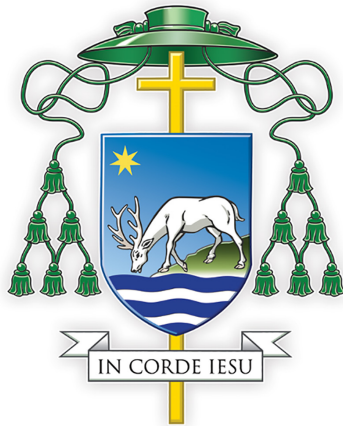


# THE YEAR OF THE EUCHARIST 2020-2021

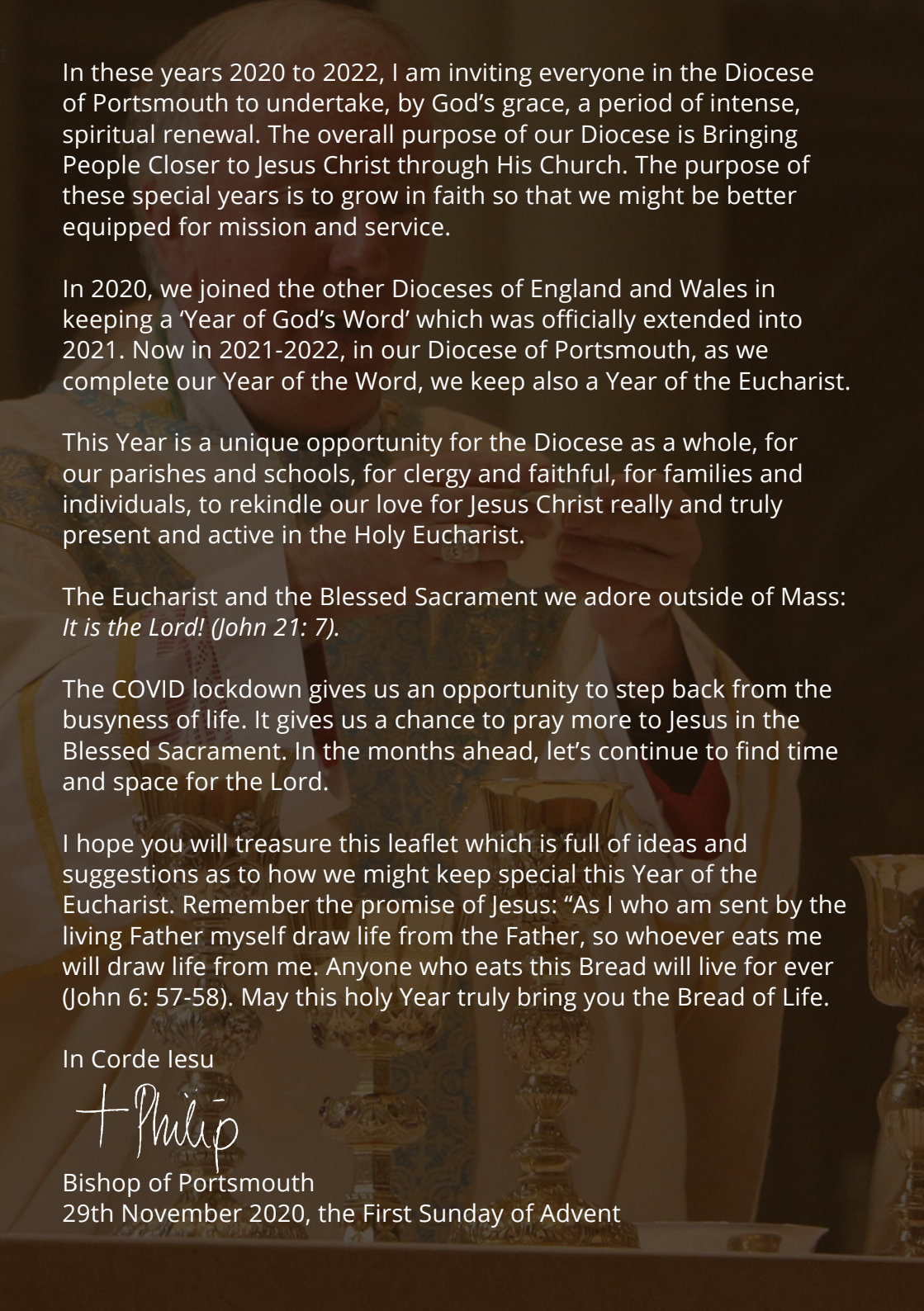
Diocese of Portsmouth



*sicut cervus desiderat ad fontes aquarum,  
ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus.*

