



HOLY FAMILY PARISH

NEWSLETTER



www.holyfamilyparish.org.uk

♡ ♡ ♡ HE IS WITH US ♡ ♡ ♡

When we go through challenges, we might often find ourselves asking God: "Please give me a sign that I will get through this. Give me a sign that all will be well. Give me a sign that you have not forgotten me." In these last days of Advent God is reminding us of the sign he gave to Ahaz, which was fulfilled in Mary: "Emmanuel, God with us" and the angels to the shepherds: "This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger".



Advent and Christmas remind us once again that God is truly with us in the nitty gritty routine of daily life. There's a story of a little boy frightened by thunder. During a storm, he ran to his parents' room. His mother said: "Don't be afraid. God is with you." He replied, "I know, but I want someone with skin on!" That's exactly what we celebrate in this grace filled season. In Jesus, God has "skin on". While remaining true God, he has become true man and immersed himself in our human experience. He comes close enough to touch our wounds, close enough to walk our streets, close enough to cry our tears. In the Eucharist, Jesus who once lay in a manger, is now humbly in the Host. St. John Vianney once said that if we truly understood the Eucharist, we would die of joy. God is with us so completely that He becomes our food, our Bread of Life.

When, like Ahaz and Joseph, we go through our own moments of turmoil and fear, let's remember: He is with us. When we carry our burdens: He is with us. When we sit in adoration and wonder if our prayers are heard: He is with us. When we leave the church and step into our daily routine: He walks with us, within us. Faith in Emmanuel does not remove our struggles; it reframes them. When we face difficulties like loneliness, misunderstandings, the monotony of our routine, we have only to remember: "God is with us". That simple truth changes the way we face daily life. Every moment becomes Eucharistic – a thanksgiving, a communion, a presence. We stop waiting for God to appear in grand miracles and begin to recognize Him in the small gestures of love, the hidden sacrifices, the quiet faithfulness of each day.

Belief in Emmanuel isn't a comforting theory. It's a radical way of living – seeing the invisible, loving the unnoticed, and trusting the unseen God who has chosen to dwell with us, not just at Christmas, but in every heartbeat of our life.

Dear Parish Family,

As we come to the close of this year, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude for all your support and prayers.

Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful and blessed Christmas, and may the New Year bring peace, hope, and happiness to all.

St Mary's School



P/S We are looking for a volunteer to play the piano for our school masses and ideally our weekly hymn practice on Wednesdays 2.50pm to 3.10pm. Please email the school office: StMarysOffice@stmarys-maidenhead.org.uk.

St Joseph's & St Elizabeth's edition

Christmas Edition

4th Sunday of Advent Year A

20th /21st Dec 2025

1st: Isa 7:10-14 Behold, a virgin shall conceive

Ps 24 R/ **Let the Lord enter; he is the king of glory.**

2nd: Rom 1:1-7 Jesus Christ, descended from David, Son of God.

Acclamation: **Alleluia! Alleluia! Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call him Emmanuel – which means, God with us. Alleluia!**

Gospel: Matt 1:18-24 Jesus was born of Mary, who was betrothed to Joseph, son of David.

Christmas

Christmas Midnight Mass

Ps 96 R/ **Today a Saviour has been born to us; who is Christ the Lord.**

Acclamation: **Alleluia! Alleluia! I bring you good news of great joy: for unto us is born this day a Saviour, Christ the Lord. Alleluia!**

Christmas Day

Ps 98 R/ **All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.**

Acclamation: **Alleluia! Alleluia! A hallowed day has shone upon us. Come, O nations, and adore the Lord; for today a great light has come down to earth. Alleluia!**

See back page for Christmas Mass times



Works of Mercy: Give Alms to The Poor

This Sunday, we light the Candle of Love. We can let our Love shine and bring the light of Christ into the hearts and lives of those homeless and people in need in our Parish. By donating non-perishable foodstuff, new or good, clean warm clothing or by giving financial donations through the Parish Office we will be providing vital support and living our Catholic commitment by "Giving Alms to the Poor" this Advent. When we do our Christmas shopping, we can put an extra can or packet of food in our basket that we can donate at church. Come, Lord, bearer of Love, source of Joy, prince of Peace and bringer of Hope.

