



# SOLENT PASTORAL AREA - UNITED IN CHRIST

## THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

### IN FAREHAM AND PORTCHESTER



**Nativity of The Lord, Holy Family, 2nd Sunday after the Nativity 25th, 28th Dec.'25 & 4th Jan '26**

#### **JESUS AS THE CENTRE OF HISTORY**

*Word on Fire - Dr Richard Declue*

As we celebrate the Nativity of the Lord, it is fitting to meditate on the significance of Christ's birth. To this end, I would like to reflect on Jesus as the centre of history. By "centre of history," I do not mean that he stands at the temporal midpoint of the universe's timeline. Rather, Christ is the decisive turning point of salvation history, marking the fundamental boundary between what comes before and what comes after his entry into the world. This truth is hinted at in the traditional division of time into B.C. (Before Christ) and A.D. (Anno Domini, "the year of our Lord"), but it is worth exploring more deeply.

To speak of a "centre," one must consider what lies on either side. As God, the person of Jesus - the eternal Son - is both the beginning and the end of history, the Alpha and the Omega. Regarding his identity as the Alpha, we read in the prologue of John: "All things came into being through him" (*John 1:3*). The whole Trinity creates, yet Scripture reveals a particular relationship between the work of creation and the Word, the Logos. Through the divine Word, creation comes forth from God's will. This movement outward from God has traditionally been called the *exitus*. But God created the world in order to share his own divine life. Human beings, made in God's image and likeness, are capable of knowing and loving God - and thus capable of entering into union with him. The Catechism expresses this succinctly: the purpose of human existence is to know, love, and serve God in this life and to be happy with him forever in the next. Thus, the *exitus* exists for the sake of the *reditus* - the return of creation to its Creator. In short, creation proceeds forth from God and is ordered toward returning to God.

This twofold movement signifies the deepest meaning of human life: to be drawn back into union with the One from whom we came. However, through sin, this purpose was disrupted. Instead of unity with God, humanity fell into division - separated from God and fractured within itself. The return to God, which is the goal of creation, became unattainable from the human side. The rift had to be healed for the *reditus* to be possible again.

To accomplish this healing, the eternal Word became flesh. In the Incarnation, God the Son unites humanity to himself by assuming a true human nature. He remains fully divine, *consubstantial* with the Father, while becoming fully human,

*consubstantial* with us. Through the grace of the hypostatic union - the union of two natures in one divine person - Christ's entire earthly life becomes the instrument of our re-creation. His birth, life, passion, death, resurrection, and ascension are all efficacious for our salvation. In him, our sins can be forgiven, our wounded nature healed, and our destiny restored. Through Christ we are saved from eternal separation and led toward eternal beatitude, where we shall see God face-to-face and be united with him completely. Thus, Jesus Christ inaugurates the great reversal of history. Without Christ, the human race was moving inevitably toward death and alienation from God. Through Christ, the direction changes: a path is opened from separation to communion, from death to life, from exile to home. Joseph Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI) once described this as the "great circular movement" of all reality - flowing forth from God and, through Christ the turning point, being led back to God. Later, as pope, he drew on St. Bonaventure to underline this truth: Christ is not simply the end of history but its centre. History does not simply culminate in him; it begins anew in him.

The centre of history, then, is not a point in time but a person. In Jesus, God enters history not merely to act within it but to transform its very structure and meaning. He stands at the juncture where the movement away from God is halted and the return to God is made possible. Everything before Christ looks forward to him; everything after Christ depends on him. In his divinity, he is the origin and goal of all things. In his humanity, he becomes the mediator through whom creation is restored and brought to fulfilment.

For this reason, Jesus should also be the centre of our own lives. Just as salvation history turns on Christ, so too does our personal salvation. Union with him brings about union with God, and separation from him leads away from our ultimate destiny. To place Christ at the centre of our lives is to align ourselves with the deepest movement of history - the return to God that Christ himself inaugurates and completes.

