

## ONLY A DECISION AWAY

Jesus says "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand" (Matt 4:17). The word "repent" can immediately put us on the defensive. We think of our sins and of our guilt and inwardly shrink. It can conjure up fear and anxiety and we are inclined to expect the worst. So we do not experience that word in particular as *gospel*, literally good news. And the nearness of the kingdom then seems more of a threat than a gift and a joy.

All this reaction stems from the way the word has been used in our own culture and tradition. It is good to know that Jesus was actually saying something different. Jesus may have spoken Hebrew or Aramaic but the New Testament was written down in popular Greek. The word in the Greek is *metanoia* and it combines two words meta & nous (literally change & mind). So Jesus is calling us to a new mind, a change of attitude, a new way of thinking. We need a new way of thinking to see good news and accept it. We need a new way of thinking to allow the kingdom of heaven to begin entering into our lives and changing them. It is only a decision away.

Jesus says that the kingdom of heaven is close at hand. Indeed the kingdom is close; it is all around us and within us. But the kingdom is also hidden by our spiritual blindness. Remember Jesus said: Blessed are the pure in heart. They shall see God. The way to be healed of this blindness is to have a change of mind, a change of heart. We have to want it and desire it but it is a work only the Spirit of God can do.

The saints and mystics have something to tell us about this new mind, this change of heart, this new way of seeing. It is about seeing the goodness in ourselves and others. It is about the union of everything and everyone in God. It is about the world and how everything is at the same time both wonderful, beautiful and glorious and also finite, passing, decaying and disfigured. It is about the gratuity of life, and the graciousness of God's love. This can only be gratefully received and celebrated but never possessed and controlled. As is said of Jesus – *he did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself* (Philippians 2). It is about having love where there was once hatred, forgiveness where there was once bitterness, compassion instead of coldness, joy instead of self-pity. Instead of seeing a refugee you see a fellow human being in need of shelter. Instead of seeing a down & out you see a person who can be lifted up and brought in. A wounded and damaged person is to be loved and healed. A sinful and wicked person needs love and healing too for a different kind of sickness. The whole of creation, Paul tells us, (Rom 8) is waiting for people who see with God's eyes, so animals are no longer seen as resources to be exploited but as creatures to be respected and treated compassionately. The dawning of the kingdom in our lives is very near, it is only a decision away (DMA).

# The Messenger

St Michaels Church, (SM) Langdown Lawn, Hythe SO45 5GR  
St Bernard's Church, (SB) Southbourne Ave, Holbury, SO45 2NT

**23<sup>rd</sup> January 2011**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time - Divine Office: Wk 3**

Sun	23 <sup>rd</sup>	9.00am Mass at St Bernard's 11.00am Mass at St Michaels
Mon	24 <sup>th</sup>	No Service ( <i>Liturgy: Memorial St Francis de Sales Bishop &amp; Doctor of the Church 1567 - 1622</i> )
Tues	25 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am SM Morning Prayer & Mass ( <i>Liturgy: Feast: The Conversion of St Paul (Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity ends today)</i> )
Wed	26 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm SM Evening Prayer & Mass ( <i>Liturgy: Memorial: St Timothy &amp; St Titus c1st - 2nd Cent</i> )
Thurs	27 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am LT Mass ( <i>Liturgy of the Day, or optl Mem. St Angela Merici, Foundress, 1474 - 1540</i> )
Fri	28 <sup>th</sup>	No Service ( <i>Liturgy: Memorial; St Thomas Aquinas, Religious &amp; Doctor of the Church, 1225 - 1274</i> )
Sat	29 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am SM Mass followed by Reconciliation until 11.30am ( <i>Liturgy of the Day or Our Lady</i> )
Sun	30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time</b> 9.00am Mass at St Bernard's 11.00am Mass at St Michaels with Baptism of baby Willow Ramsey

**Mass Intentions: For this week:** All members of the Parish, All those who are unwell, Tina Bowler (B'day), Norman Jones RIP Anniv., Rev Mr & Mrs Pitto RIP, Bridget Reeves RIP, Mary King (Intentions)

**For the week beginning 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan:** All members of the Parish, All those who are unwell, Family of Josephine Hogan RIP (Intentions), Benefactors of the Clergy Retirement Fund, Benefactors of "Living our Faith", deceased Clergy of the Province, Anne Candri RIP, Bridget Reeves RIP, Fr. Peter Sprague RIP

### New Forest East Pastoral Area - Sunday Mass Times

St Theresa, Totton - Sat Vigil Mass 6pm; Sun 10.30am  
Ashurst Community - Sun 9am  
Our Lady & St Edward, Lyndhurst - Sun 9am

### WATERSIDE CATHOLIC PARISH

Pastoral Team:  
Rev David Adams (Parish Priest)  
Rev Steve Bowler (Deacon) (023 8020 7449)  
Rev Ian Tobin (Deacon) (023 8089 7354)  
Kevin Barnett (Chair: Parish Pastoral Council)

