

# THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN GOSPORT



Saint Mary's High Street  
Saint Columba's Nobes Avenue



23rd/24th JUNE 2018

NATIVITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

Sunday Readings: Year 2 (B); Weekdays: Year II; Prayer of the Church: Week IV

SAT 23	Nativity of St John the Baptist	St Columba's	6pm	Brian Extance RIP
SUN 24	" " Latin Mass	St Mary's St Mary's St Mary's	9.15am 11am 5pm	William Cliffe RIP People of the Parish Anthony Miles RIP
Mon 25	Latin Mass	St Columba's	10am	Rachel Eleanor Thorpe (Special Intention)
Tue 26	Feria	St Mary's	12 noon	George Clements RIP
Wed 27	St Cyril of Alexandria	St Mary's	7pm	Margarett Chowler & Father Boswell RIP
Thu 28	St Irenaeus <b>Solemnity of Ss Peter &amp; Paul</b>	St Columba's <b>St Mary's</b>	10am <b>7pm</b>	Pat Fitzgerald RIP
Fri 29	" <b>Latin Mass (Ss Peter &amp; Paul)</b>	St Mary's <b>St Mary's</b>	12 noon <b>7pm</b>	Father Pio (Ordination Anniversary)
Sat 30	Latin Mass Thirteenth Sunday	St Mary's St Columba's	9.30am 6pm	Capitanelli Family Kathleen Daily (90th Birthday – Thanksgiving)
Sun 1	" " Latin Mass	St Mary's St Mary's St Mary's	9.15am 11am 5pm	People of the Parish Owen Dugan (Vocation) Capitanelli Family

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Mass at 7pm on Wednesday is preceded by the Holy Rosary at 6.30pm.

In addition to the Masses listed above, Latin Mass in the Extraordinary Form will usually be celebrated in St Mary's Church at 7am, Monday to Friday.

# PARISH NOTICES



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**SACRAMENT OF PENANCE:**

in St Mary's Church on Saturdays from 12 noon until 1pm, or by appointment.

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**EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT:**

on Thursdays in St Mary's Church from 8am, concluding with Pro-Life Holy Hour at 7pm. Also in St Columba's Church on Thursdays after the 10am Mass until 12 noon.

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**PLEASE PRAY FOR THE DEPARTED:**

Please pray for those who have died recently, and for those we are remembering at this time.

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**PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE UNWELL:**

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**ST MARY'S RENOVATIONS:**

Thank you to everyone who has made a contribution to the St Mary's Beautification Fund, which currently stands at about £16,000. If you have not yet made a donation, please consider doing so, as we are still a long way from reaching our fundraising goal. Cheques should be made payable to "PRCDTR-Gosport".

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**PARISH WALKING PILGRIMAGE:**

Over the weekend of 18th/19th August, Father Pio will be leading a pilgrimage along the Way of Saint Augustine (Canterbury Cathedral to the Shrine of St Augustine in Ramsgate), to commemorate the 6th Century journey undertaken by St Augustine, who was sent by Pope Gregory the Great to bring the Faith to the English. The walk is around 19 miles long. Upon arriving at the Shrine of St Augustine, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be offered. This pilgrimage is open to all who are able to maintain a good walking pace over the required distance. For more details, to sign up, or kindly to sponsor the walk, please speak to Father Pio or call the parish office on 02392 580119. The cost of the pilgrimage is £20 per person.

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**SACRED HEART OF JESUS:**

Throughout June, which is the month dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Litany of the Sacred Heart is prayed in St Mary's Church every day during Holy Hour (7-8pm), except on Wednesdays, when it is prayed after the 6.30pm Rosary.

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**HANDYMAN NEEDED:**

We currently have a few odd jobs around St Mary's Church and Hall that need doing. If you think you might be able to help, please contact the parish office.

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**FIRE DRILLS:**

All parishes of the diocese are now required to hold annual fire drills. There will be a short fire drill after all Sunday Masses this weekend. Once the Mass has ended, please remain in your seats and wait for the alarm to be raised, then simply follow the fire wardens' instructions. This will take five minutes at most.

