

PETERPOST

The Parish of St Peter and the Winchester Martyrs

Heart of Hampshire parish with worshipping communities in Winchester, Alresford and Stockbridge



THE PARISH
OF ST PETER
& THE WINCHESTER MARTYRS

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS

WEEK:

*Let There Be Light - Burning Brightly For Others
Advent and Christmas Messages - not too late
Kingdom Seekers Advent Retreat*



FATHER MARK WRITES: “LET THERE BE LIGHT – BURNING BRIGHTLY FOR OTHERS”

As winter deepens across the parish, the festive lights on our streets stir a familiar longing - not just for physical warmth, but for something more profound.

Light is life itself. Without it, we stumble in confusion, fear, and despair. But when Christ's light breaks through, it warms our hearts and it transforms: bringing peace to anxiety, hope to shadows, and love where bitterness once lingered. Last week, we explored welcoming this light through prayer and surrender. Today, Jesus calls us further: **You are the light of the world.** What do we – and those around us - truly crave in these wintry shadows - warmth, purpose, connection? And how can we shine Christ's light for others?

John the Baptist: A Life That Points to the Light

This is where we witness the entry of John the Baptist, the ultimate influencer sent by God. As Scripture declares: “There came a man who was sent by God; his name was John. He came to testify to the light” (John 1:6–7). Jesus praised him: “Among those born of women, none greater than John” (Luke 7:28). John's mission? To prepare hearts for the Messiah and to point them towards Him.

He preached in the Judean wilderness: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” (Matthew 3:1). Not in temples or cities, but the desert—a place of hidden transformation, as it was for Moses and the People of Israel, having escaped from slavery in Egypt. The desert stripped away distractions, heralding God's fresh work. Repentance, John urged, isn't shame but **a change of mind, heart, and direction—take a step forward in faith toward God, who's nearer than you think** (Matthew 3:2).

John's life embodied this with his humble clothes, simple diet, unwavering humility. “I am not worthy to untie His sandals,” he said. Crowds came, but he pointed beyond himself. “There is One coming after me.” His influence shouted, Look—there He is.

Your Influence Matters

Now, what about us? Do our words, choices, and attitudes point others to Christ? You have influence—more than you know. God might have placed you where you are - at home, work, school, or in this parish - for a reason. That “stuck” job or unwanted routine? It might be your wilderness, your place to shine with the love of Christ.

Cont'd...

These are our usual Mass times. For any changes or special celebrations, please check the back page for this week's full schedule.

ST PETER'S CHURCH WINCHESTER

Sunday Masses: Saturday Vigil Mass, 5.30pm. Sunday 8.00am, 10.30am and 5.30pm.

Weekday Masses: Monday, Tuesday and Friday 12.15pm. Wednesday and Thursday at 10.00am.

Confessions: Saturday 9.30am to 10.30am and 4.30pm to 5.00pm.

Morning Prayer and Eucharistic Adoration 8.00am Monday to Friday.

ST THOMAS MORE'S CHURCH STOCKBRIDGE

Sunday Mass: 9.00am.

ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH WINCHESTER

Sunday Mass: 9.15am.

ST GREGORY'S CHURCH ALRESFORD

Sunday Mass: 11.00am.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT - SUNDAY 7TH DECEMBER 2025 | YEAR A

St. John Henry Newman echoes this in his prayer, which we can claim for ourselves:

God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good; I shall do His work...He knows what He is about.

Like John the Baptist, use your platform – your age, position, personality - to guide others to Christ. Teenagers, your example inspires younger ones; adults, your kindness lights paths. This deepens your own faith too, turning influence into mission.

Baptised with Fire: How We Shine

John proclaimed: *"I baptise you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me... will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire"* (Matthew 3:11). **You have been baptised with fire!**

Fr. Dave Pivonka TOR explains: *Fire illuminates, revealing God, self, and others amid shadows. It purifies, burning away selfishness, pride, and sin to make us holy. It protects, like a shepherd's flame warding off wolves—shielding from evil's harm. The Spirit empowers us to burn with passion for Christ, so His light shines through, glorifying the Father.*

As the saying goes (often attributed to John Wesley): "I set myself on fire and people come to watch me burn." Kindle that flame this Advent—let it convict you of darkness without Him, yet fill you with hope for transformation.

Practical Ways to Point to Christ

Make this your priority: simple acts to add value and invite light.

