

Priest-in-Charge: **Rev. Fr Matthew King**  
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**ST MARY'S & ST COLUMBA'S**  
 The Catholic Church in Gosport

**22 March 2026 - FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT**

21	Sat	06:00pm	<i>Vigil</i>	William Cornelius RIP	<p><b>CONFESSION TIMES</b>                  Wed 6:15pm-6:45pm                  (if Mass is celebrated)                  Sat - 12:00nn—1:00pm</p> <p><b>EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION</b>                  Thu - after the 7pm Mass                  Holy half hour with Night Prayer                  Fri 10:00am—12:00nn                  Rosary for the Unborn at 10am</p> <p><b>OUTREACH</b>                  Thu from 1:00pm</p>
22	Sun	08:00am 11:15am	<i>Fifth Sunday of Lent</i>	Joel Diño RIP William Walter Mansfield RIP	
23	Mon	<b>No Service</b>			
24	Tue	12:00nn		Rev John Martin RIP	
25	Wed	07:00pm	<i>The Annunciation of the Lord</i>	Georgina Savege RIP	
26	Thu	07:00pm		Sam Spencer INT	
27	Fri	12:00nn		Private Intention	
28	Sat	06:00pm	<i>Vigil</i>	People of the Parish	
29	Sun	08:00am 11:15am	<i>PALM SUNDAY</i>	John Fleming INT Joel Diño RIP	

**REFLECTION**

This week's reflection comes to us from Fr Johnpromise Umeozuru, parish priest within the Diocese of Portsmouth, who shares a poignant personal story.

20<sup>th</sup> May 1996 will remain ever present in my mind. At the end of our second semester examinations in the minor seminary, we were asked to go home for a one week break, and I went home joyfully to spend time with my parents and siblings. On reaching my parents' shop which was situated in the business district of Aba, Nigeria, I asked the whereabouts of our last born who was one and half year's old. My mum looked at me askance and said – "Did the rector not inform you?" I asked my mum what she was talking about and she broke down in floods of tears. My brother had died due to malaria while I was writing my exams, and my parents had informed the rector to release me to attend the funeral; however, the rector fearing how devastated and shattered I would be knowing how close I was to my brother, hid that information from me, meaning I was not able to attend my brother's funeral. I cried uncontrollably upon learning what had happened and the fact I could not bid him farewell. I loved my brother and still love him; knowing he has joined the choirs of angels in heaven, I do ask him to intercede for me all the time.

On this 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent, our Gospel pericope from John 11:1-45, showcases the affectionate side of the God who is one with us. Jesus' love for Lazarus was so palpable that the Jews stated – 'Behold how he 'affectionately' loved (*ephilei*) him!' This is the one aspect of God we seldomly talk about; however, it is the fundamental characteristic of God. It is this affectionate love of Christ for His friend Lazarus, that led Him to raise Lazarus from the dead; He will equally open our graves, raise us to life as revealed to Prophet Ezekiel in the vision about the valley of bones in our First Reading, and give life to our mortal bodies through His Spirit as St Paul tells us in our Second Reading. My friends, our God is an AFFECTIONATE GOD who has destroyed our death and restored us to life; I have no doubt that my younger brother is at peace in His affectionate bosom. On this last Sunday of Lent and before the commencement of Holy Week, let us ask Him for the grace to selflessly and affectionately love all of humanity and creation, and to have that conviction that death is but our passage into immortality.



The raising of Lazarus, by Zimmermann / wikimedia

Source: [www.theliturgyproject.com](http://www.theliturgyproject.com)

**TO MAKE DONATIONS:**

For BACS Transfer: Account Name: **CDP Gosport** Account No.: **00878538** Sort Code: **30-93-04** . Make all cheques payable to **CDP Gosport**, or you may scan the QR code. Standing Order and Gift Aid forms are available in the office.

*Please Gift Aid your donations if possible.*



### Notice:

- 23 March Mon - St Mary's church and the parish office will be closed.
  - 25 March Wed - Only the parish office will be closed
- For any urgent matters, please contact 0759 064 3572.**

### TABLETOP SALE

St Mary's Fundraising Team is organising, once again, a tabletop sale on the **28th of March Saturday from 10am to 2pm**. We are calling on our keen bakers, to kindly donate any home-baked items for our cake stall. We are also looking for volunteers to man some tables on the day. Please coordinate with Annette at [ahkosche@gmx.com](mailto:ahkosche@gmx.com) or contact the parish office.



### FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CATECHISM SESSION

**The next session will be on Saturday - March 28 in the parish hall.**

### CONFIRMATION PROGRAMME

The children's Confirmation programme is coordinated pastorally by Fareham covering the parishes in Gosport, Lee-on-Solent, Stubbington, Park Gate and Fareham. This Confirmation pathway called "CHOSEN" has its **next session on March 27-Fri from 7 - 8.30pm at St Philip Howard Church.**

### YOUNG CATHOLIC ONLINE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

**Are you a Catholic aged 18-35 who engages with your faith online?** We would love to hear from you. We are carrying out a short survey to better understand how young adults connect with their faith in the digital space. Your input will help shape and develop our parish's online presence. If you would like to take part, please pick up a form at the back of the church and return it via the post box. Thank you for your time and support.

