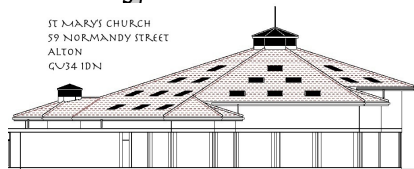


St Mary's Parish Newsletter

ST MARY'S CHURCH
59 NORMANDY STREET
ALTON
GU34 1DN



59, Normandy Street
Alton, Hants
GU34 1DN
Tel: 01420 82030
Fax: 01420 85821

Parish Priest - Rev. Peter Hart
Website: www.stmarysalton.co.uk
Email: stmarysalton@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
Parish Deacon: Rev. Stephen Joseph
Safeguarding Rep. Mrs. Anne Bothwell
Contact No: 01420 82030

MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS w/c Sunday 17th May, 2026 SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (A2) (Psalter Week 3)

Saturday	Easter Feria	
	5.30pm	Elizabeth Norris, RIP
Sunday	7th Sunday of Easter	
	9.00am	Sister Barbara & Sister Joan, RIP
St. Mary's	11.00am	Amy & Leonard Gilbert, RIP
Monday	Easter Feria	
	9.30am	Augustine Thomas, RIP
Tuesday	Easter Feria	
	NO MASS	
Wednesday	Easter Feria	
	9.30am	The People of the Parish
Thursday	St. Bede the Venerable	
	9.30am	Eileen McDermott, RIP
Friday	St. Philip Neri	
	9.30am	John McGinty, RIP
Saturday	St. Augustine of Canterbury	
	5.30pm	Paul Martin, RIP
Sunday	PENTECOST SUNDAY	
St. Lucy's	9.00am	Elizabeth & Paul Daynes, R
St. Mary's	11.00am	Edward Striegel & Joyce Clark, RIP
<i>Confessions: Saturday at 4.45pm and by appointment</i>		

Seventh Sunday of Easter

Entrance Antiphon

O Lord, hear my voice, for I have called to you; of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face; hide not your face from me, alleluia

First Reading *Apostles 1:12-14*

Responsorial Psalm

I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living.

Second Reading *St. Peter 4:13-16*

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, Alleluia ! I will not leave you orphans, says the Lord; I will come back to you and your hearts will be full of joy **Alleluia !**

Gospel *John 7:1-11*

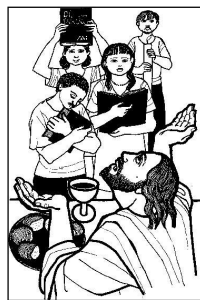
Communion Antiphon:

Father, I pray that they may be one as we also are one, alleluia.

*There will be a Special Collection
this week-end, 16th & 17th May,
for the Catholic Communications Network*

Cheques made out to the Parish

The correct name is **C.D.P. Alton St. Mary**



SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

17th May 2026

Constancy in prayer does not mean continuous prayer. Rather it is a prayer that is unending, a posture of dependence on and openness to God that makes an ongoing relationship a normal part of life. This type of prayer appears in all three readings today. Gathered in the upper room in anticipation of the coming of the Spirit, the apostles and the women followers of Jesus lived in a climate of prayer. Jesus in John's

gospel in his inseparable oneness with the Father typifies the spirit of prayer as he prays today in a special way for his followers.

'Father, glorify your Son.'

A Pope's Reflection - Pope Benedict XVI

In his farewell discourses to the disciples, Jesus stressed the importance of his 'return to the Father', the culmination of his whole mission: indeed, he came into the world to bring man back to God, not on the ideal level—like a philosopher or a master of wisdom—but really, like a shepherd who wants to lead his sheep back to the fold. It was for our sake that he came down from Heaven and for our sake that he ascended to it, after making himself in all things like men, humbling himself even to death on a cross and after having touched the abyss of the greatest distance from God. For this very reason the Father was pleased with him and "highly exalted" him (Ph 2:9), restoring to him the fullness of his glory, but now with our humanity. God in man—man in God: this is even now a reality, not a theoretical truth.

The Holy Father's Intentions (May)

That everyone might have food

Let us pray that everyone, from large producers to small consumers, be committed to avoid wasting food, and to ensure that everyone has access to quality food.