In celebrating the Nativity, then, we celebrate not merely the birth of a child, but the entrance of the world's centre into the world's story. The one through whom all things were made and for whom all things exist, comes among us to restore creation's path and lead us home to the Father.

*Dr Richard Declue - [www.wordonfire.org](http://www.wordonfire.org)*

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## A VERY WARM WELCOME

... to students back on holiday, family members who have been away, to visitors and to new parishioners. Welcome!

**Holy Communion / Prayer of Blessing** . If you are not a Catholic, or not receiving the Eucharist please come forward in the procession, place one hand on your chest with your head slightly bowed and the celebrant / minister will know to pray a short prayer of Blessing for you.

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## CELEBRATIONS AND PREPARATIONS

A lot of behind the scenes work and commitment is put into the community throughout the year and more recently for our Advent Services, especially the Carol Service and Christmas celebrations. **Thank you** to all who have helped in the Church that Christ might be known.

**Thank you** also for your Christmas Cards and gifts with some really lovely messages. A *personal thanks* to all who give so generously of their time and their talents for the parish. A very happy Christmas and many blessings for 2026. *Cn. John*

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## THANK YOU

A big thank you ***Msgr. Vincent*** for stepping in to celebrate our Masses for Cn John from time to time and when he's away. We are blessed to have Fr. Vincent retired with us.

***Cn David Mahy*** would also like to wish everyone a blessed Christmas and thank you for kindnesses shown to him.

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## THANK YOU - ADVENT DAWN MASSES

Thank you to the Parish UCM for the Dawn Mass Breakfasts raising £681.00 for the *Mary's Meals Appeal*  
[www.marysmeals.org.uk](http://www.marysmeals.org.uk)

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## ADVENT APPEAL "Mary's Meals"

A huge thank you for your generous support. We have raised £4,033!

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## THANK YOU - CHOCOLATE TOMBOLA & RAFFLE

Raising £528.50 for the 150th Anniv celeb'ns in 2028 ...

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## CONVERSATION GROUP

***Every other Thursday 2pm - 3.30pm at Sacred Heart Hall***

Next meeting: 8th January

Do you have APHASIA or communication difficulties after a stroke? Come and join our friendly group. Donation of £2. For info. contact Angela at: [amnally65@gmail.com](mailto:amnally65@gmail.com)

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## PARISH BEREAVEMENT "BETHANY" GROUP

***3rd Thursdays, 10am at Sacred Heart Hall***

For anyone who has lost a loved one. A welcoming and safe space to be. For info: [sacredheart.bethany@gmail.com](mailto:sacredheart.bethany@gmail.com)

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## SCRIPTURE GROUP - FEASTING ON THE WORD OF GOD

***Friday mornings: 11.15am Sacred Heart Hall***

Restarting Friday 9th January 2026.

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**PLEASE PRAY FOR** The sick & those who care for them...

***Richard B., Ann H., Cari P., Lucyna S., and young Charlotte.***

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## REST IN PEACE *Please keep in your prayers*

*Mary Payne RIP . Eileen Martin RIP . Joan Wright RIP . Lousie Grady RIP . Alan Cassidy RIP . Jacqueline Gulvin RIP . Teresa Bevis RIP . Veronica Gaoua RIP . Peter Aspin RIP . Linda Taylor RIP . Susan Griffiths RIP. Julie Nally RIP. and Jasmine Ward RIP.*

Please keep those grieving in your prayers, as they approach Christmas without their loved one.

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## BAPTISM [www.catholicchurchfareham.org.uk/baptism](http://www.catholicchurchfareham.org.uk/baptism)

Please visit the parish website for details and to register online. Why not take part while "still expecting"?

## Next Preparation Pathway commences 14th Feb

Closing date for this Preparation Pathway - Fri. 30th January

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## SYCAMORE ADULT PATHWAY IN FAITH

***Wednesdays 7pm for 7.30pm at Sacred Heart Hall***

Looking for answers about the Catholic faith? We will talk about the existence of God, how God speaks to us, the person of Jesus, Mary, the Sacraments and many other key beliefs and teachings of the Catholic Church. Interested?