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

28 Dec 2025

The whole process of Jesus's birth and infancy was surrounded by difficulty and today's Gospel contains one memorable element. We know that Herod the Great was an insecure, ruthless and cunning man. He was an effective builder – he rebuilt the Jerusalem Temple – but he was cruel, vicious and violent. He murdered members of his own family and, following the Holy Family's 'escape to Egypt', he slaughtered the 'Holy Innocents' whose feast would have been today. Jesus escaped but history tells us that he could have been in real danger.

In our time and culture, family life has its joys and its sorrows. The members of the Holy Family experienced tribulation as well and our celebration of their memory today invites us all to have courage and hope whatever the difficulty we face. The example of the Holy Family, and of Mary and Joseph particularly, speaks of a faith and trust in the goodness and providence of God that perseveres. It speaks of patience and that fruit of prayer which is to recognise the hand of God guiding us and bringing everything to a good outcome.

Family life will encounter the challenges of life in their many forms. One of those challenges, as we know too well, is separation and brokenness. Relationships do not always persevere in stability and unity. As disciples of Jesus, we are called to manifest compassion, forgiveness, welcome and support for all those whose family lives are seriously disrupted. And as catechists, and those who support the faith development of the young, we must be diligent in our care for those who suffer family breakdown and even abuse.

In our parish communities, that same welcome and support must be offered to those who find themselves living without the support and affection of a family. For many, the parish community is their only family.



Each time we celebrate infant baptism, the parents of the child are reminded that they "accept the responsibility of training their child in the practice of the faith. It will be their duty to bring up their child to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbour". The two words 'responsibility' and 'duty' are heavyweight terms because they indicate how indispensable the family is in imparting the faith, both in terms of knowledge, and a living relational faith in Jesus, to a child. The Church is clear in presenting 'Family Catechesis' as prior and foundational. It comes before any other formation or education that we offer as a diocese, a community or the Church. Nothing can replace it and if it is missing other efforts and resources spent on the catechesis of the young will lack full effectiveness. Let us be effective and generous in encouraging and supporting Catholic parents in this fundamental responsibility.

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

Ps 128 R/ **Blessed are all who fear the Lord, and walk in his ways.**

Acclamation: Alleluia! Alleluia! Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts; let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Alleluia!

The snug is open. Please help us look after it.



2026 TRAVEL / PILGRIMMAGES

- **8 Mar 26 Escorted Tour: Westport, Knock & Co Mayo** £899.00 pps. Incl: flight from Heathrow, 10kg hold luggage, 5N in 4* hotel, dinner, B&B + leisure facilities, entertainment, excursions & transport. Irish music nightly. Single supplement. 01268 762 278 / 07740 175557 / knockpilgrimages@gmail.com
- **1 - 6 Jun 2026 Pilgrimage to Assisi Prices 5 nights:** £1,350 pp (sharing). Incl: flight from Stansted, 5N in 4* hotel, ½ board, daily Mass, excursions & transport. Step into the home of St Francis, St Clare, and the modern witness St Carlo Acutis. Walk Assisi's old streets and pray in the same places www.jcjourneys.com/assisi-june-2026

About 60 people went to St Elizabeth's last Saturday evening for the organ recital. The locals were delighted to welcome visitors from all corners of our new parish with home-made Christmas foods, mulled wine, the romantic light of 700 candles, a spectacular organ recital of music for Advent and Christmas, and some rousing carols to end it. In summary, a great pre-Christmas celebration. Several people said "must do this again" so for those who missed out, watch this space! Thanks you St E Vision Group for organising!