### **GLASTONBURY PILGRIMAGE:**

On Sunday 8th July, a group of parishioners and two friars will be participating in the Diocese of Clifton's annual pilgrimage to Glastonbury, which is led by Bishop Declan Lang. A minibus will leave from outside St Mary's Hall at 9am, to return at about 7pm. The day begins at the Shrine of Our Lady with the Holy Rosary at 11.30am, and ends with the Pilgrimage Mass at 3.30pm. The procession, led by the Bishop, commences at 2.15pm. The Sacrament of Penance will be available from 12 noon until 3pm. If you would like to join the pilgrims travelling from Gosport, please contact the parish office.

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### **ADORATION OUTREACH:**

Every Thursday (but not 28th June), between 1pm and 3pm, a group of parishioners go out onto the high street to invite passers-by into St Mary's to light a candle and spend some time in the presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. This has proven to be a very successful outreach, and a very rewarding ministry for those involved. If you are available on Thursday afternoons, if only for half an hour or so, why not come along and take part?

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### **WALSINGHAM PILGRIMAGE:**

From Thursday 2nd to Sunday 5th August, the Dominican Sisters of St Joseph will be leading the annual St John Paul II Pilgrimage for the New Evangelisation. This is a 50-mile walking pilgrimage from Bury St Edmunds to Walsingham, so participants must be able to walk long distances at a steady pace. To book, visit [www.dominicansistersofstjoseph.org/JPII](http://www.dominicansistersofstjoseph.org/JPII) or call 01590 681874.

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### **SECOND COLLECTIONS:**

This weekend's second collection is for the First Holy Communion flowers fund. There will also be a second collection next weekend, 30th June/1st July, for Peter's Pence.

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### **ANNUAL NAVAL MASS:**

takes place in St John's Cathedral at 10am on Sunday 8th July, followed by a drinks reception in the Cathedral Discovery Centre. Please call the Royal Navy Catholic Chaplaincy on 02392 723660 for details.

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### **FIRST FRIDAY & SATURDAY DEVOTIONS:**

Next month's First Friday devotions take place at Sacred Heart Church, Fareham, on Friday 6th July, beginning with the Rosary at 9am. Mass follows, and afterwards there is Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, during which there will be a meditation on the Crucifixion of the Lord and Sacred Heart devotions. Confessions will be heard after Mass, up until the devotions end with Benediction at 10.30am. The following day, Saturday 7th July, join us at St Mary's Church for First Saturday devotions, which begin with the Holy Rosary at 9am. Sung Latin Mass is then celebrated at 9.30am, followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament with a second Holy Rosary and a meditation on the Crowning with Thorns. Confessions will be heard throughout the morning, which ends with Benediction at 12 noon. The Marian Group will then meet in the Upper Room of St Mary's Hall, where there will be a shared lunch and Marian catechesis by one of the friars.

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### **FIRST HOLY COMMUNION:**

Rehearsals and confessions for children preparing to receive their first Holy Communion will take place on Friday 29th June (for those receiving it on Sunday 1st July) and Friday 6th July (for those receiving it on Sunday 8th July) at 6.30pm in St Mary's Church. We ask that parents bring their children to St Mary's Hall at 10.30am on the day of their children's First Communion.

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### **ST MONICA'S GROUP:**

The St Monica Mother's Prayer Group will meet again in St Mary's Church at 7pm on Tuesday 3rd July. This is an opportunity for mothers of the parish to come together to pray the Holy Rosary and participate in a short Bible study session.

# The Greatest Of The Prophets

by Fr George M. Roth



Today, we celebrate the Nativity of St John the Baptist. It is one of only three birthdays in the Church calendar; the other two are the Nativity of Jesus on Christmas Day, and the Nativity of Mary on 8th September. St John was the Precursor – the prophet – who would go before the Messias to prepare the way for Him by preaching a doctrine of repentance: **“Do penance: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”** (Mt 3:2) St John is also the link between the Old and New Testaments; he is the greatest of the Old Testament prophets and, as St Augustine says, **“He is the passive voice and Christ is the eternal Word.”** Jesus spoke of St John the Baptist in glowing terms: **“But what went you out to see? A prophet? Yea I tell you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written: Behold I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. Amen I say to you, there hath not risen among them that are born of women a greater than John the Baptist.”** (Mt 11:9-11) St John the Baptist was not only the greatest of prophets; his birth and life show forth the wondrous works of God, because St John the Baptist was the Precursor who was to prepare the way for the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the long-awaited Messias of Israel.

