

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 –



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR "B" 13TH DECEMBER 2020

“Be Happy at All Times”

Are Christians supposed to always be happy?

In our second reading this third Sunday of advent, St. Paul writing to the Thessalonians tells us to be *happy at all times*. The question now is - Is happiness something Christians should strive for?

We have sometimes heard the slogan that a sad Christian is a contradiction. Many say that it's wrong to suggest that a Christian should always be happy. We can ask ourselves the question: Is it a requirement that a Christian should be happy? Or again is it wrong to feel sad if you are a Christian?

We know that a Christian life should not be lived on the basis of feelings at all, but on the basis of faith; but we wrongfully equate faith with our human feelings and emotions.

I can feel sad about the state of the world. I can be sorrowful because of loss. And at the same time I do not have to lose my faith and confidence that God has His hand over my life and that He will cause all things to work together for my very best. With His power I can overcome anything that would cause me to lose my peace, my hope, my contentment, my *joy* in my spirit.

Happiness, as most people think of it, tends to be externally triggered and is based on other people, things, places, thoughts and events; but the Christian thinks of happiness as a deep foundation of trust in God. A rock on which he/she can stand, regardless of external triggers, other people, things, places, thoughts and events. “A choice that I make, over and over in life; a choice that I am not able to make in my own strength but that I can make using the power of the Holy Spirit. Again, the Bible says: “He who heeds the word wisely will find good, and whoever trusts in the Lord, happy is he.” Proverbs 16:20.”

This idea that Christians should always be happy seems to be misconstrued these days, perhaps because the Holy Father, Pope Francis, likes to speak a lot about joy in the Christian life. But joy and happiness are two different things. Happiness is something that you feel while joy is something you possess. We cannot always control our feelings. Feelings often just happen to us, sometimes with good reason and other times not. Good, faithful Christians may feel sadness for any number of reasons. Perhaps, like when Jesus wept, you have lost a loved one. Perhaps someone you love is suffering. Maybe you have been through a break-up, lost a job, or failed a class. These are all legitimate reasons to be sad. Sadness is an appropriate response to a sad occurrence. Feeling sad does not make you a bad Christian.

We all experience that we come into situations in which we are “shaken.” Is it wrong to suggest that someone should be happy even though something painful has happened in their life? Or that they should be happy even when dealing with depression and other illnesses? It *is* wrong if you equate happiness with good feelings. But it is *not* wrong if happiness is not just a human emotion, but an established confidence in God and His love for me; a deep spiritual rest and certainty. It is written, “*Rejoice always.*” 1. Thessalonians 5:16. That doesn't mean to rejoice that the painful thing has happened, but to rejoice that I know that God's hand is over me regardless of what has happened. To know that I can lean on Him, that He will bear me up and hold me in His hand through the hard times, through the trials, through the sorrows.

Happiness is not an absence of sorrow or grief. Jesus was “a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” Isaiah 53:3. Yet He was “anointed with the oil of gladness, more than His companions,” because He loved righteousness and hated lawlessness. (Hebrews 1:8-9.) If I have the same love for righteousness

and hatred for sin that He had, then I too will be glad in my spirit. “But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God; yes, let them rejoice exceedingly.” Psalm 68:3.

Don't confuse happiness with pleasure because neither is happiness the fulfilment of my natural, human passions and desires. In fact, these lead to emptiness, dissatisfaction, and ultimately, misery, after what is described as the “passing pleasure of sin” is over. Happiness should not be confused with pleasure: enjoyment or satisfaction derived from following one's selfish desires. It is through *overcoming* these passions and desires – the sin in my flesh – that I get happiness deep in my spirit.

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.” Matthew 6:19-20. Knowing that something eternal and unfading is awaiting me after a life of faithfulness, even through trials, sorrows, and grief, gives me this deep internal joy that has nothing to do with good “feelings.” I have “... an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.” 1 Peter 1:4.

Being able to love in a situation that in former times caused offense, bitterness, or wrath brings genuine gladness into the heart – this is happiness

Being able to be at peace in a situation that in the past would have caused anxiety, fear, and turmoil brings genuine gladness into the heart – this is happiness

Being able to turn our eyes away from things that used to bind us brings genuine gladness into the heart – this is happiness

Being able to serve and give when we used to be full of laziness and selfishness brings genuine gladness into the heart – this too is happiness

What is the Difference Between Happiness and Joy?

