

OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH In NEW MILTON

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

15 Mount Ave, New Milton. BH25 6NT.

Parish priest: *Father George Ngwa*

Church opening hours **07.30- 17.00** (during winter)



2nd Sunday of Advent

Year B

10 December 2017

MAKING MY LIFE A STRAIGHT ROAD FOR THE LORD.

Our first reading and the Gospel both are reminding us during this advent to listen to the voice that is loudly crying in the wilderness telling us **“Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.”** This means we make a journey back to ourselves. We know that the journey of salvation is not a journey in space. It is rather a journey of internal change. Change is effected in us when we become, through Christ, awakened to God's presence and love for us.

As Catholics, we must realize that if we wish to grow spiritually, we cannot follow the paths or the ideas of others religions. No amount of mediation or renunciation of the world, no amount of right living or the following of laws, will achieve for us the spiritual growth we yearn for.

We must understand that our spiritual growth comes from one source that we grow spiritually in one way alone: by accepting the infinite outpouring of love and grace offered to us through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. For the Catholic, spiritual growth can be nothing but a continual turning to Christ. In this we come to understand an astonishing truth, that spiritual growth is really a growth in relationship, a constant deepening of our relationship with Christ, accompanied by a trustful surrender to him of our personal needs. We must add to this a willingness to do his will and a sense of repentance for any previous failure to do so.

We must trust him not only with our present need but also with the salvation of our souls and those we care about and here we have spiritual growth in a nutshell. We grow through our awareness of Christ's constant presence, of his constant love for us. We grow as our trust in him grows. We grow as our will becomes one with his. We grow as we repent and repair the many little ruptures in our relationship with him that our sinfulness has caused. Spiritual growth becomes spiritual surrender — a surrender to infinite love. We surrender to the One who gave himself for us out of love. We grow through becoming closer to him.

Making this bond a profound encounter

Christ offers us many paths to meet him, many means to grow closer to him. Primary among these, of course, is faith itself. Then come the sacraments. **Among the sacraments there is the Eucharist in which “heaven and earth meet.”** The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us that the Eucharist is **“the source and summit of Christian life,” and this is certainly so.**

The Eucharist is Christ's love made manifest. It is the ultimate offering of intimate relationship to sinful man. In the Eucharist, Christ comes to us under the appearance of bread and wine, entering our bodies and our souls. Here we encounter him in a way that is infinitely more profound than any other meeting we will have in our earthly lives. In the Eucharist, Christ offers us the intimate relationship that causes spiritual growth, making us yearn to be in unbroken intimacy with him.

It is up to us only to turn to Christ, to accept the gifts that he offers us. If we do, if we turn to him and away from sin we will find that we no longer need to worry very much about spiritual growth, that such growth will become an integral part of our lives. Spiritual growth will turn out to be simply our earthly journey to God. But we must ask the question that since human life is imperfect, weak and hopelessly divided creatures; how can we hope to turn to Christ constantly? **... to be continued.**

Fr. George

Bible Sunday – 10 December 2017

A Conversation with God

*"In the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven lovingly comes to meet his children, and talks with them
" Dei Verbum"*

The Bible is the great story of the marvels of God's mercy. Every one of its pages is steeped in the love of the Father who from the moment of creation wished to impress the signs of his love on the universe. Through the words of the prophets and the wisdom writings, the Holy Spirit shaped the history of Israel as a recognition of God's tenderness and closeness, despite the people's infidelity. Jesus' life and preaching decisively marked the history of the Christian community, which has viewed its mission in terms of Christ's command to be a permanent instrument of his mercy and forgiveness (cf. Jn 20:23). Through Sacred Scripture, kept alive by the faith of the Church, the Lord continues to speak to his Bride, showing her the path she must take to enable the Gospel of salvation to reach everyone. I greatly desire that God's word be increasingly celebrated, known and disseminated, so that the mystery of love streaming from this font of mercy may be ever better understood. As the Apostle tells us clearly: "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Tim 3:16).

It would be beneficial if every Christian community, on one Sunday of the liturgical year, could renew its efforts to make the Sacred Scriptures better known and more widely diffused. It would be a Sunday given over entirely to the word of God, so as to appreciate the inexhaustible riches contained in that constant dialogue between the Lord and his people. Creative initiatives can help make this an opportunity for the faithful to become living vessels for the transmission of God's word. Initiatives of this sort would certainly include the practice of lectio divina, so that the prayerful reading of the sacred text will help support and strengthen the spiritual life. Such a reading, centred on themes relating to mercy, will enable a personal experience of the great fruitfulness of the biblical text – read in the light of the Church's spiritual tradition – and thus give rise to concrete gestures and works of charity." Pope Francis, Misericordia et Misera, 7

Daily Reflections

Very short daily reflections on the gospel by Bishop Robert Barron sent to your email (takes 2-5 minutes)

<http://dailycatholicgospel.com/>

Sacred Space

Running for 18 years this daily prayer and reflection on the daily gospel has a Jesuit approach finding a prayerful reflective place from which to read the scripture. Run by the Irish Jesuits and Loyola Press. (Takes 5-10 minutes)

<https://www.sacredspace.ie/>

Pray as you Go

A daily prayer session from the Jesuits, designed for use on portable MP3 players and phones, to help you pray whilst travelling to and from work, study, etc. A new prayer session is produced every day. It is not a 'Thought for the Day', a sermon or a bible-study, but rather a framework for your own prayer. Lasting between ten and thirteen minutes, it combines music, scripture and some questions for reflection. [Available as an App](#)

The Wednesday Gospel Webinar

Specially for our diocese Sr Hyacinthe from Sway in the New Forest reflects in depth on the upcoming Sunday Gospel and offers formation in faith through Holy Scripture. Join the webinar on a Wednesday evening to join the conversation or listen to the podcast at your convenience.

