

NORTH WEST

HAMPSHIRE

PASTORAL AREA

Serving the Parishes of

ANDOVER, BASINGSTOKE, HOOK,
TADLEY AND BURGHFIELD COMMON



**St Michael's Parish, Tadley,
Kingsclere,
and St Oswald's Church,
Burghfield Common**

St Michael's Church
Bishopswood Road, Tadley
RG26 4HG

St Oswald's Church
Abbey Park, Burghfield Common,
RG7 3HQ

Parish Priest:

Rev Fr Patrick Tansey
0118 981 4572

Safeguarding Officers:

Mrs Kath Murtagh (Tadley)
0118 981 4658
Mrs Ellen Goodall (Burghfield Common)
0118 983 3332

Parish Secretary

Mrs Barbara Davis
Email: tadley@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
Website: www.stmandsto.org.uk

Covenant to the People

If you would like help from the Covenant to the People scheme, please contact Gerry Penfold on 01189 811247 during October.

NEWSLETTER

17th/18th October 2020 AD

THE 29TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME PARISH BULLETIN

PUBLICATION OF PORTSMOUTH DIOCESE TRUST REGISTERED CHARITY NO 246871

A BLESSING OF THE PANDEMIC?

A Reflection from Father Patrick based on Isaiah (25, 6-10) and Matthew's Gospel (22, 1-14), Readings of Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time celebrated on 11th October 2020 AD.

Thoughts on Death and Judgement are appropriate for this continuing time of the coronavirus pandemic, and have a rightful place in our Christian reflections and prayers during it. Jesus does not dodge these issues—nor should we. As Thomas More says in Robert Bolt's remarkable play, 'A Man for All Seasons', knowing that he is going to be executed for upholding the Papal Supremacy against the temporal authority of Henry VIII:-

'Death—comes for us all, my lords. Yes, even for Kings, he comes, to whom amidst all their royalty and brute strength he will neither kneel nor make them any reverencebut roughly grasp them by the very breast and rattle them until they be stark dead And sending them to judgement'

But the Death and Judgement Jesus calls us to engage with is not something to be feared if we prepare for it—it is, in fact, a journey from a limited earthly life to eternal life.

We often fail to recognise that, as Christians, we are every day standing on the threshold of the Resurrection, readying ourselves to enter into it. Yes, with fear and trembling because of our sinfulness—but confident also that the Lord will not let go of us if we truly desire Him as the centre of our lives.

Isaiah (25, 6-10) is often chosen for Funeral Services or Funeral Masses—and rightly so! The Prophet confronts death—but prophetically looks beyond it to the Wedding Feast of the Lamb, which is brought to us in the coming of Christ, who will destroy Death for ever. In the words of Isaiah, the God who is to become one of us:

'.... will take away his people's shame everywhere on earth The Lord is the one in whom we hoped. We exult and we rejoice that he has saved us'

Jesus reminds us that the crossing of the threshold will not be easy—and we should not take Him for granted. He can refuse entry, as well as liberally opening the door for both the riff-raff and the righteous. He expects us to come dressed properly for the celebration—cleansed of sin in His unfathomable Mercy, as

Matthew's story of the Wedding Feast reminds us. Possibly one of the God-given Blessings of the Pandemic is the opportunity, each day, to look beyond the glories of our blood and state, which are shadows, not substantial things, to the Wedding Feast of the Lamb—where there is, in Isaiah's words:

'a banquet of rich food, a banquet of fine wines ...'
DO WE? DIFFICULT THOUGH IT MAY BE IN THESE TESTING TIMES WHICH WILL BE WITH US FOR A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF HISTORY?

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WORLD MISSION SUNDAY

There is a Second Obligatory Collection this week-end for the work of the Church in The Foreign Missions, work personally supported by Pope Francis. His message this Sunday is that in a situation 'profoundly marked by the COVID 19 pandemic, we must not be discouraged' but must continue to do God's work.

Fr Chantry of MISSIO writes:

'In this time of international turmoil and uncertainty, World Mission Sunday is an opportunity for the global family of the Catholic Church to stand together in solidarity, prayer and faith.'

Each parish throughout the world celebrates being part of a worldwide Church, giving what they can for the benefit of those most in need. We offer the hand of friendship and encouragement to our sisters and brothers in poorer countries, and to missionaries across the world who are proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those who have not yet heard it.

It is clear that the needs of the Church in Africa and Asia are greater than ever. I receive many requests from Bishops, Priests and Religious for help so that they can continue serving their people. They ask for our prayers and support. Any help we can give them at the moment will make a huge difference to their lives and to the future of our Church.'

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PARISH VISION SURVEY

Gerry Penfold writes:

Many thanks to all those who completed the survey to select the words that you felt best described what you want our parish to be like in the future. 58 parishioners completed the survey and in addition to selecting many of the words provided, a great range of additional words were suggested.