Like the deer that yearns for running streams,  
so my soul is yearning for you, my God – Psalm 41





In these years 2020 to 2022, I am inviting everyone in the Diocese of Portsmouth to undertake, by God's grace, a period of intense, spiritual renewal. The overall purpose of our Diocese is Bringing People Closer to Jesus Christ through His Church. The purpose of these special years is to grow in faith so that we might be better equipped for mission and service.

In 2020, we joined the other Dioceses of England and Wales in keeping a 'Year of God's Word' which was officially extended into 2021. Now in 2021-2022, in our Diocese of Portsmouth, as we complete our Year of the Word, we keep also a Year of the Eucharist.

This Year is a unique opportunity for the Diocese as a whole, for our parishes and schools, for clergy and faithful, for families and individuals, to rekindle our love for Jesus Christ really and truly present and active in the Holy Eucharist.

The Eucharist and the Blessed Sacrament we adore outside of Mass:  
*It is the Lord! (John 21: 7).*

The COVID lockdown gives us an opportunity to step back from the busyness of life. It gives us a chance to pray more to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. In the months ahead, let's continue to find time and space for the Lord.

I hope you will treasure this leaflet which is full of ideas and suggestions as to how we might keep special this Year of the Eucharist. Remember the promise of Jesus: "As I who am sent by the living Father myself draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will draw life from me. Anyone who eats this Bread will live for ever (John 6: 57-58). May this holy Year truly bring you the Bread of Life.

In Corde Iesu

Philip

Bishop of Portsmouth

29th November 2020, the First Sunday of Advent

## Five hopes for this Year of the Eucharist:

1

Let us grow so much in our faith that we always acknowledge Jesus Christ to be really and truly present and active in the Holy Eucharist

2

Let us see the Mass as the source of our life's activity

3

Let us practice regularly spending time with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration

4

Let us beg the Eucharistic Lord to fill us with His Holy Spirit, sending us out to transform the world in loving mission and service

5

Let us reach out in welcome to others, those outside the Church, the non-practicing and the needy, in order to draw them to Jesus in the Eucharist

*"I urge you with all the strength of my soul to approach the Eucharistic Table as often as possible. Feed on this Bread of the Angels from which you will draw the strength to fight inner struggles, the struggles against passions and against all adversities, because Jesus Christ has promised to those who feed themselves with the most Holy Eucharist, eternal life and the necessary graces to obtain it" (from a speech at Pollone to youth by Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati)*

## **FAQS**

### **What do we mean by the 'Real Presence'?**

Catholics believe that at Mass, during the Eucharistic Prayer when the words of consecration are said by the priest, the bread and wine is really and truly changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. In the Eucharistic elements, Jesus Himself is now present, hence the 'Real Presence'. The appearances of bread and wine remain, but their substance has been changed (cf. the term 'transubstantiation'). The presence of Jesus is not symbolic but real and substantial, such that the worship we should offer the Eucharist is the worship due to God Himself. "My flesh is real food and my blood real drink" (John 6: 55)

### **Why is Mass always the same?**

There are always two parts, the Liturgy of the Word with its Scripture readings, and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, finishing with Holy Communion. There is also an Introductory Rite in which we seek God's mercy and a Rite of Conclusion in which we seek His blessing as we leave. But if you have a Missal (or look up the liturgy of the day online), then you will discover the different seasons and feasts of the year with their various prayers and cycles of Scripture readings. Moreover, besides the extraordinary and ordinary forms of the Roman Rite of Mass, there are several other Rites of Mass in use in the Catholic Church. "Do this in memory of me" (Luke 22: 19)

### **How can I explain the Eucharist to my children?**

Children with their vivid imaginations can easily grasp it if we say that a miracle is taking place. Jesus becomes food so that He can come inside us. This is why it is important that children do attend Mass routinely even if unable to focus on the entire ceremony. There are parts of the Mass that can capture their attention if they learn that this is God coming to His people. "Let the little children alone and do not stop them coming to me, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs" (Mt 19: 14).

