

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)**



3rd Sunday of Advent

Year B

17 December 2017

Gaudete Sunday

MAKING MY LIFE A STRAIGHT ROAD FOR THE LORD. NO 2

This third Sunday of Advent the prophet John tells us *“I am, as Isaiah prophesied: a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the lord.”* Through his Church, Christ offers us many ways to deepen our relationship with him. It is up to us to take them seriously. We have the sacraments, of course, each one of them a unique and inexhaustible fountain of graces. We also have the sacramentals and the many prayers of the Church. They will bring us into deeper intimacy with Christ. It is sad but true that many Catholics today do not really understand this. As they strive to grow spiritually they ignore the most important pathways to the only One – Christ, who can offer them true spiritual growth. If we want to grow in our spiritual lives we should and must practice the following:

Participate fully and Actively in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass: Many people attend Mass in a distracted frame of mind. We must be fully present and prepared. We should not rush into Church thinking of a thousand things. We must enter Church filled with joy and gratitude, knowing that we go to meet our Creator. Our time at Mass should be totally in prayer. It should also be filled with anticipation, for during Communion Christ comes to us and lives with us and offers us infinite love. After Mass we should pause a bit before the tabernacle filled with thanksgiving for what we have so graciously been given.

Spiritual Cleansing - Take advantage of Confession: Sinfulness is part of the human condition — one that separates us from Christ. Christ offers us a way to put our sins behind us and to experience once again his loving embrace through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. What possible reason can there be for ignoring this? If we stay in our sins we push Christ away from us and we have no hope of growing in the spiritual life. Our sins should weigh heavily on us; we should yearn for confession, which offers us Christ again. A key spiritual point made by the saints is to rise promptly after every fall. We often hear the proverb that the good man falls seven times a day, but the rest of that verse says, *“BUT HE GETS BACK UP”* (Proverbs 27:16). Judas betrayed Jesus and fell into despair. Peter betrayed Jesus and sought His forgiveness. God is not unsympathetic to the fact that we are weak. He wants us to keep trying and to **never give up**. In short, we should learn from our mistakes and use them as a foundation for growth, not diminishment, with joyful recourse to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Love our Blessed Mother the Blessed Virgin Mary: Through Mary we meet Christ; through Mary’s prayers we are brought closer to Christ. The Blessed Mother is our mother. She should be our constant companion in the spiritual life. Pray the Rosary.

Develop a life of Prayer: Every moment is an opportunity for prayer. We never have to be far from a moment of prayer. Each time we pray we draw closer to God. Every moment of prayer, whether it involves the Rosary or the Liturgy of the Hours or simply a few spontaneous words of our own is a conversation with Christ.

Encounter Christ in the Scriptures: Reading the Scriptures meditatively can be of enormous help in coming to know Christ. Here we find Christ earthly teachings and his actions. Here we see again and again his enormous love for us, his great sacrifice for us. Through the Scriptures we come to know Our Lord in a deeper and deeper way and thus our relationship with him grows.

Taking Examples from the Saints: The Church has canonized innumerable saints. These are our examples. They have walked the road of holiness, and their lives show us the many ways that closeness with Christ can be achieved. Here we discover how many of them were just like us in their ways of acting and thinking. We must learn about the saints; we must study their lives, read their writings and pray for their intercession.

Improve our relationship with Others: Spiritual growth transforms the outer life. There are some people who pray regularly, who go to Mass nearly every day, who are punctilious about every religious rule and regulation. At the same time they are indifferent to the needs of others. At times they may even be cruel. This is a tragic failure. Their relationship with Christ is damaged. Perhaps they only believe it exists. When we are in real relationship with Christ, we come to see that each human being is created in the divine image and is of infinite value. To grow in the spiritual life is to grow in the love of others — to find Christ in them and to serve Christ in them.

CONCLUSION: Saint Pope John Paul II wrote, “[*Although*] *the journey is totally sustained by grace, it nonetheless demands an intense spiritual commitment*” The forms of this world are passing away. The great good is Heaven. How quickly our lives will come to an end. Do not try to make an absolute out of some fleeting pleasure or good of this world. The goal is eternal happiness and joy with God and the saints. Keep in mind that eternity will last quite a long time. Conversely, it would be quite a tragedy to “waste away the ages in hell” (F.W. Faber). The Christian model of faith is one of growth in relationship with God. “The Fathers of the Church tell us that he who does not go forward on the way to God goes back”. In order words; if we are not growing upward we are growing downward.” **Fr. George Ngwa**

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Christmas Offerings - Gifts for Our Priests.

