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ST MARY'S & ST COLUMBA'S The Catholic Church in Gosport

28 Dec 2025 & 04 Jan 2026 - THE HOLY FAMILY & 2nd SUNDAY AFTER NATIVITY

27	Sat	06:00pm	Vigil	Ms Mary Anne Cornelius RIP	CONFESION TIMES Wed 6:15pm-6:45pm (if Mass is celebrated) Sat - 12:00nn—1:00pm
28	Sun	08:00am 11:15am	The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph	People of the Parish Altar Servers INT	EUCARISTIC ADORATION Thu—after the 7pm Mass <i>Holy half hour with Night Prayer</i>
29	Mon	No Service			
30	Tue	No Mass			
31	Wed	No Mass			
01	Thu	12:00nn	Mary, The Holy Mother of God	Private Intention PP	
02	Fri	No Mass			
03	Sat	06:00pm	Vigil	Francis Savege RIP	
04	Sun	08:00am 11:15am	Second Sunday after the Nativity	Robert Prior RIP Greg Nwokora INT	
05	Mon	No Service			
06	Tue	12:00nn 07:00pm	The Epiphany of the Lord	Miss Mary Ann Cornelius RIP Rev John Martin RIP	
07	Wed	07:00pm		Deceased of the Munro & Tanner Families	
08	Thu	07:00pm		Mike Tanguy & Francis Camp RIP	
09	Fri	12:00nn		James William Loveday RIP	
10	Sat	06:00pm	Vigil	Lawrence Halford INT	
11	Sun	08:00am 11:15am	The Baptism of the Lord	Canon John Watson RIP Zied Solomon RIP	
<p><i>This Newsletter covers a two-week period. The next Newsletter will be issued on Sunday, 11 January.</i> <i>Please Note: The Parish Office will be closed until 02 January 2026.</i> <i>Our regular Sunday tea and coffee in St Mary's Hall will be back on January 18.</i></p>					

KEY DATES FOR THE NEW YEAR

- 06 January Tue - The Epiphany of the Lord (Holy Day of Obligation).
Mass at 12nn and at 7pm
- 11 January Sun - Children's Liturgy . During the 11:15am Mass
- 11 January Sun - Seniors' Christmas Lunch . 1pm in the parish hall after the 11:15am Mass
- 16 January Fri - First Holy Communion Parents' Meeting . 7pm in the parish hall
- 17 January Sat - First Holy Communion Catechism - First Session . 9:00am til 10:30 am in the parish hall.
- 31 January Sat - First Holy Communion Catechism - Second Session . 9:00am til 10:30 am in the parish hall.



Welcome to all our visitors and parishioners!

If you are new to the parish, please introduce yourself to Fr Matthew and/or Dcn John after Mass today. Please complete a Parishioner Registration Form which can be found in the church foyer and take a copy of the newsletter as well to stay informed about current parish and diocesan news and updates.



CHRISTMAS COLLECTION

Any additional donations given on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day will be used to support the priests of the diocese. Every penny specifically donated over this weekend (together with any Gift Aid on qualifying donations) will be used to support our local priest. Our Dona machine will be able to receive any late donations until the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord. Thank you for your kind donations

SENIORS' CHRISTMAS LUNCH

11 January 1:00pm in St Mary's Hall. This year's Christmas meal for senior parishioners require advance booking, so please call or email the parish office to secure your place. Also, a member of the hospitality team will be at every Mass from 27 December to take names and reservations. **A £5 donation is requested for a three-course meal.**



ALTAR SERVERS' MASS

28 December at the 11:15am Mass. We invite all parishioners to join us as we celebrate Mass and enrolment of some of our altar servers to the Guild of St Stephen, the patron saint of altar servers. This Mass will also be for all our altar servers whose faithfulness, reverence and commitment enrich our liturgies throughout the year. After Mass, we invite all our altar servers and their families in the hall for some light refreshments. **The hall will be used exclusively for the Altar Server's Christmas Get-together. The regular tea and coffee will be back on the 11th of January.**



NEW DONA MACHINE

We have installed a new Dona machine to replace the previous unit, which was aging and required significant software updates. We spent £390 for the new unit. All donors who have registered and signed up for Gift Aid under the previous declaration will need to re-register in Dona. This is a one off registration only.



CHRISTMAS CRIB OFFERING

This year, Bishop Philip has agreed that donations made in the **Christmas Crib appeal will go to the Friends of the Holy Land**. The situation there is dire. Bethlehem is far from lying still and peaceful and is currently home to two refugee camps for those fleeing from the conflict in Gaza, as well as from other conflicts and persecution in the region. The families that live in the Holy Land rely on Pilgrimages for over 90% of their income, something which had barely recovered from Covid before the latest round of fighting brought a halt to visitors to the region. Please keep our brothers and sisters there in your prayers.