Pentecost Shared Lunch

After the 11am Mass next week there will be a shared lunch. Please sign the sheet to indicate what you will bring. We will be giving out certificates for the First Communicants, those having received Confirmation and those made full members of the Church at the Easter vigil. Also some of our Altar Servers will be enrolled in the Guild of St Stephen

God's Promise

God hath not promised skies always blue,
flower strewn pathways, all our lives through;
God hath not promised sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain.
But God Hath promised Strength for the day,
Rest for the labour, light for the way,
Grace for the trails, help from above,
Unfailing kindness and undying love.

Prayer for the Sick

Watch O Lord, with those
who cannot sleep or weep tonight.
Tend your sick ones.
Rest your weary ones.
Bless your dying ones.
Soothe your suffering ones.
Pity your afflicted ones.
Shield your joyous ones. Amen.
(By St Augustine of Canterbury)

CATHOLIC QUOTE

"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 Easter message. Anyone who even begins to grasp what this means also knows what it means to be redeemed." *Pope Benedict XVI*

Finding Hope in Grief — A Reflection before Pentecost

Jesus said to his disciples: "Now I am going to the one who sent me, and not one of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' But because I told you this, grief has filled your hearts. But I tell you the truth, it is better for you that I go. For if I do not go, the Advocate will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you." Each of us experiences grief. The death of a loved one, the loss of a job, and a serious illness are a few of many immediate causes of grief. Jesus addresses the grief the disciples were experiencing as they listened to Him explain that He was going to the One Who sent Him, to the Father: "But because I told you this, grief has filled your hearts." It's easy to relate to the disciples' grief. Imagine that you find out that your best friend is moving to another state. You would have a deep sense of loss upon hearing the news. This is what the disciples were experiencing. The closeness they shared with Jesus was profoundly consoling to them. In Him, they learned so much and began to understand the purity and power of divine love, likely for the first time. The news of His departure filled them with grief.

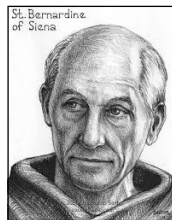
Emotions are neither good nor bad; they are natural reactions to perceived goods or evils. The disciples' initial perception of Jesus' earthly departure was as an undesirable loss, so they felt grief. Jesus, fully understanding human nature, addressed their grief with great empathy. Simply identifying what they were feeling would have been a comfort to them. But Jesus goes further: "But I tell you the truth, it is better for you that I go. For if I do not go, the Advocate will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you." At Jesus' words, the disciples might have experienced the beginnings of hope, but they did not fully understand. Only after Jesus left them, ascended to the Father, and sent the Holy Spirit at Pentecost did they begin to understand. And only after living with the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives for some time did they more fully comprehend the depth of this promise. This reflects our own spiritual journey; it takes time and openness for the wisdom of God's plan to unfold in our lives. Whenever we face grief or confusion, we would benefit from pondering this exchange between Jesus and the disciples. Romans 8:28 tells us, "We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose." That means "all things," not just some things.

When we fully commit ourselves to God and His perfect will, everything we encounter has the potential to produce good fruit. Every sorrow, joy, cross, victory, or persecution, as well as all the emotions that accompany these experiences, is able to be used as an instrument of God's grace in our lives, and through us, in the lives of others. The reason this is so is because of God's perfect wisdom. From the divine perspective, Jesus transformed suffering and death through His Cross and Resurrection, and nothing is beyond the reach of God's power. God can use even something as painful as the tragic and sudden loss of a loved one for good. Believing this instills hope in our lives, which is among the three most important virtues. Faith is the certain belief that God can work all things for good, and hope is the drive that moves us toward the fulfilment of that belief. Together, faith and hope produce charity, the greatest gift of all, the only gift that endures even in Heaven. Just as the disciples later understood the value of Jesus' departure—when they received the Holy Spirit and discovered that the Lord they loved now lived within them, never to leave—so we too will come to that same realization when we open ourselves to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit through prayer, trust, and surrender to His guidance. Reflect today on the moment in your life when you faced grief or loss. Offer that memory to God in prayer, asking Him to reveal how His grace was at work in that situation, bringing growth, healing, or a deeper understanding of His love.

