

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

Parish Priest: Fr. Elijah Fru Nde (emergency use phone number 0777 466 7010)

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5th Sunday in Ordinary Time: Year B, Cycle II

4th February 2024

The Mystery of Human Suffering

Job. 7:1-4, 6-7; 1 Corinthians 9:16-19,22-23; Mark 1:29-39

One of life's greatest mysteries is human pain. It is challenging to reconcile the existence of a good and all-powerful God with the horrible sufferings that many people must endure. This problem is brought to light very forcefully in the book of Job, which is where our first reading comes from. Written around 700 years before the birth of Christ, it relates the tale of a righteous man named Job who experiences a terrifying series of misfortunes. Having lost everything and everyone dearest to him, he is left to bemoan his sad plight in words we surely find an echo in our own hearts: 'Is not our life on earth no better than hired service, our time no better than hired drudgery?' (Job 7:1). Three friends pay Job a visit amid his suffering. They remain silent when they initially come. For seven days and seven nights, they do nothing but sit in quiet on the ground next to him. They lack the words to ease Job's sorrow. The greatest and possibly only thing we can do in the face of unfathomable grief is to remain silent. But eventually, friends of Job do speak, and even though they mean well, their remarks simply make Job's suffering worse. They try to persuade him to turn from his sins and put himself at the mercy of God, thinking that his afflictions are a result of his transgressions. But Job doesn't stop claiming to be innocent. Finally, after many days pouring out his grief and anger, Job is granted an audience with God. And God does indeed stand by his claim to be innocent of any wrongdoing, but without explaining the shocking calamities he has had to endure. He just tells Job that there is no way he (Job) could understand things from God's perspective.

Jesus echoes the teaching of the Book of Job in rejecting the view, commonly held by his contemporaries that human suffering is a punishment for sin. (cf. Lk 13:1-5). But he goes well beyond this teaching in portraying a God who is more compassionate and loving than the austere

God of Job. While Jesus does not explain the mystery of human suffering, his words and actions manifest a God who is profoundly moved by human suffering and responds to it with love 'beyond all telling.' Jesus reveals a God, who, in the words of today's responsorial psalm 'heals the broken hearted and binds up all their wounds'. As today's gospel clearly shows, Jesus went out of his way to heal all kinds of suffering, physical and mental. He is the lived embodiment of the divine response to human suffering, sowing seeds of hope where he finds despair, restoring broken relationships, and drawing life from the teeth of death.

When suffering touches us personally, and none of us can escape suffering at some stage in our lives, it can be an overwhelming experience, shattering our self-confidence and even our faith in God. Personal suffering confronts us with a choice. We can allow it 'to lead us into self-doubt to the point of despair, or we can embrace it as an opportunity for growth and discernment about what really matters in life.' The English poet, John Keats, who experienced great suffering in his life and died from tuberculosis at the age of twenty-five. wrote, 'The world is the vale of soul-making.' For Keats, suffering is an integral part of this soul-making, helping us to become the person God wants us to be. This does not mean, however, that we should be passive, or merely stoical, in the face of suffering. As disciples of Jesus, we are also called to imitate his example and, amid our own doubts, fears, and sufferings, to reach out to others with loving care. In the words of Pope Francis, we are called 'to imitate God's style of closeness, compassion and tenderness..., to be close to those in pain and to do what is possible to alleviate it, or at least let them know they are not alone.'

I wish you all a very Blessed Week

Fr Elijah

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time – 4th February 2024

9.15am **Our Lady of the Assumption** (Hedge End)
11.00am **Christ the King & St Colman** (Bitterne)
5.30pm **St. Brigid** (West End)
For the people
6.00pm **Christ the King & St Colman** (Bitterne)
Polish Mass

Weekday Mass Times (30th Jan – 4th Feb)

OLA – Our Lady of the Assumption (Hedge End)
CKSC – Christ the King & St. Colman (Bitterne)
SB – St Brigid (West End)

Tue 6th 10.00am **OLA**
Wed 7st 10.00am **SB** *Claire Waas RIP*
Thu 8th 10.00am **CKSC** *For the people*
Fri 9th 10.00am **OLA** *Jane & Michael Ingram
45th Wedding Anniversary*
Sat 10th 10.00am **NO MASS TODAY**
Sun 11th 9.15am **OLA**
11.00am **CKSC**
5.30pm **SB**
6.00pm **CKSC** *Polish Mass*

Canon John Cooke will be joining us to celebrate Mass and promote vocations on Sunday 4th February.

