



St Francis of Assisi Church

Windsor & Ascot Pastoral area
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Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth
Charity number 1199568

www.stfrancisascot.co.uk

Fr Phillip writes...

EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD

Surrexit Christus! Alleluia! Christ is risen! Alleluia!

After six weeks of not using the word 'Alleluia', we finally get to sing many joyful Alleluias, for with Christ risen triumphantly from the tomb, nothing can hold back our joy. Alleluia! – Praise the Lord! – Christ is risen! – it is a wonderful way to express our joy to others.

Holy Week and the Easter Triduum move us through our Lord Jesus giving himself to us in the Last Supper in the Upper Room and at every Mass, to his being betrayed, mocked, scourged, crucified and laid in the tomb, through to the new light and joy of his Resurrection on Easter Day.

At the Easter Vigil this year we are receiving Tami into the Church and anointing and confirming her with Joseph and Augustine. It is a wonderful moment for all people of faith – a faith we share with them, a faith, we pray, that will continue to strengthen and bring joy to them, their families and to all of us.

Easter is a time to rejoice in all that the Lord has done for us in dying and rising from the dead. Jesus has poured out his love on us by his suffering and death on the Cross and opened the path to eternal life for us. There is always hope, even in our troubled world, there is always the joy of the new light of the Resurrection. Let us proclaim this to all with great joy! *Surrexit Christus! Alleluia!* Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

*Live stream: <https://www.youtube.com/@rp54996/streams>

Save the Date: Youth Event Sat, 27th April - St Edward's Church, Windsor

Event for young people aged 13-30, led by the One Hope Project. It will be a day of worship & workshops and fun finding your faith. It starts at 11.30am until 5pm. Check out the One Hope Project!



- ### MASS TIMES THIS WEEK
- ✦ Saturday, 30th March at 7 pm: Holy Saturday: Easter Vigil
 - ✦ Sunday, 31st March Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord:
8.30 am (People of the Parish)
10 am (Private Intention)
 - ✦ Monday, 1st to Thursday, 4th April: **NO MASS AT ST FRANCIS**
 - ✦ Friday, 5th April at 10 am: Friday within Octave of Easter
 - ✦ Saturday, 6th April at 10 am: Saturday within Octave of Easter (Eileen Berkeley R.I.P)
 - ✦ Saturday, 6th April at 5.30 pm: Vigil: Second Sunday of Easter (Michael Maloney)
 - ✦ Sunday, 7th April Second Sunday of Easter of Divine Mercy:
8.30 am (People of the Parish)
10 am (Deceased members of the Berkeley family R.I.P)

Remember the clocks go forward on Easter Sunday!

*Confessions after 10 am Mass on Saturdays or by appointment

Enjoy refreshments after Saturday Vigil Mass and Sunday 10 am Mass!



Rosary said every Saturday at 9.30 am, before Mass, at the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima.



WE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOUSEBOUND:

MARIA WILLIAMS, BRIAN LYNCH, PAT SASSI, SIMON SAINT, ERNESTO AND NAPOLEON MANNOIS, JANE THOMAS, DANIEL OFFER, MARIE HALL, NINA MULLINS, GEORGIA MACKINLEY, EILEEN HOARE, SR. JOSEPHINE COLLIER, PAULINE PAINTER, GERALD GRIFFITHS & MAGORZATA CORDOBA.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO ADD A NAME TO THIS LIST, WITH CONSENT, OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE A NAME REMOVED, KINDLY EMAIL OR PHONE THE PARISH OFFICE. WHATSAPP: 07851 092431



Little Franciscan Toddler Group

Toddler group will break after our session on Tuesday **26th March until April 16th**. We wish you all a lovely Easter! During term time, every Tuesday from 11am to 12.45pm. All welcome!

Children's Liturgy of the Word

Will resume on April, 21st. We wish all our families a wonderful Easter! Enjoy your holidays! Every Sunday, during the 10am Mass (during term-time). We accept children from 3y-0 to Year 3. Enrolment forms available in the Narthex.

For further queries, email Sue Roche on: sue.roche1@btinternet.com

Single Bed Donation

A single bed, white colour, being donated. Collection from Sunningdale, it'll need assembling. If you are interested, contact the Parish Office and we'll direct you to the person donating the bed. Mattress also available! Many thanks.

[Samia Passos, Parish Secretary]



Welcome!

Please pray for those who were confirmed at the Easter Vigil taking the names of Flora, Joseph and Augustine, receiving the Lord in Holy Communion at Mass. May they be truly blessed as they continue their Christian journey through life.



VOLUNTEER READERS FOR EASTER

Dear Parishioners, thank you to all of you who are volunteering to read during the Easter Masses. We appreciate your help! God bless!



