



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 JANUARY 2025

FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD – YEAR C

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11	<i>The glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it.</i>
Psalms 103 Response	<i>Bless the Lord, my soul! Lord God, how great you are.</i>
Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7	<i>He saved us by the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit.</i>
Luke 3:15-16, 21-22	<i>While Jesus after his own baptism was at prayer, heaven opened.</i>

THIS WEEK

Saturday 11 January	St Luke's <i>(Mass Intention: Maria Assunta Paniccia, RIP)</i>	5.30pm
Sunday 12 January	St Bernadette's <i>(Mass Intention: People of the Parish)</i>	9.45am
	Abbey Church	10.30am
Mon 13– Sat 18 Jan	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 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 · Mary Cox · Theodora Fernandez · 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 Patricia Stroud and Roy Haslam, and keep their loved ones in prayer.

Funeral Mass for Patricia takes place at St Mary's Church on Tuesday 14 January at 11am.

A memorial Mass for Roy will be celebrated on 26 January at 9am at St William of York, Upper Redlands Road, Reading.

MESSAGE FROM FR ALBAN

Dear Parishioners,

Many thanks to all of you who sent cards and greetings for Christmas. I hope you all enjoyed a happy and peaceful festive season.

This Sunday we celebrate the feast of the Baptism of Our Lord. This feast recalls the moment which marked the end of Our Lord's 'hidden' life at Nazareth and the beginning of his public ministry. It may be strange that today we celebrate our Lord's baptism as a mature adult, when only a short time ago we were contemplating him as a baby lying in the manger. However there is method in the apparent madness - at the end of the Christmas season it is important for us to consider what our response should be to the feast we have been celebrating and Christ's baptism gives us the opportunity to reflect on our own commitment to the Lord.

It is difficult for most of us to remember our baptism - we were too young at the time. From a spiritual point of view, baptism is the greatest thing that can happen to us. What happened at the Baptism of Our Lord, happened to us too. God called us by name & called us his beloved son or daughter – and the spirit descended on us because we too were given a calling – a vocation to offer God and the world some service or gift.

Baptism is not a social ritual observed for the sake of conventionality. It is a calling - to share in the mission of Jesus, to love and serve Him and one another.

In the season of Christmas, we have been recalling and celebrating God's great love for us in sending us his Son to be born in a poor stable. The message of Christmas is about love and peace and goodwill. It is a message we are all called to live out in the circumstances of our lives. Whatever happens, we mustn't lose the message of Christmas - it isn't something that we pack away with the decorations at the end of the season and forget about until next Christmas. Today's feast which ends the festive season reminds us that Christianity is for life - not just for Christmas.

Please pray for the children and their families preparing for baptism in 2025, and for our baptism catechists, Susan and Daniela. On behalf of all of us, I thank them for all they do to guide and support the parents of those to be baptised.

Yours devotedly,

Father Alban OSB

CHRISTIAN UNITY WEEK

You are invited to a Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity taking place at 6pm on Sunday **19 January** at St. Michael's Church Tilehurst. Organised by Churches Together in West Reading, Tilehurst & Southcote. Materials prepared by the ecumenical community at Bose in Northern Italy, celebrating 1700 years of the Nicene Creed.

PARISH QUIZ EVENING

Last few tickets remain for our popular Quiz Evening on Saturday **22 February** in aid of our new parish charity, Rainbow Trust. Tickets £15 include two-course meal. Bring your own drinks, glasses and nibbles. Doors open 7pm for prompt 7.30pm start. Pangbourne Village Hall, RG8 7AN. See poster at the back of church for more information or contact the Parish Office.

COME TO WORK IN OUR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Are you a Catholic currently teaching in a non-Catholic setting? Have you thought of applying to work in one of our schools? If unclear about how a Catholic school might differ, or how to apply, questions will be addressed in an hour-long online webinar presented by Catherine Hobbs, Director for Education and Robert Dare, Diocesan Schools Support Officer, starting at 7.00pm on **14 January**. Register for your free place, via this link: <https://bit.ly/4gPWBP>.

THE GREAT STORY OF JESUS RETREAT

Start the new year with this free retreat delivered by the Verbum Dei Community. Refresh your appreciation of the core of our faith: the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and new life with the Holy Spirit. Takes place on Saturday **25 January**, 10am-4pm, St Peter's Pastoral Centre, St Peter's Church, Jewry Street, Winchester SO23 8RY. More details [here](#).

GOING INTO HOSPITAL?

Just a reminder that if you wish the Catholic Chaplain to visit you or a loved one in hospital you will need to let the hospital staff know. Data Protection means that your information cannot be passed to the Chaplain without permission. Simply make the request through a member of the nursing staff or hospital switchboard.

ADORE SPIRITUAL MINI-RETREAT

Taking place on **25 January**, this month's theme is 'Pilgrims of Hope - Jesus is The Way'. Includes Mass, Adoration, Praise, Prophecy, Prayer for the gifts of the Holy Spirit and inspiring guest speaker Daniella Stephens. Please register for the free Zoom meeting in advance at bit.ly/ADOREJAN2025. More information at altonrenewal.com.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE JUBILEE YEAR WITH CAFOD

2025 is a Jubilee year, but what does that mean? Catholic talk show host and author Nana Churcher, and CAFOD's Simon Giarchi will be hosting Fr Jan Nowotnik (Director of Mission for the Bishop's Conference), Christine Allen (CAFOD Director) and Kayode Akintola (CAFOD Head of Africa) and more for a lively start to the Jubilee. Saturday **18 January**, 10:30am-midday, online. All welcome. Register here for free: cafod.org.uk/jubilee

JOIN BISHOP BARRON IN THE UK

If you are seeking to gain a deeper appreciation of the Sacred Scriptures and the beauty of the Catholic faith, then this conference is for you! Join Bishop Barron in London for the Word on Fire 'Evangelisation & Culture' Conference on the Bible. Takes place on **21-22 February** at Excel London. More information [here](#).

CALLING ALL KNITTERS!

Stella Maris, the worldwide Catholic seafarers charity, is asking knitters to make hats to distribute to seafarers arriving in our local ports. Working in cold and difficult conditions, away from family, this simple gift keeps seafarers warm and shows them that they are remembered and cared for. Hats welcome year around!

Patterns from stellamaris.org.uk/knitting. When finished send to Stella Maris c/o St Joseph's and St Edmund's Parish Office, The Avenue, SO17 1XJ.