ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH EPSOM NEWSLETTER
10 DECEMBER 2023

FR STEPHEN'S UPDATE

I don't think that anyone can be unaware that the countdown to Christmas has begun. I joined a queue at the Post Office the other day which stretched out onto the street! Mince pies and Christmas puddings are everywhere in the supermarkets. The usual rush to get everything ready is under way. In short, as Michael Palin once described it, the season of long queues and short tempers is upon us.

We are preparing too, but in rather a different way. Last Sunday, in both churches, we blessed our Advent wreathes and lit the first candle. Our countdown too has started. What are we counting down to?

Obviously, in one way, we are preparing once again to celebrate that most wonderful moment when our Saviour came into the world. The long wait for a Messiah, so beautifully depicted in Isaiah, came to an end, as the age of Christ, who came to save us, began. We also remember that we are preparing for that future Advent, when he will come again.

How can we do this? Both Isaiah and our Gospel this week (the one echoing the other) tell us how: to prepare a path for the Lord. Indeed, the Gospel actually says "prepare the path". Those who thought that the Messiah would be literally a king in the human sense may well have taken this literally- that we should build the sort of kingly road on which the powerful travelled. However, just as Jesus' kingdom is not like that, we need to do something else. The path we need to build to welcome Jesus is to bring about his will- to bring the peace and love which are the hallmarks of his very different kingdom. Let's pray that we can all work this Advent to do just this, and so to help bring about his kingdom in our world.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
SUNDAY 10 DECEMBER 2023

Advent is a sacred time of longing and preparation for the Lord; a time for waking up to listen to the Spirit calling deep within us.

The words of Isaiah ***(First Reading- Isaiah 40: 1–5. 9–11***) bring to this Sunday's liturgy a cry of consolation for a people desperate for peace. As we make a straight path to welcome the Lord into our lives, he gathers us up into his arms like a shepherd tenderly holding his lambs. Our world is thirsting for this peace now, the deep peace that only Christ can bring.

The Psalm ***(Psalm 84)*** is a prayer that speaks to the longing and yearning that is within us all. Christ is not slow to respond to our desire for this peace.

Peter's letter ***(Second Reading - 2 Peter 3: 8–14)*** to the early Christian community teaches that the Lord wants no one to be lost: he desires for all to be gathered unto himself. Since we do not know the time of the Lord's return, our prayerful preparations will draw us nearer to the peace that he promises.

The Gospel of Mark ***(Mark 1: 1–8)*** that we follow throughout this coming year begins the revelation of the Good News with that same call of the prophet Isaiah that began our readings: 'Prepare a way for the Lord'. John the Baptist, a voice crying in the wilderness, calls us to repentance and renewal. He baptises with water, but tells of the time when we will be made new by the Holy Spirit.

Let us continue our Advent journey together, praying for this same spirit of renewal and preparation. Let us pray too for peace in our hearts, in our communities and especially in the Holy Land.

DATE		MASS INTENTION
Sat 9 Dec	10.00am 5.30pm	Private Intention Shirley Browne RIP
Sun 10 Dec	***Second Sunday of Advent***	
	10.30am 5.30pm	People of the Parish Ancestoral Bondage / Healing of Dipenha and Family
Mon 11 Dec	10.00am	Theophilus Nicholas RIP
Tue 12 Dec	10.00am	Essie King RIP
Wed 13 Dec	***Memoria of St Lucy, Virgin, Martyr***	
	10.00am	Well-Being of Relatives and Friends of the Kelly and O'Shea Families
Thur 14 Dec	***Memoria of St John of The Cross, Priest, Doctor***	
	10.00 am	Lucy Packham – In Thanksgiving
Fri 15 Dec	10.00am 12.30p.m.	Private Intention Denise Perez RIP
Sat 16 Dec	10.00am 5.30pm	Teresa Campbell RIP Deceased Relatives and friends of the Kelly and O'Shea Families
Sun 17 Dec	***Third (Gaudete) Sunday of Advent***	
	10.30am 5.30pm	Guiseppe Lombardo R.I.P. Pathma Nathan Bernard R.I.P.

OUR CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Friday 22 December
5.00pm Christmas Mass for our Portuguese and Brazilian community

Saturday 23 December
5.30am Vigil Mass for Sunday 24 December
7.30pm Christmas Youth Celebration

Sunday 24 December Christmas Eve
10.30am Family Mass for 24 December
3.00pm Children's Mass
5.30pm Vigil Mass for Christmas Day
9.00pm 'Midnight Mass'

Monday 25 December Christmas Day
8.30am Dawn Mass
10.30am Family Mass

Tuesday 26 December Boxing Day
10.00am Mass

Canon Bill and Fr Stephen will also be celebrating Masses at St Michael's in Ashtead so you may wish to attend Mass there if the timings are more suitable for you.