GIFT AID/PLANNED GIVING ENVELOPES

Numbered envelopes for the 2024/25 tax year are available for collection from the church porch at masses in April. If you normally donate by weekly envelope, please take the box marked with your name. If you have any queries, or wish to join the Gift Aid scheme, please contact Chris Sowinski on giftaid.asc@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Easter, a Season of Hope

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy...!" (Romans 15: 13). First of all, I hope that you have had a fruitful and inspirational Lent. It only seems like yesterday when the ashes were placed on our foreheads with that prayer: "repent and believe in the Gospel." Now it is time to wish everyone every joy and blessing, as we prepare to celebrate the great and wonderful season of Easter: the resurrection of our Lord and the life this brings to us. Jesus' death and resurrection is, in a way, the key that opens the door of God's love and mercy to us: in other words, the gift of new life and hope. This promise and possibility of new life and hope Jesus brings at Easter is about our future (life after death), but also about our present. As Jesus says: "I have come that they might have life and have it abundantly" (John 10: 10). This year, it strikes me that the here and now message of Easter is especially about the gift of hope. This may seem a strange thing to say. After all, we all encounter many worrying things on a big scale, such as the ongoing war in the Ukraine, the situation in Israel and Gaza, or divisions and violence in our own country, or economic uncertainties. Many of us have more personal or local worries too, such as family issues, or health matters, or a concern about the future for ourselves and for those we love. In this election year, there are also so many uncertainties and possibilities.

So, what is this much needed and Easter gift of hope and how can we experience and live this hope? Well, we are certainly familiar with the idea of hope. There is what we might call a natural or human sense of hope. We might hope for success in an exam or an important interview, or we may hope that the results of a medical test are good. We might hope for a better financial situation. We might hope that a family member or friend manages to turn their life around, or we may just hope that we do win the lottery after all these years! We also know of people who have lost all sense of hope and it is certainly hard to imagine how life could continue with such a loss

Christian hope may involve some of these more human hopes, but it is also quite different and, in many ways, deeper. First of all, true hope is very much the Easter gift. We can think of the apostles and disciples on Good Friday and then Holy Saturday and then see how they are transformed by hope on Easter Sunday. The Catechism tells us that "hope" is one of the theological virtues. It defines the virtue of hope as: "The theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit." (# 1817)

Hope then is not just something from within us, it is also a special or supernatural gift from God. This special gift assists us in our daily life and also helps us journey well through this life towards heaven (see Catechism # 1818). Therefore, it is a very much a practical gift! It is something certain too: the basis of our hope is in Jesus and his resurrection. In this hope, our Lord gives us life to the full here and now, but also when our journey of life is complete. This is the "sure and certain hope" the Commendation Prayer in the Funeral Rite speaks of. Hope is definitely a gift from God but, as St. Thomas Aquinas tells us, we must also choose to use and live that gift. Hope then is not only a gift, but a decision or choice that we make. It is a positive act of our will to accept this gift and to be a hopeful person. I am sure that we all know amazing people who, despite very tough situations, have made that choice. They encourage us and inspire us, reminding us then that hope is also a gift to be shared. As Pope Benedict XVI taught, Christian hope is never individualistic, but rather always for others.

Christian hope is additionally something active, especially as a motivator or driving force in our lives. It is not some sort of day dreaming or wishful thinking. It is a deep desire and a thirst, and an expectation of having what we desire or thirst. St. Augustine says something quite startling about this dynamic nature of hope: "hope has two beautiful daughters, their names are anger and courage. Anger at the way things are and courage to see that they do not remain as they are." We can think of so many inspirational figures in history who changed the world for the better, motivated and driven by hope. We are called to do the same. Yes, it can be therapeutic to vent or to complain about how bad things are, but as people of hope we must then do something about it.

This active understanding of hope also means that it is refreshing and life-giving, but not in the sense of pretending all is fine when it is not. At best this is unrealistic and, at worst foolish (and incredibly irritating to others!). Rather, hope is about avoiding the temptation of becoming negative or of being jaded and cynical, but rather seeing beyond a situation to what can be and with a constant freshness. As G. K. Chesterton wrote [hope] "keeps alive in oneself the immortal power of astonishment and laughter, and a kind of young reverence."

In this Easter season may you and your family experience this wonderful gift of hope. May we all be ambassadors of that hope to others; for that hope is desperately needed. Let us also ask the prayers and guidance of our Blessed Mother, "our life, our sweetness and our hope." Finally, let us remember that the coming Jubilee Year of 2025 has, as its theme, "Pilgrims of Hope." It is a strong reminder of how central hope is to us as Christians as we journey through life, but also that we are to make a difference by being active promoters and bringers of hope to others.

(Fr. Anthony Barratt, parish priest of Hudson NY and Director of Liturgy for the Diocese of Albany)

ST FRANCIS
FATIMA DEVOTIONS
KSC HOME PRAYER GROUP
Monday - Friday at 1.30pm
30 Minutes of praying the Rosary
As requested by Our Lady
ZOOM ID & PASSWORD BELOW
MON 1st April - Fri 5th April 2024
ZOOM ID : 775 3211 1654
PASSWORD : rosary



Sponsored by the KNIGHTS of ST COLUMBA - Province 41 WESTMINSTER
London North - Hanwell - Edmonton - Palmers Green - Sudbury - Harrow - St Albans - Northfields - Uxbridge - Willesden Green - Mill Hill
High Wycombe - Wood Green - Chiswick - Cockfosters - Hemel Hempstead - Letchworth - Enfield - Stevenage - Hoxton Square
Yeading - Whitton Wembley - Thames Valley