

**Reflection from Fr Elijah: True blessedness is found in humble dependence on God**

On this Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, the Word of God places before us a profound paradox at the heart of the Christian life. In the Gospel, Jesus ascends the mountain and proclaims the Beatitudes. What He describes does not resemble the world's definition of success or happiness. **Blessed are the poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful, the persecuted.** These are not qualities we instinctively admire or pursue. Yet, Jesus gives them as the path to the Kingdom.

The first reading from the prophet Zephaniah helps us understand why. God calls the lowly, the humble, those who seek righteousness, not because they are impressive by human standards, but because their hearts are open to Him. God's saving work does not begin with self-sufficiency but with trust. The poor in spirit are not simply those who lack material goods; they are those who know they need God.

Saint Paul sharpens this message in his letter to the Corinthians. He reminds them – and us – that God did not choose many who were wise, powerful, or noble by worldly measures. Instead, God chose what is weak to shame the strong. This is not to humiliate us, but to free us from the illusion that we can save ourselves. Our dignity and worth comes from belonging to Christ, not from our achievements.

The Beatitudes, then, are not passive or sentimental ideals. They describe the life of Jesus Himself. He is the truly poor one, the meek one, the merciful one, who endured persecution and even death out of love. To live the Beatitudes is to conform our lives to His.

As we approach the altar today, we are invited to examine where we seek our security and happiness because God's Kingdom belongs to those who recognize their need for Him and allow their lives to be shaped by the humility, mercy, and self-giving love of Jesus, rather than by the world's standards of power and achievement.

**Mass Times and Intentions****4<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time**

Exposition & Rosary at 9.30am before Mass (Tue-Fri). Sacrament of Confession is available on request.

Mass Intentions can be requested through Fr Elijah or the Parish Office.

Date	Times & Location			Mass Intentions & Feasts
Sun 1 <sup>st</sup> February	9.15am 11am 5.30pm 6pm	OLA CKSC SB CKSC	Mass Mass Mass Mass (in Polish)	In thanksgiving for Lorraine & Anthea Hollingworth on their birthday For the people For the people
Tue 3 <sup>rd</sup> February	10am	OLA	Mass	
Wed 4 <sup>th</sup> February	10am	SB	Mass	For Isobel Baldwin RIP
Thur 5 <sup>th</sup> February	10am	CKSC	Mass	
Fri 6 <sup>th</sup> February	10am	OLA	Mass	
Sat 7 <sup>th</sup> February	10am	CKSC	Mass	
Sun 8 <sup>th</sup> February	9.15am 11am 5.30pm 6pm	OLA CKSC SB CKSC	Mass Mass Mass Mass (in Polish)	For the people In memory of Maria Rosario Millan For the repose of the soul of Elma Gibson, Lorna's Mum, on the 21st anniversary of her death.

This Sunday's readings can be found at <https://universalis.com/europe.England/20260201/mass.htm>

Second Collection – 1<sup>st</sup> February – Lepra Mission

## Within our Parish

### Consultation on Formation of a Pastoral Area and Canonical Parish February 2026

#### Parish of Christ the King and St Colman, Our Lady of the Assumption and St Brigid

In 2023 the Bishop published his 10-year mission plan for the catholic diocese of Portsmouth, 'You Will Be My Witness'. The diocesan vision is to bring people closer to Jesus Christ by renewing the faith of Catholics, reaching out to those who have drifted away, and welcoming those on the margins. That every parishioner is encouraged to use their gifts in the Church's mission, to care for the poor and for creation, and to reconnect with young people. The aim being to focus less on maintaining buildings and more on sharing Christ with the world.

The diocesan plan is to build Christ-centred missionary communities, Pastoral areas, founded on a strong partnership between our parishes, schools, small groups, families, and individuals all working together to grow in faith and authentically witness the love of God. Communities which reach out, welcome, and inspire so that our parish and Diocese may truly bring people closer to Jesus Christ through His Church.

To fulfil the plan the Bishop shared that new parish structures were needed to ensure sustainable resources for the future with numbers of Priests and parishioners declining. Under the Mission Plan, 87 parishes within the dioceses were to be grouped into 24 pastoral or single-parish areas that would then become canonical parishes. A Canonical Parish is a parish that is formally established in Church law. In other words, it's a Parish that officially exists according to the rules of the Catholic Church (canon law), with a defined territory, a priest, and clear responsibilities.

The Bishop had originally planned that our parish would form Southampton East Canonical Parish with Woolston and Netley. The Bishop has now proposed a change to that plan, he wishes that all the Parishes within Southampton form one Canonical Parish named 'Our Lady Star of the Sea, Southampton'. This would bring together the following 8 Parishes:

- Holy Family, Millbrook; St. Boniface, Shirley; St Joseph and St. Edmund in the city centre; St. Vincent de Paul, Lordswood; Immaculate Conception, Portswood; St. Theresa's, Totton; St Patrick's and The Annunciation, Woolston & Netley; Christ the King and St Colman & Our Lady of the Assumption and St Brigid, Bitterne, Hedge End & West End.

In this Canonical Parish there would be:

- One Co-ordinating Parish Priest supported by a team of Priest's and Deacon's
- One central administration office
- One pastoral committee
- One finance committee
- An average Sunday Mass attendance of parishioners across the Canonical parish of over 3,000 people.

As a parishioner of Christ the King and St Colman, Our Lady of the Assumption and St Brigid's it is important to your Pastoral Council that you have the opportunity to discern (the process of listening to God so we can choose the path that leads most faithfully to Jesus and His mission) and share your views with the Bishop.

We will be sharing a questionnaire next week and we every parishioner to share their thoughts, hopes, and concerns to help guide our communal discernment. All feedback must be received by the 16th February so it can be submitted to the diocese.  
God Bless, **Your Parish Pastoral Council**

## Recurring Events

### Our Lady of the Assumption – Hedge End

- Tea, coffee, biscuits & friendly chat in the hall every Sunday after Holy Mass
- Children's liturgy during Mass every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month (not during summer holidays)

- Carers Group on third Wednesday of every month from 7.00pm to 8.30pm
- Growing in Faith every Tuesday evening 7:30-9pm
- Table tennis every Tuesday from 9.30am to 12pm
- Open Church every Thursday from 10am-12pm
- Tea, coffee, biscuits & friendly chat in the hall after Holy Mass every 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month
- Choir practice in hall - 7:30pm on 2nd & 4th Friday each month. All welcome.

### Christ the King & St Colman – Bitterne

- Prayer group every Thursday 10.30am-12 noon
- Children's liturgy for 4 to 7-year-olds every Sunday during term time

### St Brigid – West End

- Tea, coffee & cake every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month after Mass

The next Parish Pastoral Council meeting is on the 5<sup>th</sup> March, please submit any points of discussion to the office.

## Continuing to Support the Church

Please consider setting up a **standing order**.

### For Christ the King & St Colman:

**Account Name:** CDP Christ the King & St Colman  
**Sort code:** 30-93-04  
**Account Number:** 00887553

### For Our Lady of the Assumption and St Brigid:

**Account Name:** CDP Hedge End Our Lady  
**Sort code:** 30-93-04  
**Account Number:** 00879747

Please mention which fund you are donating to as a reference.  
Make out cheques for Fr Elijah to Rev Fru N Elijah  
Thank you for your support