
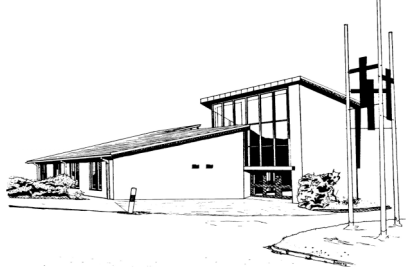


NEWSLETTER FOR ST JOSEPH'S & THE ENGLISH MARTYRS

	<p style="text-align: center;">Parish Clergy:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mgr John Nelson (Parish Priest & Co-ordinating Pastor)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Fr Joseph Awoh (Resident at St Joseph's)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Registered Charity Number: 246871</p>	
<p>64 Liebenrood Road Reading, Berkshire, RG30 2EB Tel: 0118 957 2149 englishmartyrs@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk website: www.englishmartyrs.org.uk</p> <p>Secretary: Gwen Price</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">RBH Chaplaincy - (Tel. 0118 3227105) Fr Chris Whelan Fr Richard Maniak (0118 9586637)</p>	<p>The Presbytery, Berkshire Drive Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire, RG31 5JJ Tel: 0118 942 8632 e-mail: office@st-josephs-tilehurst.org.uk website: www.st-josephs-tilehurst.org.uk</p> <p>Secretary: Sheila Jones</p>

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR B

20/21 December 2008

I was away for Christmas last year. I deployed to Iraq in November and so experienced the build up to Christmas in a very different environment from what I've been used to. But it was very interesting because a lot of effort was put into creating a Christmas feel to the camp in Basra where we lived and worked. For example, the staff in the Field Hospital set up a competition to decorate the wards and departments. For some it was really quite ingenious – you'd be amazed at what soldiers are able to acquire! Decorations and trees and crib scenes appeared made out of all sorts of material and the atmosphere helped the nurses and staff as well as the patients being cared for. 'Secret Santa' was organised and we sang carols in different parts of the Hospital on Christmas Eve. That night I said Mass in a tent with more than 150 of the hospital staff, by candlelight. It was something I won't forget.

Our Christmas Day in Iraq followed the usual pattern although we had our main meal in the evening (when rockets were less likely to be fired at us). During the day people phoned home and it was easy for me to spot those who had young families back home because they were the ones finding it particularly hard talking to their excited children from whom they were separated. This Christmas my mind has been wandering to thoughts of those who are away from home again this year, in Iraq, in Afghanistan and in many other places.

But we shouldn't forget that there are people on our doorsteps who are unable to be with family or friends at this time. They are our neighbours. Talk to them, invite them round for a drink, maybe even see if they'd like a lift to church at Christmas. And, after all the festivities of the coming days, let's remember - a neighbour is not just for Christmas.

Fr John

MASS INTENTIONS				
ENGLISH MARTYRS	TIMINGS			ST. JOSEPH'S
Arch. Cornelius' Intentions	6.30 pm	Vigil Mass		
People of the Parish	9.30 am	Sunday	8.30 am	Anna Maria Suhandjaja RIP
Laura Griffith RIP	11.30 am		10.30 am	Mary Donaghy RIP
Paddy Donoghue RIP	5.00 pm			
Jimmy Condon RIP	9.30 am	Monday	8.30 am	George & Anne Beale RIP
Michael Henneghan RIP	9.30 am	Tuesday	7.00 pm	Joseph Meredith RIP
Funeral - Kathleen Matthews	1.30 pm			
Sophia Belcher RIP	9.30 am	Wednesday - CHRISTMAS EVE	9.00 am	Antonio Mastrocola RIP
Michael Conroy RIP	6.00 pm		6.00 pm	
CAROLS FOLLOWED BY MIDNIGHT MASS	11.30 pm		11.30 pm	CAROLS FOLLOWED BY MIDNIGHT MASS
People of the Parish	12.00 pm		12.00 pm	Michael Kelly RIP
Joseph D'Cruz RIP	8.00 am	Thursday CHRISTMAS DAY!	9.00 am	Peter Jones RIP
Kevin McSharry RIP	9.30 am		10.30 am	People of the Parish
Josephine Quilty RIP	11.30 am			
Bishop Hollis Intentions	10.00 am	Friday	11.00 am	Patrick McMahan RIP
		Saturday	10.00 am	Maureen Murphy RIP
THE FEASTS FOR THIS WEEK ARE:				
Wednesday/Thursday – THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD Friday – St Stephen Saturday – St John				
NO EXPOSITION		EXPOSITION AND BENEDICTION		Tuesday – 7.30-8 pm
5.30–6.15 pm		CONFESSIONS - SATURDAY		10.30-11 am
Responsorial Psalm: "I will sing forever of your love, O Lord."				

COLLECTIONS FOR 14TH DECEMBER 2008

Gift Aid:	£434.00
Planned Giving:	£67.00
Loose Plate:	£236.48
TF5 (Fr Zvonko)	£0.00
CAFOD Congo Crisis Appeal	£68.32
Christmas Cards	£15.50
Christmas Draw	£291.10
TOTAL	£1,112.40
Running Totals	
Fr Zvonko	£157.34
Christmas Draw (Expenses: £80)	£1,228.66
CAFOD Congo Crisis Appeal	£1,103.97
Christmas Cards	£452.90

REMINDER

The counters for Sunday, 28th December are John O'Shea & Clare McSoley.

CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS

It is the custom that your offering at Christmas (and Easter) is for the personal use of the clergy. These Offerings form a significant part of a priest's annual income and so your generosity is always appreciated.

CHURCH CLEANING

Church cleaning for Christmas will be on Monday, 22nd December after the morning Mass. Please come along and lend a hand.

CELEBRATING MARRIAGE 2009

On 25th April 2009, there will be a special Mass at St Bede's, Basingstoke for couples in our diocese celebrating significant wedding anniversaries during 2009. If you are celebrating your 25th, 40th, 50th anniversary during 2009, or any anniversary over 60 years, please let your parish priest know as soon as possible so that Bishop Crispian can send you an invitation. Attendance will be by invitation only and numbers are limited.

For more information contact: *Keith Chappell, Advisor for Marriage and Family Life, Park Place. kchappell@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk. Tel: 01329 835583.*

PARENT/CARER AND TODDLER GROUP

We look forward to welcoming you back again on Thursday, 14th January 2009. The timing will be as usual, between 9.30 am – 11 am.

JOE D'CRUZ RIP

Following Joe's Funeral, I wish to take this opportunity to thank the parishioners from both St Joseph's and English Martyrs, for your prayers, kind wishes of condolence and for joining in the Requiem Mass celebration which was a poignant reminder of the many friends Joe had.

A very special thank you to Fr Joseph for being so tolerant of the lengthy service and Fr John for his homily, as well as the other celebrants – it was indeed an awesome sight - *Gwen Price & the D'Cruz family.*

Parishioners might like to note that there will be a parish Memorial Mass for Joe on Tuesday, 3rd February 2009 at 7 pm, followed by light refreshments in the hall, and all are welcome to attend.

ALTAR SERVERS' PRACTICE

There will be a servers practice for all those who wish to serve at Midnight Mass on Monday, 22nd December at 11.00 am. If you cannot make the practice then please let me know.

On St Stephen's Day, altar servers are encouraged to attend the 11.00 am Mass to celebrate their patron saint. Servers will receive a special blessing and medals and cords will be awarded to those entitled.

A servers' treat will be arranged in the New Year – *details to follow – Mike Tomas: 941 2786.*

STEWARDSHIP OF CREATION

Christ the King is having a 'Stewardship of Creation' day on 14th February 2009 as part of their 50th Jubilee year. *Further details are available in the Church porch.*

GRAND CHRISTMAS DRAW

As you will notice from the collection details, the Grand Christmas Draw raised £1,228.66 for parish funds. I would like to thank the promoter Mike Tomas and the many people who assisted in the production of the hampers, but most of all to thank all parishioners for their most generous donations which made the whole event so successful.

The details of the prize winners are displayed on the notice board in the Church porch. Many, many thanks – *Fr Joseph.*

CHRISTMAS CARDS

You will also notice from the collection details that the Christmas cards raised the sum of £452.90 towards parish funds. I would again like to thank most sincerely the parishioners who were responsible for the production of the cards, at no cost to the parish – *Fr Joseph.*

CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S SOCIETY NEW NAME

As you will be aware, the Government's new Equality legislation has presented significant challenges for Catholic Adoption Agencies. In consultation with the Bishops of Arundel & Brighton, Southwark & Portsmouth, our own diocesan agency has taken the decision to comply with the legislation in order to safeguard its wide range of services to children, young people and families. In order to do this the Catholic Children's Society will be working under the new name of Cabrini Children's Society from 1st January 2009.

Archbishop Kevin's recent ad clerum detailed the agreement reached to enable the Society to continue fundraising in parishes and schools. From 1st January, any monies collected will be placed in a "communities fund" which will go towards supporting non-adoption related services. The Diocesan Financial Secretary for Southwark and Arundel & Brighton, or his delegate, will continue to be on the Finance Committee of Cabrini. Some of the Society's non-adoption work includes:

- providing flexible, affordable and accessible support and services to a diverse range of communities through our long standing neighbourhood projects.
- supporting Catholic schools by providing counselling for students as well as training for teachers.
- providing a home-for-life and day centre for adults with learning disabilities.
- offering personalised catechetical programmes to children and young adults with learning and physical disabilities
- supporting people who were in our care homes to access their records and, if required, facilitate reunions with their birth families.

OFFICE HOURS OVER CHRISTMAS

Please note that St Joseph's Parish Office will be open on Tuesday, 23rd & 30th December from 9 am – 12.30 pm. The office will re-open on Tuesday, 6th & Thursday, 8th January 2009.

DIOCESAN YEAR BOOK

Please note that a decision has been taken not to produce a Diocesan Year book for 2009. Extremely low interest last year resulted in many copies being left unsold across the diocese. The situation is being reviewed for 2010.

KNITWITS

All of us at Knitwits would like to wish all of you a very Happy, Warm & Peaceful Christmas and to say thank you for all the help you have given us, help that since we started will have given some warmth and comfort to 11,347 children who are cold, lonely and often homeless all over the world.

Our next meeting will be at Colleen Collins' home: 40 Blewbury Drive, on 5th January 2009 at 8 pm, when we will add to our 3,744 blankets and 7,603 garments – *Margaret Chaplin.*

CAFOD – FOCUS AFRICA

Thank you for your contributions during November - £144.64 for CAFOD's projects in Africa. On behalf of the many people you will have helped, CAFOD would like to wish you all a Happy & Holy Christmas.