1. **Pray daily**—even a few brief minutes: "Lord, how can I reflect You today?"
2. **Bring blessing**—encourage at work, school, in the shops; serve where you go.
3. **Smile**—it sparks joy, influencing others to respond in kind.
4. **Call people by name**—notice, affirm; it's music to the soul.
5. **Kindness in small ways**—hold doors, carry bags, send thanks.
6. **Invite personally**—to Christmas Masses, the Alpha course, or coffee. Many feel alone; your warmth can connect them to Christ. There is no grand stage needed - just a willing heart aflame with God's love.

The Light Has Come

Advent proclaims: "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light" (Isaiah 9:2). Christ is that light - receive it, reflect it, radiate with it. As you stroll through the twinkling streets of Winchester, Alresford or Stockbridge, don't just admire: become the light. Darkness flees when we shine together.

Fr. Pedro and I eagerly await you at our Christmas Masses—bring a friend. Let's share this transforming hope and joy.

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING:

Reminder: Our in-person safeguarding training, led by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, takes place on **Saturday 6 December, 10am-1pm in the Pastoral Centre.**

NEW ALTAR SERVER TRAINING:

Fr Mark warmly invites any children who have made their First Holy Communion to consider becoming Altar Servers—a wonderful privilege and blessing. Our second information and training session for parents and children will take place on **Saturday 6th December, 12:00-1:00pm at St Peter's Church**, where you can ask questions and the children will receive basic training, including how to wear the alb. Children and young people can also serve in other ways at Mass, such as welcoming (Andrea: welcoming@stpeterswinchester.org.uk), reading (Sarah: readers@stpeterswinchester.org.uk), or music (Rosanne: rosanne@stpeterswinchester.org.uk).



ADVENT

Let There Be Light – Daily Advent Messages from Fr Mark: As a reminder, Fr Mark is once again sending out daily reflections throughout Advent and Christmas - short, uplifting messages with Scripture and images to help you welcome the Light of Christ into your days. This year's theme, "Let there be Light," invites us to walk with Jesus, the Light of the World, especially when life feels dark or overwhelming. If you've received these before, you'll be included automatically; if you'd like to join for the first time, [click here](#) to sign up.



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

O People of Zion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations, and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart.

FIRST READING

First reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 72(71):1-2. 7-8. 12-13. 17. R. cf 7

In his days shall justice flourish, and great peace for ever.

SECOND READING

Romans 15:4-9

Gospel Acclamation:

R. Alleluia, alleluia

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight; all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

R. Alleluia

GOSPEL

Matthew 3:1-12

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

Cf. Ba 5:5; 4:36

Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights, and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT - SUNDAY 7TH DECEMBER 2025 | YEAR A

Kingdom Seekers Advent Retreat - Theme: 'Our Hope is in Jesus' Saturday December 13th 9:00am - 1:00pm in Pastoral Centre: A half day retreat of prayer, fun activities, music, food, reflection and creativity, all centred around why we can place our hope in Jesus. If you have a child in Years 5 through 9 (age 9 - 14) who has made their First Holy Communion, why not encourage them to come along and join our current members for the morning. Please contact rosanne@stpeterswinchester.org.uk for more information or to sign up.



Kingdom Seekers Information Session – Parents & Children, Saturday 13 December, 1:00pm

We're really excited to welcome new members in January, and we'd love you and your child to be part of the journey! Kingdom Seekers helps our young people grow in faith, discover their gifts, and learn what it means to lead with a servant heart. There are already some amazing plans for next year! Simply come along to the **Pastoral Centre at 1:00pm** for a short, friendly information session (or **rejoin your child at 1:00pm** if they're attending the retreat) and find out what Kingdom Seekers is all about.

St Stephen's Travelling Nativity: This Advent, Mary and Joseph are travelling with the little donkey to Bethlehem. On their way they are hoping to find a different inn to stay at every night. Could they come to stay at your house? The Travelling Nativity will come to you for a night and then you are expected to pass them on to the next family. This is a good opportunity to meet other families and pray together this Advent. Please let the office know if you would like to participate and I will add your family to the rota. Please can you share your address and your contact details (these will be shared on the group rota). If interested, please do email the office office@stpeterswinchester.org.uk as soon as you can.



