



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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22 DECEMBER 2024

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR C

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|-----------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Saturday 21 December | St Luke's <i>(Mass Intention: People of the Parish)</i> | 5.30pm |
| Sunday 22 December | St Bernadette's Abbey Church | 9.45am 10.30am |
| Mon 23– Tue 24 Dec | Abbey Church | 7.45am |

NATIVITY OF THE LORD

25 DECEMBER 2024

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| Tuesday 24 December | <i>Vigil Mass of Christmas</i> St Luke's | 5.00 pm |
| | <i>Christmas Mass During the Night</i> Abbey Church | 8:00pm |
| Monday 25 December | <i>Dawn Mass of Christmas</i> St Bernadette's | 9.45 am |
| | <i>Day Mass of Christmas</i> Abbey Church | 10.30 am |



OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS – ABBEY CHURCH

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| Thursday 26 December | <i>Feast St Stephen</i> | 11.30 am |
| Friday 27 December | <i>Feast of St John, Apostle</i> | 7.45 am |
| Saturday 28 December | <i>Feast of The Holy Innocents</i> | 7.45 am |

29 DECEMBER 2024

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH – YEAR C

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| Saturday 28 December | St Luke's <i>(Mass Intention: People of the Parish)</i> | 5.30 pm |
| Sunday 29 December | St Bernadette's <i>(Mass Intention: Agnes Hall, RIP)</i> | 9.45 am |
| | Abbey Church | 10.30 am |
| Monday 30 December | Abbey Church | 11.30 am |
| Tuesday 31 December | Abbey Church | 7.45 am |
| Wednesday 1 January | <i>Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God</i> Abbey Church | 11.30 am |
| Thu 2 – Sat 4 January | Abbey Church | 7.45 am |

5 JANUARY 2025

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD – YEAR C

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| Saturday 4 January | St Luke's | 5.30 pm |
| Sunday 5 January | St Bernadette's <i>(Mass Intention: People of the Parish)</i> | 9.45 am |
| | Abbey Church | 10.30 am |
| Mon 6 – Sat 11 Jan | 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 · Mary Cox · 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 Overington and Patricia Stroud, and keep their loved ones in prayer.

The funeral of Mary Overington will take place on Monday 30th December at 12pm in St Mary's Church.

MESSAGE FROM FR ALBAN

Dear Parishioners,

If you are still searching for that perfect Christmas gift, or that indispensable ingredient for the perfect Christmas celebration, then today's gospel offers food for thought.

We hear about the visit Our Lady made to Elizabeth. What gift did Mary bring to Elizabeth? We're not told that she brought her a present, though she might well have done. We're not told that she brought a gift for the child Elizabeth was expecting, though she might well have done. We're told she brought just one thing: herself. She gave not her presents, those nice, wrapped objects, she gave her very presence. And this is the best and hardest gift of all.

It is easy to send flowers, it is easy to send a parcel, but to give the gift of ourselves, to make the time to be with someone, that is the gift that many people long for but do not receive at Christmas. Do you know of someone who will be lonely this Christmas? Can you give them the gift of your presence, or better still; can you offer them the gift of welcome, of hospitality, into your home?

Mary's gift to Elizabeth also reminds us that we should give not according to our convenience but according to the needs of the recipient. It was not convenient for Mary to travel the lonely, dangerous road from Galilee to the hills of Judah. But Elizabeth needed a helping hand. Mary gave to her what she needed when she needed it. If you've ever experienced someone showing you an act of kindness that was just what was needed at a particular time, then you know what a difference it makes.

It is in giving that we receive. Our Lady discovered this. She also benefitted from the visit to Elizabeth, for Elizabeth affirmed and encouraged her: She paid her a wonderful compliment: 'Blessed is she who believed that the promise made to her by the Lord would be fulfilled.' As the elder and more experienced of the two women, Elizabeth was able to help Mary. What a wonderful exchange of gifts.

The greatest gifts we can give to one another are very simple but are often very costly ones because they involve effort, and commodities that we may not always have: the gift of time, the gift of encouragement, the gift of consolation, of peace, of joy.

Wishing you all a very happy and holy Christmas,
Yours devotedly,

Father Alban OSB

CHRISTMAS CRIB COLLECTION

This year the Christmas Crib Offerings go to Knights of the Holy Sepulchre who support Christians living in the Holy Land. Their need this year is hugely urgent. Thank you for your generosity, please pray for a lasting peace.

FRESH BAKES FROM THE ABBEY KITCHEN

There is a bake sale after Mass in the Abbey on **22nd December**, with some festive specials. There is no card payment facility, so please be prepared to pay with cash.

CAROL SINGING IN PANGBOURNE

We'll be singing outside Garlands in Pangbourne on Monday **23rd December** from 1 - 2pm to raise funds for our parish charity, The Rainbow Trust. Come and join in!

CHRISTMAS CAROLS AT ST LUKE'S

Please join us at St. Luke's Church at 4:30 pm on **Christmas Eve** for carols and readings, as we prepare for the Vigil Mass at 5pm.

NEW YEAR'S EVE CONCERT

Commotio choir returns to give the new year concert at the Abbey on Tuesday **31st December** at 3.30pm, tickets £15 can be purchased [here](#).

YOUNG DISCIPLES GROUP

On Sunday **5th January** children who have made their First Communion but not yet Confirmed will meet after Mass at St Bernadette's. Short topics, then doughnuts!

NEW YEAR CATCH-UP

Come along to St Bernadette's on Wednesday **8th January** from 10.30am to midday for a chat and cuppa. Everyone is very welcome.