



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

Parish Priest: Fr Alban Hood OSB

Tel: 0118-971-5350 ahood@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Parish Administrator: Kathryn Garden

Tel: 0118-971-5350 woolhampton@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Safeguarding Minister: Kate Burke

Tel: 0118-984 2166 safeguarding.wool@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

6 APRIL 2025

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR C

Isaiah 43:16-21

Behold, I am doing a new thing and I will give drink to my chosen people.

Psalms 125 Response

What great deeds the Lord worked for us! Indeed, we were glad.

Philippians 3:8-14

'For the sake of Christ I have suffered the loss of all things, becoming like him in his death.'

John 8:1-11

'Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.'

THIS WEEK

Saturday 5 April

St Luke's

5.30pm

(Mass Intention: Anastasia Langstone, RIP)

Sunday 6 April

St Bernadette's

9.45 am

(Mass Intention: People of the Parish)

Abbey Church

10.30 am

Mon 7 - Sat 12 Apr

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 (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 and keep their loved ones in prayer.

MESSAGE FROM FR ALBAN

Dear Parishioners,

As we look forward to Holy Week and Easter, many of you who attend St Luke's and St Bernadette's may be disappointed that the Easter Triduum will not be celebrated in your churches.

In the reform of the liturgy after Vatican II, the Easter Triduum is seen as the 'most solemn of all feasts' and the 'summit of the liturgical year'. It deserves the very best we can give it, and therefore, requires resources that the Abbey Church can best provide. It should be remembered that the Triduum is not a collection of single celebrations, but ONE event.

Each parish has only one celebration of the Easter Vigil. This directive is liturgical law and can be found in the Sacramentary and in the Circular Letter "Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Paschal Feasts, 94: "The celebration of the Easter Vigil for special groups is not to be encouraged, since above all in this vigil the faithful should come together as one and should experience a sense of ecclesial community."

The power of the gathered assembly in prayer fuels the life of the Church. There is even a sense of the universal People of God gathered together for this special night in the texts for the Vigil found in the Sacramentary itself: "Dear friends in Christ, on this most holy night, when our Lord Jesus Christ passed from death to new life, the Church invites its sons and daughters throughout the world to come together in vigil and prayer." (p 171)

Please note that this year, the Abbey will be welcoming a large group of young people for the Easter Retreat, and it would be good if you could support them by coming to the celebration of the Triduum, **especially** the Easter Vigil, the most important celebration of the liturgical year.

The liturgy on this night has four parts: the Light Service, the Liturgy of the Word, the Rites of Initiation, and the Celebration of the Lord's Supper. Each part is embedded with powerful symbols: light and darkness, fire, word, water, oil, touch, and a sacrificial meal shared as friends.

In a sense, the Vigil is a family reunion. At any Mass, we gather together with the Body of Christ, with Christ at the head. We join with Christians around the world, and throughout eternity. Those who have gone before us are there.

The Easter Vigil liturgy has its roots in the Old Testament and relives in ritual, the night the Israelites stayed awake waiting for the Lord to deliver them from their slavery in Egypt. Similarly, we wait with the disciples for the good news that Jesus indeed is risen! In its fullest expression this is a true vigil, a night watch. We gather as family to re-tell the wondrous stories of our salvation and draw strength as we remember. We wait together in joyful hope for the good news of Christ's victory over death. In the process, we discover for ourselves the glory of the Cross.

The *Exsultet*, a long poem, or proclamation, sung by the priest or deacon after the lighting of the paschal candle, is believed to date from the fourth century. St. Ambrose of Milan may be the author, although some dispute this. It was the custom of the Jews to pray at the time of the lighting of the evening lamp in the home. This custom was taken over into Christian usage, and the church's evening prayer, known as the *lucernarium*, developed out of it.

The form of the *Exsultet* as we know it entered the Roman rite in about the 9th century. It has been described as "one of the literary and theological treasures of the Roman liturgy." It is a wonderful meditation on the story of salvation and repays some detailed reflection.

With my prayers and best wishes,

Yours devotedly,

Father Alban OSB

SECOND COLLECTION - MYANMAR EARTHQUAKE APPEAL

This weekend there will be a special collection following the devastating earthquake in Myanmar. CAFOD is responding through the Catholic Church there to support families affected by the disaster and your donations will provide essentials like water, food, solar lights and mosquito nets.

You can donate online at cafod.org.uk/myanmar, by calling 0303 303 3030 or text EARTHQUAKE to 70450 to donate £10.

FLOWERS FOR EASTER – SPECIAL COLLECTION

There will be a collection for the purchase of flowers to decorate the church on Easter Sunday at St Bernadette's **this Sunday**.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

There will be Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Confessions can be heard following Mass this Sunday, **6 April**, at St Bernadette's Church.

The Pastoral Area Reconciliation Service takes place at 7.30pm on Wednesday **9 April** at St Joseph's Church, Newbury. Individual Confessions will be available.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Stations of the Cross will be prayed at **6.30pm on Friday** at St Luke's Church. On **11 April** at St Bernadette's: 12pm Stations of the Cross followed by a Lent lunch and at St Luke's: a Fish & Chip Supper after 6.30pm Stations of the Cross, £7 per person. Just let Phil Church know before 7 April if you would like to come: pchurch@btinternet.com.

ASSISTED SUICIDE BILL

The Third Reading of the Assisted Suicide Bill is expected to occur in late April/early May. [Not Dead Yet](#), a group of disabled and terminally ill people, ask you to support their fight for assistance to live, not assistance to die. Please pick up a postcard, available at the back of church, and send it to your MP, asking them to vote against the Bill.

READY FOR A COFFEE BREAK?

Come along to St Bernadette's on Wednesday, **9 April**, 10.30-12.00 for a cuppa and chance to catch up together. A perfect mid-week break!

CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES – LENT CHALLENGE

There's still time to support our Confirmation candidates as they walk these final days of Lent as part of The Big Lent Walk for CAFOD. You can do so online [here](#).

PARISH MUSIC EVENING

Performances from singers and musicians from the parish, a special guest appearance by The Dooley Brothers and a Les Misérables celebration led by Masters in Music students from Bath Uni. Takes place on Saturday **7 June** at 7.15pm, St Bernadette's Church, to raise funds for our parish charity The Rainbow Trust. Priority booking for parish members until **20 April**. Sign up on forms in our churches or contact Graham on 07787376336 or email g_mhodge@hotmail.com.

SOMETHING FOR THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Just in time for Easter, the animated children's film 'The King of Kings' comes to [Vue cinemas](#) in Newbury and Reading from Monday. With a voice cast including Kenneth Branagh, Ben Kingsley and Pierce Brosnan, it delivers a heartfelt retelling of the life of Jesus through the lens of Charles Dickens and his son.