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ST MARY'S & ST COLUMBA'S
 The Catholic Church in Gosport

13 & 20 July 2025 - FIFTEENTH & SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (Year C)

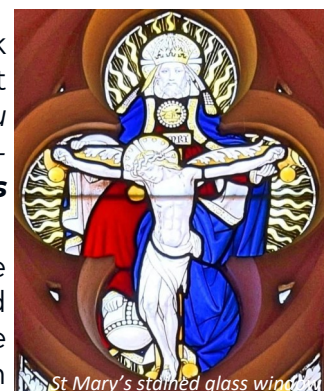
12	Sat	06:00pm	<i>Vigil</i>	Rev Canon Thomas Doyle RIP	<p>CONFESSION TIMES Thu 6:15pm-6:45pm <i>(if Mass is celebrated)</i> Sat - 12:00nn—1:00pm</p> <p>EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION Thu—after the 7pm Mass <i>Holy half hour with Night Prayer</i> Fri 10:00am—12:00nn</p> <p>OUTREACH Thu from 12:00nn</p> <p>TO MAKE DONATIONS: For BACS Transfer: Account Name: CDP Gosport Account No.: 00878538 Sort Code: 30-93-04 Make all cheques payable to CDP Gosport, or you may scan the QR code.</p> 
13	Sun	08:00am 11:15am	Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time	John David Dickens INT Teresa Crowley RIP	
14	Mon	No Service			
15	Tue	12:00nn	St Swithun	Margaret Marsh RIP	
16	Wed	12:00nn	Our Lady of Mt Carmel	Fitzgerald RIP	
17	Thu	07:00pm	St Bonaventure	Nicola Vizard RIP	
18	Fri	No Service		Alan Thompson RIP	
19	Sat	06:00pm	<i>Vigil</i>	People of the Parish	
20	Sun	08:00am 11:15am	Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time	Warren, Lora & Kate INT Zied Solomon RIP	
21	Mon	No Service			
22	Tue	12:00nn	St Mary Magdalene	Holy Souls in Purgatory	
23	Wed	12:00nn	St Bridget of Sweden	Mary Williams RIP	
24	Thu	07:00pm	St Sharbel Makhluif	Kathleen Magri RIP	
25	Fri	12:00nn	St James	Joe Loughborough & Family RIP	
26	Sat	06:00pm		Elizabeth Extance & Family RIP	
27	Sun	08:00am 11:15am	Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time	People of the Parish Crispo & Clarita Alvarez RIP	

Why is July Dedicated to the Precious Blood?

Devotion to the Most Precious Blood by the saints and the faithful dates back to the beginnings of the Church. We read in Sacred Scripture many verses that honor the blood of Christ as the source of our salvation. Saint Peter writes, “You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the **precious blood of Christ**, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.” (1 Peter 1:19)

The Most Precious Blood became a focus for Pope Pius IX while he was in exile during the Italian War for Independence. The Pope understood the great need for God’s intervention and instituted the Feast of the Most Precious Blood to be celebrated in July 1849. The purpose was to call upon assistance from Heaven to end the war. Soon after the formal institution of the feast, the war ended and the Pope returned to Rome, his prayers having been answered. Eventually, the entire month of July became dedicated to the Most Precious Blood.

The Church, therefore, encourages all the faithful to honor and recognize with particular attention during the month of July the blood of Jesus shed for us during His passion and crucifixion. Being reminded of the tremendous sacrifice of Our loving Savior in the Masses and prayers of this month, we are moved to express deep gratitude to God for the saving power of His blood and the gift of salvation it has merited.



A WARM WELCOME TO ALL OUR VISITORS AND PARISHIONERS.

Whether you are seeking spiritual growth, connection, or simply a place to belong, we hope you find our church a welcoming place. If you are new to the parish, please introduce yourself to Fr Matthew and/or Dcn John after Mass today.

Advance Notice

18 July - **There will be no Mass and Adoration.** Fr Matthew will be attending the funeral of Canon Gerard Flynn. **The Parish Office will also be closed.** For any urgent matters, please contact 07590643572

WELCOME, FR BENEDIKT!