CHRISTMAS YOUTH CELEBRATION

A shout out to all secondary school, college and Uni students...We'd like to invite you to a Christmas Youth Mass, celebrated by Father Ruslan, at St Joseph's Church Epsom, on Saturday 23rd December from 7:30pm. This gathering is aimed just for you and please bring along your friends. Everyone is invited no matter where they live, which school they go to and what their beliefs are. Drinks, snacks and pizza will follow in the hall and a place to hang out with your friends for the evening. If you have any questions, please do get in touch with either May (07970230246) or Rachel (07899902051).

A Festive Lunch at St Joseph's Church 15th December 2023, Friday, 1.00pm (preceded by Mass at 12.30pm)

Please remember to sign up by this MONDAY 11th December for our very special Festive Lunch. Treats Galore! Don't forget to bring some cash for all the wonderful handmade gifts available. See the lovely poster and the sign up sheets in the Narthex. Thank you for your support.
Next Sunday 17th December the Creative Ladies will be selling their wonderful Christmas gifts, cards, preserves etc. Please go into the Hall after Mass, enjoy a coffee and support the Faith in Action.

NATIVITY SCENE COMPETITION

Thank you for all who are taking part in the Nativity Scene Competition. Please bring your scenes and leave them on the table in the narthex this weekend. Please can you write your names on the bases of the scenes so we know whose they are. Please can everyone else in the parish bring some pound coins to place in the pots/ jars next to the scene for voting for the one that you like the best. The scene with the most coins given will be the winner.

BEREAVEMENT CAFE

Please note there will be no Bereavement Cafe during December. We know that Christmas can be a difficult time, especially if you are newly bereaved. If you feel you would like to chat to someone, please telephone either Paula on 07710 099682 or Theresa on 07867 625291.

JILL WILKINS RIP

Jill's funeral will take place here at St Joseph's on Thursday 18 January at 10.00am.

ADVENT RECONCILIATION SERVICES

The following Advent Reconciliation Services are taking place in the Deanery

Wednesday 13 December 2023
St Joseph's Epsom at 7.30p.m.

Thursday 14 December 2023
Our Lady of Sorrows, Effingham, at 7.00p.m.

Friday 15 December 2023
St Joseph's Redhill at 6.00p.m.

Wednesday 20 December 2023
Our Lady & St Peter, Leatherhead at 7.00p.m.

FOODBANK UPDATE

A massive 'Thank You' to our awesome Cubs of the 8th/14th Epsom Air Scout Group!!! On Wednesday night, they raised a staggering £780 for the Epsom and Ewell Foodbank, supported by the Beavers, young leaders and their families. The kilos of food and toys donated will make such a difference to those in our community who need it most.

The Scout leaders are incredibly proud of each and every cub as each patrol set up and ran their own stall, thinking of others during this time of advent, fundraising for such a worthy cause and spreading lots of Christmas cheer. Thank you once again for being little super stars!!

Our Prayers are asked for all those who are ill:

Frances Walsh, Merlyn Soares, Ann Schifano, Emma Lee, Ian Watts, Steve Lee, Melitona Leander, Vanessa Tuff, Anita Hully, Joseph Poku, Angela Brett, Kay Pledge, Alan Lucas, Tom Makinson, Ethan Foley, Alice Nicolle, Sue Brackenbury, Matty Horkan, Lorraine Corsini, Jimmy Ward and Family, Graham Bell, Francis Taylor, Sandra McNamee and Baby Trevor Agius.

Raffle and collection for HCPT Group 24

In 2024, HCPT Group 24 will be providing disabled and disadvantaged children the opportunity to take part in an amazing life-changing pilgrimage and holiday to Lourdes. St. Joseph's Parish was kind enough to support Group 24 last year, raising funds and hosting our training and reunion events. To help make our 2024 trip possible for the children and the volunteers that support them, we will be selling HCPT's Grand Draw raffle tickets and taking donations after St. Joseph's masses on 16 & 17th December.

HCPT's Grand Draw is your chance to win one of 28 cash prizes - all for just £1 a ticket! Every ticket you buy will help put smiles on the faces of HCPT's pilgrims. More details can be found at:
https://www.hcpt.org.uk/grand-draw

St Joseph's SVP invite you to join them for Coffee or Tea at Epsom Methodist Church at 11 o'clock on Thursday 14th December.

