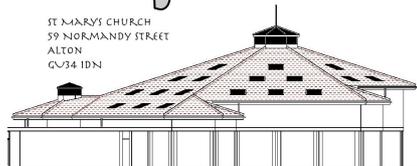


# St Mary's Parish Newsletter



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## MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS

w/c Sunday 8th March, 2026

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

(A2) (Psalter Week 3)

|                   |                           |                                   |
|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Saturday</b>   | <b>Lent Feria</b>         |                                   |
|                   | <b>4.45pm</b>             | Stations of the Cross             |
|                   | <b>5.30pm</b>             | Bernie & Richie Ahearne, RIP (MC) |
| <b>Sunday</b>     | <b>3rd Sunday of Lent</b> |                                   |
| <i>St. Lucy's</i> | <b>9.00am</b>             | Sr Barbera & Sr Joan,             |
| <i>St. Mary's</i> | <b>11.00am</b>            | Amy & Len Gilbert, RIP (KH)       |
| <b>Monday</b>     | <b>Lent Feria</b>         |                                   |
|                   | <b>9.30am</b>             | The People of The Parish          |
| <b>Tuesday</b>    | <b>Lent Feria</b>         |                                   |
|                   | <b>NO MASS</b>            |                                   |
| <b>Wednesday</b>  | <b>Lent Feria</b>         |                                   |
|                   | <b>9.30am</b>             | Jenny McIntosh, RIP               |
| <b>Thursday</b>   | <b>Lent Feria</b>         |                                   |
|                   | <b>9.30am</b>             | Special Intention                 |
| <b>Friday</b>     | <b>Lent Feria</b>         |                                   |
|                   | <b>9.30am</b>             | Special Intention                 |
| <b>Saturday</b>   | <b>Lent Feria</b>         |                                   |
|                   | <b>4.45pm</b>             | Stations of the Cross             |
|                   | <b>5.30pm</b>             | The People of The Parish          |
| <b>Sunday</b>     | <b>4th Sunday of Lent</b> |                                   |
| <i>St. Lucy's</i> | <b>9.00am</b>             | Sr Barbera & Sr Joan,             |
| <i>St. Mary's</i> | <b>11.00am</b>            | John Walmsley, RIP (F)            |

**Confessions:** Saturday at 3.20pm and by appointment

## THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

Entrance Antiphon

**My eyes are always on the Lord, for he rescues my feet from the snare. Turn to me and have mercy on me, for I am alone and poor.**

First Reading: Exodus 17:3-7

Responsorial Psalm

**O that today you would listen to his voice !  
'Harden not your hearts'.**

Second Reading: Romans 5:1-2, 5-8

Gospel Acclamation

**Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God.**

Lord you are indeed the Saviour of the world; give me living water, so that I will not be thirsty. **Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God**

Gospel: John 4:5-42

Communion Antiphon

**For anyone who drinks it, says the Lord, the water I shall give will become in him a spring welling up to eternal life.**

*There will be a Special Collection this week-end, 7th & 8th March for flowers to adorn the Church at Easter*



## **3rd Sunday of Lent 8th March, 2026**

The Gospel of the third Sunday is the remarkable conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman by the well, the theme is water - which gives life, which cleanses, which is so necessary. This reading forms part of the catechesis given before Baptism at Easter: the candidates who would go into the water are invited to reflect on what that means. But more necessary than the water which

gives life is the water which gives eternal life - the water of baptism, the water flowing from Jesus' side on the cross. Even if your Church does not have any candidates preparing for Baptism, we will all renew our baptismal promises at Easter: we should take this opportunity to reflect on what baptism has given us, and what God has done for us in this gift..