Fr Benedikt, known to many as Fr Faustino, will be covering for Fr Matthew on the 19th and 20th of July (Saturday and Sunday) while he is away attending a course. Let us warmly welcome Fr Benedikt during his visit. We are grateful for his presence and ministry and we look forward to celebrating Mass with him. Please keep Fr Matthew and Fr Benedikt in your prayers.

THIS WEEK'S SECOND COLLECTION—STELLA MARIS

This weekend is the day in the Church's year when it prays and collects funds for all those who live and work at sea. Seafarers and fishers play a vital role in all our lives, but they often work in difficult, hazardous conditions. Our support will make a big difference to seafarers and fishers in need. If you wish to donate online, the link is: <https://tinyurl.com/3xdzha55>

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CELEBRATION

We would like to thank all the parents of the children who received their First Holy Communion. The celebration last Sunday was well attended and was a big success. We pray that our FHC children will continue to shine with the brilliance of Christ. **We also would like to thank all those who brought food to share last Sunday!**



TABLE TOP SALE ON THE 26TH OF JULY!

Please spread the news!! Our Fundraising Team is organising a **Table Top Sale in the parish hall and in front of St Mary's on the 26th of July, Saturday, starting from 10am until 2pm.** There will be plants, second hand goods, cakes, home made jams, and many more. They are still in need of items for the sale, and any donations or unwanted gifts for the tombola prizes. We will also need volunteers to help run the stalls. **Please speak to Annette after the 11:15am Mass or contact her at 07930833971. Thank you!**



CALLING ALL KNITTERS—REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY PROJECT

We would like to invite our keen knitters to take part in a special project for Remembrance Sunday. We know it is still a few months away, but we are planning ahead! Whether you are an experienced knitter or just starting out, your contribution is welcome. Every poppy will count and will add meaning to this tribute to those who served and sacrificed. Please contact Clarinda in the parish office for further details.



GREEN THUMBS NEEDED

We are looking for some volunteer gardeners to help care for the church grounds. No special expertise required, just a willingness to lend a hand with weeding, planting, or general upkeep. If you are keen to contribute an hour or so of your time, or you want to know more, please contact the parish office or speak to Fr Matthew. Every bit of help makes a big difference!



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: ASSISTANT PSM

We are currently looking for a dedicated volunteer to serve as Assistant Parish Safeguarding Minister. This important role supports the Parish Safeguarding Minister in ensuring our church remains a safe and welcoming environment for all. If you would like to contribute to this vital role of promoting safety and well-being within our parish, or wish to find out more information, please speak to Fr Matthew, Dcn John, or you may contact the parish office. Thank you.

ST MARY'S CHURCH TRUSS REPAIRS

Dear Parishioners, we would like to inform you that essential repairs are needed on the church roof trusses on the left hand side of the nave. A structural engineer completed an inspection and drafted some drawings detailing how to safely secure the wooden trusses. These remedial works are scheduled to begin in the next couple of weeks. This may affect the left hand side of the nave as these works are carried out in the church. Your generosity in giving to the collection plate has a direct impact on funding this remedial works and is very much appreciated.

The Tree of Hope

Have you seen how much it has grown since we started a few weeks ago? It is not too late to participate. Visit the Lady Chapel (right hand side of the sanctuary), and you will find our Tree of Hope. Instructions will be there.



WILLIAM FRANCIS DOYLE RIP

A Memorial Mass will be held for Bill on 29 July - Tue 12nn at St Mary's Church. On 30 July - Wed, a Funeral Service at the Crematorium will be held at 1:45pm. William was fondly known as B and was a long time member of the Iona Club in Bridgemary. Please pray for his family and friends. May his soul rest in peace. ✠



SPONSOR A SANCTUARY LAMP

If you would like to sponsor a Sanctuary Lamp with a thoughtful intention, simply fill in a sponsor envelope that is available in the church foyer. The cost of sponsoring a Lamp is £5. Your intentions will also be remembered during the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament every Friday.