Looking for a moment of peace as Advent unfolds? As we enter the second week of Advent and Christmas draws a little closer, Hallow is offering an extended free trial to help you find calm, prayer and space with God. Their Pray25: Be Still series- featuring voices like Jonathan Roumie, Chris Pratt, Gwen Stefani and more - comes with beautiful Advent music, daily reflections, the Rosary, and thousands of guided prayers. It's a gentle way to stay grounded in faith during a busy season. [Click here](#) to give it a try.

Let this Advent be Different, Quieter, Deeper, and Filled with Grace: As we enter Advent and step into a brand-new liturgical year, the Church invites each of us to pause, breathe, and prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus. Advent isn't just a countdown to Christmas—it's a sacred journey from darkness to light, from hurry to stillness, from routine to renewed hope. And choosing even one small practice can change the whole way we experience this season. **To help you make space for God in the midst of December's rush, our parish bookshop is offering a wonderful range of Advent resources** - beautiful, accessible, and designed to guide you gently into prayer. From Praying the Psalms and Waiting in the Light (daily Advent reflections) to Season's Greetings, A Journey to the Crib, and Wonders of His Love for families, these books are perfect tools for anyone who wants to slow down, refocus, and prepare a place for Christ. Why not pick something up this week.

Families of Faith – Advent Newsletter: Looking for fun and meaningful ways to get ready for Christmas as a family? Our Families of Faith – Advent 2025 newsletter from the Diocese is full of simple ideas you can try at home - like making your own Advent wreath, weekly activities for hope, peace, joy and love, prayers you can say together and inspiring stories of St Nicholas and St Lucy. There are even small challenges linked to each Sunday's Gospel to help you live out your faith in real and practical ways. [Click here](#) to take a look and get started this Advent!

St Stephen's Church Red Poinsettia Display: Each Christmas we display poinsettias in memory of a loved one. This year we are using **RED** plants. Please bring your plant donation in a drainage saucer to ease watering. Make sure you attach a tag with details of the loved one. **We are collecting these plants on Sunday 21st December at morning Mass and Tuesday, 23rd December.** Christmas displays will be arranged on Tuesday 23rd December.

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) – A Beautiful Space to Begin Again: On **Saturday 13th December**, St Peter's will be open for Extended Confessions from **9.30am to 12.00 noon** - a quiet, grace-filled window in the heart of Advent. This is a golden opportunity to pause, breathe, and let God meet you with mercy. No pressure, no expectations... just a warm welcome and the chance to lay down whatever burdens you've been carrying. Whether it has been weeks, months, or years, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is one of the gentlest ways to prepare your heart for Christmas. In the stillness of the church, Christ offers you peace, freedom and a fresh start - the gift He most wants to give you this Advent. Come whenever you're ready. Let grace find you.

Advent Penitential Service – A Time of Healing and Hope: On **Monday 15th December at 7.00pm**, we gather at St Peter's Church for our Advent Penitential Service - a beautiful communal moment of prayer, reflection and mercy as we prepare for Christmas. If you've been longing for peace, clarity, or simply a quieter heart, this is a gentle way to open yourself to God's healing. Through Scripture, music and shared silence, we'll walk together into the light of Christ's forgiveness - with several priests available for individual confession for those who wish. Come and experience the warmth, the welcome, and the grace that Advent promises. Let this be the moment that helps you breathe again.

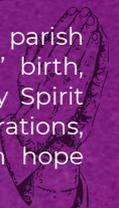
FUNERALS

Jo Tanter RIP - 11th December at 11:30am - St Peter's Church
Carol Bracegirdle RIP - 11th December at All Saints Church, Hursley 12:30pm
Please pray for their family and friends at this difficult time.
Fr. Shaun Budden RIP
Fr. John Buckley RIP

May God grant them eternal rest.

PRAYER CORNER

Let us pray that our parish community, awaiting Jesus' birth, may be filled with the Holy Spirit through our Advent preparations, growing closer to Christ in hope and joy.