### **Can my non-Catholic friends receive Holy Communion at Mass?**

In Holy Communion, we are united not only with Jesus but with His body the Church. That is why Catholics cannot receive communion in most other churches, for communion is a sign of unity in doctrine, life and worship. For the same reason, non-Catholics cannot receive Communion in a Catholic Church. Sadly, Christians differ in their beliefs about Christ and His Church. This makes it urgent that we pray for that unity Christ willed for His followers. "May they all be one" (John 17: 21).



# Some Ideas and Suggestions to keep special this Year of the Eucharist

## 1. Diocese

- Bishop writes *Pastoral Letter* to initiate and explain the Year and its purpose.
- Study of the *General Instruction on the Roman Missal* (E-news items, mini-series of YouTube videos on Eucharistic Prayer by liturgical experts).
- Offer formation of EMHCs with practicum and a diocesan *recognitio*.
- Provide a *Prayer before Mass* to be said across the Diocese to aid preparation.
- Establish three Eucharistic shrine churches in the Diocese to invite pilgrims.
- Send out on tour an historic monstrance or chalice/paten.
- Bishop offers series of talks by Zoom, with discussion groups.

## 2. Parish

- Catechesis on the Eucharist, with personal testimonies from clergy and faithful.
- Keep church open for daily visits and Eucharistic Adoration
- Help EMHCs grow in faith in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.
- Renewal of altar servers.
- *Quarant'ore* or special Eucharistic events.
- Use *Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs* when liturgically appropriate.
- Review and renew the sacramental programmes for First Holy Communion.

## 3. Schools

- Undertake *Holy Half Hours* with *lectio divina*.
- Formation for teachers on the Eucharist.
- Encourage priests to visit schools to talk about the Eucharist and encourage schools to pay visits to pray in church.
- Ensure children understand and know the *Tantum ergo*, its history and meaning.

## 4. Family and Home

- Encourage a family member to return to Mass and invite a neighbour to Mass.
- Visit the Blessed Sacrament as a family, to make a Holy Hour.
- Celebrate a house-Mass or host an hour of Eucharistic Adoration in the home.
- Watch together as a family an online Eucharistic resource and discuss it.

## 5. Individuals

- Daily to say the *Morning Offering* in union with the Sacrifice of the Mass
- To spend an hour with the Lord in the Holy Eucharist once per week.
- Always to genuflect to the Blessed Sacrament when entering church and to make the Sign of the Cross when passing by church.

## 6. Online

- Diocese, schools, parishes develop online resources (NB material for families) .
- Series of Zoom talks on Eucharistic saints by passionate witnesses (FFM).
- Diocesan website: series of catecheses.
- A treasury of testimonies from priests, seminarians and passionate witnesses.

## 7. In the Public Domain

- Run a Nightfever event.
- Corpus Christi Procession, stational altars and Benediction of neighbourhood.



*Each time we celebrate the Eucharist we are caught up in the divine and eternal love and praise that Jesus has for his Father; the love of the Trinity in the unity of the Holy Spirit in fact. It is a love that is made visible for us in Jesus's death and resurrection which is an historical event living forever in the life of God. An event made present for us when we celebrate Mass and an event which gives life and form to the Church empowering it for mission. **Canon Paul Townsend, Vicar General, Fordingbridge.***



*After months of being restricted to spiritual Communion, this is beautifully timed. As a Church, myself included, it had been far too easy to take receiving the Eucharist for granted. I look forward to our being led and inspired, with the whole Catholic Community to declare Jesus in the Eucharist, afresh, 'My Lord and my God' and experience even deeper intimacy with Him. **Teresa Cripps, Assistant Head / Head of RE, Bishop Challoner, Basingstoke.***



*"When David and I kneel in adoration , before Jesus who is present Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, we are reminded of who we truly are - creatures. Before Him we are fired up to contemplate who we are called to become - Christlike - we never leave the same!" **Aba & David Shields, Aba is the Marriage and Family life coordinator.***

# How to Prepare for Sunday Mass

## A few days before ...

Find out what Scripture Readings have been appointed and in prayer, read and reflect on them. Use the Gospel Reading as *lectio divina*. You could join online the diocesan Wednesday Webinar.