Message from the Clergy team of Holy Family

Dear Parishioners,

The season of Advent is coming to an end, the preparations for the birth of our Saviour are almost complete. We continue to wait patiently for the coming of Emmanuel (God is with us). We are wrapping up presents, getting prepared for Christmas dinner. Looking forward to giving and receiving presents.



Indeed, what present could we give to the baby Jesus this Christmas? What would Jesus want me to give to him?

We have to try our best to love, try our best to bring peace and joy, into our world. This isn't always easy, we know that Emmanuel will be walking with us to help us.

We wish you and yours all the true spiritual riches of the feast for which we are waiting, and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. As we prepare for Christ-mass, let us try again to honestly open ourselves, in simplicity and poverty, to the love he wants to give us. Thank you for all your support, kindness, prayers and friendship.

May God bless you all.

O come to us, abide with us: our Lord Emmanuel.

HAPPENING IN THE PARISH

All are welcome!

- **27 Dec 7.30pm** Christmas Dinner & Dance in the Hall. Contact Edgar 07864 977536 for tickets
- **30 Jan NOSTALGIA NIGHT** The West End is coming to St Edmund Campion! All proceeds to SEC Church refurbishment. Tickets @ £20 available from SEC office or see posters for online booking.

PARISH REGULAR EVENTS

- ❖ **3rd Sundays 3.00pm** Filipino Mass

The following are on a break. To resume 8 Jan

- ❖ **Thursdays Zoom Room:** 2pm Rosary 6pm Journey together through Holy scriptures www.tinyurl.com/2hz5axvp
- ❖ **Fridays 8.45-10:45am Baby & Toddler Group** SEC (term time)

CLASSES/ EVENTS IN SJ CENTRE

See notice board/ website
(some are privately run)

- **Tuesdays: Practical Art** Join U3A untutored Art Group. Bring your art materials and join in the fun every 1st & 3rd Tuesdays 2-4pm in SJ Hall. Contact Peter 01628 674097
- **Wednesdays: 5-6pm Taichi** in Hall.
- **Thursdays 7pm** Yoga with Una in Hall. All proceeds to SJ!

SACRAMENTALS

All **forms** can be found here: <https://stjosephsparish.co.uk/newsletter/>

❖ **Baptism Course 6 Jan** For expecting parents and parents whose child(ren) is being baptised in M'head

❖ **Marriage:** Thinking of getting married? Enquire via our online form!

Retrouvaille helps marriages. It can bring hope and healing to relationships. Next date: 12th February 2026.

www.retrouvaille.org.uk Tel: 07887 296983

Confirmation & First Holy Communion Classes: As you may be aware, the Confirmation and FHC journeys are in three stages. Stage 1: come to Mass for the last number of months and participating in the prayers and singing, and being comfortable with the journey of liturgy. At the end of each Mass, the candidates received an attendance stamp. This will continue. The family/child will need to show the priest or catechist their Mass Attendance Card. If there is consistency, then the child will be invited into Stage Two, which are the classes. If not, and there seems no interest in Mass attendance, then the child and family will be asked to postpone the reception of the Sacrament for another year.

❖ **FHC Stage 2:** First class in **SJ: 9.30am 11 Jan / SEC: 4.30pm 10 Jan.** Classes will be followed by Mass and official enrolment for the First Holy Communion programme.

❖ **Confirmation Stage 2** Eligible Candidates will begin this stage **Saturday 24 Jan 4.30pm at SEC** school. Bring along your Mass attendance cards. A letter and an update of dates have been sent out to their families recently. Please note the requirements to enter Stage Two of the programme. We continue to pray for them.

❖ **OCIA:** We are blessed with having eighteen candidates join the OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults). These are made up of people from Holy Family Parish, Maidenhead & Twyford. They are all involved with our church community. Some desire to be baptised, others to be received into the Catholic church from another church, and some are Catholics who desire to complete their Initiation process by the Sacrament of Confirmation. All we be fully initiated at the Easter Vigil, April 4th, 2026. Classes are beginning. We continue to pray for them.

