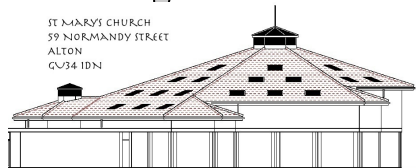


# St Mary's Parish Newsletter



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## MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS w/c Sunday 26th April, 2026 FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (A1) (Psalter Week 4)

Saturday	St. Catherine of Siena	
	5.30pm	Jeannie & Sean Norris, RIP (MC)
Sunday	4th Sunday of Easter	
St. Lucy's	9.00am	The People of The Parish
St. Mary's	11.00am	In Thanksgiving (RG)
Monday	Easter Feria	
	9.30am	NO MASS
Tuesday	St. Athanasius	
	12.00pm	Requiem Mass for Elizabeth Norris
Wednesday	Ss. Philip & James	
	9.30am	Special Intention (RG)
Thursday	The English Martyrs	
	9.30am	Pat Crossdale, RIP (JA)
Friday	Easter Feria	
	9.30am	Eileen McDermott, RIP (KMcd)
Saturday	Easter Feria	
	5.30pm	Intentions of Regina Muller 95th Birthday (RG)
Sunday	5th Sunday of Easter	
St. Lucy's	9.00am	The People of The Parish
St. Mary's	11.00am	Intentions of the Priest

Confessions: Saturday at 4.45pm and by appointment

### Fourth Sunday of Easter

#### Entrance Antiphon

The merciful love of the Lord fills the earth; by the word of the Lord the heavens were made, alleluia.

First Reading *Apostles 2:14, 36-41*

#### Responsorial Psalm

The Lord is my shepherd; There is nothing I shall want.

Second Reading *St. Peter 2:20-25*

#### Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, Alleluia ! I am the good shepherd, says the Lord; I know my own sheep and my own know me.. Alleluia !

Gospel *John 10:1-10*

#### Communion Antiphon:

The Good Shepherd has risen, Who laid down his life for his sheep and willingly died for his flock, alleluia..

*Special Collection for the Clergy Training Fund taken today, 25th & 26th April.*

### Pope's Prayer Intentions - April 2026 For priests in crisis

Let us pray for priests going through moments of crisis in their vocation, that they may find the accompaniment they need and that communities may support them with understanding and prayer.



### 4th Sunday of Easter 26th April, 2026

This Sunday is traditionally called 'Good Shepherd Sunday', because of the Gospel references to Jesus as the Good Shepherd. It is also the day of prayer for Vocations to the Priesthood. On this Sunday we hear one of the great 'I am' statements of Jesus from Saint John's Gospel today 'I am the gate of the sheepfold'. Through Jesus we enter into life and safety, and we 'go through Jesus, the gate' by baptism. This image is implied in all today's readings: the people listening to Peter find this gateway and enter through it: Peter writes to remind us that we have come back to the Good Shepherd, who heals us by his wounds.

### A Pope's Reflection - Pope Benedict XVI

*The World Day of Prayer for Vocations is celebrated on this 4th Sunday of Easter, on which the Liturgy presents to us Jesus as the Good Shepherd. On every continent Ecclesial Communities with one voice seek from the Lord numerous holy vocations to the priesthood, to the consecrated and missionary life and to Christian marriage. In the experience of the Apostle to the Gentiles, whom the Lord called to be a "minister of the Gospel", vocation and mission are inseparable. He therefore represents a model for every Christian, particularly for missionaries, those men and women who dedicate themselves totally to proclaiming Christ to those who still do not know him, a vocation which has retained its full value. This missionary service is carried out in the first place by priests who dispense the Word of God and the sacraments and who manifest the healing presence of Jesus Christ to all, especially the sick, the lowly and the poor through their charitable Apostolate. Let us thank God for these brothers of ours who spend themselves unreservedly in the pastoral ministry, sometimes sealing their fidelity to Christ with the sacrifice of their lives. Our grateful admiration and prayers of suffrage go to them. Let us pray that the ranks of those who decide to live the Gospel radically with the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience may be ever more numerous. They are men and women who have a primary role in evangelization. Some of them are dedicated to contemplation and prayer, others to a multi-faceted educational and charitable action, but they all have the same goal in common: to witness to God's primacy over everything and to spread his Kingdom in every social milieu. Many of them, the St Paul VI wrote, "are enterprising and their apostolate is often marked by an originality, by a genius that demands admiration. They are generous: often they are found at the outposts of the mission, and they take the greatest of risks for their health and their very lives". Finally, it should not be forgotten that the vocation to Christian marriage is a missionary vocation: indeed, the spouses are called to live the Gospel in families, in work contexts, in parish and in civil communities. In some cases they also offer their valuable collaboration to the mission ad gentes. Dear brothers and sisters, let us invoke Mary's motherly protection upon the multiple vocations that exist in the Church so that they may develop a strong missionary stamp.*

### Prayer for Vocations

Lord, Jesus Christ,  
Good Shepherd of our souls,  
You who know Your sheep  
and know how to reach the human heart.  
Stir the hearts of those young people  
who would follow You  
but who cannot overcome doubts and fears.  
You who are the Word of the Father,  
the Word which enlightens and sustains hearts,  
conquer with Your Spirit  
the resistance and delays of indecisive hearts.  
Arouse in those whom You call  
the courage of love's answer:  
"Here I am, send me."