Takes 50 minutes to an hour. [Join the webinar](#) or [listen to it on itunes](#)

Torch

Torch seeks to share inspiring Catholic preaching from the Dominican Friars.

They publish a homily for every Sunday of the year to fit with the readings at Mass, plus additional sermons on other important liturgical days. (takes 5- 10 minutes) <https://www.english.op.org/torch>

St Paul Center

Weekly reflection on the Sunday Gospel from Dr. Scott Hahn from the St Paul Center. (takes 3-5 minutes).

<https://stpaulcenter.com/studies-tools/sunday-bible-reflections/>

Have you ever had a Christmas where you felt like you were really prepared?
Have you ever had a Christmas where you walked into Christmas Mass and you felt focused and peaceful and ready?

We prepare for everything we consider important in life, and Advent is the time we prepare for Christmas.

For many people, preparing for Christmas includes shopping, baking cookies, wrapping presents, hanging decorations, and much, much more. Often these activities are stressful and chaotic, and they easily become a distraction from what Christmas is really all about. Welcome to **Best Advent Ever**.

What Is Best Advent Ever?

It's a free email program that will help you slow down and focus on what matters most during this busy season. You'll experience Advent in a whole new way—leading to the best Christmas of your life!

Here are a few on line ideas to help you make the most of Advent

CAFOD's online Advent calendar 2017

The **USCCB website** has a lot of items on Advent

The Liturgy Office of the Bishops Conference of England & Wales

Helpers required to put up the decorations in the church. The hall is being decorated on Saturday the 16th and the Church can be done the same day. We should have our Christmas tree delivered by the 15th. Thank you.

Praying for the Archdiocese of Bamenda

Recently, I wrote to all the MPs of our Diocese – 34 constituencies cover our area – to ask them to raise as a matter of urgency the situation in Cameroon with those responsible in our government, that pressure might be brought to bear to help resolve the tensions and difficulties being faced. Nearly all have responded and done so favourably. Here is a response typical of many:

Dear Bishop Egan

Thank you for your letter about the situation in Cameroon. I am indeed aware of the worrying situation in that country: in particular the Biya regime's violent repression of protest against the compulsory use of French in courts and education, and of political opposition in general in the run-up to next year's scheduled presidential election.

I have written to the Foreign Secretary pressing the points you raise, and asking him what the government is doing to help safeguard human rights, including the right to education, in Cameroon. I will send you a copy of his reply as soon as I receive it.

With best wishes.

I am intending to visit Archbishop Cornelius for a few days in early February and I will take with me the prayers and best wishes of our Diocese. Please continue to remember Cameroon and our sister diocese of Bamenda in your prayers. Let us ask the Lord for a speedy resolution of the current troubles. Please pray too for our own government and for all our Members of Parliament who represent us and labour to serve us.

Portsmouth Diocese is sending a group of 18-30s to World Youth Day, Panama in January 2019 (21st-27th). Anyone who would like to go should express their interest by emailing youth@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk no later than 15th January. The cost is in the region of £1800, and support will be given for seeking sponsorship and fundraising.

Sunday	10	December	2nd Sunday of Advent	18.00 Vigil Mass - <i>Manuel Caneda, thanksgiving for recovery</i> 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Missa Pro Populo</i>	Coffee & tea in hall after Mass
Monday	11	December	St Damasus 1		
Tuesday	12	December	Our Lady of Quadaalupe	18.00 Exposition, 18.30 Rosary 18.50 Benediction 19.00 Holy Mass – <i>special intention</i>	7 pm Tap classes
Wednesday	13	December	St Lucy	09.00 Exposition, 09.30 Rosary 09.50 Benediction 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Grace Mambo, birthday intentions</i>	
Thursday	14	December	St John of the Cross	09.00 Exposition, 09.30 Rosary 09.50 Benediction 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Eileen Ramsay RIP</i>	Rosary intention for peace in the world
Friday	15	December	of the 2 nd week of Advent	09.00 Exposition, 09.30 Rosary 09.50 Benediction 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>birthday intentions & 60th anniversary</i>	
Saturday	16	December	of the 2 nd week of Advent	09.30 Divine Mercy chaplet veneration of the relic of Sr Faustina 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Antonia & Manuel 45th anniversary</i> 18.00 Vigil Mass – <i>Elza</i>	Confessions after morning Mass & before Vigil Mass
Sunday	17	December	3 rd Sunday of Advent	10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Missa Pro Populo</i>	Coffee & tea in hall after Mass

Prayer to St Michael, said at the end of Masses. St Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who wander through the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen

Christmas masses: Christmas Vigil is Sunday 24th December at 8pm with carols starting at 7.15pm. Christmas morning at 10.00.

Collections 2/3 December	
loose	346.17
envelopes	251.00
Thank you for your continued support	

	Sat 9 Dec	Sun 10 Dec	Sat 16 Dec	Sun 17 Dec
Reader	A Nash	S Ramsay	B Dempster	P Caffyn
	P Thorpe	J Thomas	M Newland	C Barrett
EMHC	R or M Yon	A Joseph	T Gearey	S Salinger
	C d'Espagnac	J Nichols	B Dempster	A Caneda
	M Harwood	M Buckland	K Dempster	J Kurian

Parish priest: Father George Ngwa

email: gngwa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk emergency mobile: **07475753040**

Parish office: 01425 614968 Hall Booking via Parish Office

lolnewmilton@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Secretary: Johanna Thomas Wed/ Fri 10.45-12.00.

Our Parish Live streaming: <http://churchservices.tv/newmilton>

Website: wwwnfwfwp.org.uk

Safeguarding: Katherine Dempster Tel: 01425 611643 email: katherine.dempster@btinternet.com