**'A spring of water welling up to eternal life'**

### A Pope's Reflection - Pope Benedict

*This year, on this Third Sunday of Lent, the liturgy again presents one of the most beautiful and profound passages of the Bible: the dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan woman. St Augustine, was justifiably fascinated by this narrative, and he made a memorable comment on it. It is not possible to give a brief explanation of the wealth of this Gospel passage. One must read and meditate on it personally, identifying oneself with that woman who, one day like so many other days, went to draw water from the well and found Jesus there, sitting next to it, "tired from the journey" in the midday heat. "Give me a drink", he said, leaving her very surprised: it was in fact completely out of the ordinary that a Jew would speak to a Samaritan woman, and all the more so to a stranger. But the woman's bewilderment was destined to increase. Jesus spoke of a "living water" able to quench her thirst and become in her "a spring of water welling up to eternal life"; in addition, he demonstrated that he knew her personal life; he revealed that the hour has come to adore the one true God in spirit and truth; and lastly, he entrusted her with something extremely rare: that he is the Messiah. All this began from the real and notable experience of thirst. The theme of thirst runs throughout John's Gospel: from the meeting with the Samaritan woman to the great prophecy during the feast of Tabernacles, even to the Cross, when Jesus, before he dies, said to fulfil the Scriptures: "I thirst". Christ's thirst is an entranceway to the mystery of God, who became thirsty to satisfy our thirst, just as he became poor to make us rich. Yes, God thirsts for our faith and our love. As a good and merciful father, he wants our total, possible good, and this good is he himself. The Samaritan woman, on the other hand, represents the existential dissatisfaction of one who does not find what he seeks. She had "five husbands" and now she lives with another man; her going to and from the well to draw water expresses a repetitive and resigned life. However, everything changes for her that day, thanks to the conversation with the Lord Jesus, who upsets her to the point that she leaves her pitcher of water and runs to tell the villagers: "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?". Dear brothers and sisters, like the Samaritan woman, let us also open our hearts to listen trustingly to God's Word in order to encounter Jesus who reveals his love to us and tells us: "I who speak to you am he", the Messiah, your Saviour. May Mary, the first and most perfect disciple of the Word made flesh, obtain this gift for us.*

### EASTER GIFT BAGS

We would like to distribute Gift Bags once again, to those who are perhaps unwell or unable to come to Mass and would be most grateful for donations of small Easter Eggs, bars of chocolate or biscuits or small gifts. As previously, these can be left at the back of the Church. Thank you

# Saints of the Week

## 11th March, Saint John Ogilvie

Saint John Ogilvie's noble Scottish family was partly Catholic and partly Presbyterian. His father raised him as a Calvinist, sending him to the continent to be educated. There, John became interested in the popular debates going on between Catholic and Calvinist scholars. Confused by the arguments of Catholic scholars whom he sought out, he turned to Scripture. Two texts particularly struck him: "God wills all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth," and "Come to me all you who are weary and find life burdensome, and I will refresh you." Slowly, John came to see that the Catholic Church could embrace all kinds of people. Among these, he noted, were many martyrs. He decided to become Catholic and was received into the Church at Louvain, Belgium, in 1596 at the age of 17. John continued his studies, first with the Benedictines, then as a student at the Jesuit College at Olmutz. He joined the Jesuits and for the next 10 years underwent their rigorous intellectual and spiritual training. At his ordination to the priesthood in France in 1610, Saint John Ogilvie met two Jesuits who had just returned from Scotland after suffering arrest and imprisonment. They saw little hope for any successful work there in view of the tightening of the penal laws. But a fire had been lit within John. For the next two and a half years he pleaded to be placed there as a missionary. Sent by his superiors, he secretly entered Scotland posing as a horse trader or a soldier returning from the wars in Europe. Unable to do significant work among the relatively few Catholics in Scotland, John made his way back to Paris to consult his superiors. Rebuked for having left his assignment in Scotland, he was sent back. He warmed to the task before him and had some success in making converts and in secretly serving Scottish Catholics. But he was soon betrayed, arrested, and brought before the court. His trial dragged on until he had been without food for 26 hours. He was imprisoned and deprived of sleep. For eight days and nights he was dragged around, prodded with sharp sticks, his hair pulled out. Still, he refused to reveal the names of Catholics or to acknowledge the jurisdiction of the king in spiritual affairs. He underwent a second and third trial but held firm.



At his final trial, he assured his judges: "In all that concerns the king, I will be slavishly obedient; if any attack his temporal power, I will shed my last drop of blood for him. But in the things of spiritual jurisdiction which a king unjustly seizes I cannot and must not obey." Condemned to death as a traitor, he was faithful to the end, even when on the scaffold he was offered his freedom and a fine living if he would deny his faith. His courage in prison and in his martyrdom was reported throughout Scotland. John Ogilvie was canonized in 1976, becoming the first Scottish saint since 1250. His liturgical feast is celebrated on March 10th.

**Reflection:** John came of age when neither Catholics nor Protestants were willing to tolerate one another. Turning to Scripture, he found words that enlarged his vision. Although he became a Catholic and died for his faith, he understood the meaning of "small-c catholic," the wide range of believers who embrace Christianity. Even now he undoubtedly rejoices in the ecumenical spirit fostered by the Second Vatican Council and joins us in our prayer for unity with all believers.

