



# PARISH OF WOOLHAMPTON

*Diocese of Portsmouth - Served by the Benedictine Monks of Douai Abbey*

[www.douaiparish.org.uk](http://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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**15 DECEMBER 2024**

## **THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 'GAUDETE' – YEAR C**

Zephaniah 3:14-18a	<i>The Lord will dance with shouts of joy for you as on a day of festival.</i>
Psalm 12 Response	<i>Sing and shout for joy for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.</i>
Philippians 4:4-7	<i>The Lord is very near.</i>
Luke 3:10-18	<i>What must we do?</i>

### **THIS WEEK**

<b>Saturday 14 December</b>	<b>St Luke's</b> <i>(Mass Intention: Claire Bonifacio)</i>	<b>5.30pm</b>
<b>Sunday 15 December</b>	<b>St Bernadette's</b> <i>(Mass Intention: People of the Parish)</i>	<b>9.45am</b>
	<b>Abbey Church</b>	<b>10.30am</b>
<b>Mon 16– Sat 21 Dec</b>	<b>Abbey Church</b>	<b>7.45am</b>

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, Giles Caiger-Smith and David Marshall, and keep their loved ones in prayer.**

The funeral of Giles Caiger-Smith will take place on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December at 2pm at St Bernadette's Church.

## **MESSAGE FROM FR ALBAN**

Dear Parishioners,

This Third Sunday of Advent is known as Gaudete Sunday, based on the Introit for the day: Gaudete in Domino semper, iterum dico, Gaudete, from Philippians 4:4 ("Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I say, 'Rejoice'"). We also hear this text proclaimed in the second reading today.

'Rejoice!' Today's liturgy challenges us to ask ourselves are we ready for joy? Are we ready to find joy in even unexpected places?

An Italian commentator noted that in the first five months of his pontificate, Pope Francis had used the word "joy" more than one hundred times in his speeches and homilies. The Pope often says that we Christians should manifest the joy that comes from our faith, which is essential for attracting others to Christ. And he not only preaches that message; he practices it in his own interactions with people continually.

Is Jesus the one for us or are we looking for someone else? Is his Gospel enough for us? Do we find in Him the true answer to our longings, and if not, why not? What keeps us from feeling and projecting the joy that Christ's presence with us should bring? What are the things that block our joy? These are the things we need to relinquish to be ready to receive Christ into our hearts and lives again this Christmas.

## WEEKLY NOTICES

As our Sunday Masses are to continue to be celebrated by myself and other priests from the Abbey on a rota, I think it important that a consistent approach be adopted concerning weekly notices, on the website and bulletin, and at the end of Mass. It would be appreciated if items for the Parish Bulletin could be sent by email to the Parish Office by Wednesday evening at the latest.

If by the weekend there are notices to be communicated beyond what is in the bulletin, they should be printed out and handed the priest before Mass so that he can announce them. Thank you for your co-operation.

With my prayers and best wishes,

Yours devotedly,

*Father Alban OSB*

## PARISH CHRISTMAS MASSES

### **CHRISTMAS EVE** Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December

4.30pm Carols and Readings – St Luke’s Church

5:00pm Vigil Mass of Christmas - St Luke’s Church

8:00pm Christmas Mass During the Night - Abbey Church

### **CHRISTMAS DAY** Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December

9:45am Dawn Mass of Christmas - St Bernadette’s Church

10:30am Day Mass of Christmas - Abbey Church

## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

This Sunday, **15<sup>th</sup> December**, there will be Confessions after the 9.45am Mass at St Bernadette’s Church.

The Penitential Service for our Pastoral Area takes place at 7.30pm on Tuesday **17<sup>th</sup> December** at St Joseph’s Church, Newbury. This is your opportunity to make your Confession in readiness for Christmas. There will be least six priests present.

## FLOWERS FOR CHRISTMAS

There will be a second collection this Sunday, **15<sup>th</sup> December**, for Christmas flowers at St Bernadette’s Church.

## PASTORAL LETTER

Bishop Philip Egan’s pastoral letter last Sunday on the subject of Hope can be read [here](#) or watched online [YouTube](#).

## **ADVENT 'GIVING TREES'**

If you took a label from the Giving Trees in our parish, please bring it and your gift back by this Sunday, **15<sup>th</sup> December**. Your gift will be used when making up parcels for the people who use CIRDIC, the drop-in centre for the homeless in Reading.

## **CRIB SERVICE**

Taking place on Saturday **21<sup>st</sup> December** at 12 noon at St Bernadette's Church: a short service with carols to prepare the crib. Children are welcome to come dressed as a nativity character of their choice. Followed by sandwiches, mince pies, mulled wine (for the adults!) afterwards.

## **CHRISTMAS CAROLS AT ST LUKE'S**

Join us at St. Luke's at 4.30pm on **Christmas Eve** for carols and readings, in preparation of the Vigil Mass that follows at 5pm.

## **FRESH BAKES FROM THE ABBEY KITCHEN**

There will be a bake sale after the 10.30am Abbey Mass on **22<sup>nd</sup> December**, with some festive specials. If you wish to purchase larger quantities or have a specific request, please email Sarah, the Abbey Cook, at [sarahhill123@icloud.com](mailto:sarahhill123@icloud.com). There is no card payment facility, so please be prepared to pay with cash.

## **CAROL SINGING IN PANGBOURNE**

We will be singing outside Garlands in Pangbourne on Monday **23<sup>rd</sup> December** from 1-2 pm to raise funds for our new parish charity, The Rainbow Trust. Please come and join in the singing.

## **NEW YEAR'S EVE CONCERT**

Once again this exciting choir, Commotio, based in Oxford, returns to give the new year concert at the Abbey. The choir's unique singing style and imaginative programmes are always popular. Music by Rutter, Walker, Martin, and plenty more. On Tuesday **31<sup>st</sup> December** at 3.30pm, tickets £15 can be purchased [here](#).

## **CALLING ALL KNITTERS!**

Stella Maris, the worldwide Catholic seafarers charity, is asking knitters to make hats for them 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.

Patterns and instructions from [stellamaris.org.uk/knitting](http://stellamaris.org.uk/knitting). When finished send to Stella Maris Southampton, c/o St Joseph's and St Edmund's Parish Office, St Edmund's Lodge, The Avenue, SO17 1XJ. Hats welcomed all year round!