Exposition & Rosary at 9.30am before Mass (Tues – Fri)
Sacrament of Confession is available on request

THERE HAVE NOT BEEN MANY MASS INTENTIONS RECENTLY

Please consider offering Mass Intentions for families and friends (contact Fr. Elijah or Parish Office)

Entrance Antiphon

Ps 95 (94): 6-7

O come, let us worship God
and bow low before the God who made us,
for he is the Lord our God.

Communion Antiphon

Ps 31 (30): 17-18

Let them thank the Lord for his mercy,
his wonders for the children of men,
for he satisfies the thirsty soul,
and the hungry he fills with good things.

Bible Timeline Course

The Bible Timeline course continues at Our Lady of the Assumption Church Hall at 7:15pm on Thursdays. Any queries please contact Donald on 07508 010337 (course leader).

OPEN CHURCH - Our Lady of the Assumption

Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Hedge End is open for private prayer every Thursday from 10am until midday.

To join the rota, please contact Pauline or Jane.

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

Diocese of Portsmouth Symposium

The Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth has organized a symposium entitled ‘**What does it mean to be Human? Medical Ethics and Social Care Today**’:

- Date: Saturday 16 March
- Venue: The Arc, Winchester
- Info and registration: [Click here](#)

St Brigids Feast Day

5:30pm Sunday Mass at St Brigids on 4th February will be celebrating St Brigids feast day and tea and cakes will be served after Mass. All are welcome.

QUIZ NIGHT - Our Lady of the Assumption

Many thanks to all those who joined us for the Quiz Night at Our Lady of the Assumption church hall. The evening was a great success.

Special thanks, of course, to Simon for being our Quiz Master and to all those behind the scenes who donated the food and spent many hours in preparation before the event, serving the food and clearing up afterwards.

Helpers Party on Monday February 12th at 7pm in Hedge End in the Church Hall

Everyone who is helping in church as a volunteer is invited to join in at the Helpers Party on Monday February at 12th 7pm in the Church Hall in Hedge End. A list for food and nibbles to bring will be at the back of both churches. Please come and join in for a get-together just before Lent starts.

First Friday Soup in OLA Hall – 2nd Feb

Our next First Friday Soup is at midday on Friday 2nd February in Our Lady of the Assumption Church Hall.

Please do come along and join us for a lunch of delicious home-made soup and crusty bread.

There is no charge however, donations will be gratefully received.

CKSCOLASB Calendar of Events

OLA – Our Lady of the Assumption (Hedge End)

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

SB – St Brigid (West End)

Tue 6 th	9.30am-12pm Table Tennis (OLA Hall) 7.30-9pm Growing in Faith (OLA)
Thu 8 th	10.30am-12pm Prayer Group (CKSC) 10am-12 noon Open Church (OLA)
Sun 11 th	12.30-2pm Youth Meeting (CKSC)
Tue 13 th	9.30am-12pm Table Tennis (OLA Hall) 7.30-9pm Growing in Faith (OLA)
Thu 15 th	10.30am-12pm Prayer Group (CKSC) 10am-12 noon Open Church (OLA)
Sun 18 th	During 9.15 Mass Childrens' Liturgy (OLA)
Tue 20 th	9.30am-12pm Table Tennis (OLA Hall) 7.30-9pm Growing in Faith (OLA)
Wed 21 st	7.00-8.30pm Carer's Group (OLA Hall)
Thu 22 nd	10.30am-12pm Prayer Group (CKSC) 10am-12 noon Open Church (OLA)
Sun 25 th	12.30-2pm Youth Meeting (CKSC)
Tue 27 th	9.30am-12pm Table Tennis (OLA Hall) 7.30-9pm Growing in Faith (OLA)
Wed 28 th	8.00-9.00pm Faith on Fire (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 10am-12 noon (OLA) after Jan 18th

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
- **Youth Meetings** 12:30 -14:00 on 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.

Confirmation

Please send your name into the office if you would like to see what this journey to Confirmation is all about. Our first meeting will be on Wednesday 7th February in CKSC church at 7.30pm. Come and see!!! Open to all from year 8 and above.

Special Ministers of the Eucharist

Have you thought of becoming a special minister? It is a privilege to serve in this way and very humbling to do this. Speak to other ministers and hear first hand what it is like. Training will be given when we know who and how many would like to investigate this essential ministry in the church. Contact the office to put your name forward or speak to Fr Elijah.

