



Draw Near Life giving habits for Lent 2026



As you may know I have just had my first cataract operation. It is amazing how much I had accepted as 'normal' my burred and slightly opaque sight. As I now compare the sight from each eye, I have rediscovered colour and brightness around me and a clearer view of TV and people! I now can't wait for the 2nd eye to be addressed. In life we all become accustomed to things being 'normal' as they are, without perhaps noticing how habits or routines have slipped, or our priorities have been dampened by tiredness or routine.

This Lent we are being given the chance to stop and have a fresh look at ourselves, our faith and life with God. In the material being shared with us by the national Church at the invitation of the Archbishops we are called to **draw near** to God so he can draw near to us. This will be by renewing and **refreshing our habits** regarding those things which are essential to being a Christian.

Through the 6 weeks of Lent we will be encouraged to thinking about how we are called to share in worship; in prayer; in scriptures; in communion; in service and in sharing the good news. I hope that each one of us will find time and space to do this either alone or with others.

On your own you can join in **daily reflections** (the booklet will be available in Church for each household) – or you can follow online or on social media. There is also a **children's booklet** with a daily activity in Lent reflecting on the theme, you can find out more online.

In the Parish you will be able to join us in reflecting on this theme and material each week. There will be **opportunities to explore with others** after the **Tuesday Mass at St Faith's (9.30am)** or with the

Fellowship on **Wednesday after the Noon Mass at St Mary's** or on a **Saturday over a light breakfast at 9am at St Mary's**. If you would be interested in a group – but if these times do not work for you – please contact one of the Ministry Team and we will see what can be arranged.

This year the Bishop is inviting us to support his **Lent Appeal**, This will support **Tearfund; USPG and Vista** you can find more details at www.portsmouth.anglican.org/lentappeal . If you wish to support this appeal, please either donate in a clearly marked envelope or join us for a **Soup Lunch** at St Mary's **details to follow**,

Please see the list of other special services and events below ...

Other dates in Feb and March

Tuesday Feb 17th **6pm Pancake races and celebrations for Shrove Tuesday at St Mary's.** The evening begins with Pancake Races for all ages. This will be followed at 6.30pm by hot food with an African flavour and then at 7pm Quiz. You can join us for all or some of the evening. **Tickets available in Churches.**

Ash Weds Feb 18th **Noon and 7pm Masses and imposition of ashes at St Mary's.** We mark the beginning of Lent by placing the sign of a cross in ash on our foreheads to remind us that without God and his love we are no more than the dust of the earth. Please try to get to one of these services.

The lunchtime service will be followed by the first reflection on 'Draw Near'. (And every Wednesday in Lent)

Tues Feb 24th **9.30am at St Faith's** – the first weekly **reflection on 'Living Hope'** after the Mass (and every Tuesday in Lent)

Saturday Feb 28th **2.30 & 7pm – Dick Whittington Parish Panto at St Faith's Church** – come and join us and enjoy the fruits of weeks of hard work by members of our community. **Tickets available in Churches or on the door.**

Sat March 7th **9am** The first **light breakfast** and reflection on 'Draw Near 'please let Fr Bob know in advance if you intend to come along .

Mon March 9th **7.30pm at St Faith's** – there will be chance to reflect in silence and prayer on 'Living Hope' with the **Julian Prayer Group**.

Tues March 10th **7pm PCC** meets at St Mary's

Sunday March 15th **10am special services for Mothering Sunday** at both Churches – including the distribution of flowers to those who care for us.

4pm Choral Evensong at St Mary's

Tuesday March 17th **6pm Social Justice Group** at St Faith's

Friday March 20th **4pm Find My Voice celebration** at St Mary's

Sunday March 22nd **4pm Music and Readings for Passontide** at St Mary's

Saturday March 28th **10am – Messy Holy Week** at St Mary's – craft and activities for young families ending with a lunch.

Palm Sunday March 29th We will start our keeping of Holy week with a **procession from St Faith's to St Mary's at 9.30am**
Full details of Holy week services will follow,

Looking further ahead

Sunday April 12th **At end of 10am service a blessing of the Wedding of Brian and Thabi**
at St Mary's. You are all invited to join them for a drink and cake in the Church after the service.

Monday May 4th **The May Fayre –**
raffle tickets are now available for you to take and sell. 1st Prize donated by Barrells - £100!
We will soon be asking for your help on the day – **please put the date in your diary!**

Parish Retreat **Friday May 29th – Sunday 31st May –**
Hilfield Friary Dorset

Join us for our parish retreat in the stunning setting of Hilfield Friary in Dorset, at the most beautiful time of the year.

We will be taking over Bernard House and Juniper House, sharing food, periods of reflection, the opportunity to join with the Brothers in their daily prayers, and free time to enjoy the beautiful surroundings and rest, read, walk, pray.

There are 16 spaces available. Further details to follow.

Costing not finalised yet, but we don't want lack of funds to be a barrier to anyone.

Please contact Rev Wendy May if you would like to reserve a place:

wendymay.jacobs@portseaparish.co.uk

Please note we often take photographs at our services and events that may appear on social media – please let us know if this causes you any problems. If you have any suggestions as to what you would like to see included on these notices, please let us know.

Contact Parish Office 02392 814444 officeassistant@portseaparish.co.uk
Revd Wendy May 07341 569234 assocvicar@portseaparish.co.uk
Fr Bob 02392 822687 vicar@portseaparish.co.uk

*Weekly notes Feb 15th 2026
Sunday before Lent*

Today	3pm Panto players at St Mary's
Monday Feb 16th Feria Week 6 th	Noon Mass at St Mary's (live streamed)
Tuesday Feb 17th Shrove Tuesday	9.30am Mass at St Faith's followed by refreshments 6pm Pancake Races, Food, Quiz and welcome to Sister Teresa- Lucia at St Mary's
Ash Weds Feb 18th	Noon Mass with hymns and imposition of ashes at St Mary's Followed by Fellowship Lunch and Lent reflection 7pm Sung Mass and imposition of ashes at St Mary's (live streamed)
Thursday Feb 19th After Ash Weds	10.30am Mass at St Faith's followed by refreshments
Friday Feb 20th After Ash Weds	10am Mass at St Mary's (live streamed) 10.30am by Coffee and Chat
Saturday Feb 21st After Ash Weds	10am Just Ask at St Mary's come and enquire. about Christenings, Weddings etc or simply 'just ask' something of the clergy. 10am Craft Fair at St Mary's 10am Can you help us move Parish Panto Stage etc to St Faith's
Sunday Feb 22nd Lent 1	8am BCP Eucharist at St Mary's 9.30am Mass and Hymns at St Faith's With licensing of Sr Teresa-Lucia 10am Sung Mass at St Mary's 2.30pm Panto Players at St Faith's