

Christmas: A Story of Divine Love

First of all, I'd like to wish a very happy and holy Christmas time to all our parishioners, their family members and relatives and all visitors to our parish during this holiday season.

Secondly I'd like to thank everyone who has helped to prepare for this year's celebration and all those assisting at the Liturgy.

Thirdly, thank you all for your kind wishes, prayers, blessings, cards and generous gifts. They are all very much appreciated. And thank you all for your support during the past year.

The Gospel Stories: It is inevitable that as the majority of people become more & more disconnected from the Christian faith the Gospel stories of the human and Divine origins of Jesus will be increasingly misunderstood and trivialised. These narratives are not biographical recollections as we would write them today. They are not sweet, little fairy tales. They are rich, carefully crafted, and challenging theological statements that draw on deep connections within the Jewish religious tradition, especially of course the Bible. They were also written within and with reference to particular communities & their needs at the time.

Valuing Kindness: Jesus is God's act of undeserved kindness towards humanity. Christmas is therefore a time when we give special attention to kindness and consideration. Though, of course, it must be our first priority every day of the year. In some quarters, strange as it may seem, there is a suspicion of and resentment about kindness. These attitudes probably have their roots in a fear of vulnerability and dependence on others. If we have made up our minds to "take care of number one and to blazes with everyone else" any gratuitous act of kindness is a direct challenge. It reminds us that there is an alternative way of living. Season your day with random acts of gracious kindness and many "thank yous". You'll be introducing something of the "kingdom of heaven". Just don't expect 100% appreciation all the time.

A Lesson in Acceptance: We have all been inconvenienced in some way by the cold and snowy weather. It's a salutary reminder that we are not in control. Our relationship with God will never develop properly unless we can be honest with ourselves and fully accepting of reality. This not about giving up hope. It is about replacing naïve optimism with responsibility and accepting one's potential as much as one's limitations.

God becomes a baby and so every baby becomes divine. God can put us at the centre and delight in every potential we have. We can rejoice in this and return the gift with thanksgiving. But it doesn't work when we try to make ourselves the centre in competition with every one else and excluding God. On our own we are disconnected from the Source. In Jesus & by following his way we are reunited. (DMA)

The Messenger

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

26th December 2010

The Holy Family Yr A- Divine Office: Wk 1

ONE MASS ONLY TODAY

Sun	26 th	10am St Michaels;
Mon	27 th	No Service (<i>Liturgy: Feast: St John, Apostle, Evangelist</i>)
Tues	28 th	No Service (<i>Liturgy: Feast: The Holy Innocents</i>)
Wed	29 th	7.30pm SM Evening Prayer & Mass (<i>Liturgy: Feast: St Thomas of Canterbury</i>)
Thurs	30 th	10.00am LT Mass (<i>Liturgy: of the Day</i>)
Fri	31 st	No Service (<i>Liturgy: of the Day</i>)
Sat	1 st	10.00am SM Mass (<i>Liturgy: Solemnity: Mary, Mother of God</i>)
Sun	2 nd	The Epiphany of the Lord 9.00am Mass at St Bernard's 11.00am Mass at St Michaels

Mass Intentions: For this week: All members of the Parish, Benefactors of the Clergy Retirement Fund, Contributors to the "Living Our Faith" Campaign, Bishop Crispian Hollis, Peter Farrington RIP Anniv, Benita Farrington RIP Anniv, Gilly McDermott RIP

For the week beginning 2nd Jan: All members of the Parish, All those who are unwell, , Bishop Crispian Hollis, Tony & Irene O'Connell (Wedding Anniv), Win & John Cocker (Wedding Anniv)

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,
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website: watersidecatholics.org.uk



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, Anne Candrl, Petra Daniels, Ruth Freemantle, Pat Gallanagh, Amanda Gudge, Jim & Doris Lamb, Richard Moore, 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.)

**PLEASE REMEMBER THIS COMING SUNDAY,
26th December, Boxing Day
ONE MASS ONLY - 10am at St Michaels**

"WHISPERS ON THE WIND" Anne Candrl has produced another lovely collection of poems and this time there are beautiful colour illustrations too. Anne is donating 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.

MORE SEASONAL REFLECTIONS: by Fr Ron Rolheiser are available on a handout at the back of the church. Fr Rolheiser is an internationally acclaimed spiritual writer and retreat / conference leader. His weekly column is published widely around the world in Catholic newspapers.

THE CHRISTMAS OFFERING: As usual the collection at Christmas time is a voluntary contribution towards your parish priest's annual income. Your generosity in difficult financial circumstances is greatly appreciated. If you want further information about how priests are financially supported please read the leaflet at the back of church.

ST BERNARD'S: Preliminary Training for new Ministers of Holy Communion - 1 session only either Tuesday, 11th Jan at 7.30pm until 8.30pm at St Bernard's, or Saturday, 15th Jan at 12 noon until 1pm at St Bernard's. Those who kindly accepted the invitation to be Ministers at St Bernard's will begin their ministry from the start of February 2011. Please look out for your Rota which is available this weekend.

PARKING AT ST BERNARDS: Please be careful when parking on (what was!) the grassy area. *The area at the back near the trees is particularly soft & muddy & should be avoided!!* **Spaces immediately outside the church should be left free for disabled parking.**

CHRISTMAS POSTERS: are available to remind people that the real meaning of Christmas is celebrating the birth of Christ. They are donated

OUR LADY & ST JOSEPH CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, LYMINGTON: The closing date for applications for a reception place in September 2011 is on Saturday, 15th January 2011. Introductory leaflets are available at the back of the church or can be obtained directly from the school. Contact details are as follows: Tel: 01590-672711; email: adminoffice@ourladyst-joseph.hants.sch.uk Website: www.ourladyst-joseph,hants.sch.uk

THANKS & FAREWELL TO FRANCIS WADDINGTON: Sadly Francis will be moving away in early January to return to the family home where he can give more support to his mother. Francis has been in the parish over 20 years and has faithfully served the parish community in many ways: as a member and lately Chair of the Finance Committee and main accounts person, as a member of the St Michaels choir until recently, as a regular driver of the minibus for the school run until last year, and more besides. We wish him all the best for the future, lots of enjoyment on the Swanage Steam Railway and many blessings.

THANKS TO TINA & ALL THE VOLUNTEERS AT OUR FAITH, HOPE & CHARITY PARISH SHOP: The shop has just been able to pay over to the parish the sum of £3000, and there will be more to come in the new year. Thanks to everyone for hard work, loyalty and constancy. **PLEASE EVERYONE SUPPORT THE PARISH SHOP.** The shop does not sell only second-hand items. There are lots of NEW gift items, Fairtrade goods and scented & decorative candles and more besides.

THANKS FOR A MOST ENJOYABLE SENIOR CITIZENS CHRISTMAS LUNCH: Special thanks to Win Cocker, her daughter-in-law, Sue, Tina Bowler, Veronica Chadwick, Linda Guilding, Ann Harding, Liz Jones & Mary King. The food was lovely and abundant, the raffle great & everyone had an enjoyable time. Thanks to those who gave lifts to others.

NEW PORTSMOUTH PEOPLE NOW AVAILABLE! See back of church.