HEALING SERVICE

Martin, a Gosport parishioner, recommends a 2-day weekend school and healing service in Northampton in February: 27 - 28, called Teaching—Activating—Deploying Catholics to Participate in the Healing Ministry of Jesus. We are called *to do what he did, and that includes healing the sick. Jesus wants to use you as an instrument of his divine healing. Are you going to give him the chance?* To find out more, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/yy8cymhm>

SANCTUARY LAMP

This week, the Sanctuary Lamp is offered for a private intention.



SPONSOR A SANCTUARY LAMP

If you would like to sponsor a Sanctuary Lamp, with a thoughtful intention, simply fill out a Sanctuary Lamp sponsor envelope that is available in the church foyer. The cost of sponsoring a Lamp is £5 per week. Your intentions will also be remembered during the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament every Friday.

MASS INTENTIONS

To have a Mass offered for your intentions, kindly use the envelopes at the back of the church. Please book in advance. The earliest available dates are now in February 2026.

TURN EVERYDAY SHOPPING INTO EVERYDAY GIVING

Give as You Live (GAYL). With Give as You Live Online, every purchase you make helps support St Mary's without any extra cost to you. It is quick, easy and completely free. Shop as normal and raise vital funds for St Mary's. Use this link: <https://tinyurl.com/222ae5s5> to access our parish's online shopping/giving page.

STELLA MARIS CHRISTMAS CHOCOLATE APPEAL

We are still accepting donations. Did you know that there will be about 400,000 Seafarers working over Christmas, separated from their families and friends? Stella Maris meets and supports these seafarers. You chocolate donations will be for seafarers visiting Southampton ports in the days before Christmas. Thank you.



A BIG THANK YOU!

To everyone who brought food for the Simbang Gabi and the Volunteers' Get-together. It was very much appreciated. We cannot miss the sumptuous meals prepared for our events!

To all those who donated prizes for the raffle, we had really good raffle prizes this year and we would also like to thank all the businesses who donated and shared their blessings to our parish.

SACRAMENTS

Baptism: Please contact the Parish Office for an application form. The dates for the next Baptism Preparation Programme are: Meet & Greet - in person Saturday 14th Feb, 10am Online Session 1 Tuesday 17th Feb, from 8pm Online Session 2 Tuesday 24th Feb, from 8pm Welcome & Anointing Sunday 1st March Closing date for this Preparation Pathway - Fri. 30th January Please contact the parish office for more information or visit <https://tinyurl.com/2vctjens>.

Marriage: Marriage is a sacred vow. Getting married in church is a traditional, meaningful, and a beautiful ceremony to which every Catholic couple aspires. If you wish to get married at St Mary's Church, please contact the parish office. We will be more than happy to guide you in preparing for this Sacrament.

Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick: Please contact the Parish Office.

If you or a loved one is sick or housebound: If you are unable to participate in the Sunday Eucharist, please contact the Parish Office and arrangements will be made for you to receive Holy communion.

If you are in the hospital or will be admitted in the hospital: Please call the following Chaplaincy Nos: QA - 02392 286 408 / War Memorial - 02392 580119 / Southampton Hospital - 02381 206 049, and ask for a Roman Catholic Priest.

December : A Busy and Blessed Time in Our Parish

December has been, once again, a wonderfully busy and grace-filled time in our parish with many events and activities taking place. We were pleased to host St Mary's Primary School with their Christmas Carol Service which brought children, families and parishioners together in our church.

Our Children's Liturgy group continued their work throughout the year, and it was lovely to see our children go home with Rosaries as a beautiful reminder of prayer and devotion to our Lady. The children's Nativity play was another highlight, made possible through the time and effort of our youth coordinators and parents, and the children themselves.

We also celebrated Simbang gabi, and our choir has been busy rehearsing and preparing music for the Christmas Services. In addition, our volunteers' get-together was a welcome chance to thank those who serve and to spend time together and celebrate the friendships and our service that make our parish as one.

Our Fundraising team exceeded themselves by working so hard and giving their time and effort to support the financial needs of our parish.

WE SINCERELY THANK ALL OUR PARISH VOLUNTEERS, ACROSS EVERY MINISTRY, FOR THE TIME AND EFFORT YOU GIVE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, ESPECIALLY DURING THIS BUSY SEASON. YOUR COMMITMENT, OFTEN UNSEEN AND UNNOTICED, REALLY MAKES A DIFFERENCE. YOUR WORK SUPPORTS PARISH LIFE IN MANY WAYS AND IS TRULY APPRECIATED!

Three years ago, on Pope Francis's video message for International Volunteer Day, he said, "volunteers are the strength of the Church". He described volunteers' service as a vital part of the Church's mission. In that message, he highlighted the "strength of volunteers" and urged each one to accept volunteering as a grace from God. Pope Francis said that the world needs volunteers committed to the common good even when commitment seems difficult or overlooked. Volunteers should be "artisans of mercy", showing mercy through their hands, eyes, attentive listening, and closeness to others. He also stressed the importance of working together with people, encouraging greater cooperation among volunteers.

