

19th Sunday in Ordinary Time — 9th August 2026

St Benedict's Parish Newsletter Stratton-on-the-Fosse (find us on Facebook)

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Sunday Masses

Saturday	5.00pm	St Benedict's
Sunday	10.00am	Abbey Church
Sunday	11.00am	St Benedict's

19th Sunday 'Nothing is impossible for God'. Last Sunday's readings opened with Isaiah's promise of nourishing refreshment for the thirsty: 'Come to the waters'. This week's Gospel describes the terror of the disciples of Jesus, with a rising wind on the fresh-water Sea of Galilee in the middle of the night, heightened by the appearance of the Lord himself in the dark, walking towards them through tumultuous waters. This is one of a number of resurrection-premonitions in the Gospel, with the presence of Jesus representing the Lord of life and death. He comes to show us that 'nothing is impossible' .. although faith is certainly necessary! The wonderful thing about the presence of Jesus with his disciples is that he actually offers them their much-needed Faith in person – holding out his hand to Simon Peter to save him from sinking beneath the waves. Similarly, in the Old Testament, Elijah witnesses a mighty gale, an avalanche and an earthquake .. which all turn out to be inconsequential in the face of the 'still small voice' of the prophet's personal God. In today's second reading, St Paul goes so far as to challenge the authority of the divine promises to Israel, reminding his hearers (Romans chapter 9) that God's power in the shaping of individual human destinies is of greater import even than the history of entire nations

Other Diary Dates The local Glastonbury Pilgrimage – for all parishes in the Diocese of Clifton – is held on the **first Sunday of September**. This year's theme – 'Mary, Mother of the Faithful' – will be celebrated at St Mary's in Magdalene St, opposite the Abbey ruins, as well as out-of-doors. For full details, visit cliftondiocese.com. A National Pilgrimage to London for the 'Adoremus' Eucharistic Conference is being planned for **Saturday October 10th**; 45 places are available for the Diocese of Clifton. Participants aged 18 or over, able to make your own way to Southwark Cathedral for **10.30 am** on the day & prepared to walk the 1.7-mile Eucharistic procession between Southwark and Westminster should register at adoremusclifton2026.eventbrite.co.uk & attend a preparation session at Clifton Cathedral on **Saturday September 12th** (Mass at **12 noon** followed by orientation with issuing of tickets and further information)

Weekday Masses

Tuesday 11th August — St Claire of	9.30am	Holy Ghost
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Fr Martin will be away between **August 12th and 19th** inclusive and so with regret **there will be no weekday Masses** during that period. As usually happens during the summer holiday, the Parish Newsletter will be published fortnightly from next weekend until the beginning of the autumn term.

St Francis of Assisi The 800th anniversary of the death of St Francis (†1226) will be celebrated on the weekend of October 4th (St Francis' day) preceded by the Season of Creation (from September 1st) during which St Francis is remembered under his new title of Patron Saint of Ecology. Members of our parish led by Alice Maddalena are going to anticipate the celebrations in honour of St Francis with a **5 mile contemplative country walk in the vicinity of Mells** which will take place on the afternoon of **Saturday August 22nd**.

Meet 1.15pm for 1.30pm start under the yew tree in Mells churchyard. We aim to be back in Mells for 4pm where refreshments can be purchased at Mells Walled Garden or The Talbot.

Please wear comfortable shoes and bring water, sunscreen, hats, waterproofs as appropriate.

Let there be Light This is the theme of this year's Celebrate Festival, to be held at Worth Abbey School in Sussex between **15th - 19th August**. Keynote speakers include Fr Roberto Pasolini (Preacher to the Pope), David Wells and Johannes Hartl. 'Fun and formation for children and young people aged 3-24' are advertised for each day of the festival. Accommodation might be available in Worth Abbey School; camping and weekend tickets are also available. Contact celebratefestival.org

Wedding Congratulation to Leanna and Bryn who were married in St Benedict's yesterday. We wish them many happy years together.

Anniversary Mass for Anne Prior RIP will be offered on Wednesday 12 August in the Abbey Church at 11am, celebrated by Fr Michael Patey. All welcome.

Parish Safeguarding— Parish Representative – Hettie McDermott is the Parish safeguarding representative and she can be contacted on mcdermothj@outlook.com

First reading—1 Kings 19:9a, 11-13a

‘Stand on the mount before the Lord.’

In those days: Elijah reached Horeb, the mount of God. There he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the LORD came to him. And he said, ‘Go out and stand on the mount before the LORD.’ And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper. And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

Responsorial Psalm—Ps 85(84):9ab, 10, 11-12, 13-14. R8

**Show us, O LORD, your mercy,
and grant us your salvation.**

I will hear what the LORD God speaks;
he speaks of peace for his people and his faithful.
His salvation is near for those who fear him,
and his glory will dwell in our land.

Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have kissed.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth,
and justice look down from heaven.

The LORD will bestow his bounty,
and our earth shall yield its increase.
Righteousness will march before him,
and guide his steps on the way.

Second reading—Romans 9:1-5

**‘I wish that I were accursed for the sake of my brothers
and sisters.’**

Brothers and Sisters: I am speaking the truth in Christ. I am not lying. My conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit — that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers and sisters, my kinsmen according to the flesh. They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed for ever. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation- Psalm 130(129):5

Alleluia, alleluia.

I long for you, O LORD,
my soul longs for his word.
Alleluia.

Gospel—Matthew 14:22-33

‘Command me to come to you on the water.’

After the crowd had eaten and were satisfied: Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat by this time was a long way from the land, beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them. And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, ‘It is a ghost!’ and they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.’ And Peter answered him, ‘Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.’ He said, ‘Come.’ So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, ‘Lord, save me.’ Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, ‘O you of little faith, why did you doubt?’ And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, ‘Truly you are the Son of God.’

Presence of God

‘Even if you cannot conceive of yourself as near to God, you should still regard God as near to you’ (*Meister Eckhart*). For God is utterly and intimately present to us, closer to me than I am to myself, as St Augustine said. God is more intimately settled at the core of my being than any lover could ever be. And yet God’s utter intimacy is such that we can be completely unaware of God. God’s presence is completely discreet, unobtrusive. ‘It is as if God wished to give us the highest form of being – true freedom – but to do so, God is forced to hide himself’ (*Karl Jaspers*; cf Isaiah 45,15). So it is out of respect for our high dignity as free people that God now only shows himself to us by hints and glimpses

Memorial Acclamation

**When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we
proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come
again**

Foodbank—Most needed items: Instant Mash, Instant Coffee (small), Vegetarian tinned meals, Squash/long life juice, Tinned tomatoes, Jars of Pasta sauce, Tinned custard, Tinned rice pudding, UHT milk, Tinned vegetables (carrots and peas), Washing-up liquid, Deodorant, Shampoo, Conditioner, Soap, Toilet Rolls, Toothpaste Household Cleaners.