The top 10 most popular words were Welcoming, God/Jesus/Christ-centred, Compassionate, Spirit-filled, Prayerful, Caring, Encouraging, Loving, Supportive and Joyful. In addition, there were over 50 other words highlighted by the survey. All the words selected or suggested have been captured and put into a "Word

Cloud" (see attached at the end of the Newsletter). This is a visual snapshot which shows the most popular words in larger, bolder font and the less popular words in smaller font.

The Evangelisation Strategy Team are now working on grouping the words in different ways to draw out the main themes. These will then become the building blocks for our parish vision along with the output from the Parish Meeting held last October. As soon as the themes become clear and the first ideas of the parish vision begin to emerge, the EST will again share the results with the parish. In normal times this would be another Parish Meeting but in the current circumstances it will have to be an online forum, supplemented by a paper-based approach for those without internet access.

In the meantime, please include the work on the Parish Vision in your prayers so that it is Spirit-led and reflects God's will for our parish. If anyone has any questions, please contact the parish office and a member of the EST will be in touch.

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NEW CO-ORDINATING PASTOR AND DEAN

Please keep Father Chris Whelan, Parish Priest of St Joseph's Church, Basingstoke, in your prayers. Bishop Philip has appointed him Co-ordinating Pastor of our Pastoral Area of North-West Hampshire, as well as Dean of our Area and that of North-East Hampshire.

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FATHER PADRAIG FAUGHNAN

Please keep Father Padraig in your prayers. He is Parish Priest of St Joseph's Church, Newbury, and a long-standing friend of Father Patrick. Father Padraig is in hospital at the moment, having been taken seriously ill and placed in intensive care in The Royal Berkshire Hospital.

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CORONAVIRUS ETHICS CONTINUED

Our Newsletter of 6th September 2020, reported the concern of the Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox Church leaders in Sydney, Australia, that politicians need to seek an anti-coronavirus vaccine which has not been developed from cell lines from an aborted foetus for those who conscientiously object to vaccines linked to abortion.

The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales have clarified their August Statement on this matter, also stressing the need for vaccines not related to aborted foetuses to be developed.

Whether or not there will be a vaccine in the near future—or ever—is not certain. In one of his statements on Monday 12th October, Prime Minister Johnson stated that we cannot be definite that one will emerge—research has not yet produced a SARS vaccine. Medical experts are coming to the opinion that it is unlikely that one will emerge until mid 2021, if at all.

If one is found, serious ethical questions will have to be addressed. Who should receive it first, as it will not be available for wholesale populations immediately? Obviously key workers, especially in the NHS and Care Homes, should be amongst the first, but the term 'key workers' covers large groupings including supermarket workers. Should the elderly and vulnerable receive it before the young, who seem to react to coronavirus better?

More and more, the pandemic is raising questions about our values, the importance of certain groups and issues affecting human rights—to say nothing of the needs of those living in parts of the World where there is no adequate health-care. Will we promote their well-being as well as our own? Are we engaging in the issues?

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ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1967 ABORTION ACT

This falls on Tuesday 27th October, the 53rd Anniversary of the Act being passed in England and Wales. Since 1967 over 9,000,000 unborn babies have lost their lives to direct abortions.

Large numbers of women—and many fathers—have had to address the emotional and psychological effects which often develop from abortion.

We are called to keep Tuesday 27th October as a day of prayer and/or fasting for an end to this situation, also recognising the deep pain many women experience in seeking abortions because of pressure and unjust social structures.

For Post Abortion help and support, The Good Counsel Network has information on:
www.GoodCounselNetwork.com

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OFFICE MATTERS

Our part time secretary, has to go into hospital for an operation in November and will be on sick leave for several weeks. During this time, Fr Patrick, will take the opportunity to take some well earned annual leave.

We will be taking advanced bookings for Masses and details will be published in next week's Newsletter, with an indication of Office Closure Dates and contact details for any emergencies.

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SOCIAL DISTANCING ON ENTERING AND EXITING OUR CHURCHES

Please remember to follow Government guidance and keep two metres distance apart. Thank you..

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IF YOU ARE SUFFERING FROM COVID 19, A COLD, SNEEZING OR FLU LIKE SYMPTOMS, PLEASE DO NOT ATTEND MASS.

THIS DOES NOT APPLY IF YOU SUFFER FROM A PERSISTENT COUGH DUE TO A MEDICAL CONDITION UNRELATED TO THE ABOVE ADVICE. IF THIS IS APPLICABLE TO YOU, PLEASE ADVISE US IMMEDIATELY.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.

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PARISH VISION SURVEY WORD CLOUD

