



OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

A PARISH OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH IN THE CARE OF THE SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO

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Office Hours: 10am – 12pm

Parish Priest: **Fr. Michael Hynes SDB**

Deacon: **Rev. Paul Page-Tickell**

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23rd March 2025 - 3rd Sunday in Lent

Dear friends,

Welcome to Our Lady Help of Christians. Everyone is welcome, no matter who you are or where you are on your faith journey.

Today's Gospel presents us with the imagery of the barren fig tree. It starts by reminding us that we should not judge when misfortune or tragedies happen to other people. What Jesus does make clear in the opening sentences of this passage is that there no direct correlation between suffering and sin. Our focus should be on what we need to do in our lives so that we bear fruit.

We can take comfort that God focuses on the plants that are struggling. God gives us everything we need to allow us to bear fruit and reach our full potential, but it does call for a response from us. The analogy with the fig tree is a gentle reminder that God does not give up on us: he is the dedicated gardener caring for his plants. This is an expression of God's love for us.

Last week, on the mountain we heard God say: 'This is my Son: Listen to him'. Listening to the word of God calls for a response, the 'Here I am Lord. It is I Lord'. When Moses heard God calling him from the burning bush, he answered 'Here I am'. What is our response when God calls us. Standing still is not an option for Jesus's disciples.

We can only listen if we are prepared like Moses to respond. Moses sets out for Egypt and the challenge of convincing Pharaoh to release the people. We are called to repentance and the challenge of delivering the world from slavery to sin. How are we doing?

The story is also a warning: we must be ready and receptive to the graces God gives us. It offers a choice: change and be reconciled with God or perish. God is patient, there is time, Lent is such a time, for repentance to bear fruit, but there is a limit.

PASTORAL AREA LENTEN RECONCILIATIONS (CONFESSION)

A number of Priests will be on hand to minister the Sacrament of Forgiveness. All are most welcome.

9 April 7.00pm Holy Trinity, Church Crookham

10 April 7.00pm Our Lady & St Dominic's, Cove

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is always available in our Church after the 10am Mass on a Saturday.

Mass Times, Intentions and Events for the Week

Sat 22 nd March	10.00 10.30	Mass <i>Reconciliation</i>
Vigil Mass 3rd Sunday of Lent	5.00pm	Mass
Sun 23 rd March 3rd Sunday of Lent	9.30	People of the Parish
Mon 24 th March	9.30	Mass
Tue 25 th March The Annunciation	9.30	Ned Davern RIP
Wed 26 th March	9.30	Mass
Thu 27 th March	9.30 7.30pm	Beatrice & James O'Connell RIP <i>Adoration</i>
Fri 28 th March	9.30 11.30	Mass <i>Stations of the Cross</i>
Sat 29 th March	10.00 10.30	Mass <i>Reconciliation</i>
Vigil Mass 4th Sunday of Lent	5.00pm	People of the Parish
Sun 30 th March 4th Sunday of Lent	9.30	Abigail Merrifield & Matthew Ramsey Int

ANNIVERSARIES ABOUT THIS TIME Ann Clark, Fr Paul McAleer SDB, Daisy Mary Rogers, Mary O'Connor, Fr Brendan McGuinness SDB, John McGowan, Gordon Olcut, Edmund Davern, Katherine Dinmole, Margaret Jenkinson, Margaret England. May they rest in peace.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS & FRIDAY FRUGAL LUNCHESES The Stations of the Cross will be prayed during Lent on a Friday at 11.30am. This is a powerful way to walk with Jesus during Lent. Join us after Stations of the Cross at 12.00 for a simple meal of soup and a roll.

THE POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR MARCH Let us pray that broken families might discover the cure for their wounds through forgiveness, rediscovering each other's gifts, even in their differences.

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS We pray for Pope Francis and for all who are ill, those who are housebound, those who are unable to join us in person at our celebration of the Eucharist, those who are mentioned in our Parish Book of Prayer Intentions and all who have asked for our prayers.

FRIDAY LENTEN DISCUSSION GROUP Our Friday Evening Lenten 'Lectio Divina' Programme continues on 28th March at 7pm, with the evening devoted to scriptural reading, meditation, prayer and discussion of the Gospel for the following Sunday. Do join us.