Dom Prosper Gueranger comments on the importance of the Prophet Isaias: **“In these few lines Isaias implicitly refers to the announcement of Christ’s coming: the application here made by the Church to St John Baptist once more shows us how closely the Messias is united with His Precursor in the work of the redemption... ‘Give ear, ye islands; and hearken, ye people from afar!’ It was the voice of him who was to come, and of the Angel deputed to walk before him, the voice of John and of the Messias, proclaiming the one predestination common to them both, which, as servant and as Master, made them to be objects of the same eternal decree. And this voice, after having hailed the privilege which would designate them, though diversely, from the maternal womb, as objects of complacency to the Almighty, went on to utter the Divine oracle which was to be promulgated, in other terms, over their cradles by the ministry of Zachary and of Angels. ‘And He said to me: Thou art My servant Israel, for in thee will I glory, in thee who art indeed Israel to Me. And he said: It is a small thing that thou shouldst be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to convert the dregs of Israel,’ who will not hearken to thee, and of whom thou shalt bring back but a small remnant. ‘Behold I have given thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation even to the farthest part of the earth;’ to make up for the scant welcome my people shall have given thee, ‘kings shall see, and princes shall rise up, at thy word, and adore for the Lord’s sake, because He is faithful, and for the Holy One of Israel, Who hath chosen thee’ as the negotiator of His alliance.”** From these prophetic words of Isaias, we can see the important mission of St John the Baptist in getting all peoples – Jews and gentiles, kings and commoners – prepared for the coming of the Messias, **“the Holy One of Israel.”** (Is 49:7)

As God does all things with wisdom and power, the events leading up to the births of St John the Baptist and Jesus Christ are filled with miraculous and extraordinary occurrences. First, both saintly mothers of royal lineage, Elizabeth and Mary, experienced miraculous births by the power of the Holy Spirit; Elizabeth conceived in her old age, and Mary was **“overshadowed”** by the Holy Spirit in Her virginal birth. Second, while Mary had faith in the Angel Gabriel and believed that She would be the Mother of God, Zachary doubted that he and Elizabeth could conceive in their advanced age; for this lack of faith, Zachary was struck dumb. Third, St John the Baptist was sanctified in Elizabeth’s womb when the Blessed Virgin Mary **“went into the hill country with haste”** (Lk 1:39) with Jesus in Her womb, to Elizabeth: **“And it came to pass, that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she cried out with a loud voice, and said: Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?”** (Lk 1:41-43) Fourth, these wondrous events precede the dramatic event in which both Elizabeth and Zachary say that the child will be called John. Zachary’s pronouncement is especially significant because he had first to write it, as he was hitherto struck dumb for his disbelief: **“And demanding a writing table, he wrote, saying: John is his name. And they all wondered. And immediately his mouth was opened, and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God.”** (Lk. 1:63-64) It is here that Zachary, his father, filled with the Holy Spirit, prophesied, **“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; because he hath visited and wrought the redemption of his people: And hath raised up an horn of salvation... And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways: To give knowledge of salvation to his people, unto the remission of their sins.”** (Lk 1:68-69, 76-77) No wonder all who witnessed these events wondered, **“What an one, think ye, shall this child be? For the hand of the Lord was with him.”** (Lk 1:66)

In today’s secular world, we need to imitate the virtues of St John the Baptist, who served Jesus Christ as His humble messenger: **“Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who taketh away the sin of the world. This is he, of whom I said: After me there cometh a man, who is preferred before me: because he was before me.”** (Jn 1:29-30) St John the Baptist also knew that he had to point out to both the powerful and the simple the evil of sin. This eventually caused him to be a martyr for Christ when he condemned Herod Antipas, the Tetrarch of Galilee: **“It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife.”** (Mk 6:18) Let us pray that God will raise up in our days holy men and women as modern prophets, like St John the Baptist, who will call the world to repentance.