If you, or someone you know is struggling and would appreciate some help or just someone to talk to in confidence, please call Celia Flood on 07767 870035, or Terry Cruise on 07788 454774.

ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON DIOCESE

The Diocese currently has a vacancy: W: P/T Education Officer - Admissions and Place Planning | Careers (abdiocese.org.uk)

Request for Drivers to EMC Christmas Lunch

Epsom Methodist Church is once again holding their Christmas Day lunch. They need 2-3 volunteer drivers to transport people coming to their midday lunch and take them home again at 4 pm (no requirement to stay between).
To offer, please contact Paul and Janet Warren at pwarren@lineone.net

BAPTISMS AT ST JOSEPH'S

We very much look forward to meeting new parents and explaining our Baptism preparation which includes regular attendance at Mass prior to joining classes. You will find one of us (Baptism Catechists') near the font after 10:30 Mass on Sundays. Do come and say hello.

ST JOSEPH'S CONFIRMATION PROGRAMME 2024

Will commence with an introduction and enrolment session on Monday 22nd January at 7:30 pm in the Church. Please bring along a copy of the child's Baptism certificate and the registration fee of £30.

Day of Reflection for Ministers of the Word
Saturday 20 January 2024

Bishop Richard will lead a day of reflection and formation for Ministers of the Word at Sacred Heart Church, Cobham, 11-4pm. Including Lectio Divina and Mass, plus talks on Sacred Scripture, the Liturgy of the Word, the Lectionary, and practical aspects of the ministry. Please register using the link W: Day of Reflection for Ministers of the Word (20-Jan-2024) · ChurchSuite Events

Day of Reflection for Ministers of the Eucharist
Saturday 10 February 2024

Bishop Richard will lead a day of reflection and formation for Ministers of the Eucharist at St Michael's, High Salvington, Worthing 11-4pm. The day will include theological and practical talks, Eucharistic Adoration and mass. Please register using the link W: Day of Reflection for Ministers of the Eucharist (10-Feb-2024) ChurchSuite Events

Car Parking on the Access Road to the Church Sunday 10.30a.m. Mass

In order to maintain good relations with our neighbours, I would like to remind Parishioners that you should not be parking on the access road to the Church when arriving for Sunday morning 10.30a.m. Mass. If you cannot park in the Car Park on a Sunday morning, please park on St Margaret Drive and St Elizabeth Drive where parking restrictions do not apply on Sunday morning.

Carols in Epsom Hospital
Friday Dec 22: 7-9pm

Churches Together in Epsom and the Hospital Chaplaincy, together, plan to sing carols around the hospital wards. We will meet at the main Hospital entrance on Dorking Road at 7pm. If you can come and sing, please email: handleyhammond@gmail.com.

MARY'S MEALS wants to collect all your foreign currency and turn it into cash to feed hungry children in the 18 countries it works in. You will find envelopes in the Narthex; please take one when you leave and put all your foreign coins and notes into it. Then pop your envelope into the Parish Office when it suits you. Please return your envelopes by 1 January.

ST JOSEPH'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Admissões escolares nas turmas de recepção em setembro de 2024

Estamos a contactar as nossas famílias portuguesas que assistem à missa na Basílica de São José. Se você tem um filho católico que deverá começar a escola em setembro de 2024, gostaríamos de encorajá-lo a considerar a escola paroquial, a Escola de São José. Sentimos fortemente que uma educação católica é importante e gostaríamos muito de acolher crianças da comunidade portuguesa que vivem na freguesia e nas paróquias vizinhas. Se você quiser visitar a escola, ligue para 01372 727850.

Parish Finances and Offertory

CHURCH OFFERTORY

Ways for you to contribute are as follows:

- **standing order**: this is our preferred method. Please set up your standing order directly with your bank, using the following details (this is a business account) - account name **RCD A&B St Joseph Epsom**; sort code: 40-05-20; account number: 71076221; bank reference: your name, along with "GA" if you are a member of our Gift Aid scheme. (If you aren't yet a Gift Aider, please do join the scheme! See below).
- **contactless devices**: these are located in the narthex and in the church (beside the hymn books). Simply choose "Church offertory" from the list on the screen, and please select the option to add gift aid if you are a tax payer. (Note: these devices can also be used for special collections)
- **gift aid envelope scheme**: please place your envelope in the collection bags
- **loose cash**: please place in the collection bags.

Thank you for your support.

Contact Us: Email: epsom@abdiocese.org.uk
Telephone: 01372 723573

PARISH OPENING HOURS
MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY
8.30A.M. – 2.30P.M.