Are happiness and joy the same thing? The definition of happiness is the state of being happy. The definition of joy is a feeling of great pleasure and happiness, rejoice. Clearly, these are not the same thing. Happiness is a choice we make on a daily basis, either we are going to be sad, angry, etc or we're going to be happy. Joy is what we have in a relationship with the Lord. Joy is also the feeling we get from having a job that fills us with purpose, having wonderful friends, or a loving family.

In general, God likes to see his children happy and thriving. He also likes to see his children take notice of what he is trying to teach them. No matter what we are going through, God wants to see us happy, whether it is at this moment or on down the line in the future.

Fr. George Ngwa

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HOLY MASS BOOKING ON LINE DURING CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Hampshire is still governed by Tier 2 Covid Restrictions, therefore, you will be able to attend Holy Mass on Wednesdays and Fridays at 10:00 a.m. and Sundays at 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. All other Masses will be available via Live-Streaming at <http://churchservices.tv/newmilton> and the Church will be open for *Private Prayer* on Wednesdays and Fridays after Holy Mass till 3:00 p.m.

It will still be necessary to restrict the number of parishioners in Church for each Mass to 30, therefore, you will need to book your place in advance. We now have an “on-line” booking system in place, which you can find by going onto our website at <https://www.nfwp.org.uk> and clicking on: **coronavirus-how-to-book-a-seat-for-mass-1**/(scroll down left hand column to CORONAVIRUS:Welcome to Our Lady of Lourdes, New Milton and click on CORONAVIRUS: How to book a seat for Mass) you will be directed to the following Links: Sunday 20th Dec.- <https://forms.gle/zADE9Y9LgRGbsEZw5> . If anybody does not have the facility to book on line, would they please contact Lizzie in the Parish Office on either a Wednesday between 12:00 noon and 3:00 p.m. or on a Friday between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

MASS TIMES OVER CHRISTMAS & OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS

DAY	MASS	
Christmas Vigil Thursday 24 th December	4:00 p.m. Mass for Children	No Rosary, Benediction
	6:00 p.m.	
	8:00 p.m.	
Christmas Day Friday 25 th December	8:00 a.m.	
	10:00 a.m.	No Rosary, Benediction
OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS		
Saturday 26 th December	10:00 a.m.	
Vigil Mass Holy Family	6:00 p.m.	
Sunday - Holy Family 27 th December	8:00 a.m.	
	10:00 a.m.	
Monday – Holy Innocents 28 th December	10:00 a.m.	No Rosary, Benediction
Tuesday – 29 th December	10:00 a.m.	Rosary and Benediction
Wednesday 30 th December	10:00 a.m.	Rosary, Benediction
Thursday 31 st December	10:00 a.m.	
	4:00 p.m. – thanksgiving Mass for the end of the year	No Rosary, Benediction
Friday – Holy Mother of God 1st January 2021	8:00 a.m.	
	10:00 a.m.	Rosary and Benediction

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE ON INDOOR SINGING - From advice by the Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Carol Singing can take place in Church by a choir of not more than 6 people but the congregation should not participate in any activity that can create aerosols, including singing and chanting.

FROM BISHOP PHILIP - CLERGY CHRISTMAS DONATION This Christmas we celebrate and give thanks for all the dedication, guidance and care our priests give us throughout our Diocese and in each Parish. If you would like to give a gift to support our Parish Priest – Father George - in his vocation and mission, please visit our Parish Website or click on the link <https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/new-milton-clergy-christmas-collection>. As the chief shepherd, Bishop Philip and the Diocesan Curia have designed a webpage which will henceforth be used for the Christmas & Easter donations to the Priests of the Diocese of Portsmouth. Many people showed their concerns when last Easter the closure of our Churches greatly affected their willingness to do this according to their various dispositions. This website is so easy to use & the sum total collected transparent to all.)

