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Monday: 2.30 - 4.30pm Wednesday: 1.30 - 4.30pm Friday: 2.30 - 4.30pm

Website: <https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/parish/st-vincent-de-paul/> (To open: Select then Ctrl + left Click)

First Sunday of Advent

Sunday 3rd December 2023

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Isaiah 63: 16-17, 64: 1, 3-8

1 Corinthians 1: 3-9

Mark 13: 33-37

This weekend we start the new liturgical year leading up to the celebration of the birth of Jesus and it might have been expected that the Gospel would be one of joy and happiness. However, we have a reading from Mark that follows the theme of the last few weeks "Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come". This is a bit depressing and I think we all have the message now after being warned so often in the last few weeks. The Psalm is no more joyful calling on help and care from God so we can be saved. "God of hosts, bring us back, let your face shine on us and we shall be saved". It calls on the Shepherd of Israel to come to the aid of his people, to care for and enlighten them, making them strong and faithful. It is a plea for healing and restoration in a world that has experienced harm.

In the first reading from the prophet Isaiah refers to God's role as a creator, likening us to clay in the hands of a potter to be formed in his image – "we are all the work of your hand". However, he despairs of the way people are behaving. How they have strayed away from the plan God had hoped we would follow, fearing God, showing respect for each other and giving support and help to everyone, especially the weak and vulnerable. He pleads for God to come down from heaven to earth to sort out all the evil in the world – "that you would tear the heavens open and come down". This is the theme of previous weeks concerning the Second Coming and the prophet is complaining about having to wait so long and displays a certain amount of impatience. The lesson is for us to be ready to wait for help from God and not expect it straight away.

At last in the 2nd reading, St Paul writes to the Corinthians in Greece, with a message which is much happier and upbeat. Thanking the Lord Jesus Christ for sending his grace and peace and telling them that they "have what it takes", as we might express it today, to do good, to grow in wisdom and holiness. These words of encouragement can apply to us today, who may at times feel inadequate or not quite "up to the task". We should have confidence in our potential. Malcolm.

Mass times	Feast Days
6pm: Confessions 6.30pm Vigil Mass	Saturday 2nd St Bibiana Patron saint of hangover cures. Roman virgin and the daughter of a Christian Roman Knight who was sent into exile after being tortured for his Christian beliefs. Bibiana's mother was beheaded and the two sisters were left in poverty. Her sister died when they were arrested. She refused to renounce her faith. Martyred in 360. Herbs grew from her grave with medicinal properties for hangover relief. Now the site of St Bibiana Basilica in Rome.
9.30 am Mass	Sunday 3rd December First Sunday of Advent
6.30pm Mass	Monday 4th St John Damascene. Born 675 in Damascus, 43 years after the death of Mohammed. An Arabic Christian in Syria where Islam was spreading rapidly. Educated with Muslim books and Greek Christian books. Greek and Christian communities were tolerated by the Islamic authority. Administrator in Muslim court. Hermit at Mar Saba monastery, Jerusalem, founded by the great theologian and hermit St Sabas. John was one of the greatest theologians and philosophers of the Eastern Church. Produced a large number of works and sermons. Devotion to Virgin Mary. Died 749 at 74.
10 am Mass Thomas Kulathunkal RIP 2 nd Anniversary	Tuesday 5th St Birinus French Benedictine monk born 600. Came to England in 634, landing at Southampton, then Hamwic, in the St Mary's area as "Apostle to the West Saxons" sent by Pope Honorius I as a missionary. Founded St Mary's Church whose football team centuries later formed the basis of Southampton FC, then called the "Saints" after the church. Allowed to preach by the pagan West Saxon King Cynegils who was eventually converted to Christianity. Made an alliance with Christian King Oswald of Northumbria against the pagan Mercians in central England. Made Bishop of Dorchester-on-Thames, 10 miles south of Oxford, then the capital of the Kingdom of the West Saxons. Established many churches. Successful ministry and preaching until he died in 650.
SVP Social 1pm to 3pm 6.30 pm Mass	Wednesday 6th St Nicholas of Myra. Born 270 in Asia Minor now Turkey to wealthy Greek parents. Worked for social justice in his youth and did a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Made Bishop of Myra. Imprisoned in the "Great Persecution" of Christians by Roman Emperor Diocletian. When released by the new Emperor Constantine his parents died and he inherited great wealth which he used to help the poor. Legend of helping 3 poor daughters with dowry so they could marry rather than go into prostitution. Pawn brokers sign of 3 gold balls represents the 3 bags of gold he gave them. Basis of "Santa Claus" giving presents to young people at Christmas. Fought for justice against the Roman authorities and saved innocent people from execution. Patron saint of unmarried women, brides, sailors, pilgrims and travellers. Died in 343 aged 73 and first buried in Myra. When the area was captured by the Muslim Turks relics were moved to Italy in Bari and Venice

