



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

19 JANUARY 2025

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME– YEAR C

Isaiah 62:1-5

The bridegroom rejoices in his bride.

Psalms 95 Response

Proclaim the wonders of the Lord among all the peoples.

1 Cor 12:4-11

One and the same Spirit, who distributes gifts to different people just as he chooses.

John 2:1-11

This was the first of the signs given by Jesus: it was at Cana in Galilee.

THIS WEEK

Saturday 18 January

St Luke's

5.30pm

(Mass Intention: People of the Parish)

Sunday 19 January

**St Bernadette's
Abbey Church**

9.45am

10.30am

Mon 20– Sat 25 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 Roy Haslam, and keep their loved ones in prayer. 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,

Mothers often instinctively know what's best for us and can often see the larger picture that may be invisible to us. To help us to do this they sometimes have to exhibit tough love. When I was being bullied at school and pleaded with my mother to let me stay at home rather than go to school, she pushed me out of the front door and ordered me to face the music. Much later, during my first year in the monastery when I was struggling and decided to leave, she refused to send me a train ticket home and told me to weather the storm because she believed that I belonged in the monastery. She always had great faith in me, and her sudden death from a stroke fifteen years ago left a huge gap in my life.

In today's gospel the mother of Jesus tells him sharply: 'they have no wine!' she alerts him to a need, but his initial response is not very positive: 'why are you bothering me? He is clearly irritated but listens. His mother noticed the trouble at the wedding and spoke up. To run out of wine during a celebration would bring shame upon the family. Her son declares he is not ready to launch his public ministry, declaring 'my hour has not yet come.' And yet, without notice, his time had arrived. Mary's trust in him awakened the spirit within him. To have faith in another bestows a great gift.

We all have situations in our lives that are just as serious as the one at the wedding at Cana. Problems and struggles are part of life, and of living. There are times where we are acutely aware of our own powerlessness, and our inability to manage things. Yet we need others to enable us to see the bigger picture, to identify the possibility of miracle, to believe that God can and does work wonders in our lives if we will only trust him.

St Paul in our second reading reminds us that we cannot live in isolation. No one has all the gifts needed to make it through life. I know this only too well, and I have been reminded so often of my fragility and my rather limited skill set, of my need to call upon the faith and the gifts of others to help me do the work the Lord has called me to do. St Paul reminds us that each of us is given a particular manifestation of the Spirit to be used and shared for the common good.

‘They have no wine!’ Mary’s compassion for the married couple moves her to prompt Jesus to perform a spectacular miracle to save them from embarrassment. The words, “They have no wine,” are directed to both Jesus and to us, to remind us to think not of ourselves, but of the needs of others. “Do something to help them,” she says, even if we consider that we do not have the resources necessary. During this coming week, may we have courage to use and share our gifts. Whenever we encounter others in need, may we give what we have, and then allow God to do the rest.

With prayers and best wishes,

Yours devotedly,

Father Alban OSB

PEACE SUNDAY

This Sunday, **19 January**, is designated as Peace Sunday, a day of prayer for peace in the world. Pope Francis’ message has been published and his theme is ‘Forgive us our trespasses: Grant us your peace’. You can read the full message [here](#).

CHRISTIAN UNITY WEEK

You are invited to a Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity taking place at 6pm this 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.

SECOND COLLECTION

There will be a Second Collection next Sunday, **26 January**, for the Cathedral of St John the Evangelist, Portsmouth.

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 a lively start to the Jubilee. Saturday **18 January**, 10:30am-midday, online. All welcome. Register here for free: cafod.org.uk/jubilee.

CAFOD VOLUNTEER FOR ST LUKE'S

Could you help promote CAFOD at St Luke's Church? Your desire for a better world will help connect with our sisters and brothers in the poorest places to lift themselves out of poverty. Please contact Jo Lewry for more information jolewry@cafod.org.uk or call 07710 094447.

Our thanks to Monica Morris for all she has done representing CAFOD at St Luke's Church.

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 and new life with the Holy Spirit. Takes place on Saturday **25 January**, 10am-4pm, St Peter's Church, Jewry Street, Winchester SO23 8RY. More details [here](#).

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

To everyone at St Luke's and St Bernadette's churches, a heartfelt thank you for supporting our Giving Tree last Advent. Our parcels were delivered on the day of CIRDIC's Christmas Lunch for the homeless. The staff at CIRDIC were amazed at the number of parcels from our parish - our best year yet! Our thanks to the organisers, Sandra, Gill and Lorraine for all their hard work.

UPDATE ON SYNOD ON SYNODALITY

The Synod on Synodality concluded in October, hailed as a pivotal moment for the modern Church, the [final document](#) was endorsed by Pope Francis.

On Wednesday **5 February**, 7.30 – 9pm, at Corpus Christi Church, Wokingham, and online via Zoom, Dr. Austen Ivereigh will delve into the practical implications of synodality for dioceses and parishes, explaining why this shift towards a more participatory Church is crucial. Register [here](#).

MEDJUGORJE PILGRIMAGE

Sue Smith from our neighbouring parish of Our Lady of the Assumption, Thatcham, has arranged a pilgrimage to Medjugorje from **12-19 May**. The cost is £749 including flights, transfers, 4-star accommodation near the centre and the accompaniment of experienced guide, Svetlana. For more information email info@discovermedj.com or Sue Smith susan.smith313@ntlworld.com.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE DIOCESE

The Diocese has a variety of career opportunities available, including Fundraising Manager, Management Accountant, Communications Manager, and IT Service Delivery Lead. For more information please visit [Diocese of Portsmouth](#).