

St Joseph's Catholic Church

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2nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A

Sunday 18th January 2026: 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time - YEAR A. Masses at 8.30am and 11.00am.

Monday 19th January: Feria of the 2nd Week in Ordinary Time, or St Wulstan, Religious, Bishop, optional memorial. No Mass today.

Tuesday 20th January: Feria of the 2nd Week in Ordinary Time, or St Fabian, Pope, Martyr, or St Sebastian, Martyr, optional memorials. Mass at 10.00am.

Wednesday 21st January: St Agnes, Virgin, Martyr, memorial. Mass at 10.00am.

Thursday 22nd January: Feria of the 2nd Week in Ordinary Time or St Vincent, Deacon, Martyr, optional memorial. Mass at 10.00am.

Friday 23rd January: Feria of 2nd Week in Ordinary Time. Mass at 10.00am.

Saturday 24th January: St Francis de Sales, Bishop, Doctor of the Church, memorial. Mass at 10.00am followed by Confessions and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

Mass Intentions:

Sunday 18th January: 8.30am Mass for Christie Dullea RIP (Jane Dullea's Intention).

Saturday 24th January: 10.00am for Martin Cawte RIP (Jill Cawte's intention).

Please Pray for the Sick and Housebound of the Parish:

Fr Padraig Faughnan, Carol Bartlam, Batilda Temba, Damian Perry, Angela Jordan, Margaret Saunders, Elizabeth Skelton, Oliver Avery, Kate Kennington, Philip Rowlands, Jonathan Sheridan, Deanna Knight, Eric and Beryl Thompson, Lesley Smith, Larry Bretz, Yvonne Bradley, Pat and Ron Bird, Theresa Cassidy, Joshua David, Marie O'Sullivan, Liliana Ramalingam, Terry Hamill, Rita Zollo. Additions - please inform Fr Michael.

Collections: 11th January: Plate collection £799.02; Crib Collection £14.50. Thank you for your generosity.

Sunday 18th January: 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (A) (PEACE SUNDAY): We are to choose to accept John's

testimony in today's Gospel as God's personal and corporate call to us to become witnesses to the Lamb of God.

'Peace Sunday': At his first Angelus greeting of 2026, Pope Leo urged everyone to "build a year of peace, by disarming our hearts and refraining from every form of violence." Greeting around 40,000 people gathered in Saint Peter's Square on 1st January, he extended his heartfelt wishes for peace and every good to them. This peace, he continued, "is unarmed and disarming, which comes from God, a gift of his unconditional love, and is entrusted to our responsibility."

18th – 25th January: The Annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The theme for 2026 comes from the Letter to the Ephesians: "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling" (Eph 4:4). The synod of bishops re-affirmed that "what unites us is greater than what divides us. For in common we have "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, among all and in all" (Ephesians 4:5-6)." Prayers and reflections for the week have been prepared by the Armenian Apostolic Church, along with their Catholic and Evangelical counterparts and are available at www.christianunity.va

Wednesday 21st January: Open Church 12.30pm – 2pm. The church will be open for quiet prayer and reflection. All are welcome at any time while the church is open.

Thursday 22nd January: 10.30am Grand/Mothers' Prayers every Thursday at Newbury Grove Care Home, 370 London Rd, Newbury RG14 2QH to pray for the needs of our children and grandchildren, and for a strengthening of faith. New attendees are particularly welcome at present. For more information speak with Fr Michael or Elizabeth Matias after Mass.

7.30pm: RCIA Meeting in the Parish Hall at St Francis de Sales' Church, Wash Common. Topic tonight - 'The Way that God Communicates.'

Sunday 25th January: The annual Second Collection for St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth, Mother Church of our Diocese, is taken at Masses today.

The Bishop's 4th January Portsmouth Meeting: Following his expression of concern about vocations to the priesthood, and a pastoral letter on the issue inviting men to a meeting in Portsmouth about vocations, Bishop Philip welcomed over 50 men to the gathering in Cathedral House from across the diocese! Please continue to pray that some of those attendees may be discerning a true vocation to priesthood for our diocese.