We are part of the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth, Registered Charity Number: 1199568



Advent & Christmas Services 2025



Date	Times	Where	Service
Saturday 13th December	9:00AM to 1:00PM	St Peter's	Kingdom Seekers Advent Retreat
Saturday 13th December	9:30AM to 12:00PM	St Peter's	Extended Confession (Sacrament of Reconciliation)
Sunday 14th December	3:45PM to 4:45PM	St Peter's	Christingle Sunday
Monday 15th December	7:00PM	St Peter's	Penitential Liturgy (Confession)
Friday 19th December	10:30AM	St Peter's	Blue Christmas
Friday 19th December	5:30PM to 8:00PM	St Peter's	Night of Light
Wednesday 24th December	3:00PM	St Peter's	Early Family Christmas Mass
Wednesday 24th December	5:30PM	St Peter's	First Mass of Christmas
Wednesday 24th December	5:30PM	St Stephen's	First Mass of Christmas
Wednesday 24th December	8:00PM	St Gregory's	Midnight Mass with Carols & Readings
Wednesday 24th December	10:30PM	St Peter's	Midnight Mass with Carols & Readings
Thursday 25th December	8:00AM	St Peter's	Christmas Day Mass
Thursday 25th December	9:00AM	St Thomas More	Christmas Day Mass
Thursday 25th December	9:15AM	St Stephen's	Christmas Day Mass
Thursday 25th December	10:30AM	St Peter's	Christmas Day Mass
Thursday 25th December	11:00AM	St Gregory's	Christmas Day Mass
Friday 26th December	10:00AM	St Stephen's	Feast of St Stephen
Wednesday 31st December	8:00AM	St Peter's	New Year's Eve
Wednesday 31st December	10:00AM	St Peter's	New Year's Eve
Thursday 1st January 2026	10:00AM	St Peter's	New Year's Day - Mary, Holy Mother of God
Sunday 11th January 2026	10:15AM	St Stephen's	Epiphany Party





PARISH NEWS & EVENTS

Pies and Puds Xmas Special Lunch Event: Has been postponed for a week, so it will now be on **Wednesday, 17th December** - full details next week!

Love Poetry? Join Deacon Martin!

On Sunday 7th December at 7:30pm, Deacon Martin will read Gerard Manley Hopkins's *The Wreck of the Deutschland*, recalling events on the eve of the Immaculate Conception. The reading takes about 15 minutes, with time afterward to discuss the poem. Volunteers are welcome to share the reading—ideally 2–3 voices. To join, email mmcelroy@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk for the Teams link and a copy of the poem. No extra software is needed—just a web browser.



Winchester Catholic History Society: The Committee invites you to join them for wine and mince pies **from 5.15pm** on **Wednesday 10 December** to start the Christmas celebrations. The AGM will follow at 6.00pm in the Parish Centre. Dr Frances Sands' talk, "Architecture in the Age of Elegance: An Introduction to Robert Adam", will begin immediately after at 6.30pm.

Something Sweet is Coming to St Gregory's! Join us after the Children's Mass on **Sunday 14th December** for a delicious Cake Sale - the perfect chance to enjoy a treat, support our parish, and spread a little festive cheer. Contributions of homemade goodies are gratefully welcomed! Plus, don't miss Clare Gamble's Christmas Cake Raffle 🎄🍰 - tickets will be on sale after Mass, with the lucky draw taking place the following Sunday, 21st December. Come for the cakes... stay for the Christmas joy!

Baptism Celebratory Mass – Save the Date for 2026: If your child was baptised during 2025 here in the Parish of St Peter and the Winchester Martyrs, we'd love to celebrate with you at our Annual Thanksgiving Mass - a joyful moment to gather as families and give thanks for the gift of new life in Christ. Join us on **Saturday 10th January 2026 at 10:30am in St Peter's Church**, for Mass with Fr Mark Hogan, followed by a friendly finger buffet. To help with planning, please email rosanne@stpeterswinchester.org.uk with the number of adults and children attending.



Epiphany Party 🍷🎉 – 11th January 2026: Join us **at St Stephen's on Sunday 11th January** as we celebrate the Epiphany together! **After the 9:15am Mass**, the Children's Liturgy team will be hosting a fun and friendly parish gathering. Everyone is welcome and contributions to the shared snack table are gratefully received.

Gospel Workshop at St Peter's Church: Join us for an unforgettable Come & Sing Gospel workshop led by international choir leader Tim Uffindell on **Saturday, 28th February - 2.45pm to 5.15pm**. No experience needed- just turn up, have fun, learn a vibrant gospel song, and feel the joy of singing in harmony with others. It's low-pressure, high-energy, and a brilliant way to build community, boost confidence and discover the power of your own voice. Come ready to laugh, sing and leave feeling AMAZING. For more tickets [Click here](#).