MASS INTENTIONS

To have a Mass offered for your intentions, kindly use the envelopes at the back of the church. You may book in advance. There are still available dates in August.

COME PRAY THE ROSARY WITH US

The Rosary group meets every night at 8pm on WhatsApp. If you would like to join and participate in praying the Rosary as part of the group please contact Anthonia 07773185812 or Clare 07774664409. Thank you.

THANKSGIVING & HEALING MASS

St Vincent de Paul in Fareham extends their invitation for a joint Thanksgiving and Healing Mass. It will be on the **6th August 2025 at 1:30pm at St Philip Howard - Fareham.** There will be tea & coffee provided by SVP afterwards. Pls note that there is a new car parking system employed at SPH and you will need to ensure you register your vehicle on your arrival to avoid a parking fine.

There is Tea and Coffee in St Mary's Hall every Sunday after the 11:15am Mass. Please join us for a friendly cuppa and chat and help raise funds to support various parish initiatives.

MULTICULTURAL MASS IN SEPTEMBER!

Following last year's successful International Mass, we are holding it again on the 14th of September. **We need volunteers to help with the planning.** Pls speak to Clarinda in the parish office.

CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTHDAY OF ST FAUSTINA

The Divine Mercy Apostolate, London is holding a Celebration of St Faustina Birthday at **Aylesford Priory, Aylesford, Kent on Bank Holiday Monday 25 August 2025 from 10:30 am to 4pm.** The reflection day will include teachings on the Message of Divine Mercy, Holy Mass, Hour of Mercy with Stations of the Cross, Adoration and Benediction and Veneration of the Image of Merciful Jesus. All welcome. Call millie on [07957594646](tel:07957594646) for information.

ST LORENZO RUIZ - PROCESSION & HOLY MASS

In honour of St Lorenzo Ruiz, the first Filipino-Chinese saint, there will be a procession and Holy Mass on Saturday **the 27th of September from 1:30pm.** This will be held at St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth. Please join us. Food and fellowship available afterwards. Everyone is invited to attend.

ADULT BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

Are you interested in **becoming a Catholic** or do you know someone who is? Did you miss out on the **Sacrament of Confirmation** as a teenager and would like to be confirmed? Please speak to Fr. Matthew or Dcn John, or email the parish office.

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK

If you are in the hospital or will be admitted in the hospital:

Please call the following Chaplaincy Nos: QA - 02392 286 408 / War Memorial - 02382 318 000 / Southampton Hospital - 02381 206 049, and ask for a Roman Catholic Priest.

Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick: Please contact the Parish Office if you know of any **elderly or housebound people** who would appreciate being offered the sacraments at home, please speak to Fr. Matthew, Dcn John or contact the parish office.

If you or a loved one is sick or housebound: If you are unable to participate in the Sunday Eucharist, please contact the Parish Office and arrangements will be made for you to receive Holy communion.

CHURCH WEDDINGS

Marriage is a sacred covenant. Getting married in church is a traditional, meaningful, and a beautiful ceremony to which every Catholic couple aspires. If you wish to get married at St Mary's Church, please contact the parish office. We will be happy to guide you through the process towards the Sacrament of Matrimony.

A CATHOLIC FUNERAL

In 2014, Bishop Philip issued to the clergy and people of the Diocese some ***Guidelines for Funerals and for the Care of the Terminally Ill.*** The Guidelines should be followed in our Diocese when planning a funeral for a Catholic person who has died. The leaflet also enables Catholics to leave instructions about their own funeral for their next of kin, and in addition, some notes are given for the care of Catholics who are terminally ill. You may find them here. <https://tinyurl.com/mpvj57d>. When a Catholic dies, it is the usual custom of the Catholic Church for them to be brought to their parish church & for a Requiem Mass to be offered up for them. This is the case even for those who during their lifetime rarely practiced their Catholic faith. Catholics believe that when a person dies, it is a priority to offer Mass, because it is the Sacrifice of Christ & in the Mass the Church pleads to the Lord, asking him to forgive the sins and weaknesses of the deceased & to admit them into the communion of the saints. **If you wish to have a copy of the guidelines, please contact the parish office.**

This Newsletter covers a two-week period. The next Newsletter will be issued on Sunday, 27 July.