All correspondence to: The Parish Office,  
Angel House, 6 Langdown Lawn, Hythe SO45 5GR  
**Tel: 023 8084 3479**  
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For the Ideal Gi visit  
**Faith, Hope & Charity**  
**8 ST JOHN'S STREET, HYTHE SO45 6DA**  
**Tel: 023 8020 7882**

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:** Please keep in your prayers: Nigel Bolton, Marion Butler, Petra Daniels, Pat Gallanagh, Amanda Gudge, Bishop Crispian Hollis, *Olive Jenkin*, Jim & Doris Lamb, *Pat Leigh*, Sandy Nicholas, Bridget Reeves, Norma Rudd, Eileen Shanley, May Sycamore, Betty Williams, Anne Wyatt. (If you wish someone to be included for prayers here please give their name to Fr David.)

**PRAYER POTTERY:** There next Prayer Pottery will be on Tuesday, 25th January from 11.00am until 12 noon. It takes place in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel at St Michaels, Hythe. It is led by Christine Olden and all are welcome for quiet Scripture, prayer and reflection. If you want any more details please contact Christine on 023-80-848754.

**CHRISTIAN UNITY SERVICE THIS SUNDAY, 23rd January: at Cornerstone URC in Hythe at 6.30pm. All are welcome.** The octave of prayer for Christian Unity finishes on Tuesday, 25th January. Please keep this in your prayer intentions and join other Christians for prayer if you can.

**ADVANCE NOTICE:** On Saturday, 5th February Fr David will be attending the Diocesan Pastoral Council. There will therefore be no Mass or Reconciliation that day.

**THANK YOU FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS THE WHITE FLOWER APPEAL:** The amount raised for the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC) was £86. Thank you for your generosity. The society works to raise public awareness about the sanctity of life at all its stages, from the unborn child to those nearing the end of their lives. It endeavours to bring concerns about the sanctity of life issues to members of the Houses of Parliament.

**THANKS TO THOSE WHO TOOK WINTER CLOTHING INTO "FAITH, HOPE & CHARITY" :** They still need more!! If you have any that you can donate to the shop, please do so. Also please donate quality items, (but NOT electrical goods or videos).

However, the shop does not sell only second-hand items. There are lots of **NEW** gift items, Bibles, Rosaries, devotional books, cards & craft items, also Fair-trade goods, jewellery and scented & decorative candles and more besides.

The parish depends on the shop & the volunteers who help for significant financial support.

**"WHISPERS ON THE WIND"** The late Anne Candrl, together with her daughter Pam produced another lovely collection of poems and this time there are beautiful colour illustrations too. Anne donated copies to our church and to Oakhaven Hospice. If anyone buys a copy at church all the proceeds will go to church funds. The price is £7.50p. Please put the



**CAFOD: ACT ON POVERTY: Letter from the Prime Minister.** Some months ago nearly 100 parishioners signed cards to the Prime Minister asking him to act to help the poorest in the world. On 28th October your cards and many thousand more were delivered to him. He has now replied very positively; a copy of his letter is on the notice board at both Churches. Now we need to keep him to his promises! (Louise Croll).

**CAFOD RWANDA LINK:** On Sunday, 6th February there will be a special presentation at both Masses on the situation in Rwanda and a new initiative promoted by CAFOD . This will be prepared and presented by members of our parish CAFOD group.

**SPIRITUALITY EVENT:** David Torkington invites you to the launch of his book, *Wisdom from Franciscan Italy - The Primacy of Love*. This will take place at Christ church Parish Hall, Colbury (Deerleap rd, Ashurst), on Saturday, 29th Jan 2011 at 7.00pm. Your host for the evening is Rev Kate Wilson, Vicar of Christ Church. The principal speaker who will introduce the author is: **Rev Andrew McMahon OFM (Franciscan) MA MBE**

**KEEP RE IN THE CURRICULUM:** Government proposals on a new style English Baccalaureate have left out R.E. from the Humanities subjects. On behalf of Catholic schools we need to raise concerns over this, first of all to our MP. Letters & emails can also be sent to: Dept for Education - The School Performance Data Unit, 2nd Floor, Dept. for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT; email: [mailbox.performancedatateam@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:mailbox.performancedatateam@education.gsi.gov.uk).

**ECUMENICAL STUDY GROUPS FOR LENT 2011 - WATERSIDE CHURCHES TOGETHER (SOUTH)** Waterside Churches Together (South) have decided to repeat the successful ecumenical study groups for Lent. The dates and venues are as follows: March 15th, 22nd, 29th & April 5th, 12th. On each date there will be a group at 1.30 for 2.00pm at Blackfield Baptist Church (Hampton Lane, Blackfield) and 7.00 for 7.30pm at Waterside Methodist Church (Chaple Lane, Fawley). The groups are open to all.