



PARISH OF WOOLHAMPTON

Diocese of Portsmouth - Served by the Benedictine Monks of Douai Abbey

www.douaiparish.org.uk

Douai Abbey and St Mary's, RG7 5TQ

St Bernadette's, Pangbourne RG8 7JL St Luke's, Theale RG7 5AS

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12 NOVEMBER 2023

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

32nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - YEAR A

Wisdom 6:12-16	<i>Wisdom is found by those who look for her.</i>
Psalms 62 Response	<i>For you my soul is thirsting, O God my God.</i>
1 Thess 4:13-18	<i>God will bring with him those who have died in Jesus.</i>
Matthew 25:1-13	<i>The bridegroom is here! Go out and meet him.</i>

THIS WEEK

Saturday 11 November	St Luke's <i>(Special Intention)</i>	5.30 pm
Sunday 12 November	St Bernadette's Abbey Church	9.45 am 10.30 am
Mon 13 – Sat 18 Nov	Abbey Church	7.45 am

All are welcome to daily services in Douai Abbey Church:

6.20am Morning Office (Matins & Lauds)

12.45pm Midday Prayer

6.00pm Vespers 8.00pm Compline

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (Confession)

By arrangement – please email Fr Alban, or at the following places:

Abbey Church: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 6.30pm -7.00pm

St Luke's: Saturday 4.45pm – 5.15pm

St Bernadette's: Sunday 9.00am – 9.30am

Please Pray for The Sick and Housebound of our Parish:

Monica Adams · Patricia Brennkmeyer · Pat Campbell · Mary Cox
Frank Ferris · Frank Flynn · Marigold Norman · Donald and Babs
O'Sullivan · Mary Overington · Jill Rowley

**Please pray for those who have died, especially
Cecilia Primavesi (St Luke's), Michael Delaney (Abbey)
and Jack Buchanan (Abbey). Jack's funeral will be at the Abbey on
Thursday 16th November at 11:30am**

MESSAGE FROM FATHER ALBAN

Dear Parishioners,

In many places today, communities will make their annual act of remembrance and honour those who gave their lives in war. These stirring words will be uttered: "they shall not grow old as we who are left grow old...age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn."

For us, however, life does not stand still. Life is continually changing. Change is a fact of life. We have to cope with so many changes throughout our individual lives - as well as in the life of our parish community. Change can be a painful thing - perhaps that is why all of us can have a tendency to resist it.

With each of us there are vast areas of our lives that seek to resist change. Areas that become afraid and entrenched. We cling to what seems safe and familiar and proven. That is very understandable. But we must be careful of that tendency to resist change; for a resistance to change can easily become a hindrance to growth. For to grow is to change. Or as St John Henry Newman put it: "to live is to change and to be perfect is to have changed often." Not that change has to happen for change's sake. That is a bad principle and unfortunately the history of the Church has been littered with the wreckage of some thoughtless, mindless changes which have not been properly thought through. When change happens for change's sake it is all too easy to throw the baby out with the bathwater. We cannot force change - we can only make ourselves ready for it when it comes.

Being ready is the message of today's Gospel. Ready for the ultimate change: from this life to life after death; ready to experience the fulness of God's life and love. We

are urged not to be like the foolish bridesmaids in today's gospel who had prepared, but who hadn't prepared enough. They couldn't see beyond the oil in their own lamps. Their horizons were limited. Christ calls each one of us to open our eyes to all that's going on around us and be ready. Being ready means accepting personal responsibility for our actions - especially our failures. We cannot borrow another person's state of preparedness.

