

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

Website: www.stmarysalton.co.uk

Email: stmarysalton@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr. Peter Hart

Parish Deacon: Rev. Stephen Joseph

Safeguarding Rep. Mrs. Anne Bothwell

Parish contact No: 01420 82030

MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS w/c Sunday 18 October, 2026 29th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A1) (Psalter Week 1)

Saturday	Our Lady on Saturday	
	5.30pm	The People of The Parish
Sunday	29th Sunday in Ordinary Time	
St. Lucy's	9.00am	Mary Grace Franco, RIP
St. Mary's	11.00am	John McGinty, RIP
Monday	Feria	
	9.30am	Rosamma Augustine, RIP
Tuesday	Feria	
	NO MASS	
Wednesday	Feria	
	9.30am	Denise Graham, RIP
Thursday	Feria	
	9.30am	Johny Antony, RIP
Friday	Feria	
	9.30am	John & Anna Griffin, RIP
Saturday	Ss. Simon & Jude	
	5.30pm	Mary Lucas, RIP
Sunday	30th Sunday in Ordinary Time	
St. Lucy's	9.00am	Adrian Wilson, RIP
St. Mary's	11.00am	Amy & Leonard Gilbert, RIP
Confessions Saturday 4.45pm, and by request		

29th Sunday of the Year—22nd October, 2023

Entrance Antiphon

To you I call; for you will surely heed me, O God; turn your ear to me; hear my words. Guard me as the apple of your eye; in shadow of your wings protect me.

First Reading *Isaiah 45:1-4-6*

Responsorial Psalm

Give the Lord glory and power.

Second Reading *Thessalonians 1:1-5*

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, Alleluia ! Your Shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life. Alleluia !

Gospel *Matthew 22:15-21*

Communion Antiphon:

Behold, the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, who hope in his merciful love, to rescue their souls from death, to keep them alive in famine.

MISSIO - The Pope's Charity

The collection for **FOREIGN MISSIONS** will take place this week-end, **17th & 18th October**. Missio Donation Envelopes are available at the back of the Church. Other ways to make your donation: Online: visit missio.org.uk/donate
Credit or Debit Card: **020 7821 9755** during office hours

29th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday 18 October, 2026



Everyone on this earth belongs to God. All are made in his image. Therefore it is right that all men and women, 'from the rising to the setting of the sun', should know the God to whom they belong. The only desire of our God is that all should know and love him, and find in him the fulfilment that they seek. Even a pagan king like Cyrus is used to further this knowledge of God - just

as Jesus uses Caesar's head to make the point again: all belong to God, and the mission of all who acknowledge that belonging is to help others to find it. This is exactly what we see Paul, Silvanus and Timothy doing, as they write to the people of Thessalonika.

to whom they carried the Good News of Jesus Christ.
'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.'

A POPE'S REFLECTION—POPE FRANCIS

This Sunday's Gospel presents to us a face-to-face encounter between Jesus and his adversaries. The theme addressed is that of the tribute to Caesar: a "thorny" issue about whether or not it was lawful to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor, to whom Palestine was subject in Jesus' time. There were various positions. Thus, the question that the Pharisees posed to him — "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" — was meant to ensnare the Teacher. In fact, depending on how he responded, he could have been accused of being either for or against Rome. But in this case too, Jesus responds calmly and takes advantage of the malicious question in order to teach an important lesson, rising above the polemics and the alliance of his adversaries. "Show me the money for the tax" he asks the Pharisees. They present him a coin, and, observing the coin, Jesus asks: "Whose likeness and inscription is this?". The Pharisees can only answer: "Caesar's". Then Jesus concludes: "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" On the one hand, suggesting they return to the emperor what belongs to him, Jesus declares that paying tax is not an act of idolatry, but a legal obligation to the earthly authority; on the other — and it is here that Jesus presents the "thrust" of his response: recalling the primacy of God, he asks them to render to Him that which is His due as the Lord of the life and history of mankind. The reference to Caesar's image engraved on the coin says that it is right that they feel fully — with rights and duties — citizens of the State; but symbolically it makes them think about the other image that is imprinted on every man and woman: the image of God. He is the Lord of all, and we, who were created "in his image" belong to Him first and foremost. From the question posed to him by the Pharisees, Jesus draws a more radical and vital question for each of us, a question we can ask ourselves: to whom do I belong? To family, to the city, to friends, to work, to politics, to the State? Yes, of course. But first and foremost — Jesus reminds us — you belong to God. This is the fundamental belonging. It is He who has given you all that you are and have. And therefore, day by day, we can and must live our life in recognition of this truly fundamental belonging and in heartfelt gratitude toward our Father, who creates each one of us individually, unrepeatable, but always according to the image of his beloved Son, Jesus. It is a wondrous mystery. Christians are called to commit themselves concretely in the human and social spheres without comparing "God" and "Caesar"; comparing God and Caesar would be a fundamentalist approach. Christians are called to commit themselves concretely in earthly realities, but illuminating them with the light that comes from God. The primary entrustment to God and hope in him do not imply an escape from reality, but rather the diligent rendering to God that which belongs to him. This is why a believer looks to the future reality, that of God, so as to live earthly life to the fullest, and to meet its challenges with courage. May the Virgin Mary help us to always live in conformity with the image of God that we bear within us, inside, also offering our contribution to the building of the earthly city.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYERS

Saints of the Week

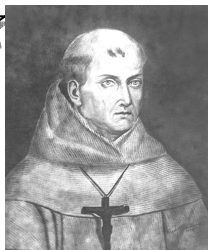
October 23rd, Saint John of Capistrano

It has been said the Christian saints are the world's greatest optimists. Not blind to the existence and consequences of evil, they base their confidence on the power of Christ's redemption. The power of conversion through Christ extends not only to sinful people but also to calamitous events. Imagine being born in the 14th century. One-third of the population and nearly 40 percent of the clergy were wiped out by the bubonic plague. The Western Schism split the Church with two or three claimants to the Holy See at one time. England and France were at war. The city-states of Italy were constantly in conflict. No wonder that gloom dominated the spirit of the culture and the times. John of Capistrano was born in 1386. His education was thorough. His talents and success were great. When he was 26 he was made governor of Perugia. Imprisoned after a battle against the Malatestas, he resolved to change his way of life completely. At the age of 30 he entered the Franciscan novitiate and was ordained a priest four years later. John's preaching attracted great throngs at a time of religious apathy and confusion. He and 12 Franciscan brethren were received in the countries of central Europe as angels of God. They were instrumental in reviving a dying faith and devotion. The Franciscan Order itself was in turmoil over the interpretation and observance of the Rule of St. Francis. Through John's tireless efforts and his expertise in law, the heretical sect the Fraticellis were suppressed and the "Spirituals" were freed from interference in their stricter observance. John helped bring about a brief reunion with the Greek and Armenian Churches. When the Turks captured Constantinople in 1453, John was commissioned to preach a crusade for the defence of Europe. Gaining little response in Bavaria and Austria, he decided to concentrate his efforts in Hungary. He led the army to Belgrade. Under the great General John Hunyadi, they gained an overwhelming victory, and the siege of Belgrade was lifted. Worn out by his superhuman efforts, Capistrano was an easy prey to an infection after the battle. He died on October 23, 1456.

Reflection: John Hofer, a biographer of John Capistrano, recalls a Brussels organization named after the saint. Seeking to solve life problems in a fully Christian spirit, its motto was: "Initiative, Organization, Activity." These three words characterized John's life. He was not one to sit around. His deep Christian optimism drove him to battle problems at all levels with the confidence engendered by a deep faith in Christ.

October 24th St. Anthony Claret

The "spiritual father of Cuba" was a missionary, religious founder, social reformer, a queen's chaplain, writer and publisher, archbishop, and refugee. He was a Spaniard whose work took him to the Canary Islands, Cuba, Madrid, Paris, and to the First Vatican Council. In his spare time as weaver and designer in the textile mills of Barcelona, Anthony learned Latin and printing: The future priest and publisher was preparing. Ordained at 28, he was prevented by ill health from entering religious life as a Carthusian or as a Jesuit, but went on to become one of Spain's most popular preachers. Anthony spent 10 years giving popular missions and retreats, always placing great emphasis on the Eucharist and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It was said that his rosary was never out of his hand. At age 42, he founded a religious institute of missionaries beginning with five young priests, known today as the Claretians. Anthony was appointed to head the much-neglected archdiocese of Santiago in Cuba. He began its reform by almost ceaseless preaching and hearing of confessions, and suffered bitter opposition mainly for opposing concubinage and giving instruction to black slaves. A hired assassin—whose release from prison Anthony had obtained—slashed open his face and wrist. Anthony succeeded in getting the would-be assassin's death sentence commuted to a prison term. His solution for the misery of Cubans was family-owned farms producing a variety of foods for the family's own needs and for the market. This invited the enmity of the vested interests who wanted everyone to work on a single cash crop—sugar. Besides all his



