

CHRIST THE KING & ST. COLMAN (Bitterne) OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION (Hedge End) ST. BRIGID (West End)

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

Registered Charity number 1199568

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2nd Sunday of Advent: Year B, Cycle II

10th December 2023

Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11; 2 Peter 3:8-14; Mark 1:1-8

The note of joyful hope, rather than penance, dominates the season of Advent, as our first reading today says: ‘Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger of Zion. Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem. Shout without fear; say to the towns of Judah, “Here is your God”’ (Is. 40:9). This was the good news that the prophet Isaiah brought to the crushed and dispirited exiles of Israel in the sixth century before Christ. He was telling them that their God had come to liberate them and bring them home. This is surely a message that must resonate with the many oppressed and ravaged people of our world today. We cannot help but think especially of the war-torn people of Ukraine, of Israel and Gaza! How they must long for ‘the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, and salvation’ (Is. 52:7).

Our gospel reading opens with the proclamation of the ‘Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God’ (Mk. 1:1), in whom Isaiah’s hope is fulfilled. In introducing his gospel, Mark highlights the role of John the Baptist in preparing the way for Christ. He presents him as the messenger foretold by Isaiah, the ‘voice that cries in the wilderness: prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight’ (Mk. 1:3). From Jerusalem and the surrounding region of Judea large crowds of people travelled to the banks of the river Jordan to hear John. These were people who had been, for a very long time, on the lookout for a sign of hope, for some indication that a fresh start was possible in their lives. John baptizes them in the waters of the Jordan and summons them to repent and prepare a path in the desert for the one who comes after him, the one who will baptize them with the Holy Spirit (cf. Mk. 1:8). John’s baptism marks a new

beginning for them, a time for them to turn away from sin and strive again to be faithful to God.

The desert John is referring to is not just a physical desert; it is a symbol for the desert of the world and of our hearts. And making a pathway in the desert indicates the work we need to do as we prepare to welcome Christ this Christmas and await his second coming: filling in the valleys of misery and injustice; razing to the ground the hills of stubbornness and pride; making straight the twisted paths of corruption and lies; and clothing ourselves with humility, integrity and holiness – tasks that this special season of grace summons us to undertake with a renewed sense of purpose.

Our second reading today, from Saint Peter, reminds us of the vision that informs this sense of purpose and the kind of lives that reflect it: ‘What we are waiting for is what he promised; the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So, then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace’ (2 Peter 3:14).

Our readings today challenge us to examine our lives in the light God’s promise to make all things new in Christ and be willing to change what needs to be put right. There are surely areas

Fr Elijah

Our Lady of the Assumption: OPEN CHURCH

Our Lady of the Assumption Church is open on Thursday each week from 11am to 1pm for private prayer. If you are able to join the rota please contact Pauline or Jane.

2nd Sunday of Advent – 10th December 2023

- 9.15am **Our Lady of the Assumption (Hedge End)**
For the repose of the soul of Sarah Barlex (Helen & George's daughter) for her anniversary next week (14th Dec)
- 11.00am **Christ the King & St Colman (Bitterne)**
In thanksgiving to God for restoration of health of Pat O'Donovan and blessings on the Parish family
- 5.30pm **St. Brigid (West End)**
For Christine Mongan RIP
- 6.00pm **Christ the King & St Colman (Bitterne)**
Polish Mass

Weekday Mass Times (12th Dec – 17th Dec)

OLA – Our Lady of the Assumption (Hedge End)

CKSC – Christ the King & St. Colman (Bitterne)

SB – St Brigid (West End)

- Tue 12th 10.00am **OLA** *In loving memory of Margaret & Ces Smith, Glen & Betty Palethorpe and Sally Palethorpe RIP*
- Wed 13th 10.00am **SB**
- Thu 14th 10.00am **CKSC** *In thanksgiving to God for healing for families - Veronica*
- Fri 15th 10.00am **OLA** *For the people*
- Sat 16th 10.00am **CKSC** *For the departed souls of our parish family especially those I have visited to bring them communion - Veronica*
- Sun 17th 9.15am **OLA** *Thanksgiving for Donald Hedges for his service as an altar server*
- 11.00am **CKSC** *For quick recovery of Kenny Johnson and safe surgery on his finger*
- 5.30pm **SB**
- 6.00pm **CKSC** *Polish Mass*

Exposition & Rosary at 9.30am before Mass (Tues – Fri)

Sacrament of Confession is available on request

We are all encouraged to offer Mass Intentions for our families and friends (contact Fr. Elijah or Parish Office)

Entrance Antiphon

Is 30: 19, 30

O people of Sion, behold,
the Lord will come to save the nations,
and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard
in the joy of your heart.

Communion Antiphon

Bar 5: 5; 4: 36

Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights,
and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

Prayers for Dennis Harnett

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Dennis Harnett.

Continuing Support of the Church

Please consider setting up a **standing order**.