OUTREACH

Pope Leo has maintained his advocacy for the world's poor and spoken out about the effects of climate change on the global South. During the recent COP30 conference he sent a heartfelt message to the Catholic bishops who were attending. During Advent we pray that the world will listen to the cry of the poor and take urgent action to tackle the climate crisis. You can see his video message by [clicking here](#)



SCHOOL

Vote for St Peter's at Tesco: St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Winchester, is in the running for a Tesco Stronger Starts grant! This will fund sensory activities that help children share worries and support mental health. Please vote with your blue token when you shop - especially during your Christmas shopping! Voting runs early October 2025 to mid-January 2026 at Tesco stores in Winchester and nearby. Every vote helps!



St Peter's Catholic School: [Click here](#) for the newsletter.

Parish Priest: Fr Mark Hogan

Assistant Priest: Fr Pedro José Hernández O'Hagan

Deacons: Tony Darlison & Martin McElroy

CONTACTS:

For a full list of contact details for our Parish, please visit our website:

www.catholicwinchester.org.uk or email office@stpeterswinchester.org.uk to be directed to the correct person.

Parish Office: office@stpeterswinchester.org.uk

Finance: accounts@stpeterswinchester.org.uk Tel: 01962 852804

Deadline for items for newsletter requests submit by **Wednesday mid-day!**

PARISH BANK DETAILS:

If you wish to make a payment or donation, please use the following details: Parish Bank Account Name: CDP St Peter & Winchester Martyrs, Sort Code: 30-93-04, Account Number: 00890996 & Reference details (e.g. offertory, SVP, etc). You can also use the Contactless machine at the back of St Peter's or visit our website.

TABLE:

Date	Times	Where	Intentions
Sat 6 Dec St Nicholas	10:00AM	Winchester Cathedral Mass	The Soul of Frederick Yard
	11:00AM to 12:00 Noon	Confession at St Peter's	
	4:30PM to 5:00PM	Confession at St Peter's	
Sunday VIGIL Second Sunday of Advent	5:30PM	Mass at St Peter's	Deceased Members of the Hill Family
	8:00AM	Mass at St Peter's (Plainchant)	People of the Parish
Sun 7 Dec Second Sunday of Advent	9:00AM	Mass at St Thomas More's	For the Soul of Sean McGuinness
	9:15AM	Mass at St Stephen's	Lidia Otero RIP
	10:30AM	Mass at St Peter's (Family Mass)	The Soul of Richard Wheble
	11:00AM	Mass at St Gregory's	
	5:30PM	Mass at St Peter's (Grace Notes)	Benefactors
	8:00AM	Morning Prayer & Adoration at St Peter's	
Mon 8 Dec The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary	12:15PM	Mass at St Peter's	David Leonard Morgan KSG RIP
	8:00AM	Morning Prayer, Adoration at St Peter's	
Tues 9 Dec St John Diego Cuahtlatotzin	10:00AM	Mass at St Gregory's	Michael King
	12:15PM	Mass at St Peter's	The Soul of Mary Julia Wheble
	11:00AM	Mass at St Peter's	The Intentions of Anna Salley & Roseann Lynch
Wed 10 Dec Our Lady of Loreto	8:00AM	Morning Prayer & Adoration at St Peter's	
Thur 11 Dec St Damasus I	10:00AM	Mass at St Peter's	Intentions of the Neil Family
	11:30AM	Funeral Service Jo Tanter RIP	
	8:00AM	Morning Prayer & Adoration at St Peter's	
Fri 12 Dec Our Lady of Guadalupe	10:00AM	Mass at St Gregory's	
	12:15PM	Mass at St Peter's	Maria Cheng RIP & John Blake RIP
	9:00	Mass St Peter's	Elliott & Kelly Families RIP
Sat 13 Dec St Lucy	9:30AM to 12:00 Noon	Extended Confession at St Peter's	
	4:30PM to 5:00PM	Confession at St Peter's	
Sunday VIGIL Third Sunday of Advent Gaudete	5:30PM	Mass at St Peter's	People of the Parish

Watch live or catch up later on our [YouTube channel](#) — all services from St Peter's, including Morning Prayer and Adoration, are livestreamed. [St Peter's - Livestreaming Notice September 2025](#)