CAFOD - Big Lent Walk

We are planning a Parishes walk on Saturday 2nd March. We will meet at Itchen Valley Country Park at 10.30am after mass at 9.30am at CKSC. The idea is to raise money and awareness to help fight global poverty. For more information watch this space or contact Deirdre 07828810009

CAFOD Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal

Donate to CAFOD's Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal at <https://cafod.org.uk/ipc> or call 0303 303 3030 to support those affected. Your donation will help support aid workers providing urgent humanitarian aid including food, water and emergency shelter.

CAFOD Meetings-

You are warmly invited to come to a CAFOD meeting to find out the difference that your donations make. You can attend either on:

- Saturday 3rd February
- at St Philip Howard Church Hall, Bishopsfield Road, Fareham PO14 1ND.

A simple lunch will be provided at both meetings so please book your place so that we have an idea of numbers by emailing Jo on jlewry@cafod.org.uk or phone 07710 094447.

CAFOD Lent Family Fast Day Friday 23rd February

This Lent, your donations to CAFOD's Family Fast Day appeal will help hardworking people like James the fisherman in Liberia with resources, tools and training to feed their families for good.

Give today using the envelope or online at <http://cafod.org.uk> and please join us in praying with James that our sisters and brothers around the world have what they need to feed their families.

Pilgrimage to Poland – 7th to 14th May 2024

Pilgrimage to Poland & the Divine Mercy:

- Chaplain to the group: Fr. Claro Conde
- Contact: 01793 881166 / 020 3720 0450
- Email: info@allsaintstravel.co.uk

Pilgrimage to Lourdes – 18th to 21st Jun 2024

Pilgrimage to Lourdes:

- Chaplain to the group: Fr. Claro Conde
- Contact: All Saints Travel on 01793 881166 or 020 3720 0450
- Email: info@allsaintstravel.co.uk

Wild Goose

During Lent we are running a course called the Mysteries of The Rosary - the Sorrowful Mysteries, produced by Wild Goose TV. We are running it on Wednesday evenings in CKSC Church and on Thursday mornings after mass in CKSC. This is an opportunity to prepare ourselves in a prayerful way for Easter. More information to follow later.

Collections at CKSC for December 2023

Figures for CKSC for December 2023

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| • Loose Offertory | £554.16 |
| • Contactless Giving – Parish | £75.72 |
| • Standing Orders & Direct Debits | £1808.50 |
| • Donation from Polish Community | £400.00 |
| • CAFOD Fundraising | £12.00 |

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/

Sunday's Readings – [here](#)

Diocesan eNews: – [here](#)

Daily Readings – [here](#)

Reflections – [here](#)

UK Catholic Newspapers – [here](#)

DIOCESAN VACANCIES

You can view vacancies in the diocese at:

<https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/about-us/other/jobs>

Utility Bills for CKSC Q4 2023

Figures for utility bills at CKSC for Q4 2023:

- | | |
|------------------------|---------|
| • Church Utilities | £262.41 |
| • Hall Utilities | £101.93 |
| • Presbytery Utilities | £363.53 |

NOTE: “Presbytery Utilities” includes £360.43 reimbursement from HEWE for Q3 2023, so this would have been £723.96 excluding the reimbursement.

Utility bills for Hedge End and West End

Utility bills for Hedge End and West End for September to December 2023:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------|
| • Hedge End Church | £106.12 |
| • West End Church | £21.21 |
| • Hall | £189.83 |
| • Flat | £258.41 |
| • Bitterne Presbytery | £360.43 |

Note the electricity supplier changed in July and no bills have yet been received for July onwards.

WANTED - Rosary Beads.

Please donate your spare and unused rosary beads to the Stella Maris charity in Southampton. Your spare beads will be passed on to the many hundreds of seafarers and their families, where there is great demand for them.

You can post them to: Stella Maris, c/o St Edmund's Catholic Church, 14 Rockstone Pl, Southampton SO15 2EQ.

Email for more information:

gregory.hogan@stellamarismail.org

Keep in touch with Portsmouth Diocese

@PortsmouthRC

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

@PortsmouthRC

<https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/>

If you have news to share with the Diocese, contact:

communications@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Ash Wednesday Ecumenical Service

Christ the King and St Colman will be hosting the CTiB (Churches Together in Bitterne) Ecumenical service of Ashes at 730pm on Wednesday 14th February. Tea and coffee will be provided after the service. Please come along and share with our neighbour Churches. Look forward to seeing you there!