Contact Dcn Larry: [lmurawski@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:lmurawski@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

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## CONFIRMATION PATHWAY - "CHOSEN"

Next session. Fri 9th Jan. 7 - 9pm. St John's Cathedral visit!

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## MEN'S GROUP ***First Weds. 7.30pm St Philip Howard Hall***

Next Meeting: 7th January

A confidential, prayer and fellowship group helping us to be the best husbands, fathers, brothers and sons we can be.

Contact Tom at: [tom\\_fairman@yahoo.com](mailto:tom_fairman@yahoo.com)

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## LADIES' GROUP ***Second Weds 7.30pm. St P. Howard Hall***

Join our Ladies' Group, getting to know each other, sharing our faith, and growing deeper in our relationship with the Lord. Every woman is so welcome - no age limit applies.

Contact Eloise at: [eloise@olimcomms.com](mailto:eloise@olimcomms.com)

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## MARRIAGE We ask for 12 months notice for prep., please.

## 'LITTLE TREASURES' TODDLER GROUP

***Every Tuesday, 9:30am - 11am at St Philip Howard Hall***

Restarting Tues 13th Jan. It costs just £1.50 for children to come and play with a lovely selection of toys and for carers to have a hot drink and biscuit. All are welcome.

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## ALTAR SERVERS - St Stephen's Guild

***Sun 4th Jan 11am Mass at St P. Howard.*** Enrolment, medals and awards. A big thank you to a great team!

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## OFS SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER ELECTION MEETING

***Saturday 17th Jan, 12pm, St Philip Howard Hall***

For info. contact John: [franciscansolent@outlook.com](mailto:franciscansolent@outlook.com)

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## MEETING WITH BP PHILIP ABOUT THE PRIESTHOOD

Bishop Philip is inviting any man in our Diocese, aged 17+ who is not married and would like to know more about being a Diocesan Priest, to contact him and to come to a short meeting at the Cathedral, Sun 4th January '26. 3 - 5pm.



Please scan the QR code to register.

## JOURNEY TIME ...

Visitors please beware the closure of the M27 from Christmas Eve 8pm – 4th Jan. This means the traffic will be using the A27 pass Sacred Heart and St Philip Howard Churches Please plan extra time for when coming to Mass.

## CHRISTMAS CRIB COLLECTION

The Bishop is asking that the crib offerings be for the ***Friends of the Holy Land***. Christmas this year for families in Bethlehem will be stark. It's been two years of brokenness for our brothers and sisters in Christ, with much violence, suffering and uncertainty for the future. Life hasn't got any easier over the past year for Christians in the Holy Land. The repercussions of the war will be felt for years to come. Please use the Dona card reader in the foyer. Thank you!

## HOSPITAL

Please ensure your family advise the Chaplaincy that you are Catholic, as the staff are not allowed to ask.