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." - 1 Peter 4:10



14 December - Volunteers Get-together



21 December - Children's Nativity Play



21 December - Raffle Draw



19 December - Simbang Gabi



Nativity Scene

MEETING WITH BISHOP PHILIP ABOUT THE PRIESTHOOD

Sunday 4 January 3pm at St John's Cathedral.

Bishop Philip is inviting any man in our Diocese, aged 17 or older, who is not married and who would like to know more about being a diocesan priest, to contact him and to come to a short meeting at the Cathedral. Please scan the QR code to register.



DIOCESAN FREE WILLS SERVICE

The Diocese has partnered with market-leading solicitors and will-writing providers to offer anyone over 18 basic simple or mirror Will for free. Whether you would like to write your Will in-person, online or over the 'phone, you will be expertly supported throughout a quick and straightforward process. You are under no obligation to leave your Parish a gift in their Wills, but a gift of this kind is an opportunity to make a lasting gift to the Church, and we hope many will choose to do so. More information can be found at: <https://tinyurl.com/3r7hh47w>

A CATHOLIC FUNERAL

In 2014, Bishop Philip issued to the clergy and people of the Diocese some ***Guidelines for Funerals and for the Care of the Terminally Ill***. The Guidelines should be followed in our Diocese when planning a funeral for a Catholic person who has died. The leaflet also enables Catholics to leave instructions about their own funeral for their next of kin, and in addition, some notes are given for the care of Catholics who are terminally ill. You may find them here. <https://tinyurl.com/mpyje57d>. When a Catholic dies, it is the usual custom of the Catholic Church for them to be brought to their parish church & for a Requiem Mass to be offered up for them. This is the case even for those who during their lifetime rarely practiced their Catholic faith. Catholics believe that when a person dies, it is a priority to offer Mass, because it is the Sacrifice of Christ & in the Mass the Church pleads to the Lord, asking him to forgive the sins and weaknesses of the deceased & to admit them into the communion of the saints. **If you wish to have a copy of the guidelines, please contact the parish office.**

Our True Home: The Feast of the Holy Family

Why did Jesus choose to become a baby born of a mother and father and to spend all but His last years living in an ordinary human family? In part, to reveal God's plan to make all people live as one "holy family" in His Church (see 2 Corinthians 6:16–18).

In the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, God reveals our true home. We're to live as His children, "chosen ones, holy and beloved," as the First Reading puts it.

The family advice we hear in today's readings—for mothers, fathers, and children—is all solid and practical. Happy homes are the fruit of our faithfulness to the Lord, we sing in today's Psalm. But the Liturgy is inviting us to see more, to see how, through our family obligations and relationships, our families become heralds of the family of God that He wants to create on earth.

Jesus shows us this in today's Gospel. His obedience to His earthly parents flows directly from His obedience to the will of His heavenly Father. Joseph and Mary aren't identified by name, but three times are called "his parents" and are referred to separately as his "mother" and "father." The emphasis is all on their familial ties to Jesus. But these ties are emphasized only so that Jesus, in the first words He speaks in Luke's Gospel, can point us beyond that earthly relationship to the Fatherhood of God.

In what Jesus calls "my Father's house," every family finds its true meaning and purpose (see Ephesians 3:15). The Temple we read about in the Gospel today is God's house, His dwelling (see Luke 19:46). But it's also an image of the family of God, the Church (see Ephesians 2:19–22; Hebrews 3:3–6; 10:21).

In our families we're to build up this household, this family, this living temple of God—until He reveals His new dwelling among us and says of every person: "I shall be his God and he will be my son" (see Revelation 21:3, 7).

Source: Reflection by Scott Hahn, St Paul Centre

The Holy Family Prayer

JESUS, Son of God and Son of Mary, bless our family. Graciously inspire in us the unity, peace, and mutual love that you found in Your own family in the little town of Nazareth.

MARY, Mother of Jesus and our Mother, nourish our family with your faith and your love. Keep us close to your Son, Jesus, in all our sorrows and joys.

JOSEPH, foster-father to Jesus, guardian and spouse of Mary, keep our family safe from harm. Help us in all times of discouragement or anxiety.

HOLY FAMILY OF NAZARETH, make our family one with you. Help us to be instruments of peace. Grant that love, strengthened by grace, may prove mightier than all the weaknesses and trials through which our families sometimes pass. May we always have God at the centre of our hearts and homes until we are all one family, happy and at peace in our true home with you. Amen.

WHY YOU SHOULD GIFT AID

Gift Aid allows the church to claim back the basic rate tax already paid on donations by the donor. This means we can claim back from the government on your behalf 25p for every £1 donated so please make sure that your offer-tory donations are made using the Gift Aid envelopes that can be found at the back of the church.

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