TO OUR CATHOLIC UNIVERSE AND CATHOLIC TIMES READERS IN THE PARISH:- at the moment you are unable to collect your paper at Mass, but you can get it delivered direct to your home every week, POST FREE. Please go to www.thecatholicuniverse.com or call them on 0161 820 5722 and they will arrange for you. SPECIAL OFFER 3 MONTHS :-£22.00 or 12 Months:- £80.00

SURVEY OF PARISHIONERS & PEOPLE OF THE DIOCESE – We have been asked by Portsmouth Diocese to ask parishioners & people of the Diocese to complete a Questionnaire in order that they can better understand what you think and what you consider important to you as we journey in faith together. The link to download the Questionnaire is on the homepage of the Diocesan website www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk. Chris Smith can provide paper copies for those unable to access the digital version on 02394 216 496. Your co-operation would be much appreciated – thank you!

NEW FOREST BASICS BANK – Please keep your donations coming for this very worthwhile cause, which is particularly needed over the Christmas period. Thank you!

MRS JOAN COYNE Would like to express her thanks to all members of our Church for the support and many prayers offered over the past, difficult year. Mrs Coyne is moving shortly to be closer to her family near Brighton but she very much hopes to keep in touch with dear friends.

LIVE-IN CARER/COMPANION - If you know of anyone who needs live-in care or companionship, please call Helen on 07867 978 558. Helen can offer excellent references, has DBS clearance and her own vehicle.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR "B" 13TH DECEMBER 2020

Sunday Vigil		12	Dec.	Vigil Mass of the 3 rd Sunday of Advent Year B	6.00 p.m. Holy Mass – <i>Rossa John (RIP)</i>	
Sunday		13	Dec.	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT Year B	08:00 Holy Mass – <i>Jane Sloman & Family (God's Blessing)</i> 10:00 Holy Mass – <i>Mary & Jack Conway (RIP)</i>	
Monday		14	Dec.	St. John of the Cross	10:00 Holy Mass	
Tuesday		15	Dec.	Tuesday of the 3 rd Week of Advent Year B	18:00 Exposition 18:30 Rosary 18:50 Benediction 19:00 Holy Mass – <i>For All the Souls of the Yon & David Families (RIP)</i>	6:00-7:00 p.m. Rosary, Benediction
Wednesday		16	Dec.	Wednesday of the 3 rd Week of Advent Year B	10:00 a.m. Holy Mass – <i>Maria Alonso (Intention)</i>	6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Rosary and Benediction
Thursday		17	Dec.	Liturgy of the Day	10:00 Holy Mass – <i>Brigid Horan (RIP)</i>	6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Rosary and Benediction
Friday		18	Dec.	Liturgy of the Day	10:00 Holy Mass- <i>Jack & Mary Loftus (RIP)</i>	6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Rosary and Benediction
Saturday		19	Dec.	Liturgy of the Day	09:30 Divine Mercy Devotion 10:00 Holy Mass – <i>Charles & Minnie Garbett (RIP)</i>	
Saturday Vigil				Vigil Mass of the 4 th Sunday of Advent Year "B"	6:00 p.m. Holy Mass – <i>William & Mary Hodgkinson (for the Souls of)</i>	
Sunday		20	Dec.	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR B	8:00 - Holy Mass – <i>Anna Matthew (RIP)</i> 10:00 – Holy Mass – <i>All deceased members of the Sheehan Family</i>	

Your continued financial support during these very challenging times would be very much appreciated

Parish priest: Father George Ngwa

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Hall Bookings suspended during the Pandemic.

Secretary: Lizzie Davies– Office Hours 12.00h to 15.00h Wednesday & 10.00h to 13.00h Friday

Our Parish Live Streaming: <http://churchservices.tv/newmilton> Website: www.nfwp.org.uk

Safeguarding Minister: Tony Harwood Tel: 01425 511 952 or email hughharwood314@hotmail.co.uk

PRAYER FOR THE RENEWAL OF OUR DIOCESE – (to be said at home even with Church closure).
O Sacred Heart of Jesus, we beg you to change us, to convert us and to make us holy. Fill us with a deeper faith, hope and love for you. Send into our hearts the cleansing fire of the Holy Spirit and powerfully renew all the clergy, religious and laity of our Diocese. Unite us in love and respect for one another and unify us as your one, holy people. Grant us a new passion and zeal for the Catholic Faith, for Mission, Outreach and Service. Help us to proclaim your Gospel generously to the poor and needy that many more souls may be saved by finding their way to you in your Church. May Mary Immaculate help us. May St. Edmund of Abingdon and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati pray for us. Amen

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel - 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