts**

For a full list of contact details for our Parish, please visit our website:

[www.catholicwinchester.org.uk](http://www.catholicwinchester.org.uk)

or email [hello@stpeterswinchester.org.uk](mailto:hello@stpeterswinchester.org.uk)

to be directed to the correct person.

**Parish Priest:** Fr Mark Hogan

**Assistant Priest:** Fr Benedict Ndikum

**Deacons:** Tony Darlison & Martin McElroy

**Parish Office:**

[office@stpeterswinchester.org.uk](mailto:office@stpeterswinchester.org.uk)

**Finance:**

[accounts@stpeterswinchester.org.uk](mailto:accounts@stpeterswinchester.org.uk)

**Tel.** 01962852804

**Newsletter:**

[newsletters@stpeterswinchester.org.uk](mailto:newsletters@stpeterswinchester.org.uk) (deadline for items for the next newsletter - **Weds PM please**)

**Parish Office – Pastoral Centre Opening Times (Christmas 2024)**

As we look forward to what hopefully will be a joyous occasion we would like to share the planned opening times for the Parish Office – Pastoral Centre over the Christmas and New Year Period

Monday 23rd -	Normal Hours (9am – 5pm)
Tuesday 24th -	Will close at 1pm
Wednesday 25th -	Closed
Thursday 26th -	Closed
Friday 27th -	Open 10am – 1pm
Monday 30th -	Open 10am – 1pm
Tuesday 31st -	Open 10am – 1pm
Wednesday January 1st -	Closed
Thursday January 2nd -	Open 9am – 1pm
Friday January 3rd -	Open 9am – 1pm



Outside of these times we will be monitoring email, and would suggest that you contact us via [office@stpeterswinchester.org.uk](mailto:office@stpeterswinchester.org.uk)

**Events & News - Continued...**

**Christmas with Southern Voices** - Bringing their ruby anniversary season to a close on **21st December in the Chapel of St Cross, Winchester at 7.30pm**, SOUTHERN VOICES look forward to celebrating in style with their traditional, festive feast of Christmas carols. To make it really special, this year they are thrilled to welcome former royal harpist **Alis Huws who had the honour of playing at the Coronation**. She will accompany them in Benjamin Britten's iconic A Ceremony of Carols. This will be a real treat and the perfect way to round off a superb year of music-making for the choir. **Booking is essential and tickets are now on sale.** Tickets: £19 (Age 21 & under, £10) from: [southernvoices.co.uk/christmas](http://southernvoices.co.uk/christmas) or telephone 0333 666 3366 (booking fees apply). There will be a retiring collection in aid of the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.

**Lord's Flock - Sunday 22nd December 2-5pm - Pastoral Centre** - The Lord's Flock Catholic Charismatic Community invite you to discover the missing piece about yourself... **Join us in our praise and worship, fellowship and bible reflection.** To book your place, and to help us cater for the early supper we share together, please contact Liza Franco via the Parish Office. ALL WELCOME.

**CONSULTATION St Anne's Catholic School Admissions Policy.** St Anne's Catholic School are consulting on their admission arrangements for 2026/27 to raise their Published Admission Number (PAN) to 210, from 200. The **consultations will run to 23rd December 2024.** The school welcomes views from any interested parties. Please see the school's website for the consultation and information on response: [CONSULTATION: Admissions Policy 2026-2027 | St Anne's Catholic School & Sixth Form College](#)

**A Season of Hope:** two retreat opportunities to live the time of Advent and Christmas exploring the gift of our Christian Hope. Make time in an atmosphere of silence, with scripture inputs, to deepen your relationship with God, in beautiful surroundings.

**New Year Retreat from 28th Dec- 1st Jan.** Organised by the Verbum Dei Community. For more information, please, contact us: [verbumdei.iow@gmail.com](mailto:verbumdei.iow@gmail.com)

**The first CWL Soup & Pud Lunch is on Friday 3rd January** and will be in aid of Winchester Samaritans. Suggested donation £7. All are Welcome.

**Save the Date: Baptism Celebratory Mass Invitation.** All families who have had their children baptised over the course of the last year in the Parish of St. Peter and the Winchester Martyrs are warmly invited to the annual Thanksgiving Mass. The Mass will be held on **Sat 11th January 2025** at 10:30am in St. Peter's Church, Winchester, celebrated by Fr Mark Hogan. A finger buffet will be provided afterwards. If you would like to join us, **please email [rosanne@stpeterswinchester.org.uk](mailto:rosanne@stpeterswinchester.org.uk) by Sat 4th January**, indicating the number of adults and the number of children (over 2) for catering purposes.

**Bishop Robert Barron Bible Event – Feb 22nd in London** - Fr Mark highly recommends to you this wonderful opportunity to join **Bishop Barron in the UK for the Evangelisation & Culture Conference.** To proclaim Christ in the culture, we must know Christ; and to know Christ, we must know Scripture. As St. Jerome observed, **"Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ"**. But in order to uncover the spiritual and theological meaning of the Bible, we need to take a genuinely Catholic approach: reading it within the context of the great and beautiful chorus of voices from across the centuries of the Church's tradition. This conference is for you if you are seeking to gain a deeper appreciation of the Sacred Scriptures and the beauty of the Catholic faith while growing in your evangelisation efforts. Join Bishop Robert Barron, Professor Tracey Rowland, Professor N.T. Wright and others in London this February for the first-ever Word of Fire conference on the Bible on **Sat 22nd Feb at the Excel, London** (with an optional evening opening session on Fri 21st). You can get tickets **here** – and if you'd like to travel up with others, please let the parish know so we can put you in touch with each other.