So how do we prepare to meet the Lord? Unfortunately it isn't enough just to recite a quick act of Sorrow every night before we go to sleep. We are called to respond with our whole lives. All our actions should reflect a state of readiness. Every action, from driving carefully through a built-up area to reconciling differences between family and friends, needs to demonstrate our state of readiness to respond to whatever comes. Are we like the wise bridesmaids - open minded and fully prepared? Or like the foolish bridesmaids - with pockets of our lives untouched by the Gospel message; not prepared enough. If we are fully prepared, then our lives, and the lives of those around us will be transformed. Today's gospel challenges us to be aware of what is going on around us - to keep an open mind - to be willing to change if a situation demands it. Above all, like those wise bridesmaids we must make sure that our resources are capable of dealing with what life throws at us. In the midst of change and bewilderment we need to be prepared for the arrival of the only one in whom we can fully rely:

*Change and decay in all around I see;
O thou who changest not, abide with me.*

With my prayers and best wishes,

Yours devotedly,

Fr Alban OSB

CAFOD ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CRISIS APPEAL

Donate to CAFOD's Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal at cafod.org.uk/ipc or call 0303 303 3030 to support those affected and get funds to local trusted experts in Gaza and southern Israel who have been working alongside communities helping those most in need. Your donation will help support aid workers providing urgent humanitarian aid including food, water and emergency shelter to those in need. Thank you for your prayers."

PARISH OF WOOLHAMPTON: THE GOSPEL IN 30 MINUTES

Everyone is welcome to join us via Zoom on Tuesday evenings from 6.00pm-6.30pm to learn about and discuss the forthcoming Sunday Gospel. We encourage young people from the parish to join us - we look forward to seeing you. Zoom link is [here](#). (or use Zoom Meeting ID 750 7926 0060 Passcode q4uG1k).

‘RED WEDNESDAY’ APPEAL

This year [Aid To The Church In Need](#) is hoping to raise £100K for Africa. Why Africa? Christians are displaced and suffering trauma because of targeted violence. The effect on families is devastating, with countless suffering the loss of homes, livelihoods, and loved ones. In this, their time of need, they are turning in ever increasing numbers to the Church, and ACN’s project partners. Africa is now a priority for ACN to provide shelter, food and trauma counselling. [Can you help raise £100K4Africa?](#)

Every pound we raise before Christmas will be ‘matched’ (up to £100K), doubling our gift. The faith of our brothers and sisters is strong but they need our compassionate support. There will be a collection for ACN on Sunday **26th November** -your gift, whatever you can afford, will make a huge difference.

CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

In aid of our charity, *Young People and Children First*, First Prize is £200 cash, plus many more prizes, including Hamper and National Trust tickets. Draw to be made on 10th December 2023. Raffle tickets available from parish churches and parish office. Your support by purchasing tickets is appreciated.

PARISH ADVENT CAROL SERVICE

The Parish will celebrate the beginning of Advent with a Carol Service at St Bernadette’s Church on Sunday **3rd December**, starting at 4pm. Following the service of Advent carols and readings, featuring our young musicians, there will be seasonal refreshments in the Dorman Room.

The choir would welcome some extra voices, so please come and swell our numbers for this happy occasion. Nothing difficult, so don’t be shy. There will be a practice in the preceding week - date to be announced so check the bulletin or website.

ST STEPHEN’S QUIZ NIGHT & FISH AND CHIP SUPPER,

Taking place at St Stephen’s Church, Pangbourne Road, Upper Basildon, on Saturday **18th November**. Doors open 7 pm. Teams of up to 6 (let them know if you want to be connected to a team). Tickets £15 include fish and chips, sausage and chips or vegetarian alternative – let them know when you book. There will be wine, beer, soft drinks on sale. To book go to <https://bit.ly/3RSkuwh> or contact rosemary@thebenefice.uk (for food choice). Any questions call 01491 672494.

TALK: ‘ST JOHN HENRY NEWMAN ON LAST THINGS’

Earley parish invites you to a talk taking place on Tuesday **14th November** at 6.30pm at Our Lady of Peace & Bl Dominic Barberi, 338 Wokingham Road, Reading RG6 7DA. Fr Stan Gibzinski will present - the reality of eternal life is seen in Newman’s life and writings – a glimpse into man’s final destiny gives light to our life on earth.