THE ROSARY GROUP The New Rota for the Living Rosary is on the Notice Board in the Narthex. The members undertake to pray a decade of the Rosary each day at home for Hope and Peace. If you would like to join the group, please speak to Kate Boardman.

EASTER CARDS There is a selection of Easter Cards for sale at the Repository counter after Mass on Saturday evening and Sunday morning

HALL HIRE The hall is available for Hire for parties, celebrations and special events. For details and availability, please contact Olein Webster at: olhchallhire@gmail.com

COFFEE & CHAT Everyone is welcome in the Hall after the Mass on a Sunday morning and the 9.30 Mass on a Wednesday for tea and coffee. It is a great opportunity to get to know fellow parishioners.

SIGNIFICANT WEDDINGS ANNIVERSARY MASS Are you celebrating a 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th, 60th or anniversary over 60 years? If so, Bishop Philip would like to invite you to a Mass of celebration. This will take place at St Bede's Church, Basingstoke on Saturday 21st June at 11am and be followed by a buffet lunch. Please email anniversaries@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk to request a form for you to complete and return.

OPPOSING THE ASSISTED DYING BILL The move to legalise assisted suicide can still be defeated. Please write to your MPs to encourage them to focus on the long-term resourcing of hospice care and palliative care rather than on legislation that undermines the value of life.

SUPPORT YOUR PARISH Parishioners who wish to contribute to the financial support of the Parish can do so by placing a donation in the collection or by standing Order or BACS transfer. Please use the Parish Sort Code: 30-93-04 and Account Number: 00877868 Name: CDP Our Lady help Of Christians. Queries please email: accounts@olhfarnborough.org.uk. If you are a UK Taxpayer please ensure your donations are covered by a Gift Aid Declaration. You can increase your donation to the parish by 25% at no cost to you. Forms are available in the Narthex, or you can download the form off the Website.

YOUR PARISH NEEDS YOU!

If everyone does a little, together we can achieve much!

There are many ways of getting involved in the parish.

WELCOMING: We are still short of welcomers at the Sunday Masses. If you would like to participate in this important Ministry, please speak to David May.

MUSICIANS: Do you play an instrument? Would you be able to take some of the burden from Maureen and help provide music at Mass and other celebrations. Having different instruments would enable us to add variety and enrich our celebration of the Liturgy. Please speak to David.

HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED ALL THE THINGS THAT NEED TO BE PREPARED FOR OUR MASSES? Would you be prepared to come earlier and help to prepare the Church for Mass, check on supplies and do all the little jobs connected with the Sacristy. Might you be one of those people? Please speak to David.

SUPPLIES We are looking for a volunteer or team of volunteers to check on supplies for the Church (hosts, wine, candles etc) and the Hall and Kitchen (hand towels, soap, loo rolls, surface cleaner etc). Could you be the person who ensures that we always have sufficient items in store? Please speak to David.

ALTAR SERVER'S ALBS We are looking for a volunteer to help maintain the albs worn by our Altar Servers. Please speak to David

MAINTENANCE We are also looking for volunteers to help look after the maintenance of the buildings and grounds. Weekly and monthly checks are needed of all our buildings to ensure we are compliant with our legal duties. A skill with DIY would be useful but not essential. Please speak to Joe DeBono.

NEWS

For news and events around the Diocese please visit Bishop Philip's E-News at

<https://portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/communications/news/e-news/>

PARISH NEWSLETTER

We are happy to share news and information about our Parish in the Newsletter, but we need one key ingredient – your input

DATES FOR YOUR DARY

25th March	Feast of The Annunciation of the Lord
28th March	Lenten Prayer & Discussion Evening
4th April	Lenten Prayer and Discussion Evening
13th April	Palm Sunday
17th April	Maundy Thursday - Evening Mass 8.00pm
18th April	Good Friday - Celebration of the Lord's Passion 3.00pm
19th April	Holy Saturday - The Easter Vigil 8.00pm
20th April	Easter Sunday
23rd April	CWL Coffee Morning
15th June	Celebration of First Holy Communion