### SECOND COLLECTION - EASTER FLOWER APPEAL

Second collection for Easter Flowers will happen this weekend and the following weekend. Envelopes will be available at the back of the church. There is also an option to donate using the DONA machine under Easter Flowers. Thank you.

### EASTER OFFERING

Any additional donations given on Easter Saturday and Sunday will be used to support the priests of the diocese. Every penny specifically donated over the said weekend (together with any Gift Aid on qualifying donations) will be used to support our local priest. You may donate using this link: <https://tinyurl.com/3a9jfb7>, the QR code, or via our Dona Machine at the back of the church. You may also use our Easter Offering envelopes (Gift Aid and Non-Gift Aid). Thank you.



### FUNERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **William Walter Mansfield** - at Portchester crematorium on Wednesday 25 March at 1:30pm.
- **Patricia (Pat) Morrow** - at St Mary's Church, Requiem Mass on Wednesday 01 April at 10:30am.

*Please pray for their family and friends at this difficult time. May God grant them eternal rest.*



### BETHANY BEREAVEMENT GROUP—GOSPORT

**Beginning May 12, 2026**. We offer support for those experiencing the loss of a loved one. We help in providing comfort, support and friendship in a welcoming, safe space. Meetings are every second Tuesday of the month, from 1:00 - 3:00pm in St Mary's Hall. For more information, please contact Annette Hutchins at [bethany.gosport@gmail.com](mailto:bethany.gosport@gmail.com)



### SANCTUARY LAMP

This week's Sanctuary Lamp is donated in memory of Kathleen Hourigan. May her soul rest in peace. ✠



### STELLA MARIS EASTER CHOCOLATE APPEAL

For all your chocolate donations, please place them in the box provided in the church foyer. The chocolate Easter eggs are for all seafarers working over Easter and visiting the Southampton ports. Did you know that there will be about 400,000 seafarers working over Easter, separated from families and friends? Collection deadline: Easter Sunday

### STAY AWAKE 2026

The 8th all-age, all-day Catholic Christian Conference with music and worship is happening on 2nd of May at the Thomas Hardy School in Dorchester, DT1 2ET from 10 am to 6 pm. The theme this year is: 'Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.' (Ps 51:10). Your place can be booked from [www.stayawakejc.com](http://www.stayawakejc.com) now! There will be a choice of workshops too and more! Refreshments supplied after Mass. Free for children and £12.50 for the grown ups!

### STANDING ORDER AND GIFT AID

We continue to thank all parishioners for your kind support to our parish in many ways. If you haven't yet, **please consider donating via a Standing Order, and sign up for Gift Aid.** These are vital in helping to sustain the life and mission of our parish. They provide a more stable, and 25% extra, parish income. Forms are available at the back of the church and from the Parish Office. Contactless Giving is available at the back of the Church. You can also Gift Aid your contactless donation. All you need to do is register once and all succeeding donations will be Gift Aided. Thank you!

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### MARRIAGE SUPPORT

From relationships that are 'Just in a Rut', needing some refreshment or more serious issues - If you are open to try again - Retrouvaille could be the solution. We have helped thousands of couples get their relationship back on track as they rediscovered hope and trust in the marriage. To find out more: [www.retrouvaille.org.uk](http://www.retrouvaille.org.uk) | 0797 338 0443

### CAFÉ "BELIEVE" COURSE

This is a Lenten course, consisting of five sessions, each on Wednesday morning following the 9.30am mass at Our Lady's in Bells Lane, Stubbington, with the final session taking place after Easter. The course is a reflection on the Creed, featuring Cardinal Arinze, Jean Vanier, Delia Smith, Fr Cantalamessa, Nicky Gumbel, Lord Alton and others. This invitation is open to everyone.

### ARE YOU BEING CALLED TO THE PERMANENT DIACONATE?

Have you ever wondered what it's all about, but something has held you back from finding out more about it? Is there a little voice in your head, that can't be silenced? If that's YOU, why not 'Come & See' for yourself without committing to anything further? An information event will be held on **Saturday 28th March, '26** at The English Martyrs Church, Didcot, OX11 7AJ from 9am - 3pm where you'll get to hear first-hand, from those who are involved and what it's been like for them. You've got nothing to lose! If you'd like to attend, please call Pam on 07883 059 529 to book a space and to help with catering requirements. If you can't make it on the day, but would like to know more, please contact Pam, or email [diaconate@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:diaconate@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

### PILGRIMAGES

**Mon - July 6th until Friday the 10th - Lourdes**. To know more, please email [lourdes@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:lourdes@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk) or visit <https://tinyurl.com/mv639mbz> for a booking form.

**There is tea and coffee in St Mary's Hall every Sunday after the 11:15am Mass. Please join us for a friendly cuppa and chat.**  
*All donations we receive in the hall during tea and coffee becomes part of the building fund.*