



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

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16 MARCH 2025

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR C

Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18 *God enters into a covenant with Abram, the man of faith*
Psalm 26 Response *The Lord is my light and my salvation*
Philippians 3:17–4:1 *Christ will configure us to his glorious body*
Luke 9:28b-36 *'As Jesus was praying, the appearance of his face was altered'*

THIS WEEK

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|----------------------------|--|-----------------|
| Saturday 15 March | St Luke's <i>(Mass Intention: Sheila Fitzpatrick, RIP)</i> | 5.30pm |
| Sunday 16 March | St Bernadette's <i>(Mass Intention: People of the Parish)</i> | 9.45 am |
| | Abbey Church | 10.30 am |
| Mon 17 – Thu 20 Mar | Abbey Church | 7.45 am |
| Friday 21 March | <i>Solemnity of The Passing of St Benedict</i> Abbey Church | 12.00 pm |
| Saturday 22 March | 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, especially Mary Cox, and keep their loved ones in prayer.

MESSAGE FROM FR ALBAN

Dear Parishioners,

Last Sunday, at Masses at St Luke's and St Bernadette's the following announcement was made:

In late 2023 Bishop Philip invited us all to become involved with the development of our Diocesan 10-year Plan "You Will Be My Witnesses". Its aim is to bring people closer to Jesus Christ through His Church, through a renewed missionary effort to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to those around us.

To support and energise this mission of evangelization, we in West Berkshire have decided to work towards the amalgamation of the parishes of Our Lady of Lourdes, Hungerford and St. Francis de Sales, Wash Common, St Joseph's, Newbury and Our Lady of the Assumption, Thatcham. The parish of Woolhampton, incorporated into Douai Abbey and consisting of St Mary's, Woolhampton, St. Bernadette's, Pangbourne, and St. Luke's, Theale, will be closely associated with us as the other partner in our Pastoral Area.

The Bishop has also asked for a proposed timeline as to when we wish to amalgamate our existing parishes into a single parish based on Newbury. We are already planning this with the hope of achieving integration in September 2026.

In response to our plan, the Bishop asked us to propose 3 possible names for the new parish. The 3 names put forward are the Parish of the Sacred Heart, the Parish of Our Lady Queen of Peace and the Parish of the Holy Family. The Bishop made a choice from these alternatives, selecting the 'Parish of the Sacred Heart'. All our individual churches will retain their existing dedications within the new parish.

Now that the Mission Plan has been submitted, discussed and agreed with the Bishop, the next steps involve implementing it and planning ahead.

In addition to amalgamating the parishes in Hungerford and Wash Common, Newbury and Thatcham, the plans include:

- *A new website for the new parish to enable effective communication of what is happening around the 4 churches*
- *Sacramental programmes for Holy Communion, Confirmation and the Rite of Catholic Initiation of Adults spanning all 4 churches*
- *Faith formation opportunities with courses such as Alpha*
- *Support for youth ministry*
- *Support for the sick, housebound and bereaved*
- *Ecumenical engagement*

The aim is to create a vibrant community of communities. All this will require your support and your involvement - SO PLEASE BECOME DISCIPLES and play your part in the Church's mission here in West Berkshire. We can go a long way towards evangelizing the world around us if we all step forward and participate as our circumstances allow.

As the finances of our Douai Abbey parish come under the Douai Abbey Parishes' Trust, rather than the Diocese of Portsmouth, and as the priests working in the parish are members of the Douai Abbey monastic community, we will be a 'partner', than a full participant in the new, large parish of West Berkshire. The bishop has expressed his appreciation for our Abbey "with its prayer, liturgy and spiritual resources, its retreat centre and formation courses."

The announcement concluded with these words:

Please start by praying for the Church's mission here in West Berkshire – for OUR mission here in West Berkshire. And then please, if you can, come forward to support that mission with your time and talents as appeals for volunteers are made in the months to come. It will be wonderful to have your participation in whatever manner you feel able to contribute.

With my prayers and best wishes,

Yours devotedly,

Father Alban OSB

WELCOME IN BAPTISM

We welcome in baptism William Penn, who will receive the sacrament on Saturday 22 March, in St Mary's Church. Please pray for him and his parents, Tom and Louise, as he begins his journey of faith.

SECOND COLLECTION - CAFOD

There will be Second Collection in aid of CAFOD this Sunday. With your support, more families can overcome challenges, build resilience, and plant the seeds of hope for generations to come. You can give [online](#) or call 0303 303 3030.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Stations of the Cross will be prayed at **6.30pm on Friday** at St Luke's Church and at 12pm on **28 March** at St Bernadette's Church, followed by a Lent lunch.

SUPPORT OUR RUNNERS ... AND OUR WALKERS!

We have three runners taking part in the Reading Half Marathon on **23 March**, raising money for Rainbow Trust. Please support them through sponsorship or [donation](#). Good luck to Damian Deeney, Dominic Servais and Andrew Webber! Look out for Damian who will be standing outside our churches after Mass this weekend seeking sponsors.

The parish's Confirmation Group is taking part in The Big Lent Walk for CAFOD, so please encourage our young people by sponsoring them. You can do so [here](#).

LENT DAY OF PRAYER

'Preparing for the favourable time' calls for eager engagement, so that we do not stumble through Lent, but embrace its invitation to journey towards Easter. Led by Fr Alex Austin. Takes place 10:30am-4:00pm Saturday **22 March** at Douai. Contribution £30 (includes lunch) or £15 (bring own lunch), payable on the day. To book or make an enquiry, please email: pastoral@douaiabbey.org.uk.

NEW WEEKLY OFFERTORY ENVELOPES

The new weekly envelopes for offertory donations and Friday self-denial will be available at the back of our churches from this weekend. These envelopes are to be used from the weekend of **5/6 April** onwards. Your current boxes run until May this year, but please discard these, and use the new envelopes from April. Thank you for your continued generosity.

EVANGELIUM 2025 – FOR YOUNG CATHOLICS 18-35

A conference on Catholic faith, life and culture. Over the years, hundreds have ignited their faith through [Evangelium](#), many have met lifelong friends and spouses, joined apostolates or discovered a vocation. Takes place **15–17 August**, Oratory School, Reading, RG8 0PJ. See the poster at the back of our churches.

MUSIC FOR LENT

At Douai Abbey on Saturday **5 April**, 7:30pm, Newbury Chamber Choir will be performing The Crucifixion, by Sir John Stainer, based on the Passions of Johann Sebastian Bach. Also Thomas Tallis' luminescent motet O Nata lux and Gabriel Jackson's beautiful Tantum Ergo. Tickets available [online](#) and on the door. Adults £15. Under 18's free.

ALTON DAY OF RENEWAL

Morning of spiritual renewal online on Saturday **22 March**. More information [here](#).