Contacts:

Fr Vuni 07888 627223 Tvuni@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk Fr Elvis 07465 675985 Eberka@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Fr Liam 07776 580596 Fr Kevin 07476 367316 Office: 01628 783988 Carolyn office@stjosephsparish.co.uk

Maria youth@stjosephsparish.co.uk safeguarding@stjosephsparish.co.uk

Dec 2025: Mass Times & Mass Intentions			
Sat	20 th	18:30	Donovan & Cooney, A
Sun	21 st	08:00	Coleman Family, FM
		09:15	Thomas Doyle, A Kathleen Higgins, A
		11:00	Philip Sharp, SI
		15:00	Filipino Mass Simbang Gabi
		17:00	Mass of the Parish of Holy Family
Mon	22 nd	10:00	No Mass. No Mother's Prayers.
Tue	23 rd	10:00	Karen Gutzke, SI Judy & Richard Galligan, RIP Molly, George & Michael Terry, RIP Ruth & Andy Galligan, A
Wed	24 th	10:00*	
		17:30	Children's Christmas Eve Mass
		20:00	Christmas Eve Mass
		23:30	Carols followed by Midnight Mass
Thu	25 th	08:00	Christmas Day Mass SJ
		09:15	Christmas Day Mass SE
		11:00	Christmas Day Mass SJ
Fri	26 th	10:00	Coleman Family, FM
Sat	27 th	10:00	Sr Tecla Sambu, SI
		18:30	Donovan & Cooney, A
Sun	28 th	08:00	Richie & Bernice Fernandes, SI Derek Farrance, A Teresa McCarthy, A
		09:15	James Wilson, SI
		11:00	Noel D'Souza
		17:00	Mass of the Parish of Holy Family
Mon	29 th	10:00	No Mass. No Mother's Prayers.
Tue	30 th	10:00	Peter Evans, RIP
Wed	31 st	10:00*	Barry Cooper, FM
Jan 2026 ***Happy New Year!***			
Thu	1 st	10:00	
Fri	2 nd	10:00	Mass of the Sick & Housebound (7pm in SEC)
Sat	3 rd	10:00	Mike Connolly, A
		18:30	Coleman Family, FM
Sun	4 th	08:00	
		09:15	Fr Roy Loperman, FM
		11:00	Deceased members of Robertson Family
		17:00	Mass of the Parish of Holy Family

Adoration before Mass: *9-10am

Confessions on Saturday after 10am Mass / before 6.30pm Mass

A: Death Anniversary; FM: Foundation Mass; RIP: Rest in Peace, SI: Special Intention

Mon	5 th	10:00	No Mass. Mother's Prayers in Church
Tue	6 th	10:00	
Wed	7 th	10:00*	
Thu	8 th	10:00	Carolyn Seet, SI
Fri	9 th	10:00	Coleman Family, FM
Sat	10 th	10:00	
		18:30	Fr Tom McGrath, SI
Sun	11 th	08:00	
		09:15	
		11:00	
		17:00	Mass of the Parish of Holy Family

CHILDREN:

Please come at 5pm if your child would like to participate as Angels, Kings, Shepherds, Sheep etc. Bring/ wear what you have, or use our costumes! Please contact Helen if you have any queries or can help on the night: hmmeanwell@gmail.com / 07753 840611

OTHER CHRISTMAS MASSES IN OUR PARISH

24 Dec Children's Christmas Eve Masses

16:00 St Edmund Campion
17:00 St Thomas More
18:00 St Edmund Campion
21:00 St Edmund Campion
St Thomas More

25 Dec Christmas Day Masses

09:00 St Thomas More
09:30 St Edmund Campion
10:30 St Thomas More
11:15 St Edmund Campion

Complete the "Lego Christmas Story Trail"!

Find the posters, scan the QR code, click, point, and watch.



Newsletters will resume in 2025!