### Mass Times, Intentions and Locations, including Adoration & Confessions

<b>CHRISTMAS</b> <b>The Nativity of the Lord</b> <i>Office Proper</i>	Eve 24th Dec	5pm	St Philip Howard	For Vocations	
	Eve 24th Dec	9pm	Sacred Heart	Private Intentions	
	Dawn 25th Dec	9am	Sacred Heart	For the People of the Parish	
	Day 25th Dec	11am	St Philip Howard	Private Intentions	
St Stephen (First Martyr) Reconciliation	Fri 26th Dec	-	Sacred Heart	<i>Sorry, no service</i>	
	Sat 27th Dec	5-6pm	Sacred Heart	Confessions	
<b>The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Yr A</b> <i>Psalter Week 4</i>	Sat Vigil 27th	6:30pm	Sacred Heart	Private Intentions	
	Sun 28th Dec	9am	Sacred Heart	John Marshman RIP	
		11am	St Philip Howard	Ints.of Lily Taylor	
		6pm	St Philip Howard	For the People of the Parish	
St Thomas of Canterbury Liturgy of the Day	Mon 29th Dec	-	Sacred Heart	<i>Sorry, no service</i>	
	Tues 30th Dec	10am	Sacred Heart	Don Cooke RIP	
<b>New Years Eve</b> <b>Mary, Mother of God</b>	<i>Adoration</i>	‘til Noon	Sacred Heart	Adoration - Silent prayer	
	<b>Wed 31st Dec</b>	<b>6pm</b>	<b>Sacred Heart</b>	Mandy Pearce RIP	
	<b>Thurs 1st Jan</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>St Philip Howard</b>	Ints. of the Chiramal Family	
	<i>Confessions</i>	-	Sacred Heart	<i>Sorry, no confessions</i>	
St Basil Gt & St Gregory Reconciliation	<i>Adoration</i>	-	Sacred Heart	<i>Sorry, no Holy Hour</i>	
	Fri 2nd Jan	10am	Sacred Heart	Julie Nally RIP	
<b>Second Sunday after the Nativity - Yr A</b> <i>Psalter Week 4</i>	Sat 3rd Jan	10-11am	Sacred Heart	Confessions	
	Sat Vigil 3rd	6:30pm	Sacred Heart	Theresa Escott RIP	
	Sun 4th Jan	9am	Sacred Heart	For the People of the Parish	
		11am	St Philip Howard	Ints. of Tricia & Stephen Will	
Liturgy of the Day		6pm	St Philip Howard	Fr John Buckley RIP	
	Mon 5th Jan	-	Sacred Heart	<i>Sorry, no service</i>	
	<b>The Epiphany of the Lord</b> <i>Holyday of obligation</i>		10am	Sacred Heart	T.U. Thomas RIP
		Tues 6th Jan	1.30pm	St Philip Howard	St Jude’s School Mass
		7.30pm	St Philip Howard	Ints. of Dcn. Jack Ryan	
Liturgy of the Day	Wed 7th Jan	10am	St Philip Howard	Ints. of Fr David Conroy	
Liturgy of the Day Reconciliation	Thurs 8th Jan	10am	Sacred Heart	For Vocations	
		...after	Sacred Heart	Confessions	
Liturgy of the Day Reconciliation	<i>Adoration</i>	7-8pm	Sacred Heart	Holy Hour for Vocations with Night Prayer	
	Fri 9th Jan	10am	Sacred Heart	Ints. of Charlotte Trumpess (good health)	
	Sat 10th Jan	5-6pm	Sacred Heart	Confessions	
<b>The Baptism of the Lord</b> <b>Yr A</b> <i>Psalter Week 1</i>	Sat Vigil 10th	6:30pm	Sacred Heart	Ints. of Fr. John Adikwu	
	Sun 11th Jan	9am	Sacred Heart	Richard Ashton RIP	
		11am	St Philip Howard	Ints. of Lily Taylor	
		6pm	St Philip Howard	For the People of the Parish	

## **EUCHARISTIC ADORATION OF THE REAL PRESENCE OF OUR LORD IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT**

***Tuesdays, 10:30am - 12 noon Sacred Heart Church***

Come & be with Our Lord, even if only for a few moments. Essential for growing in a personal relationship with Christ.

**HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS - '... ask the Lord.' Mt 9:38**

***Thursdays, 7pm - 8pm at Sacred Heart Church***

Please come and pray for workers in the Lord's vineyard.

## **UNION OF CATHOLIC MOTHERS 'UCM' MEETING**

Every other Monday, 7pm. SH. Hall, commencing **5th Jan.**

From 7pm for coffee/tea with the meeting starting at 7.30pm and closing at 9pm. All are very welcome.