The Church in England and Wales realised that Christians and people of good will can help augment the low salaries of the Priests by way of a token or gift. For them it was clear that Priests don't always receive the thanks they deserve. It was for this reason that Episcopal Conference of Bishops for England and Wales accepted that the Offerings for Christmas should be the gift from the people to their Priests. These offerings (Christmas and Easter) forms a major part of their annual income and they always look forward tom it. Being a Priest is a bit like being a parent. Work, vocation, passion and duty are all rolled into one. Like our moms who get praised for a great dinner, but don't get applauded every time they do a good deed, Priests are recognized for the big events, but not always for the smaller things.

This Christmas let's make an effort to show the Priests in our lives just how loved and appreciated they are. ***No matter where you attend Holy Mass – in your parish or out of your parish.*** He could be your childhood friend, relation, classmate, or he officiated at the Baptism of your child(ren). Prepared and/or celebrated their First Holy Communion. Prepared you and your spouse and/or Celebrated your wedding, He was there for the family at the good and rough times and brought meaning to your life. Do not listen to those discouraging voices telling you not to be charitable. Let it come from your heart.

Fr. George Ngwa

The Letter of Pope Francis on the World Day of the Poor concludes..

This Sunday, if there are poor people where we live who seek protection and assistance, let us draw close to them: it will be a favourable moment to encounter the God we seek. Following the teaching of Scripture (cf. *Gen 18:3-5; Heb 13:2*), let us welcome them as honoured guests at our table; they can be teachers who help us live the faith more consistently. With their trust and readiness to receive help, they show us in a quiet and often joyful way, how essential it is to live simply and to abandon ourselves to God's providence.

8. At the heart of all the many concrete initiatives carried out on this day should always be *prayer*. Let us not forget that the *Our Father* is the prayer of the poor. Our asking for bread expresses our entrustment to God for our basic needs in life. Everything that Jesus taught us in this prayer expresses and brings together the cry of all who suffer from life's uncertainties and the lack of what they need. When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, he answered in the words with which the poor speak to our one Father, in whom all acknowledge themselves as brothers and sisters. The *Our Father* is a prayer said in the plural: the bread for which we ask is “ours”, and that entails sharing, participation and joint responsibility. In this prayer, all of us recognize our need to overcome every form of selfishness, in order to enter into the joy of mutual acceptance.

9. I ask my brother Bishops, and all priests and deacons who by their vocation have the mission of supporting the poor, together with all consecrated persons and all associations, movements and volunteers everywhere, to help make this *World Day of the Poor* a tradition that concretely contributes to evangelization in today's world.

This new *World Day*, therefore, should become a powerful appeal to our consciences as believers, allowing us to grow in the conviction that sharing with the poor enables us to understand the deepest truth of the Gospel. The poor are not a problem: they are a resource from which to draw as we strive to accept and practise in our lives the essence of the Gospel. *From the Vatican, 13 June 2017 Memorial of Saint Anthony of Padua* **Francis**

MISSIO representative/ promoter required.

Yvonne Saunders is stepping down after doing this for many years. Thank you Yvonne for all your hard work. Please will someone come forward who can do this important role. Yvonne writes:-

The job of the promoter entails delivering pamphlets three times a year to people who have signed up to have the Red Boxes in their homes. Money is also collected from these boxes at that time and delivered to the local Missio Secretary. A calender is delivered at the end of the year but no money is collected. The money collected goes to the APF Missio and the Mill Hill Fathers. They use it for Catholic Churches around the world to support themselves, catholic priests, lay missionaries, hospitals, orphanages, Catholic primary and secondary schools, dispensaries and clinics, care homes, elderly people or chronically ill, disabled, or people living with leprosy.

Lost property- there is a light blue anorak in the hall which has been hanging there for ages and a pair of glasses in the sacristy plus other stuff in the lost property box.

Confessions. Confessions, Confessions. After every Mass next week and in the evenings by appointment.

