

THE ANNUNCIATION

THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD is the celebration of the announcement by the Archangel Gabriel to Our Lady that she would conceive and become the Mother of Jesus, the Son of God. Gabriel told Mary to name her son Yehoshua (Jesus) meaning 'YHWH is salvation'. This event, marking the beginning of the Incarnation, occurred in the sixth month of St Elizabeth's pregnancy with St John the Baptist (Luke 1:26). Since the second century, the Annunciation has been observed on 25th March and gives us a date for Christmas, the birth of Christ, nine months after his conception.

St Irenæus of Lyon reckoned that this date, approximately the Vernal Equinox, co-incided with the date of the Passion of Christ. Others regarded it as the date not only of the Crucifixion but also of the Creation of the world. Thus Lady Day, as it was called in England, marked the New Year until the change to the Gregorian Calendar in 1752 (a change which necessitated a new date, 5th April, for the purposes of calculating the financial year). St Ephraim, teaching that the Annunciation fell on 10 Nisan, in the Hebrew Calendar, noted that this was the day on which the Passover Lamb is selected (Exodus 12) and not infrequently 10 Nisan coincides with 25th March. In the West, when 25th March falls during Holy Week or the Easter Octave, the Annunciation is transferred to a later date. In the East, however, the co-incidence of the Annunciation with either Good Friday or Easter Sunday is regarded as a special blessing. On Good Friday the Divine Liturgy is not normally celebrated but it is when the Annunciation falls on that date. On Easter Sunday, the coincidence with the Annunciation is called *Kyriopascha* and the rubrics governing the celebration of Annunciation and Easter alongside each other are particularly complicated.

The hymn (*troparion*) for the Annunciation goes back to St Athanasius:

Today is the beginning of our salvation,
 And the revelation of the eternal mystery!
 The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin
 As Gabriel announces the coming of Grace.
 Together with him let us cry to the *Theotokos*:
 'Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you!'

Though Muslims do not acknowledge Mary as *Theotokos* – literally 'Bearer of God' or, in English, 'Mother of God' – there is an account in the Quran of the Annunciation. Muslim tradition holds that the Annunciation took place during the month of Ramadan.

Fr Andrew



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Sunday 19th March	Sundays: Year A, THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT Mass: 9.30am St Mary's Mass: 11.15am St Patrick's	Divine Office: Week 3 [PURPLE] <i>Pro populo</i> <i>Pro populo</i>
Monday 20th March	ST JOSEPH Mass: 9.15am St Mary's	[white] <i>RIP Fr James Fanning MHM [Lazarus Family]</i>
Tuesday 21st March	<i>Third Week of Lent</i> Mass: 9.15am St Mary's	[purple] <i>FM John Joseph Eyston 1917</i>
Wednesday 22nd March	<i>Third Week of Lent</i> Adoration: 11.45am St Mary's Mass: 12.15pm St Mary's	[purple] <i>RIP Sarah Magee (42nd Birthday) [Dagmar Couchman]</i>
Thursday 23rd March	<i>Third Week of Lent</i> Mass: 9.15am St Mary's	[purple] <i>FM Edward Woods 1937</i>
Friday 24th March	<i>Third Week of Lent</i> Mass: 8.30am Hendred House Adoration: 3pm at Hendred House Stations of the Cross: 5.30pm St Mary's	[purple] <i>Holy Souls</i>
Saturday 25th March	ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD Mass: 9.30am St Mary's	[white] <i>FM Bridget Woods 1937</i>
Sunday 26th March	FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT [MOTHERING SUNDAY] Mass: 9.30am St Mary's Mass: 11.15am St Patrick's	Divine Office: Week 4 [Rose] <i>Pro populo</i> <i>Pro populo</i>
Confessions: Sunday 8.45am or by appointment		
www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk		

LENT ALMSGIVING

Following the **CAFOD** Fast Day on Friday 10th March., there is still chance to put your gift in one of the envelopes specially provided. We shall also be collecting for **AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED** on Sunday 2nd April. Meanwhile the ongoing collection, via the red boxes, for **MISSIO** continues. **CAFOD** is the Catholic Church's work for the relief of famine and suffering. **AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED** focuses on re-building shattered lives and communities where the Church is persecuted. **MISSIO** is the work of worldwide evangelisation. Margaret Maytham runs the **MISSIO** collection-box scheme.