The parish of St Mary's and St Columba's - Gosport, is part of the Solent Pastoral Area, a group of four parishes which includes Fareham, Stubbington and Lee-on-the-Solent, and Park Gate. The Diocesan Ten-year Plan entitled "You will be my Witnesses" calls for all the parishes in the diocese to work together, holding joint services, combining efforts for sacramental preparation, and resource-sharing.

DIOCESAN EVENT - THE LITURGY PROJECT

This is for all EMHC and Readers this year. The sessions are open to both new and experienced Ministers. **Readers' day on 18th October** will include a session on Lectio Divina. In addition, they are organising ***Formation for Ministers of Children's Liturgy on 6th September.*** ***Both sessions will take place at St Bede's Church/Hall in Basingstoke.*** *The programme will include prayer and reflection, sharing good practice; working collaboratively; how to grow and communicate as Liturgical Catechists; Music suggestions; and a wish list for future support, networking & how to find more helpers.* Anyone involved in any of the above is encouraged to register via litugy@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

NEW DIOCESE WEBSITE - Have a look!

The new Diocese of Portsmouth website has been launched: www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk. If you go to their "Find a Parish" and search for Gosport, it will come up with our churches of St Mary and St Columba. It will also bring up St Mary's Primary School. Please share this information to others. Thank you.

DIOCESAN FREE WILLS SERVICE

The Diocese has partnered with market-leading solicitors and will-writing providers. Whether you would like to write your Will in-person, online or over the 'phone, you will be expertly supported throughout. You are under no obligation to leave your Parish a gift in their Wills, but a gift of this kind is an opportunity to make a lasting gift to the Church, and we hope many will choose to do so. More information at: <https://tinyurl.com/3r7hh47w>

ORDINATIONS IN THE DIOCESE

The Priestly Ordination of Dcn Ryan Browne at St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth is happening on Saturday 19th July, at 11am. Ordinations to the Permanent Diaconate are scheduled for Saturday 26th July, 11am, at St John's Cathedral. Everyone is very welcome to come to these two dates. Please keep all our Seminarians who are in formation in your prayers.

ADORE - A CALL FOR PRAYER AND FASTING

On Thursday 24th July please pray and fast for the end of abortion and euthanasia. 25th July is the 57th anniversary of Humanæ Vitæ. ***"Please pray and fast for the end of abortion and euthanasia on Thursday 24th July, the Vigil of the Feast of St James. These days seem quite dark, what with Parliament voting to partly decriminalise abortion and voting to legalise euthanasia.*** Please invite others to join us in praying and fasting for life, please go to <https://tinyurl.com/3at7xyd7>

CATHOLIC FESTIVAL "WITNESS TO HOPE"

CELEBRATE FESTIVAL 'Witness to Hope' A Catholic festival for all the family 6th - 20th August At Worth Abbey, West Sussex. Join CELEBRATE for a relaxed, faith filled festival. All are very welcome. Visit; www.celebratetrust.org/festival

RETRouvaille CATHOLIC MINISTRY

Marriages in difficulty? Do you feel alone? Frustrated, or have you just stopped talking to each other? Retrouvaille might be able to help. No group therapy or group work. Email info@retrouvaille.org.uk or contact 07887 296 983

CANONISATION ANNOUNCEMENT: THE SAINTS OF YOUTH

the Holy Father announced that London-born **Blessed Carlo Acutis alongside Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati will be canonised together on 7 September.** The canonisations of the two young saints – one from the early twentieth century, the other the first millennial saint – have been greatly anticipated due to the great devotion among the faithful.

REFLECTION

What must I do?

In the Gospel Reading, a lawyer asks Jesus, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus says to the lawyer, *well, how do you read the law?* Without hesitation, the lawyer gives Jesus the answer, which the lawyer already knew - *love God wholly and your neighbour as yourself.*

If you can do good to him, he counts as your neighbour.