Read and pray the theologically rich and beautiful *Collects of the Mass* (the opening prayer, the prayer over the offerings and the prayer after Communion). To do this, why not obtain your own Sunday Missal or a subscription to *Magnificat*?

Find out about the liturgical year and which Sunday or feastday it is. The easiest way to do this is to check online in the diocesan E-news which gives the Liturgical Calendar.

Compile in your mind a list of special intentions you wish to bring with you to Mass: for family, friends, the world, the parish, your self and other needs.

## At the Mass ...

Make sure you arrive a few minutes early, find a place and recollect yourself. It would then be good to say a prayer in preparation for receiving Holy Communion, from your Sunday Missal, *Magnificat* or a favourite prayer book.

During the Mass, open your heart and mind to any Word from God that strikes you (in the readings, prayers, hymns, homily etc) and try to memorise it.

After Holy Communion, spend those precious moments speaking and listening to what the Lord wishes for you.

After Mass, say a prayer to the Blessed Mother, such as the *Hail Holy Queen*. Stay for a coffee to meet the other disciples of the Lord.



## Themes to Ponder

“The blessing-cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ, and the bread that we break is a communion with the body of Christ” (1 Cor 10: 16).

In the Sacrifice of the Mass, Jesus Christ our High Priest, through the power of the Holy Spirit, unites us with his own self-offering to the Father, enabling us to pass from death to eternal life. The Mass fulfils our human desire to worship God and to be united with Him.

In every Mass, Christ lays down His life for us, giving us an example of perfect love and inspiring us to imitate him.

“Their eyes were opened and they recognised Him” (Lk 24: 31). In the Sacrament of the Eucharist, Jesus Christ Himself, His body, blood, soul and divinity, is truly present (CCC 1373-1381; John 6: 55). In Eucharistic Exposition and Adoration: “It is the Lord!” (Jn 21: 7).

The Eucharist is the source of the Church, as well as its summit (CCC 1332). The Holy Spirit sends us out on mission and service.

*Lex orandi, lex credendi – lex vivendi* (“What we pray is what we believe - both should shape how we live our lives”).

The Eucharist is an act of cosmic love, directing us to be stewards of creation (Pope Francis: *Laudato Si* 236)

## Prayer for the Renewal of the Diocese

Lord Jesus Christ,  
fill us with the fire of divine charity,  
and through the intercession of Mary Immaculate,  
St. Edmund of Abingdon  
and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati,  
renew our Diocese, its clergy, religious and faithful.  
Give us all a deeper love for your Word  
and for the Holy Eucharist  
and make us totally dependent on your Holy Spirit.  
Fill us with the desire to go out on mission  
to everyone as servants of all.  
Restore the lapsed; bless our youth  
and help us to put our time, talent and treasure  
at your service.  
Above all, make us holy  
that we may bring many more souls closer to You  
through your Church.  
Bless us all, dear Lord,  
and bring us one day to heaven,  
where you live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

## SHRINE CHURCHES

For the Year of the Eucharist, the Bishop has established three Shrine Churches in different parts of the Diocese so that parishes and groups can go on pilgrimage and obtain a special Year of the Eucharist Plenary Indulgence. Contact the church offices to book. The shrines are ...



ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL PORTSMOUTH

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BOURNEMOUTH ORATORY IN FORMATION

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ST. JAMES READING

Office email: [stjames@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:stjames@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)



*"I am the Bread of Life.  
Anyone who comes to me will never be hungry.  
Anyone who believes in me will never thirst" (John 6: 35).*

*"The thought of the Eucharist should lead us to profound  
amazement and gratitude" (St. John Paul)*

*"In a culture obsessed with profit and personal gain,  
the Eucharist is a remedy for selfishness,  
inviting people to imitate Christ  
in sharing themselves with and for others" (Pope Francis)*

For more copies of this booklet, contact:  
[events@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:events@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