For Christ the King & St Colman:

Account Name: CDP Christ the King & St Colman

Sort code: 30-93-04

Account Number: 00887553

For Our Lady of the Assumption and St Brigid:

Account Name: CDP Hedge End Our Lady

Sort code: 30-93-04

Account Number: 00879747

Please use your surname as a reference.

Make out cheques for Fr Elijah to Rev Fru N Elijah

Thank you for your support.

Christmas Masses

4th Sunday of Advent (Sunday, 24th December)

9.15am **Our Lady of the Assumption** (Hedge End)

11.00am **Christ the King & St Colman** (Bitterne)

5.30pm **NO MASS** at St. Brigid

Christmas Eve (Sunday, 24th December)

7.00pm **Christ the King & St Colman** (Bitterne)

7pm Carols followed by Mass at 7.30pm

10.00pm **Our Lady of the Assumption** (Hedge End)

10pm Carols followed by Mass at 10.30pm

Christmas Day (Monday, 25th December)

9.00am **St. Brigid** (West End)

9am Carols followed by Mass at 9:15am

9.00am **Christ the King & St Colman** (Bitterne)

Polish Mass

11.00am **Christ the King & St Colman** (Bitterne)

Morning Mass

Christmas Mass Times in Woolston & Netley

Christmas Eve

4.00pm Family Mass - St Patrick's Church, Woolston

8.00pm Vigil Mass - St Patrick's Church, Woolston

Christmas Day

10.00am Mass - Annunciation Church, Netley

11.00am Mass - St Patrick's Church, Woolston

Community Carol Service at St. Brigid's

You are warmly invited to a Community Carol Service at St. Brigid's at 3pm on Sunday 10th December.

We are inviting neighbours in the vicinity of the church to join us & we would welcome the support of our parish family. There will be much-loved carols & Bible readings followed by hot drinks & mince pies.

Why not come along & bring a family member, friend or neighbour with you?

Contact Veronica on 07847 475806 for any queries."

CKSCOLASB Calendar of Events

OLA – Our Lady of the Assumption (Hedge End)

CKSC – Christ the King & St. Colman (Bitterne)

SB – St Brigid (West End)

Thu 7 th	10.30am-12pm Prayer Group (CKSC)
Sun 10 th	12.30-2pm Youth Meeting (CKSC)
Tue 12 th	9.30am-12pm Table Tennis (OLA Hall) 7.30-9pm Growing in Faith (OLA)
Thu 14 th	10.30am-12pm Prayer Group (CKSC)
Sun 17 th	12.30-2pm Youth Meeting (CKSC)
Mon 18 th	7.00pm Penitential Service at St Edmunds 9.30am-12pm Table Tennis (OLA Hall) 7.30-9pm Growing in Faith (OLA)
Tue 19 th	7.00pm Penitential Service at Immaculate Conception
Wed 20 th	7.00-8:30pm Carers Group (OLA)
Thu 21 st	10.30am-12pm Prayer Group (CKSC)
Thu 21 st	5pm-7pm PENITENTIAL SERVICE (CKSC)
Sun 24 th	12.30-2pm Youth Meeting (CKSC)

Recurring Events

Our Lady of The Assumption (Hedge End)

- **Tea Coffee, Biscuits, Friendly Chat** (and often cake) in the hall every Sunday after Holy Mass
- **Children's Liturgy** during Mass every 3rd Sunday of the Month (except in July/August)
- **Carers Group** on third Wednesday of every Month from 7.00pm to 8.30pm
- **Growing in Faith** every Tuesday evening 7:30-9pm
- **Table Tennis** every Tuesday from 9.30am to 12pm
- **Open Church** Thursday from 11am to 1pm (OLA)

Christ the King & St. Colman (Bitterne)

- **Prayer Group** every Thursday 10.30am-12 noon
- **Children's Liturgy** for 4 to 7-year-olds every Sunday
- **Faith on Fire** 8-9pm last Wednesday of every month – except December
- **Young Meetings** 12:30 -14:00 -2nd and 4th Sundays of every month
- **Tea, Coffee, Biscuits & friendly chat** in the hall every 1st Sunday of the month

If you would like a future event to be included in the Calendar of Events, kindly advise the Parish office.

Faith on Fire

Faith on Fire will not meet during December. The next meeting will be on 31st January 2024

Bible Timeline Course

The Bible Timeline course is taking a break and will restart on 11th January 2024 at 19:15 hours.

CAFOD Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal

Donate to CAFOD's Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal at cafod.org.uk/ipc or call 0303 303 3030 to support those affected and get funds to local trusted experts in Gaza and southern Israel who have been working alongside communities helping those most in need. Your donation will help support aid workers providing urgent humanitarian aid including food, water and emergency shelter to those in need.

CKSC Giving tree - Stella Maris Christmas Chocolate appeal 2023

Can you help us give Christmas chocolates to Seafarers this December?

