

# 4th Sunday Easter (Good Shepherd Sunday) — 26th April 2026

## St Benedict's Parish Newsletter Stratton-on-the-Fosse

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### Sunday Masses

<b>Saturday</b>	<b>5.00pm</b>	<b>St Benedict's</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Abbey Church</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>11.00am</b>	<b>St Benedict's</b>

**4th Sunday of Easter** - Today's Gospel gives us two brief parables to illustrate the infinite care exercised by our Saviour for the salvation of his chosen ones. First he warns against imposters within the sheepfold: worldly leaders, driven by ambition or avarice (like 'a thief or a robber'), should not be recognised by the chosen sheep who will know the voice of their true Master. Here it's as if Jesus leads us in the recitation of today's responsorial psalm, celebrating the goodness of God who will guide his flock towards pastures that are 'fresh and green'. But we're told that those listening to Jesus failed to understand this parable so, in a second attempt, Jesus presents himself as 'the door of the sheep', the anointed one of God through whom the chosen flock will be able to find the freedom of salvation: they 'will go in and out and find pasture'. In a third parable, which we don't hear in today's Gospel, Jesus will announce himself as the Good Shepherd who 'lays down his life for the sheep' (John 10,11). This is the version presented to us already by St Peter in today's first two readings – as the motive for which his hearers will 'repent and be baptised' on the day of Pentecost, with the coming of the Holy Spirit and then, through a fulfilment of Christian life, give answer to his call 'to die to sin and live to righteousness':- 'By His wounds you have been healed'

**Confirmation 2026** Bishop Bosco will visit Downside Abbey to celebrate this year's Confirmations on the evening of **Friday May 8<sup>th</sup>**: Mass will begin at **6.30 pm** when the Downside students will be joined by candidates from other schools for the Sacrament of Confirmation

**On today's second reading (and Gospel):** The prince of the Apostles, visible shepherd of the Universal Church, turns our thoughts to the *invisible* Shepherd whose Vicar he is: how carefully he avoids any allusion to himself! The message of the Good Shepherd would be verified in St Peter and a number of his successors whom, as one with himself, future generations would see continually persecuted, exiled, imprisoned, and put to death – *Prosper Guéranger OSB (1805-75)*

### Weekday Masses

Tuesday 28th April — 4th week of Eastertide	9.30am	Holy Ghost
Thursday 30th April — 4th week of Eastertide	6.00pm	St Benedict's
Rosary	6.30pm	
Friday 1st May - 4th week of Eastertide	9.30am	Holy Ghost
Saturday 2nd May — St Athanasius Bishop and Doctor	9.30am	St Benedict's

**Lourdes Pilgrimage** This year's Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes (part of the Catholic Association Lourdes Pilgrimage) is advertised for **August 21<sup>st</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>**. Assisted pilgrims (sick or with a disability) may travel to Lourdes by Jumbulance (specially-designed coach) or by air, accompanied by helpers; all pilgrims are welcome. Details are posted in the church porch, where there is also a special appeal for young volunteers (aged 16-25) to act as helpers; some subsidised places are available – [www.catholicassociation.co.uk/join](http://www.catholicassociation.co.uk/join)

**Diocesan Day at Downside: Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2026** A few tickets are still available for this event at Downside, to which all the diocesan family (including the youngest, for whom special facilities are made available) has been warmly invited by Bishop Bosco: arrivals and refreshments from 10 am; then activities, talks and presentations continue throughout the day (with lunch available) until Mass at 3.30 pm. To obtain a place, booking through Eventbrite is required: <https://joyoflove.eventbrite.co.uk>; further details are on the diocesan website

**St. Benedict's Catholic Church is now on Facebook.** To find out about events, mass & other service times & Catholic news here is the link <https://www.facebook.com/share/18BDPVFu7m/?mibextid=wwXlfr>

**Encounter 2026** Between Easter and Pentecost, a series of New Life presentations to be given in Clifton Cathedral (BS8 3BX) are running on **Tuesday evenings (7 pm – 9 pm)** to explore Personal Vocation Experiences, Listening to the Holy Spirit, Building the Church and Living the Mission. Attend in person or online via the Cathedral Livestream / YouTube

**Parish Safeguarding— Parish Representative** – Hettie McDermott is the Parish safeguarding representative and she can be contacted on [mcdermothj@outlook.com](mailto:mcdermothj@outlook.com)

**First reading—Acts 2:14a, 36-41**

**‘God has made him both Lord and Christ.’**

On the day of Pentecost Peter, standing with the Eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed the crowd: ‘Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.’

Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the Apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.’ And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, ‘Save yourselves from this crooked generation.’ So those who received his word were baptised, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

**Responsorial Psalm—Ps 23(22):1-3a. 3b-4. 5. 6. R1**

***The LORD is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.***

The LORD is my shepherd;  
there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures  
where he gives me repose.

Near restful waters he leads me;  
he revives my soul.

He guides me along the right path,  
for the sake of his name.

Though I should walk in the valley of the shadow of death,  
no evil would I fear, for you are with me.  
Your crook and your staff will give me comfort.

You have prepared a table before me  
in the sight of my foes.  
My head you have anointed with oil;  
my cup is overflowing.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life.

In the LORD’s own house shall I dwell  
for length of days unending.

**Gospel Acclamation**

**John 10:14**

Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the good shepherd, says the Lord.

I know my sheep and my own know me.

Alleluia.

**Memorial Acclamation**

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

**Second reading— 1 Peter 2:20b-25**

**‘You have returned to the Shepherd of  
your souls.’**

Beloved: If when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

**Gospel—John 10:1-10**

**‘I am the door of the sheep.’**

At that time: Jesus said, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.’ This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So Jesus again said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.’

**Thought for a Moment** God was pleased to the natural vast capacity of man’s understanding and will to add a supernatural light, illustrating his mind to believe and know Him, and divine charity in the will, which was as it were a weight to incline and draw the soul, without any defect or interruption, to love God, and Him only – *Augustine Baker OSB (1575-1641)*

**Prayer Corner** Catholics remember and talk about Francis and Clare, Augustine, Gregory, Catherine, Gertrude, Cornelius, Clement, Philip, Elizabeth, Luwanga, Miki, and thousands and thousands more. This is just some measure of the respect and gratitude for one another that we learn from the Church: respect and gratitude destined to last an eternity – *Jeremy Driscoll OSB*

**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, Shaving foam, Deodorant.