MUMS ON THE RUN

The next meeting is on **Monday 20th March at 8.00pm** in the Holy Family Room. If you are a mum raising children, who would like a bit of time to chat and reflect with other mothers, please come along to these meetings. Contact Gillian Groeger for more information at gilliangroeger@hotmail.com

QUIET MORNING

There will be a Quiet Morning at St Mary's on **Saturday 1st April**. Mass at 9.30am will be followed by Adoration (10am to 12 noon). During Adoration there will be a short address and an opportunity for Confession. Coffee &c will be available.

HOLY FATHER'S MONTHLY INTENTION - SUPPORT FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS. That persecuted Christians may be supported by the prayers and material help of the whole Church.

DOMESTIC CHURCH: (10)

Internet The last in our series on the Domestic Church is the gateway to a lot more information. Do an internet search on 'Domestic Church', and you find a dozen or more websites devoted to what Catholics mean by 'Domestic Church'. We haven't consulted them in the series in this Newsletter so there are many discoveries to be made. One word of caution: internet activity tends to be something individuals do on their own and, as such, it is unsuitable for children to do unsupervised. So what is being suggested is a family exploration, perhaps with a parent doing the navigation. Happy hunting!

PARISH COLLECTION

Sunday collections on 26 February and 5 March raised a total of £1741.69 of which 83% was Gift Aided. The collection for CAFOD was £363.28. The total collected for the Votive candle stand at St Mary's was £445.03, thank you!

FUTURE COLLECTIONS

Sunday 26th March: Clergy Assistance Fund



NEWSLETTER | Please send all notices for next week's Newsletter to Maria at hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk by **Wednesday 10 am**



BAPTISM AND WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

We remember in our prayers those whose anniversaries fall at this time.

THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

We remember in our prayers *Kathleen Doyle, Sr Catherine, Diana Tuson, Mary Wallace, Des McNicol, Brenda Paddon, Alfie Bartlam, Jenny Ayres and Jadyga Adasko*. Names remain for four weeks. Please request further inclusion.

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

We remember in our prayers those who have died recently and those with anniversaries at this time: *Dorothy Aldworth, Albert Midwinter, Ernest Couling, William Carter and Winifred Goodman*.

GATHERING IN CHRIST

Our small, ecumenical, lay group will meet again on **Tuesday 4th April**. We will be focussing on chapters 17, 18 and 19 of the first book of Samuel, to see how God's relations with his chosen people work out in the story of David and Goliath and David's escapes from Saul's attempts to kill him. We discuss and pray together. All are welcome, coffee and biscuits in the parish rooms at 7.15 pm for a 7.30 pm start; we finish at 8.30-8.45pm.

CHRISM MASS, ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL, PORTSMOUTH – TUESDAY 11TH APRIL 2017

The Pastoral Area is once again running a bus to the Cathedral for the Chrism Mass this year. The bus will leave Our Lady and St Edmund's, Abingdon at 7.45am and English Martyrs, Didcot at 8.15am, returning at around 3pm. The cost of a seat is £12, payment required on booking. Please call Didcot parish office to book a place on 01235 812338, or email didcot@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk. All bookings must be received by **Friday 31st March**.

EASTER 'EGGStravaganza'

'There will be an Easter 'EGGStravaganza' in Wallingford for young people aged 8 and over, at St John the Evangelist R.C. Church's parish rooms (at the back of the church) on **Friday 31st March** from 7-9pm. Please contact Melanie at tipayouth@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or Andy Robins at a.robins@talktalk.net for more information.'

ADVANCE NOTICE

The Carmelite day pilgrimage to Walsingham is on **24 June 2017**. Pick-ups: 06:30am at Redbridge park and ride; 07:00am at Peartree park and ride. Firm commitment and payment by 1 June. Cost depends on numbers- £27 up to £40 per person. All welcome! Contact Armelle Belcher via English Martyrs, Didcot Parish Office for more details on 01235 812338

LENTEN VOYAGES

Fr Colum Kelly, port chaplain with Apostleship of the Sea, presents a series of weekly podcasts during Lent, which carries the theme 'Our Lenten Voyage'. Each podcast is built around each Sunday gospel. To listen go to www.apostleshipofthesea.org.uk and click on Lenten podcast.