*Inspired by the Writings of Pope Saint John Paul II*

# Saints of the Week

## April 27th, Saint Louis Mary de Montfort

Louis's life is inseparable from his efforts to promote genuine devotion to Mary, the mother of Jesus and mother of the Church. Totus tuus ("completely yours") was Louis's personal motto; Pope John Paul II chose it as his episcopal motto. Born in the Breton village of Montfort, close to Rennes, France, as an adult Saint Louis identified himself by the place of his baptism instead of his family name, Grignon. After being educated by the Jesuits and the Sulpicians, he was ordained a diocesan priest in 1700. Soon he began preaching parish missions throughout western France. His years of ministering to the poor prompted him to travel and live very simply, sometimes getting him into trouble with Church authorities. In his preaching, which attracted thousands of people back to the faith, Father Louis recommended frequent, even daily, Holy Communion—not the custom then!—and imitation of the Virgin Mary's ongoing acceptance of God's will for her life. Louis founded the Missionaries of the Company of Mary, for priests and brothers, and the Daughters of Wisdom, who cared especially for the sick. His book True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin has become a classic explanation of Marian devotion. Louis died in Saint-Laurent-sur-Sèvre, where a basilica has been erected in his honour. He was canonized in 1947.



**Reflection:** Like Mary, Saint Louis de Montfort experienced challenges in his efforts to follow Jesus. Opposed at times in his preaching and in his other ministries, Louis knew with Saint Paul, "Neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who causes the growth" (1 Corinthians 3:7). Any attempt to succeed by the world's standards runs the risk of betraying the Good News of Jesus. Mary is "the first and most perfect disciple," as the late Sulpician Father Raymond Brown described her.

## April 29th, Saint Catherine of Siena

The value Saint Catherine makes central in her short life and which resounds consistently through her experience is complete surrender to Christ. What is most impressive about her is that she learns to view her surrender to her Lord as a goal to be reached through time. She was the 23rd child of Jacopo and Lapa Benincasa and grew up as an intelligent, cheerful, and intensely religious person. Catherine disappointed her mother by cutting off her hair as a protest against being overly encouraged to improve her appearance in order to attract a husband. Her father ordered her to be left in peace, and she was given a room of her own for prayer and meditation. Catherine entered the Dominican Third Order at 18 and spent the next three years in seclusion, prayer, and austerity. Gradually, a group of followers gathered around her—men and women, priests and religious. An active public apostolate grew out of her contemplative life. Her letters, mostly for spiritual instruction and encouragement of her followers, began to take more and more note of public affairs. Opposition and slander resulted from her mixing fearlessly with the world and speaking with the candour and authority of one completely committed to Christ. She was cleared of all charges at the Dominican General Chapter of 1374. Her public influence reached great heights because of her evident holiness, her membership in the Dominican Third Order, and the deep impression she made on the pope. She worked tirelessly for the crusade against the Turks and for peace between Florence and the pope. In 1378, the Great Schism began, splitting the allegiance of Christendom between two, then three, popes and putting even saints on opposing sides. Saint Catherine of Siena spent the last two years of her life in Rome, in prayer and pleading on behalf of the cause of Pope Urban VI and the unity of the Church. She offered herself as a victim for the Church in its agony. She died surrounded by her "children" and was canonized in 1461. Saint Catherine ranks high among the mystics and spiritual writers of the Church. In 1939, she and Francis of Assisi were



declared co-patrons of Italy. Pope Paul VI named her and Teresa of Avila doctors of the Church in 1970. Her spiritual testament is found in the work called *The Dialogue*.

**Reflection:** Though she lived her life in a faith experience and spirituality far different from that of our own time, St Catherine stands as a companion with us on the Christian journey in her undivided effort to invite the Lord to take flesh in her own life. Events which might make us wince or chuckle or even yawn fill her biographies: a mystical experience at six, childhood betrothal to Christ, stories of harsh asceticism, her frequent ecstatic visions. Still, Catherine lived in an age which did not know the rapid change of the modern world. The value of her life for us today lies in her recognition of holiness as a goal to be sought over the course of a lifetime. Like any journey worth taking, our faith journeys are marred by difficulties and doubt. But as St Catherine proved, all struggles are worthwhile if it brings us into closer proximity to God.

**Congratulations** to the ten young people of the Parish who were confirmed yesterday by Bishop Philip in the Cathedral in Portsmouth. Thank too to the lead catechists Anne Bothwell and Gill Matthews who guided them through their preparation.

**Shared Parish Lunch - 24th May**  
**On Pentecost Sunday, we will hold a shared Parish Lunch.**  
**Please sign up on the sheet to indicate contributions.**

Welcome to **Joanne Gregory** who is taking over from Tracy as our Parish Administrator. She is in the hand-over period at present and Tracy will be retiring at the end of the month after 30 years at the helm. With immense gratitude we thank for her years of faithful service to the Parish and its parishioners.

**Foodbank Memo**  
**The next Foodbank collection will be weekend May 2nd & 3rd.**  
**Items required:** Long-life milk, tinned or instant potatoes, tinned vegetables, Tinned meat, Pasta sauce or cooking sauce, spreads. E.g. peanut butter, jam etc.  
 Thank you all for your continued support which is much appreciated.

## CATHOLIC QUOTES

Faith in the resurrection of Jesus says that there is a future for every human being; the cry for unending life which is a part of the person is indeed answered. God exists: that is the real message of Easter.

Anyone who even begins to grasp what this means also knows what it means to be redeemed."

*Pope Benedict XVI*

"The saints did not all begin well, but they ended well."

*St. John Vianney*

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E	E	A	L	N	G	E	E	F	P	STEAL	KILL	LIFE
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S	A	F	H	C	E	F	E	S	T			
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**Please remember in your prayers**  
 Baby Polly Phillips, Matthew & Duncan Graham, John D., 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

