

5th Sunday of Lent — 22nd March 2026

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

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Sunday Masses

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

5th Sunday of Lent In today's Gospel, the raising of Lazarus is witnessed at Bethany with the two sisters, Martha and Mary – and their guests – only a few miles away from the central areas of Jerusalem in which our Lord's Passion, Death and Resurrection were to take place. St John the Evangelist relates that the miracle of Lazarus, which attracted many new followers to Jesus, hardened the opposition of the religious authorities towards Our Lord, who was avoiding arrest at this time. At Bethany, he was in the company of faithful friends – as on the night of the Last Supper – with the great Passover approaching. It was here that Martha's sister Mary would anoint the feet of Jesus at a local supper in celebration of the divine friendship with Jesus which St John proclaims so beautifully. The drama of the Passion is already in the air and will be introduced in the Gospels to be read at weekday Mass during the coming days

Palm Sunday (March 29th) Our celebration in St Benedict's will begin in the parish hall, followed by the usual Procession with Palms into Mass. Please remember to advance your clocks by one hour during the night of **March 28th-29th**!

Palm Sunday Masses (March 29th):

Downside Abbey 10 am; St Benedict's 11 am

Holy Thursday (April 2nd):

Mass of the Lord's Supper - St Benedict's 7 pm
followed by Adoration until 10 pm

Good Friday (April 3rd):

Stations of the Cross (1) - St Benedict's 12 noon
(with meditations by St John Henry Newman)
Liturgy of the Passion - Downside Abbey 3 pm

Easter Vigil (April 4th):

Stations of the Cross (2) - St Benedict's 12 noon
(prayers from Bishop Bosco to be read by participants,
with silent meditation)

Holy Night Vigil with Mass - Downside Abbey 8 pm

Masses on Easter Day (April 5th):

Downside Abbey 10 am; St Benedict's 11 am

Memorial Acclamation

Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free

Weekday Masses

Tuesday 24th March — 5th week of Lent	9.30am	Holy Ghost
Thursday 26th March — 5th week of Lent	6.00pm	St Benedict's
Friday 27th March - 5th week in Lent	9.30am	Holy Ghost
Stations of the Cross	6.30pm	St Benedict's
Saturday 28th March — 5th week of Lent	9.30am	St Benedict's

Reconciliation In today's world, this is surely one of the most important of all the Easter sacraments. There will be a short service of Reconciliation in St Benedict's at **6 pm on Friday March 27th** followed by individual confession and absolution for all who wish to receive them. Stations of the Cross will be celebrated at the same time from **6.30 pm**. Appointments can be made for Confession in the coming days with Fr Martin who is also available before and after Masses and other Passiontide celebrations indicated in the schedule

Oil of Catechumens Those who bring their children for Baptism will remember how, just before the water ceremony, the child is anointed after the priest has said the Prayer of Exorcism which is then echoed by all present ('Do you reject Satan?') In preparation for Easter Baptisms, this prayer is linked with the Scrutinies which are indicated in our Missals, encouraging us to accompany all catechumens with our own prayers, just as we aspire to join with Jesus in His journey of Life – so we pray for our two catechumens, Rowan and Matthew, who will receive this anointing today

Holy Thursday and the Easter Triduum Mass of the Lord's Supper on **April 2nd** will begin at **7 pm**. As usual, we are looking for half-a-dozen or so volunteers to have their feet (actually just one foot each) washed – like the first Disciples – halfway through Mass (volunteers please sign on the list at the back of church). Mass will be followed by the procession to the altar of repose in the Baptistery for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 10 pm. If anyone would like to join in singing Compline at that time, please speak to Cathy or Fr Martin; the other Easter Triduum celebrations (**April 3rd-5th**) are indicated on the schedule

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

First reading -Ezekiel 37:12-14

‘I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live.’

Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the LORD.

Responsorial Psalm -Ps 130(129):1-2. 3-4. 5-6b. 6c-8.

R7bc

***With the LORD there is mercy,
in him is plentiful redemption.***

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD;
Lord, hear my voice!
O let your ears be attentive
to the sound of my pleadings.

If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?
But with you is found forgiveness,
that you may be revered.

I long for you, O LORD,
my soul longs for his word.
My soul awaits the Lord
more than watchmen for daybreak.

More than watchmen for daybreak,
let Israel hope for the LORD.
For with the LORD there is mercy,
in him is plentiful redemption.
It is he who will redeem Israel
from all its iniquities.

Second reading—Romans 8:8-11

‘The Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you.’

Brothers and Sisters: Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

Gospel Acclamation -John 11:25a, 26

Glory to you, O Christ, Son of the living God.
I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord.
Everyone who believes in me shall never die.
Glory to you, O Christ, Son of the living God.

Gospel—John 11:1-45

‘I am the resurrection and the life.’

At that time: A certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. It was Mary, who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent to him, saying, ‘Lord, he whom you love is ill.’ But when Jesus heard it he said, ‘This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.’ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. Then after this he said to the disciples, ‘Let us go to Judea again.’ The disciples said to him, ‘Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?’ Jesus answered, ‘Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.’ After saying these things, he said to them, ‘Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him.’ The disciples said to him, ‘Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.’ Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, ‘Lazarus has died, and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.’ So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, ‘Let us also go, that we may die with him.’

Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house. Martha said to Jesus, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Your brother will rise again.’ Martha said to him, ‘I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.’ Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?’ She said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.’

When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, ‘The Teacher is here and is calling for you.’ And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.’ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. And he said, ‘Where have you laid him?’ They said to him, ‘Lord, come and see.’ Jesus wept. So the Jews said, ‘See how he loved him!’ But some of them said, ‘Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?’

Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, ‘Take away the stone.’ Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, ‘Lord, by this time there will be a smell, for he has been dead four days.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?’ So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, ‘Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me.’ When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come out.’ The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, ‘Unbind him, and let him go.’

Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him.