religious writings are two books he wrote in Cuba: *Reflections on Agriculture and Country Delights*. He was recalled to Spain for a job he did not relish—being chaplain for the queen. Anthony went on three conditions: He would reside away from the palace; he would come only to hear the queen's confession and instruct the children; and he would be exempt from court functions. In the revolution of 1868, he fled to Paris with the queen's party, where he preached to the Spanish colony. All his life Anthony was interested in the Catholic press. He founded the Religious Publishing House, a major Catholic publishing venture in Spain, and wrote or published 200 books and pamphlets. At Vatican I, where he was a staunch defender of the doctrine of infallibility, Anthony won the admiration of his fellow bishops. An American Cardinal remarked of him, "There goes a true saint." At the age of 63, he died in exile near the border of Spain.

Reflection: Jesus foretold that those who are truly his representatives would suffer the same persecution as he did. Besides 14 attempts on his life, Anthony had to undergo such a barrage of the ugliest slander that the very name Claret became a byword for humiliation and misfortune. The powers of evil do not easily give up their prey. No one needs to go looking for persecution. All we need to do is be sure we suffer because of our genuine faith in Christ, not for our own whims and lack of prudence.

Prayer to the Mother of God

Blessed Virgin Mary,
When I feel like a vessel too fragile
To hold the cares that trouble me,
Please ask the Lord in His great love
to bestow The strength and every grace I need.
When my heart nears breaking with pain or sorrow,
I pray to recall that you stood Beneath the Cross of your Son
in His suffering To comfort Him as best you could.
When I fail to understand the Father's will,
Please pray that I won't fall to sin,
Finding hope in your devotion to the Lord

Minute Meditations - The Holiness of a Honeybee

Jesus said that nobody can enter the kingdom of God unless they become like a little child (Mt 18:3). My daughter didn't study theology or memorize St. Francis' "Canticle of the Creatures." It was the inherent value of this honeybee—its worthiness of being saved, wept over, and buried—that was innate within her. Might our children be the ones to show us the kingdom of God? For what awaits is to behold the world with that childlike wonder and awe and to recognize that every atom of our universe is a miracle spoken into existence by the loving word of God. To see the kingdom of God, we need to become like children: This will mean weeping, like a child does for the honeybee; it also means pursuing the rescue of the honeybee, even as an older voice might tell us it's too hard or impossible. May we allow our spirituality to be the hand that guides us back to these fundamental truths that we have long since forgotten—truths that were etched into our hearts as children as we innocently marveled at the glory of God around us. Perhaps then, our spirituality may manifest in our lives as action, advocacy, and care for this beautiful planet we call home.

—from "Loving God, Loving Creation" by Carie Moore

A	P	H	A	R	I	S	E	E	S
S	U	I	R	A	N	E	D	E	E
N	H	M	A	S	D	E	T	A	L
A	O	R	T	A	T	I	F	M	P
I	N	I	E	E	R	R	D	A	I
D	E	H	N	C	A	R	O	L	C
O	S	T	O	I	P	C	G	I	S
R	T	P	D	E	P	X	H	C	I
E	Y	E	N	O	M	O	A	E	D
H	R	E	T	S	A	M	X	T	O

PHARISEES	TRAP	DISCIPLES
HERODIANS	TEACH	OPINION
MALICE	TAX	HYPOCRITES
DENARIUS	MONEY	HEAD



Please remember in your prayers

Baby Polly Phillips, Matthew & Duncan Graham,
John D., Mary McGinty, Regina Elliot,
Francesca Adams, Mary Hall, Michael Power
Annie Tomlinson, Rita Rawling, Kate Cradock,
Alex Smith, Jonathan & Lindy Wiltshire,
Simon Wilder, Mary Sturgess, Theresa Davies,
Flavia Stampa Gruss, Kay Hulbert, Pam Barbour,