10 am Mass	Thursday 7th St Ambrose Born 340 in Germany to Roman Christian family. His father died and family moved back to Rome. Studied law and rhetoric, Eloquent speaker in court. Provincial Governor. Problems with violent supporters of Arianism which Ambrose opposed. By public acclaim was made Bishop of Milan due to his eloquence in uniting the clergy and people with orthodox beliefs. Great theologian. Baptised St Augustine of Hippo the great North African theologian..				
NO MASS	Friday 8th December Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception and that God preserved the Virgin Mary from the taint of original sin from the moment she was conceived was defined as a dogma in 1854 by Pope Pius IX in the papal bull <i>Ineffabilis Deus</i> . The Council of Trent, held between 1545 and 1563 had previously affirmed her freedom from personal sin. The feast of <i>Mary's Conception</i> originated in the Eastern Church in the 7 th century and reached England in the 11 th century where Mary was particularly venerated. It then spread to Europe, where it was given official approval in 1477 and extended to the whole Church in 1693. The word <i>Immaculate</i> was not officially added to the name of the feast until 1854.				
6pm: Confessions 6.30pm Vigil Mass	Saturday 9th St John Diego Cuahitlatzin Aztec Indian born 1474 Mexico. Converted by conquistadors and Franciscan missionaries from Spain. Had visions of Virgin Mary on Tepeyac Hill on his way to morning Mass requesting a shrine to be built to her there. As a proof of the vision flowers bloomed in the middle of winter. Mary wrapped the flowers in his cloak and told him to take them to Bishop Juan. When the cloak was unwrapped there was an imprint of the Virgin Mary on the cloak. John's sick uncle was cured with the famous words, "Am I not here? I who am your Mother?" Uncle had a vision of Mary as well. Shrine of " <i>Our Lady of Guadalupe</i> " was built. John died in 1548 aged 74 and was buried in the first chapel built at the shrine. The shrine then attracted a great number of pilgrims. The cloak preserved from 1531 to today is in the Basilica of Guadalupe.				
9.30 am Mass	Sunday 10th December Second Sunday of Advent Maria Duggan RIP 41st Anniversary this day (mother of Kay)				
PLEASE PRINT IN BLOCK CAPITALS WHEN RECORDING NAMES FOR MASS INTENTION					
Your prayers are needed for the following people					
Sue Chandler	Hazel Sale	Joe Heatley			

NOTICES AND ANNOUNCEMENT

Appeal for readers, welcomers, Eucharistic ministers, children's Liturgists, altar servers and choir members
The parish needs volunteers for the above important roles. Please sign up on the sheet in the porch.

SVP Social this Wednesday 6th December – 1pm to 3 pm

There will another opportunity to meet for refreshments and a chat. Please come along and bring your friends. No need to stay for the whole time, a few minutes of two hours, whatever suits you.
Look forward to welcoming you. Renee and Pat.

Christmas Collection of sweets for Southampton Sunday Lunch Project by Sunday 10th December

Collection of wrapped sweets such as Roses, Celebration and Quality Street needed. Please place your donations in box in the porch by Sunday 10th December. Many thanks in anticipation, Shelagh Moon. Tel: 023 8073 6275

From Liz Challand. Another way to help the Homeless through the Southampton Sunday Lunch Project

I am trying, as in previous years, to provide 100-120 bags to be distributed by the Project at their Christmas meal service on Sunday 17th December. A recommended bag will be no more than £10 in value and will contain some, if not all, from this list: **NOTHING ALCOHOLIC**. Gloves and hat, savoury and sweet biscuits, chocolate, baby wipes, basic toiletries like toothpaste and toothbrush, deodorant and soap, socks and a Christmas card. All in a bag for life. As many people are facing financial hardships themselves. All pledges to lizchalland@btinternet.com, by Thursday 30th November and I will send you payment details. The Southampton Sunday Lunch Project, who have just won the King's Award for Voluntary Service will also operate on Christmas Day and are looking for additional volunteers to man their kitchens. **I really welcome you sharing this message with anyone who may be interested to help this year. It's an excellent team building/networking project and will help us get to our total of £1100.**

New Sacristan needed at St Vincent de Paul to replace the long serving Philomena

We are looking for a new Sacristan. This is a voluntary position. It could be a shared role with more than one person involved. A poster in the Porch outlining the duties. If you have any interest please speak to our current Sacristan, Philomena, who would like to step down after a long time serving our priests and our church.

8 hours of adoration followed by Mass every third Friday of the month from 9 pm

The next session will be Friday 15th December from 9 pm to 5 am ending with Mass at about 4 am

Parish collection for last weekend 25th and 26th November

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Parish Envelopes	Gift Aid	Loose Collection	Direct debits, standing orders	Gift Aid	Total of Offertory Collection	Other money Use of church	Envelopes	Loose plate	TOTAL of all money
£92	£23	£160.54	£242.54	£51.98	£570.06	---	---	---	£570.06