



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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17 NOVEMBER 2024

33rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR B

Daniel 12:1-3

When the time comes your own people will be spared.

Psalms 15 Response

Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.

Hebrews 10:11-14, 18

By virtue of one single offering, he has achieved the eternal perfection of all whom he is sanctifying.

Mark 13:24-32

He will gather his chosen from the four winds.

THIS WEEK

Saturday 16 November

St Luke's

5.30pm

(Mass Intention: People of the Parish)

Sunday 17 November

St Bernadette's

9.45am

(Mass Intention: Francis Shinkwin, RIP)

Abbey Church

10.30am

(Mass Intention: John Christopher Ward, RIP)

Mon 18 – Tues 19 Nov

Abbey Church

7.45am

Wednesday 20 November *Solemnity of St Edmund, King & Martyr,
Patron of Douai Community*

Abbey Church

11:30am

Thu 21 – Sat 23 Nov

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 · Patricia Brenninkmeyer · Pat Campbell · Luke Conlon · Mary Cox
Kevin McCormack · Marigold Norman · Babs O'Sullivan · Mary Overington
Barbara Stocker · Also Don Hood, Fr Alban's father.

Please pray for those who have died recently, especially Jennifer Gosse, and keep their loved ones in prayer.

MESSAGE FROM FR ALBAN

Dear Parishioners,

On Wednesday 20th November, the monastic community celebrates the Solemnity of its patron, St Edmund, King and Martyr, not to be confused with the other St Edmund, patron of our diocese of Portsmouth, which is kept on 16th November. There will be Pontifical Mass in the Abbey Church at 11.30am on Wednesday 20th November, to which you are all warmly invited. This year, 20th November also marks Red Wednesday, when we acknowledge and pray for Christians around the world that are persecuted for their religious beliefs. There will be a second collection for the charity which promotes this cause, Aid to the Church in Need, at Mass next weekend, 24th November.

As mentioned on our Douai Abbey website, Saint Edmund has been the patron of the Douai Abbey community since its foundation in 1615, and the community regards itself as the continuation of the great mediæval abbey of Bury St Edmund, which housed the pilgrimage shrine of St Edmund, King of East Anglia and first patron saint of England.

Edmund was born in about the year 841, and when he was 14, he succeeded to the throne of the then-independent kingdom of East Anglia on the death of his father, King Æthelward. He was crowned on Christmas Day in 855. Edmund was considered a model king, even-handed in all his dealings and devout - it is recorded of him that he retired for the best part of a year to Hunstanton in order to learn the psalms by heart, revealing something of a monastic spirit in him.

In 869, when King Edmund was still only 28, the Danes, under Ivar (or Hinguar), invaded East Anglia. King Edmund refused to meet the heathen Danes in battle, looking to our Lord's command to Peter not to raise the sword against the unbelievers who came to arrest him in Gethsemane.

Refusing to flee, Edmund gave himself into the hands of the Danes. Ivar had called upon Edmund to pay him homage, but Edmund refused to do so unless Ivar became a Christian. So young King Edmund was seized and beaten, then tied to a tree and shot full of arrows till he looked like a hedgehog, much like the earlier Christian martyr, young St Sebastian. Still alive, and still calling on the name of the Lord, the Danes dragged him away and cut off his head, throwing it into brambles before they left.

After the Danes had left, the Anglians sought King Edmund's head and found it being guarded by a wolf. As the people took the head back to be buried the wolf followed at a distance and did not leave until the head had been given the Christian burial it deserved. The place of the martyred king's tomb soon became Bury St Edmunds, one of mediæval England's greatest abbeys, and one its most popular shrines.

Subsequent English kings took St Edmund as their patron so that he became patron saint of England. With the invasion of Anglo-Saxon England by the Normans, his days as national patron were numbered. By the time of Edward III, St Edmund had been supplanted by St George, a warrior saint of the middle east, the devotion to whom was imported by crusaders returning from the Holy Land. Nevertheless, young St Edmund stands as a fitting patron for England, and indeed a shining example of Christian leadership for all the world today.

On 20 November 2015 a new statue of St Edmund, King and Martyr, by Peter Eugene Ball (pictured), was placed in the Abbey Church and was blessed by Cardinal Vincent Nichols as part of the Abbey's 400th birthday celebrations.



With my prayers and best wishes,

Yours devotedly,

Fr Alban OSB

WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

Today, thirty-third Sunday of the year, is the eighth World Day of the Poor. In this year dedicated to prayer in anticipation of the Jubilee Year of Hope 2025, Pope Francis has used scripture from the book of Sirach "The prayer of the poor rises up to God". The message from His Holiness Pope Francis can be found [here](#).

NOVEMBER – MONTH OF THE HOLY SOULS

During November we pray especially for the Holy Souls. You are invited to put the names of loved ones and friends you would like to be prayed for at Mass in the basket at the back of Church. If you would like to have an individual Mass said there are also envelopes provided for names and Mass offerings.

RED WEDNESDAY

Red Wednesday, on **20th November**, is an annual initiative from Aid to the Church in Need that aims to highlight the daily suffering, oppression, violence, torture, and death endured by the Christian community the world over. There will be a Second Collection for Aid to the Church in Need **next Sunday**. Find out more [here](#).

OPPOSING ASSISTED SUICIDE

There are now just over two weeks until the all-crucial vote in Parliament which will take place on 29th November. We need a huge push between now and then to lobby MPs. Please urgently contact your MP and ask them to vote against the bill. Visit www.livesworthliving.org.uk or write to them at: House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA. Links to resources: [issue of assisted suicide](#), [how to lobby MPs](#) and [booklet of stories](#).

ALTON DAY OF RENEWAL

On Saturday **23rd November** there is an opportunity to participate in a free mini-retreat morning that will explore the theme '*You shall be my Witnesses*' - *Giving your Testimony is the power of the Holy Spirit*. The free event takes place on Zoom from 10am to 1pm and [advance registration](#) is required. Find out more from [ADoRe](#).

LOOKING AHEAD TO ADVENT

Pastoral Area Advent Retreat: Taking place at 10am on Saturday **30th November** at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Hungerford. Led by Fr. Francis Preston SDB, concludes with Mass at 4pm. Bring your own lunch, all are very welcome.

Parish Advent Carol Service: Celebrate the beginning of Advent with the Carol Service at St Bernadette's Church on Sunday **1st December**, starting at 4pm. Following the carols and readings please join us for seasonal refreshments.

Advent Retreat: Three online sessions to experience Advent as the Season of Hope to prepare for the 2025 Jubilee *Pilgrims of Hope*. From **5th December**. Register [here](#).

Virtual Advent Calendar: Would you like to join our **Virtual Advent Calendar** on WhatsApp? It's a simple but special way of sharing the Advent journey, with parishioners taking it in turns to do a short reading each day during the season. To join, please send a WhatsApp message to Marc on 077-5239-7671.