For more info contact: lornefrey1954@hotmail.com

## **IN PERSON SAFEGUARDING TRAINING**

**Saturday 17 Jan, St Margaret Mary, Park Gate 10am - 1pm**

This covers both Adult & Child Safeguarding Training. Safeguarding Training is mandatory for anyone who DBS holds volunteers. Training must be refreshed every 3 years. The training can be done online or face to face.

For enquiries/to book email Stephanie. Parish Safeguarding: safeguarding.fare@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

**ASCENSION APP** The #1 app for reading / studying the Bible and Catechism of the Catholic Church. Brilliant!

## **THANK YOU**

Aidan & Angela would like to thank everyone who came to Julie's Requiem Mass and for the condolence messages.

A special thanks to Cn John for a beautiful service.

Thank you to our parish family for the prayers whilst Julie was in hospital and since her passing which have sustained us during this difficult time. May she rest in peace.

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## **PARISH PRAYER WALKS**

The prayer walks have started. Deacon Larry was on the first two walks and can attest to a warm, friendly and prayerful atmosphere. Please join us. Prayer like this is known to bear fruit! Next walks:

***Tuesday 6th January, 2pm from St Philip Howard***

***Sunday 11th January, 2pm from Sacred Heart***

***Please get in touch*** with Dcn Larry and David Cockshoot.

Imurawski@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or 01329 318 869

David on davidcockshoot@gmail.com or 07881 956 644

We do need to know contact information for those aiming to walk, in case of cancellation.

## **CATECHISTS' FORMATION DAY – LENT '26**

**Saturday 14th March 9.30am - 3.30pm at St Philip Howard**

## **MISSIO RED BOX DONATIONS - THANK YOU!**

We have had a very good year and have collected over £3,287. Many thanks to all who have Red Boxes. Every coin, helps keep the Mission message alive.

We need new promoters to deliver the magazine and keep in touch with Red Box Holders and collect donations. If you can help contact John: franciscansolent@outlook.com

## **CHRISTMAS COLLECTION (24th & 25th December)**

Catholic tradition holds that the Christmas offerings are, if you wish, your opportunity for a personal gift to the priest and is a main source of annual income for him.

Offerings can be via BACS, cash or cheque with the reference "Christmas Offering" or you can use the Dona plates in both church foyers. Thank you!

## **PARISH FINANCE**

**Dona Plates** Contactless giving made easy Gift Aid optional  
**Standing Orders** Please contact the Parish Office for details.

**BACS Transfer** Our bank details if you need them are:

***CDP Fareham Sacred Heart (Lloyds Bank)***

***Sort Code 30-93-04 Account 00877744***

**Cheques** Payable to 'CDP Fareham Sacred Heart'

**Gift Aid** Tax payers are encouraged to contact in confidence at: farehamgiftaid@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

### **Parish Office:**

41 Portland Street, Fareham. PO16 0NF Tel: 01329 318 869

Email: farehamportchester@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

[www.catholicchurchfareham.org.uk](http://www.catholicchurchfareham.org.uk)

### **Parish Clergy:**

Cn. John Cooke and Dcn Larry Murawski

### **Parish Administrator:**

Mrs Pauline McNamara *Parish Office Opening Times: Monday to Friday 09.30-12.30pm*

### **Parish Finance:**

farehamgiftaid@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

### **Parish Safeguarding:**

Stephanie Campbell 07414 685 955. Email: safeguarding.fare@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

### **Diocesan Safeguarding:**

Ruth Attfield Email: rattfield@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

### **Parish SVP Group:**

07435 880 190 - Call in confidence, any day between 8am - 6pm

### **Fareham:**

Sacred Heart Church, Portland Street, Fareham, PO16 0NQ

St. Philip Howard Church, Bishopsfield Road, Fareham, PO14 1ND

### **Wickham:**

The Chapel of St. Thomas More, Park Place Pastoral Centre, Wickham, PO17 5HA

### **St Jude's Primary School**

Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Wall. Email: admin@st-judes.info Tel: 01329 235 131

*Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth - Registered Charity Number 1199568*