● Amendments/additions to regular timetable

Mass Timetable	14th December - 21st December 2024		
<b>SATURDAY – December 14th – St John of the Cross</b> , Religious, Doctor of the Church, memorial.  <b>THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (GAUDETE SUNDAY) - Vigil</b>	9:00AM	Mass at St Peter's	Soul of William Meader
	<b>9:30AM - 12 noon</b>	<b>Extended Confession at St Peter's</b>	
	4:30PM - 5:00PM	Confession at St Peter's	
	5:30PM	Mass at St Peter's	Benefactors
<b>SUNDAY – December 15th – THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (GAUDETE SUNDAY)</b>	8:00AM	Mass at St Peter's	Carmel McClean RIP
	9:00AM	Mass at St Thomas More's	
	9:15AM	<b>Family Mass at St Stephen's</b>	Peace in the World
	10:30AM	Mass at St Peter's	People of the Parish
	11:00AM	Mass at St Gregory's	
	5:30PM	Mass at St Peter's	Zana & Luyanda - Special Intentions
<b>MONDAY – December 16th – of the third week of Advent</b> , Joint-Principle Patron of the Diocese, solemnity	8:00AM - 9:00AM	Morning Prayer followed by Adoration at St Peter's	
	12:15PM	Mass at St Peter's	The Soul of Mary Jane King
	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>Parish Reconciliation Service at St Peter's</b>	
<b>TUESDAY – December 17th – Liturgy of the Day (O Wisdom)</b>	8:00AM - 9:00AM	Morning Prayer followed by Adoration at St Peter's	
	10:00AM	Mass at St Gregory's	Kitty and David Wade RIP
	12:15PM	Mass at St Peter's	Maurice Henry RIP
<b>WEDNESDAY – December 18th – Liturgy of the Day (O Adonai)</b>	8:00AM - 9:00AM	Morning Prayer followed by Adoration at St Peter's	
	10:00AM	Mass at St Peter's	Intentions of the Neil Family
<b>THURSDAY – December 19th – Liturgy of the Day (O Root of Jesse)</b>	8:00AM - 9:00AM	Morning Prayer followed by Adoration at St Peter's	
	10:00AM	Mass at St Peter's	Bernard and Cherry Twomey RIP
<b>FRIDAY – December 20th – Liturgy of the Day (O Key of David)</b>	8:00AM - 9:00AM	Morning Prayer followed by Adoration at St Peter's	
	10:00AM	Mass at St Gregory's	Intentions of Mae Gondolly
	<b>10:30AM</b>	<b>Blue Christmas at St Peter's</b>	
	12:15PM	Mass at St Peter's	Clare McKenna RIP
	<b>5:30PM - 8:00PM</b>	<b>Night of Light at St Peter's</b>	
<b>SATURDAY – December 21st – Liturgy of the Day (O Morning Star)</b>  <b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT - Vigil</b>	9:00AM	Mass at St Peter's	Dead and Founders
	9:30AM - 10:30AM	Confession at St Peter's	
	4:30PM - 5:00PM	Confession at St Peter's	
	5:30PM	Mass at St Peter's	Austin Emery RIP

**Confession** every Saturday 9.30am till 10.30am (except on 14th Dec, when it is extended from 9.30am to 12 noon) and 4.30pm-5.00pm at St Peter's Church.

Morning Prayer (livestream and open to public), every weekday 8.00am at St Peter's followed by Adoration 'till 9.00am.

To participate in any service online (including Morning Prayer & Adoration) or to see the recorded services, go to:

**YouTube channel**

**ALL SERVICES (INCLUDING MORNING PRAYER) FROM ST PETER'S ARE LIVESTREAMED.**



MASS TIMETABLE	CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES	
<b>MONDAY - December 16th</b>	7:00PM	Reconciliation Service at St Peter's
<b>FRIDAY - December 20th</b>	10:30AM	Blue Christmas Service at St Peter's
	5.30PM - 8:00PM	Night of Light at St Peter's
<b>TUESDAY - December 24th CHRISTMAS EVE</b>	3:00PM	Children's Mass at St Peter's
	5:30PM	Family Mass at St Peter's
	5:30PM	Vigil Mass at St Stephen's
	8:00PM	Carols and Readings, 8:30PM Midnight Mass at St Gregory's
	10:30PM	Midnight Mass with Carols and Readings at St Peter's
<b>WEDNESDAY - December 25th CHRISTMAS DAY</b>	8:00AM	Christmas Day Dawn Mass at St Peter's
	9:00AM	Christmas Day Mass at St Thomas More's, Stockbridge
	9:15AM	Christmas Day Dawn Mass at St Stephen's
	10:30AM	Christmas Day Mass at St Peter's
	11:00AM	Christmas Day Mass at St Gregory's, Alresford
<b>THURSDAY - December 26th Feast of St Stephen</b>	10:00AM	Mass at St Stephen's

**The Parish of St Peter and the Winchester Martyrs:**

- St Peter's Church - 29 Jewry Street, Winchester, SO23 8RY
- St Stephen's Church - Oliver's Battery Road, Winchester, SO22 4JB
- St Gregory the Great's Church - 1 Grange Road, Alresford, SO24 9HB
- St Thomas More's Church - High Street, Stockbridge, SO20 6HD