Right!, Jesus tells him. *You do that, and you'll live.*

But wait, the lawyer says, *who is my neighbour?*

Then Jesus tells him the story of the bad priest and Levite and the good Samaritan, and Jesus finishes with another question to the lawyer: *which of these was the neighbour of the robbery victim?*

The lawyer gives the answer he has to give: *the good neighbour was the Samaritan.*

Now notice the oddness of the lawyer's first question. He doesn't ask: what is the best way to soar in love of God? He asks: what *must* I do to inherit eternal life? He is looking for the minimum necessary to get in to heaven, isn't he?

But eternal life is a union, a marriage, with God. Who would want to get married to someone who said, "what's the minimum I can do for you and with you and still get you to marry me?"

So Jesus gets the lawyer to answer his question, and the lawyer gives the right answer. What you *have* to do, the minimum necessary, is everything: love God wholly, and love your neighbour as yourself.

This is a disconcerting answer, of course, because in this life none of us is ever going to do everything. So if *everything* is the minimum necessary, then none of us is getting in. And so the lawyer tries on his original move again. He wants a definition of *neighbour* which gives him the minimum number of people to count as neighbours he has to love.

But Jesus upends the lawyer's continuing desire for a minimum by giving him another maximum: everyone you can love is your neighbour. If you can do good to him, he counts as your neighbour.

And that is what we *must* do to inherit eternal life: come to Christ. The lawyer's own answers to his questions are right. But giving everything in love for God is a holiness we can find only through Christ's unstinting outpouring of love for us.

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Photo: Harold Copping – The Good Samaritan, wikimedia



Has the attitude of people in the UK to their neighbours become like that of those who walked on by in the parable of the Good Samaritan, and if so, how did we get there? The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37) challenges us to redefine "neighbour" not by proximity or similarity, but by compassion and action. The Samaritan, despite being from a despised group, showed mercy to a stranger—while others who might have been expected to help walked by. So, has the UK embraced this ethic of radical neighbourliness?

The UK Today: Good Samaritan or Bystander?

Signs of Good Samaritan Spirit

- **Community responses during crises:** During the COVID-19 pandemic, thousands of mutual aid groups sprang up across the UK, with neighbours helping the vulnerable with food, medicine, and companionship.
- **Charitable giving and volunteering:** The UK consistently ranks high in global generosity indexes, with millions volunteering their time and money to help others.
- **Public support for refugees and the homeless:** Despite political tensions, many Britons have opened their homes to Ukrainian refugees and supported local shelters.

Signs of Declining Neighbourliness

- **Social isolation:** Loneliness is now considered a public health crisis in the UK, especially among the elderly and young adults.
- **Rise in individualism:** Economic pressures, digital lifestyles, and political polarisation have made people more inward-looking and less engaged with their local communities.
- **Hostility toward outsiders:** Some rhetoric around immigration, Brexit, and national identity has fostered suspicion rather than solidarity.

How Did We Get Here?

Several cultural and structural shifts have shaped this trajectory:

- **Economic inequality:** Austerity measures and housing crises have widened the gap between rich and poor, eroding trust and empathy.
- **Digital disconnection:** Social media can create echo chambers and reduce face-to-face interactions, making it easier to ignore those outside our bubble.
- **Political polarisation:** Previous debates over Brexit, and currently on immigration and national identity, have sometimes turned neighbours into ideological opponents.
- **Loss of shared moral frameworks:** As religious affiliation declines, so too might the communal values that once underpinned neighbourly obligations.

A Way Forward?

The parable of the Good Samaritan reminds us that compassion is not a passive feeling but an active choice. If the UK is to reclaim that spirit, it may require:

- **Rebuilding local communities** through shared spaces, events, and initiatives.
- **Teaching empathy and civic responsibility** in schools and public discourse.
- **Challenging prejudice** and expanding our definition of who counts as "neighbour."
- **Understanding and embracing the command of Jesus to love our neighbour as ourselves.**

Would you say your own experience in your community reflects more of the Samaritan spirit - or more of the priest and Levite who passed by?