Choose Life!: The Government has just published the official abortion statistics for 2023. There were 277,970 terminations recorded, an 11% increase on the year before. These are the highest numbers of abortions in the UK's history - a figure never envisaged when the legislation was first passed. These figures come as peers are due to debate the biggest expansion of abortion since 1967 - allowing self-induced abortion up to birth. The House of Lords will debate Clause 191 to the Crime and Policing Bill in the coming weeks - either on 27th January or 2nd February. **Please write to members of the House of Lords and ask them to fight the extreme abortion up to birth amendment.**

Meanwhile, Bishops in Wales have issued a joint statement ahead of a Welsh Senate debate and vote on assisted suicide legislation. On 27th January Senate Members will be asked to decide whether Wales should give its consent to Westminster's Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill — a law that would legalise assisted suicide. The Bishops express their deep concern for the proposal which would "represent a profound change in how society responds to those who are terminally ill," and propose instead to "strengthen palliative and end-of-life care so that every person can live their final days with dignity, comfort, and peace." On 26th January, the eve of the vote, the Bishops invite those who can to observe a day of fasting "to be in solidarity with those who are most vulnerable to the proposed Bill, and that those intent upon passing it, may undergo a change of heart."

Douai Abbey Spring Pastoral Programme – Begins on **Saturday 31st January** with '*An Introduction to the Gospel of St Matthew*' presented by Fr Gervase Holdaway OSB, **2-4pm**, no charge. In this new year we read the Gospel of St Matthew again at Mass. Come to discover the particular character of this Gospel and see how it differs from the other Gospels, and thereby enhance your understanding and the celebrations of the coming Sundays in Year A.

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School & Nursery – Consultation on Primary School Admissions Policy 2027 – 2028:

The Governing Body of St Joseph's School are consulting on this policy for the required six weeks between 15/12/2025 and 30/01/2026. School admission authorities must consult on admission arrangements if change is proposed other than an increase to their PAN (Published Admission Number), and if they have not consulted in the last seven years. St Joseph's School Governing Body is required to consult as they are

proposing a change to their Admissions Policy oversubscription criteria removing the category "Catholic children who are resident in the parishes of St Joseph's, Newbury; St Francis de Sales, Wash Common; The Sacred Heart, Lambourn; Our Lady of Lourdes, Hungerford;" and creating the category "other Catholic children". This change is in line with changes proposed by the Diocese of Portsmouth CASO (Catholic Academies & Schools Office). The proposed policy is on the school website (Applying for a Place). To comment on the proposed 2027 – 2028 Admissions Policy, e-mail the Clerk to Governors, Mrs Rachael House Gemmell rhousegemmell@stjosephs.w-berks.sch.uk or write to the Clerk via the School Office, St Joseph's School, Newport Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 2AW by 30th January 2026.

'The Fruits of Medjugorje' – Lent Reflection Day. On **Saturday 28th February** at Douai Abbey 10.00am-4.30pm – led by Susan Smith and Br Christopher Greener OSB. The day will explore the impact of Our Lady's appearing in Bosnia-Herzegovina since 1981. Book by email at pastoral@douaiabbey.org.uk. Contribution of £20 on the day – tea & coffee provided. Bring your own packed lunch.

Pilgrimage to Medjugorje 11th-18th May 2026. £799 per person. The price includes return flights from Gatwick, return airport transfers, senior tour guide, fully guided itinerary, 7 nights half board (breakfast and 3-course main meal), shared ensuite rooms, 1 checked-in and 2 cabin bags. Contact: Susan Smith 07737 175476 or Discover Medjugorje 020 39254613 Whatsapp: 07418 610725 email: info@discovermedj.com

300 Club Winners for January: 1st Prize (£100) Mary Grace Frane; 2nd Prize (£50) Terry Coffey; 3rd Prize (£25) Jane Greenwood. Congratulations!

From West Berkshire Foodbank: Food and house-hold items will be needed as much as ever over the winter. Donated items can be left in the collection box at the back of church at any time. The shopping list on the Foodbank's website shows that anti-bac spray, fruit juice, Pringles, tinned fruit, tinned meat and pasta/rice are urgently needed. Your generosity is appreciated.

Contactless Donations: Please use your debit/credit card or smart phone/device to donate your chosen amount on our digital collection pads for Sunday collections. Gift Aid details need only be entered once and will be retained for future donations.

If you would like to receive a copy of this newsletter by email each week, please contact the parish office.

AND A FINAL THOUGHT: Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.