### EASTER SERVICES 2026

#### Thursday, 2nd April—Holy Thursday

8pm Mass of the Lord's Supper  
Watching until 10pm

#### Friday, 3rd April—Good Friday

10.00am Children's Stations  
3.00pm Solemn Passion Liturgy

#### Saturday, 4th April—Holy Saturday

10.00am, Blessing of Polish Food Baskets  
8.00pm, Solemn Easter Vigil

#### Sunday, 5th April

9.00am, Mass at St. Lucy's  
11am, Mass at St. Mary's

*The Special Collection next week-end, 14th & 15th March is for The Clergy Assistance Fund*

### Prayers for Lent Week 3: Spiritual Growth and Transformation

#### Prayer for Wisdom

Heavenly Father, I seek Your wisdom in every decision I make. Guide my thoughts so I choose what honors You. Help me not lean on my own understanding but trust Your truth. When I feel confused, remind me that You see the bigger picture. Lead me on the path of righteousness and help me grow in spiritual maturity. Amen.

#### Prayer for Spiritual Discipline

Lord, help me remain faithful in prayer, fasting, and devotion. When I feel distracted or discouraged, give me strength to continue. Teach me discipline so my faith grows stronger every day. Help me develop habits that bring me closer to You. May my daily choices reflect my love and commitment to You. Amen.

#### Prayer for Obedience

Father, teach me to obey Your Word even when it is difficult. Help me trust that Your commands are for my good. Remove stubbornness and pride from my heart. Give me the strength to follow You faithfully in all areas of my life. May my obedience bring glory to Your name. Amen.

#### Prayer for Transformation

Lord Jesus, transform my heart and renew my spirit. Remove old habits and replace them with godly character. Help me become more like You each day. Change my thoughts, words, and actions so they reflect Your love. May this Lenten season bring lasting transformation in my life. Amen.

#### Prayer for Faithfulness

Heavenly Father, help me remain faithful in every season of life. When challenges arise, remind me to trust You. Strengthen my commitment to You. Help me walk faithfully and honour You in all I do. Amen.

#### Prayer for Perseverance

Lord, give me strength to continue when I feel weak. Help me persevere through difficulties without losing hope. Remind me that You are always with me. Strengthen my spirit and help me remain firm in faith. Amen.

#### Prayer for a Deeper Relationship with God

Father, I desire to know You more deeply. Help me spend time in prayer and reflection. Draw my heart closer to You. Strengthen my faith and help me grow spiritually. May my relationship with You become stronger each day. Amen.

#### And God Said

I said, "God I hurt." And God said, "I know."  
I said, "God I cry a lot." And God said, "That is why I gave you tears."  
I said, "God, I am so depressed."  
And God said, "That's why I gave you sunshine."  
I said, "God life is so hard."  
And God said, "That's why I gave you loved ones."  
I said, "God it hurts." And God said, "I know."  
I said, "God my loved one died." And God said, "So did mine."  
I said, "God it's such a loss."  
God said, "I saw mine nailed to a cross."  
I said, "God but your loved one lives." And God said, "So does yours."  
I said, "God where are they now?"  
And God said, "Mine is on my Right and yours is in the Light."  
I said, "God it hurts." And God said, "I know."

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |           |        |         |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----------|--------|---------|
| E | L | T | H | U | S | B | A | D | N | SAMARITAN | SYCHAR | JACOB   |
| S | E | L | L | E | W | O | M | A | N | JOSEPH    | WELL   | WOMAN   |
| W | Y | L | E | B | L | E | T | H | E | WATER     | DRINK  | JEW     |
| A | E | C | W | O | I | I | J | P | T | BUCKET    | CATTLE | HUSBAND |
| T | E | A | H | C | R | N | Y | E | E |           |        |         |
| E | L | T | T | A | C | H | K | S | S |           |        |         |
| R | R | H | M | J | R | C | N | O | O |           |        |         |
| D | N | A | B | S | U | H | I | J | J |           |        |         |
| I | S | Y | C | B | S | A | R | A | O |           |        |         |
| D | E | T | K | C | U | B | D | C | B |           |        |         |



#### Please remember in your prayers



Baby Polly Phillips, Matthew & Duncan Graham,  
John D., Sr. Joan Henry; Mary McGinty,  
Maria Proli, Francesca Adams, Mary McGrath,  
Annie Tomlinson, Rita Rawling, Kate Cradock,  
Alex Smith, Jonathan & Lindy Wiltshire,  
Simon Wilder, Mary Sturgess, Theresa Davies,  
Flavia Stampa Gruss, Kay Hulbert, Pam Barbour