If you want to send a notice for the newsletter please send it in by Wednesday of that week (if the office is open). Put the email heading as „NEWSLETTER insertion” so it can be clearly recognised. It may be edited if too long. If it needs to be reinserted for another week please send another email. Thank you.

OFFICE HOURS over the Christmas period. The last day the office is open before Christmas and the New Year is Wednesday 20th December. The office reopens on Wednesday 3rd January.

There will be a double newsletter for the weeks beginning Sunday 24th December and Sunday 31st December. All mass intentions for this period have been booked already.

VERY IMPORTANT.. READERS and Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion...please can you sign up for the Christmas Masses. The list is on the notice board at the back of the Church. Thank you.

If you would like to be a Welcomer for these Masses please put your name down. We could do with somebody on both entrances as well as someone to help check people are seated. For the Vigil Mass you will need to be there early as the carols begin at 7.15pm. Thank you.

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS Cleaning the Church will take place on Friday 22nd December after Mass (10.45- 12.00) so it is ready for Christmas. Anyone and everyone is welcome to help. The more the merrier.



There is a **SECOND COLLECTION** this weekend for flowers for Christmas. Thank you.

PALS - HAPPY CHRISTMAS to ALL OUR MEMBERS especially our new members and those unable to be with us for our **CHRISTMAS LUNCH** last Tuesday, 12th. which we all enjoyed.

JANUARY BOOKED DATES:

5th - Monthly Meeting in our Hall 10:30
16th - Lunch - at venue 12:00 for 12:30
24th - Outing as chosen - meet after Mass
27th - Concert - Mozart / Purcell - local venue- 7:30, tickets at the door

If you are in our Parish and would like to be out and about more - free to join - contact any member or Jane Gow 01425 - 501126

Sadly the Parish Diaries will not be available by this weekend. The company made a mistake and so they had to be redone. Hopefully they will be with us by next week

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.

Sunday	17	December	3rd Sunday of Advent (Gaudete)	18.00 Vigil Mass - Elza 10.00 Holy Mass – Missa Pro Populo	Coffee & tea in hall after Mass
Monday	18	December	“O Adonai”		
Tuesday	19	December	“O Root of Jesse”	18.00 Exposition, 18.30 Rosary 18.50 Benediction 19.00 Holy Mass – Mary & Bill Hodgkinson RIP	Confessions after Mass
Wednesday	20	December	“O Key of David”	09.00 Exposition, 09.30 Rosary 09.50 Benediction 10.00 Holy Mass – Philip Sloman RIP	Confessions after Mass
Thursday	21	December	“O Morning Star”	09.00 Exposition, 09.30 Rosary 09.50 Benediction 10.00 Holy Mass – Holy Souls & Derrick Hobbs RIP	Rosary intention for peace in the world Confessions after Mass
Friday	22	December	“O King of the Nations”	09.00 Exposition, 09.30 Rosary 09.50 Benediction 10.00 Holy Mass – Magdalena Maynard, birthday intentions 3.30pm → <i>Philippino Christmas Mass</i>	Confessions after Mass Cleaning the Church for Christmas 10.45-12.00. All welcome to help please
Saturday	23	December	“O Emmanuel”	09.30 Divine Mercy chaplet veneration of the relic of Sr Faustina 10.00 Holy Mass – Andy Sacco RIP 18.00 Vigil Mass – Emanuel Saliba RIP	Confessions after morning Mass & before Vigil Mass
Sunday	24	December	4 th Sunday of Advent	10.00 Holy Mass – Ned Horan RIP 20.00 Vigil Mass of Christmas-MPP	Coffee & tea in hall after Mass

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

Collections 9/10 December	
loose	348.40
envelopes	252.00
Thank you for your continued support	

	Sat 16 Dec	Sun 17 Dec	Sat 23 Dec	Sun 24 Dec
Reader	B Dempster	P Caffyn	M Hobbs	C Fradd
	M Newland	C Barrett	C d’Espagnac	J Thomas
EMHC	T Gearey	S Salinger	R or M Yon	M Tanner
	B Dempster	A Caneda	F Fallon	A Joseph
	K Dempster	J Kurian	J Thomas	J Nicholls

Parish priest: Father George Ngwa

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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

