

READINGS

Reading I: Isaiah 45:1, 4-6

Psalms: 96:1, 3, 4-5, 7-8, 9-10

Reading II: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5b

Gospel: Matthew 22:15-21

The Pharisees went off and plotted how they might entrap him in speech. They sent their disciples to him, with the Herodians, saying, *"Teacher, we know that you are a truthful man and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. And you are not concerned with anyone's opinion, for you do not regard a person's status. Tell us, then, what is your opinion: Is it lawful to pay the census tax to Caesar or not?"*

Matthew 22:15-17

The Herodians were a political group who supported the rule of Herod Antipas and his dynasty. They favoured collaboration with the Roman Empire and upheld the Herodian line as the legitimate rulers over Judea. For the sake of national stability, they promoted political compromise.

The Pharisees, on the other hand, were a religious sect devoted to the Law of Moses and the strict observance of Jewish customs, though often corrupted by legalism. They viewed Gentile rule as a threat to the sanctity of God's covenant and wielded great influence over the people due to their outward piety and perceived religious authority.

Given their stark political and theological differences, the alliance formed between the Pharisees and the Herodians in their plot against Jesus is both startling and revealing. Despite their longstanding enmity, they found common ground in their mutual hatred of Jesus. The Pharisees sought to undermine His credibility among the people, while the Herodians hoped to present Him as a threat to Roman authority. Together, they constructed a trap, hoping Jesus would either speak against the Law or against Caesar - either of which would serve their purposes.

Hatred, envy, jealousy, pride, and self-righteousness can forge what appears to be unity - even among rivals - but it is a unity rooted in darkness, a counterfeit communion built on shared agendas rather than truth. It is the kind of alliance in which Satan himself rejoices. Such false unity always unravels. Anything built on pride and sin cannot stand. Unity can only endure where truth, humility, and love prevail.

As we look around us, we see many such counterfeit alliances formed not by shared conviction in what is good and true, but by convenience in opposing what threatens personal influence or power. Individuals and groups unite to silence voices that speak uncomfortable truths.

This is frequently seen in politics and culture, but is also tragically found even within the Church. In every case, truth is twisted, motives are disguised, and God's pure and holy will becomes the object of attack. When such unholy alliances take root within the Church, they do grave damage to our common mission to proclaim the Gospel in truth.

True Christian unity is not grounded in shared ambitions or human agendas, but in the Person of Jesus Christ. It is expressed through charity, humility, and fidelity to God's will. It is not built on calculation or convenience but on the self-emptying love of Christ, who calls us to die to self and live for Him. Our only agenda must be that God be glorified and His children drawn into His glory and sanctification. As members of His Body, the Church, our unity must reflect the communion of the Most Holy Trinity, rooted in divine love, not in political expediency or pride.

Reflect today on the unity to which you are called.

Do you form alliances based on personal ambition or on wholehearted worship of God?

Reflect especially upon your involvement within the Church and consider whether, even unintentionally, you act more like a politician or lobbyist than a true disciple of Christ. Commit yourself not to an agenda, but to Jesus. Worship Him, surrender your life to Him, and allow Him to unite you with other members of His Body, the Church. Such unity is the only unity that endures all things and bears lasting fruit.

My Jesus and Head of Your Church, You call all Christians to form a spiritual bond that is forged through union with You.

Grant me the grace of humility and charity, so that I may work within Your Church not with a personal agenda, but with mercy and truth.

May I seek Your will alone and set aside my own ideas and preferences, choosing only You and Your eternal glory.

Jesus, I trust in You.



Parish of Blessed Hugh Faringdon & Buckland Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Sunday October 18th 2026

North Downs Pastoral Area

Diocese of Portsmouth

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Parish of Blessed Hugh Faringdon & Buckland



Ministries

Bible Studies - Dr. Neill Taylor & Paul Padley & Team

Family & Youth Catechesis (Confirmation) - Mrs. Helena & Emmanuel Boakye & Team

Children Catechesis (Children's Liturgy & FHC) - Mrs. Kathleen Thomas & Team

Evangelization Catechesis (Adult Evening Studies) - Dr JP Crilly & Team

Administrator & Maintenance - Andrew Chell

Office Secretary - Nerisa Gomez

Finance - Lorraine Brabin,

PPC & Youth & Children - Kathleen Thomas,

Safeguarding - Ann O'Reilly -

safeguarding.buck@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Mass Setting: Mass in Honor of Pope Paul VI with Irish Alleluia (36)

Children: 804 Isn't it good

Entrance: 707 We are gathering together

Psalms: 96:1, 3, 4-5, 7-8, 9-10

Give the Lord power, give the Lord glory; great is the Lord and worthy of praise!

Offertory: 378 I watch the sunrise (Close to you)

Communion: 897 Wait for the Lord

Recessional: 361 Immortal, invisible, God only wise

Sunday Mass is at 10am.

The Mass is usually also streamed on Facebook here: <https://facebook.com/blessedhughfaringdonchurch/>

You can follow Fr. Claro's daily international Masses from his home on Facebook here: <https://facebook.com/claro.conde/>

His current schedule (subject to change) is: 6.30 am Regular Daily Masses Monday to Sunday.

Bible Study

We have a Bible Study, reflecting on the coming Sunday Mass Readings, with Fr Claro on Zoom on Mondays from 7.00pm. To join please use the link on the Parish website home page.

Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Sunday October 18th 2026

YOUTUBE LINK for the Bible Study
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LizCFFd-U00>



The Pharisees and Herodians wanted to debate taxation. Jesus transformed the discussion into one about identity and vocation. Caesar's authority is real, but it is limited. Caesar may rightly claim his coins because they bear his image. But God claims the men and women who bear his image.

OCTOBER

In October, Blessed Hugh Faringdon will be the Leadership of the CHURCHES TOGETHER IN FARINGDON (CTIF). Andrew Chell has accepted the chairmanship. We are still looking for a secretary. On 18th October Sunday 6:30pm, we will host the AGM (Annual General Meeting) at the Parish Hall. We need volunteers. All invited, please come.

18th October World Mission Sunday. Pray with the Global Church

World Mission Sunday is our chance to show love and solidarity to our brothers and sisters overseas. In offering our prayers, we join with missionaries everywhere in communion and compassion to support them in spreading the Good News, and by giving a donation we respond to Christ's call to feed the hungry and clothe the naked.

Why is World Mission Sunday so important? Missio is responsible for coordinating World Mission Sunday and provides new, young or poor dioceses with the essential support they need on their journey to becoming self-sufficient. We work through local bishops,

churches and missionary congregations to ensure that resources are distributed equitably and justly on the basis of need. The money goes directly from England and Wales to the bishops in the mission territories – local Church directly helping local Church!

Donations are collected at these worldwide Masses, and they go, in their entirety, to support churches, hospitals, schools and vocations in countries where the Church is new, young or poor.

21 October 5pm Wednesday in the Aula of Blackfriars Hall. AI and Workers: Who Dominates? The Subjective Sense of Work in the Era of Artificial Intelligence. Dr James Bergida, Christendom College, and Dr Agnieszka Wincewicz-Price, Polish Economic Institute, will host this discussion of the moral ethics of artificial intelligence in the contemporary economy, reflecting on the insights provided by Catholic Social Teaching.

21st October Wednesday 12:30 Buckland Lunch at Memorial Hall

23rd October 12:30 Friday Open Kitchen Lunch at Blessed Hugh Parish Hall 1230, all invited

27th October Tuesday, Hallam Willis, Las Casas Institute, will host this hybrid seminar discussing how a framework of progress has impacted the adoption of artificial intelligence in society. This event will take place at 5:30pm in the Aula of Blackfriars Hall St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LY

PPC & Finance Meetings, see in the parish website

ATTENTION VOLUNTEERS. There are changes on requirements of DBS checks. Please contact Ann O'Reilly to check if your VOLUNTARY ministry needs DBS checks and Safeguarding Training. EMAIL Parish of Blessed Hugh Faringdon - Safeguarding safeguarding.buck@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

MONDAY BIBLE ZOOM time 7pm
YOUTH MEETING every other Friday, contact Helena Boakye 07455 993296

Holy Rosary, and the Month of October is Rosary Month, 3pm every Saturday at Blessed Hugh Faringdon.

PORTSMOUTH DIOCESE E-NEWS

<https://mailchi.mp/portsmouthdiocese/issue551>

The RCIA Class 2026 group has presented an Idea of a Parish Rosary Prayers. Those interested, please contact Peter Starr and Wilbroad Chasi. The 7th of October is the Feast of the Holy Rosary, and the Month of October is Rosary Month. You can pray the Holy Rosary individually, at home or at church.

Dates for your diary

23rd October- evening talk in the hall (7.45 p.m.) **"The Cross and The Caman: The entangled history of hurling, shinty and the church"**

20th November- evening talk in the hall (7.45 p.m.) **"The Annunciation in Art"**

22nd November- **Feast of Christ the King.** Shared lunch after Mass.

5th December- **CAFOD charity cake sale in the hall. 10.30-13.30**

11th December- **ACN charity quiz in the hall. 7.45 p.m.**

Car parking

A reminder that on Sundays, please leave the church car park for Fr Claro, and for elderly and infirm parishioners, to minimise the distance they have to walk. If you are able to walk from the Southampton Street car park, please park there (it is free on Sunday) and leave the limited spaces in the church car park for those who need them.

Evening talk. 23rd October

Our series of evening talks, with theme of "Christianity and...." continues by looking at Christianity and sport, through the lens of the native sports of Ireland and Scotland, hurling and shinty.

Join us on Friday 23rd October, at 7.45 p.m. in the hall for:

"The Cross and the Caman: the entangled history of hurling, shinty and the Church"

with JP Crilly

Our story will take us from a monastic mission launched due to a hurling foul, to how one clergyman is trying to use compromise rules shinty-hurling games to overcome centuries of sectarian animosities in Belfast. Over almost 1600 years clergy, religious, and pious laity have shaped the story of these sports- from playing, coaching and setting up clubs and organisations to banning altogether.

As always there will be fish and chips (£15 per person) in the hall at 7.00 p.m. prior to the talk.

Please email pbhf.bucklandandfaringdon@gmail.com with your order by 15th October.

Evening talks- call for speakers for next year

Our theme for our evening talks next year is "Learning from the Saints". If you have a favourite saint, or one whose life and works you think should be better known, please consider giving a talk on them. Talks should be 45 minutes to 1 hour long. You can use a digital presentation, or just speak, as you see fit. Please let JP Crilly know if you would be happy to talk.