



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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20 APRIL 2025

EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION - YEAR C



THIS WEEK

Saturday 19 April	Easter Vigil, Abbey Church	9.00pm
Sunday 20 April	St Bernadette's	9.45am
	<i>(Mass Intention: Norman Hall, RIP)</i>	
	Abbey Church	10.30am
Monday 21 April	Abbey Church	11:30am
Tue 22 – Sat 26 Apr	Abbey Church	7:45am

NEXT WEEK

27 APRIL 2025

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER – YEAR C

Saturday 26 April	St Luke's	5.30pm
	<i>(Mass Intention: People of the Parish)</i>	
Sunday 27 April	St Bernadette's	9.45am
	<i>(Mass of Election)</i>	
	Abbey Church	10.30am
	<i>(Mass Intention: Frank Wade, RIP)</i>	
Mon 28 Apr – Sat 3 May	Abbey Church	7.45am

All are welcome to daily services in Douai Abbey Church:

6.20am Morning Office (Matins & Lauds)

12.45pm Midday Prayer

6.00pm Vespers

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (Confessions)

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 · Bill Bateman · Patricia Brennismeyer · Pat Campbell · Luke Conlon · Eileen Harvey · Kevin McCormack · Marigold Norman · Babs O'Sullivan
Barbara Stocker · Also Don Hood, Fr Alban's father.

Please pray for those who have died recently, especially Christina Hill-Williams, and keep their loved ones in prayer. Christina's funeral takes place in the Abbey Church at 2pm on Wednesday 30 April.

MESSAGE FROM FR ALBAN

Dear Parishioners,

On behalf of Father Abbot and the monastic community, I wish you all a very happy and holy Easter.

The Gospel passage for Easter morning tells us who is most likely to learn the good news of the Lord's resurrection and understand its significance.

In John's Gospel, only Mary Magdalene, Peter and John are named among those who witness the evidence of Christ's rising on Easter morning. Others will see and believe later, but only these three see the truth at first. What sets them apart from everyone else present among Jesus' grieving followers?

St Augustine tells us that it is love that distinguishes them. Mary comes to the tomb as early as the Jewish law would allow, immediately after the end of the Sabbath, because love draws her to be as close as possible to her Beloved. Peter, wild and headstrong, can't contain his enthusiasm and runs to enter the tomb first - whilst John, although he arrives there first, hesitates to enter.

With which of these three do we relate? Are we like Mary Magdalene, committed to seeking and following Christ continually out of gratitude for all He has done for us, even despite the deprivations and sufferings of the past year? Or are we like John, celebrating Easter hesitantly, perhaps still hurting from the scars of the past 12 months and hardly daring to hope? Or are we like Peter, rushing headlong, eager to see and to believe?

Perhaps what we need this year is to practice a slow Easter — an Easter that takes root within us as gradually and imperceptibly as seeds break into life beneath the earth. Within each of us there is life we cannot see, God's life – hidden, yet at the same time tenacious, dynamic, and sure. It might take time to emerge and flourish. But that life itself is certain.

We know that the frightened silence of Mary, Peter and John on Easter morning eventually gave way to proclamation. Their panic subsided, their courage deepened, their trauma healed, and their amazement grew. They learned how to choose hope. They learned how to make the story their own, and as they did so, the story blossomed and grew. Joy came. Faith came. Peace came. Love came. The story didn't depend on them. But it changed them, and as they changed, the world around them changed, too.

The wonderful thing about taking something slowly is that we can savour it. We need to savour life right now, even as death breathes down our necks and the future feels precarious. So, receive the good news of the Resurrection slowly. Hold it, savour it, and ponder it as closely as you can in this moment. Christ is risen - whether or not we can bear this great truth right now doesn't matter. Christ has given it to us. It is ours. *This is the day that the Lord has made – let us rejoice and be glad in it. Amen.*

With my prayers and best wishes,

Yours devotedly,

Father Alban OSB

EASTER SUNDAY COLLECTION

The Easter Offering is traditionally for the parish priest (for us, the Douai Abbey community). If you wish to make a contribution online, you can do so [here](#) or via the card machines in the Abbey Church and at St Bernadette's Church. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

GOOD FRIDAY COLLECTION

For those who may miss the Good Friday Collection that supports the work of the Franciscans of the Custody of the Holy Land, who have the unique responsibility to care for the Holy Places as well for the Christians living there, you can still donate online via the [Give As You Live](#) page. This last year has been particularly difficult for this small community, so please remember them.

ST LUKE'S EASTER CELEBRATION

Thank you to all those who made the Fish and Chip supper last Friday evening a great success. Moving forward we are going to have our Easter celebration after Mass on Saturday **26 April**. We will be sharing hot cross buns, cakes and other goodies. Everyone welcome.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Please note that the Parish Office will be closed from Tuesday **22 April** until Friday **25 April**, reopening as usual on Tuesday 29 April. Both answerphone messages and emails will be monitored, and *for all urgent enquiries please leave a voicemail.*

CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATION

Our candidates for Confirmation have been preparing over several months and will receive the sacrament of Confirmation during the 9.45am Mass at St Bernadette's Church on **Sunday 11 May**. This will be a special celebration, marking a significant milestone in their faith journey and you are warmly invited to attend and welcome them into the fullness of the Church.

ADORE SPIRITUAL MINI-RETREAT

This month's theme is 'Pilgrims of Hope' for the online Retreat Day that includes Mass, Adoration, praise, prophecy, prayer for the gifts of the Holy Spirit and inspiring guest speaker Ros Powell. Takes place Saturday **26 April** 10am-1pm via Zoom. More information can be found at altonrenewal.com.

FORMATION DAY FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

A Diocesan Formation Day for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion takes place Saturday **3 May** from 10am-2pm, St Bede's Church, Basingstoke RG24 9DX.

Talks and reflections, including a session on taking Holy Communion to the sick and housebound. Please bring your own lunch; tea and coffee will be provided. Anyone interested is encouraged to register via liturgy@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk.

SABBATH: THE LORD'S DAY

There is much more to the Sabbath Day than we might think! Taking place at Douai on Saturday **10 May**, this Reflection Workshop will focus on various bible texts and is open to everyone who simply comes to Sunday Mass - no expertise or previous knowledge is required. Bring a bible if you can.

Starts at 10.30am (arrivals and coffee from 10am) and ends about 4pm. Cost with lunch is £30 (£15 if you bring own lunch) payable on the day. Please contact Fr Peter at pastoral@douaiabbey.org.uk for more information or to book.

PARISH MUSIC EVENING

Performances from singers and musicians from the parish, along with special guest appearances. Takes place on Saturday **7 June** at 7.15pm, St Bernadette's Church, to raise funds for the parish charity, Rainbow Trust. Tickets £20. Priority booking for parish members until **20 April**. Sign up on forms in our churches or contact Graham on 07787 376 336 or email g_mhodge@hotmail.com.