

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time — 13th September 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

24th Sunday Ten years ago we were celebrating the Jubilee of Mercy (December 2015 – November 2016), announced in the apostolic letter *Misericordiae Vultus* of Pope Francis: 'Mercy will always be greater than any sin, and no one can place limits on the love of God who is ever ready to forgive'. In today's Gospel, one of our Lord's Kingdom Parables centres upon the great mercy of a King who cancels a debt of 10,000 talents (gold coins) out of compassion for a wayward servant who, we're told, owed him that amount. But as the story continues, the forgiven servant becomes the 'Unforgiving Debtor' – warning us of the reality of our human recalcitrance in the face of the Divine Mercy. Simon Peter (who asked 'How often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me?') was naturally inclined to try and count the cost of his forgiveness, whereas the parable is actually about forgiveness 'from the heart' where gold coins have but little place. In the Kingdom, or New Creation, which is the subject of the parable, Jesus is inviting us to glimpse the nature of man 'made in the image of God': the heart of which Jesus speaks is a place where life is stronger than death – as he revealed in the love of his own life, especially on Good Friday

Retrouvaille / Marriage Help - Communication failure is a major cause of marital breakdown - 1,000's of couples have found Retrouvaille helped their relationship. Retrouvaille is not counselling but a programme to help married couples work through conflicts more effectively. We focus on helping restore trust and hope. Bookings until 18th September: www.Retrouvaille.org.uk +44 7887 296 983

Prayer and Praise for the Season of Creation will be held at St Benedict's on Friday 18th September 6pm. All are welcome

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

Weekday Masses

Tuesday 15th September — Our Lady of Sorrows	9.30am	Holy Ghost
Thursday 17th September - Week 24 in OT Rosary	6.30pm 7.00pm	St Benedict's
Friday 18th September - Care of Creation	9.30am	Holy Ghost
Saturday 19th September - Week 24 in OT	9.30am	St Benedict's

Debt Crisis We have received a letter from our MP, in response to the appeal (signed by a good number of parishioners) which was sent to her before the summer holiday. In recent years Christian charities (such as cafod.org.uk) have been highlighting the plight of a great many countries (more than thirty in Africa alone) who are obliged to 'spend more on servicing external debts than they do on healthcare' (not to mention other public services such as education or investment to limit the impact of the climate emergency). In 2025, the South African government made tackling the unsustainable debt crisis a key priority for its presidency of the G20 and Pope Francis made the achievement of debt cancellation one of his main priorities for the Jubilee Year. The campaign continues, and in a recent statement the charities say: "We welcome the fact the UK government has made 'tackling unsustainable debt' a major priority. However, this will not happen through business as usual, but requires a complete change in the UK approach." Copies of our MP's letter are available at the back of St Benedict's (or may be obtained from Fr Martin)

17th September -Downside Abbey Heritage Open Day—
There will be tours of the Abbey Church (10.15 and 13.15) and the monastery gardens (11.45 and 14.45). At 12.20 there will be an Organ Recital by renowned Cambridge organist, Nigel Kerry. The Exhibition 'Everyday Lives' will be on display. All welcome.

Vocations Retreat Day: Explore, Learn, Reflect at St-Mary-on-the-Quay, Bristol: **Saturday 26th September**, 10 am – 4.30 pm: tickets from £10 available via Eventbrite/Zeffy – for men and women of all ages; for details please contact bristolcatholicwomen@gmail.com

Loving God, Living Simply, Living Deeply: Brownhill Monastery, 24th-27th September A retreat for the Season of Creation, based upon the message of St Francis of Assisi. Please contact: <https://www.bernardine.org/brownhill-programme/2026/9/24/loving-god-living-simply-living-deeply>

First reading—Sirach 27:30-28:7

‘Forgive your neighbour the wrong he has done, and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray.’

Anger and wrath, these are abominations, and the sinful man will hold them fast. The one who seeks vengeance will be paid vengeance from the Lord, and he who keeps a record will have his own sins recorded. Forgive your neighbour the wrong he has done, and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray. Does one person harbour anger against another and yet seek for healing from the Lord? Does he have no mercy towards someone like himself and yet pray concerning his own sins? If he himself, being flesh, maintains wrath, who will make atonement for his sins? Remember the end of your life and cease from enmity, remember destruction and death and be true to the commandments. Remember the commandments and do not be angry with your neighbour; remember the covenant of the Most High and overlook error.

Responsorial Psalm—Ps 103(102):1-2. 3-4. 9-10. 11-12. R8
The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and rich in mercy.

Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all within me, his holy name.
Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and never forget all his benefits.

It is the Lord who forgives all your sins,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with mercy and compassion.

He will not always find fault;
nor persist in his anger for ever.
He does not treat us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our faults.

For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so strong his mercy for those who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west,
so far from us does he remove our transgressions.

Second reading—Romans 14:7-9

‘Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s.’

Brothers and Sisters: None of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

Gospel Acclamation—John 13:34

Alleluia, alleluia.

A new commandment I give to you, says the Lord,
that you love one another, just as I have loved you.
Alleluia.

Gospel—Matthew 18:21-35

‘I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.’

At that time: Peter came up and said to Jesus, ‘Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.

‘Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.” And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, “Pay what you owe.” So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you.” He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw what had taken place they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. Then his master summoned him and said to him, “You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?” And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.’

Memorial Acclamation

**We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess
your Resurrection 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.