Ask the Holy Spirit to fill your heart with faith and hope, trusting that even in the face of sorrow, God's perfect plan is unfolding for good.

Lord of perfect wisdom, I do believe that all things work for the good for those who love You. When I feel pain and grief, please give me hope. Holy Spirit, please come to me and dwell within me, so that all I experience will lead to the good You intend.

Jesus, I trust in You.



Saint of the Week

May 20th, Saint Bernardine of Siena

Most of the saints suffered great personal opposition, even persecution. Saint Bernardine of Siena, though by contrast, seems more like a human dynamo who simply took on the needs of the world. He was the greatest preacher of his time, journeying across Italy, calming strife-torn cities, attacking the paganism he

found rampant, attracting crowds of 30,000, following St Francis of Assisi's admonition to preach about "vice and virtue, punishment and glory." Compared with St Paul by the pope, Bernardine had a keen intuition of the needs of the time, along with a solid holiness and boundless energy and joy. He accomplished all this despite having a very weak and hoarse voice, it was miraculously improved later because of his devotion to Mary. When he was 20, the plague was at its height in his hometown of Siena. Sometimes as many as 20 people died in one day at the hospital. Bernardine offered to run the hospital and, with the help of other young men, nursed patients there for four months. He escaped the plague, but was so exhausted that a fever confined him for several months. He spent another year caring for a beloved aunt whose parents had died when he was a child, and at her death began to fast and pray to know God's will for him. He entered the Franciscan Order at 22 and was ordained two years later. For almost a dozen years he lived in solitude and prayer, but his gifts ultimately caused him to be sent to preach. He always travelled on foot, sometimes speaking for hours in one place, then doing the same in another town. Especially known for his devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus, Bernardine devised a symbol—IHS, the first three letters of the name of Jesus in Greek—in Gothic letters on a blazing sun. This was to displace the superstitious symbols of the day, as well as the insignia of factions: for example, Guelphs and Ghibellines. The devotion spread, and the symbol began to appear in churches, homes and public buildings. Opposition arose from those who thought it a dangerous innovation. Three attempts were made to have the pope take action against him, but Bernardine's holiness, orthodoxy, and intelligence were evidence of his faithfulness. As the General of the Friars of the Strict Observance, a branch of the Franciscan Order, Bernardine strongly emphasized scholarship and further study of theology and canon law. When he started there were 300 friars in the community; when he died there were 4,000. He returned to preaching the last two years of his life, dying while travelling.

Reflection: Another dynamic saint once said, "...I will not be a burden, for I want not what is yours, but you.... I will most gladly spend and be utterly spent for your sakes" (St. Paul). There is danger that we see only the whirlwind of activity in the Bernardines of faith—taking care of the sick, preaching, studying, administering, always driving—and forget the source of their energy. We should not say that Bernardine could have been a great contemplative if he had had the chance. He had the chance, every day, and he took it.

Guide us, O Lord, we pray, in the paths of life eternal.

Lord's Prayer Wordsearch 1

P	B	V	R	E	H	T	A	F	R	N	E	AGAINST	HEAVEN
E	V	I	G	R	O	F	C	O	M	E	M	COME	KINGDOM
T	R	E	S	P	A	S	S	E	S	A	DAILY	LEAD	
L	D	K	I	N	G	D	O	M	E	Q	N	DELIVER	NAME
S	E	T	E	M	P	T	A	T	I	O	N	DONE	TEMPTATION
L	L	Y	W	X	A	G	A	I	N	S	T	EVIL	TRESSPASSES
E	I	H	E	A	V	E	N	G	I	V	E	FATHER	
A	V	F	V	D	E	W	O	L	L	A	H	FORGIVE	
D	E	H	I	E	N	O	D	Q	E	K	T	GIVE	
E	R	Z	L	G	T	E	D	A	I	L	Y	HALLOWED	



Please remember in your prayers

- Baby Polly Phillips, Matthew & Duncan Graham, John D., Mary McGinty, Regina Elliot, 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