There will be about 400,000 Seafarers working over Christmas, separated from their families and friends. Theirs is a tough, relentless life, long hours, boring, noisy, extreme temperatures, dangerous and exhausting. Stella Maris meets and supports seafarers around the world. We want to show them that they are not forgotten this Christmas, so **we're planning to collect hundreds of chocolate Christmas presents** for seafarers visiting our Southern Region ports in the days before Christmas. We need to prepare now.

Can you help us by donating chocolate gifts?

Please put your gifts under our giving tree at Christ the King & St Colman's church by 17th December. Thank You.

Our Lady of Assumption - Christmas Giving Tree

Our Christmas Gifts on our "Giving Tree" will be going to POITERS CARE (a food delivery project) which is a Catholic Organisation supporting any person or family in and around the Southampton area, of any background, who are in need.

Please place your gifts under the tree: (as early in December as you can to ensure our gifts can be distributed before Christmas: biscuits, chocolates, tins of fruit, ready-made custard, snacks, "long-life" jellies/trifles, mince pies - any "Christmas themed treats and foods" you can think of.

Please be as generous as you can. Stuck for ideas? Take a tag (or 2 :-)) from the tree and help bring some "Christmas Cheer" to people in need of our help.

Thank you for your generosity

CKSC Christmas Cards

The repository at Christ the King & St Colman's will soon be selling Christmas cards in aid of the Leprosy Mission.

Sunday's Readings – [here](#) **Diocesan eNews**: – [here](#)
Daily Readings – [here](#) **Reflections** – [here](#)
UK Catholic Newspapers – [here](#)

Christmas Flowers

Once again we are looking to collect any donations towards the flowers to decorate Our Lady of the Assumption over the Christmas period. Any donation would be greatly appreciated. Please put any donations in the basket at the back of the church. Thank you

Our Lady of the Assumption - Quiz Night - 26th January 2024

A great date to start off your 2024 Diary/calendar ! :-)
The date of the **OLA New Year Quiz Night is Friday 26th January 2024.**
Full details and tickets will be on sale after Christmas. In the meantime, wishing our whole Parish Family a Joyful Christmas. Good Bless everyone

St Brigid's Giving Tree

The St. Brigid's Giving Tree charity this year is The Southampton Sunday Lunch Project. Please bring your wrapped gift (with label attached) to the church by Wednesday 20th December latest. Thank you for your support for this worthy charity, which provides a hot meal & company each Sunday for those in need locally.

Retrouvaille: Help Your Marriage

Retrouvaille is a programme to support couples who have difficulties in their marriage. The programme helps spouses uncover or re-awaken the love, trust and commitment that originally brought them together. It helps them through difficult times. There is no group therapy or group work. For confidential information about 'Retrouvaille' or to register for the next programme commencing with a Virtual weekend on 8 - 11 February 2024 or a Face to Face weekend in Welwyn Garden City on 14-16 June 2024, Call or text 07887 296983 or 07973 380443 or email retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com - or visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk

Christmas Collection

The Christmas Collection is an opportunity for us to say thank you to Fr Elijah for his dedication and hard work. In addition to the usual ways of giving, donations may be made online by clicking the links below.
For OLA & SB click [here](#)
For CKSC click [here](#)

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If you have news to share with the Diocese, contact: communications@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Hedge End & West End Fundraising

A huge, big **THANK YOU** to everyone who helped to make the **CHRISTMAS MINIMART of 2023** a great success by helping, donating, and buying goods and most of all for coming and joining in. Many thanks for the many lovely and beautiful items that were donated and to the dedicated team of helpers for setting up and running the event. We raised the amazing amount of **£465.11** this year compared £338.42 last year. A heartfelt thank you to everyone.

CKSC – Youth Meetings

In CKSC, youth meetings will run on the 2nd and 4th Sundays every month from 12:30 -14:00. We encourage parents to lead their children to belong. For more information, email the office or speak to Uju Cummings.

Confirmation Programme 2024

The programme for young people who wish to explore the sacrament of confirmation will start in the new year. If you're interested, please register with the office. You have nothing to lose but SO much to gain!

Christmas Day Lunch

This year Sholing Salvation Army are delivering hot Christmas Day lunches to people who will be homebound and unable to join in with any in-person festive activities.

If you are on your own on Christmas Day and would like a Christmas meal delivered to you, let us know! Please call 023 80438713, leave your details and someone will call you back.
Please could all requests be with us before Friday 15th December 2023. - Thanks

Flowers at CKSC

Due to health reasons and Rosemary's family commitments, I am unable to continue decorating the church with flowers each week. I would be very happy if someone could take my place. Flowers are not used during Advent but there will be a need at Christmas. Please think about this ministry and ask me any questions or for any information that is needed.
Thank you in anticipation - Maureen Sim

Parish Web Pages on Diocesan Website

Parish web pages are on the diocesan website at:

- [Christ the King & St Colman](#)
- [Our Lady of the Assumption](#)
- [St Brigid](#)

They can also be selected from www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/parishes/