

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary — 16th August 2026

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time — 23rd August

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

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

Assumption of Our Lady / 21st Sunday In the first reading for Assumption day, the vision of St John shows us the human vulnerability of the world's Saviour within God's glorious redemptive plan, in which He was to be born from a human Mother. When she visited Elizabeth, the future mother of Jesus sang: 'He has scattered the proud; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate'. Surely Our Lady was thinking of herself in this connection! On the 21st Sunday we hear of the fluctuating fortunes of Shebna and Eliakim at the court of Hezekiah, King of Judah c 700 BCE: one man's demotion coincides with another's preferment – both being short-lived and, we might think, of little consequence. But the desperation of the dragon in St John's vision reveals the powers of pride, envy and malice that have always been known to assail the offices of many who hold authority. The victory of God's justice, which Jesus shows us, can be assured through the truth of the teaching he shared with his apostles and other followers – look at what St John came to write for us in the closing pages of the New Testament! And in the Gospel for the 21st Sunday, where St Peter confesses that Jesus is 'the Christ, the Son of the living God', the future prince of Apostles is named as the Rock on which 'I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it'...

Living Water This is the theme proposed for this year's Season of Creation, which opens with a day of prayer for God's Creation on September 1st and closes on October 4th (feast of St Francis). The theme to be explored is announced by the prophet Ezekiel (chapter 47) and is of course related to Christian Baptism and our prayers for a fruitful earth. We are encouraged to participate with Christians of all denominations for this season, in the 800th year since the passing of St Francis of Assisi, 'patron saint of ecology'. For those unable to participate in our local walk in honour of St Francis (at Mells on August 22nd), a (longer) walk is being promoted, between Clifton Cathedral and the Franciscan parishes of Nailsea and Clevedon, for Saturday October 3rd (see cliftondiocese.com)

Downside Abbey Heritage Open Day 17th of September There will be tours of the Abbey Church (10.15 and 13.15), and 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.

Thursday 20th August — St Bernard Abbot and Doctor Rosary	6.30pm 7.00pm	St Benedict's
Friday 21st August - St Pius X, Pope	9.30am	Holy Ghost
Saturday 22nd August—The Queenship of Our Lady	9.30am	St Benedict's

Tuesday 25th August — St Thomas of Hereford, Bishop	9.30am	Holy Ghost
Thursday 27th August — St Monica Rosary	6.30pm 7.00pm	St Benedict's
Friday 28th August - St Augustine of Hippo, Priest and Doctor	9.30am	Holy Ghost
Saturday 29th August - The Passion of St John the Baptist	9.30am	St Benedict's

Fr Martin returns from holiday in time for the **evening Mass in St Benedict's on Thursday 20th August** (St Bernard's day). The 'holiday regime' with one parish Newsletter per fortnight will continue until Sunday September 6th, the day of the diocesan pilgrimage to Glastonbury (please see 'Diary Dates', below)

Other Diary Dates The local Glastonbury Pilgrimage – for all parishes in the Diocese of Clifton – is held on the **first Sunday of September (6th)**. 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)

John Nye RIP At his funeral, to be held in St Benedict's on **Thursday 27th August at 10.15 am**, we shall remember and celebrate the life of John Nye which brought him into close association with Downside Abbey and local parishes over many years. His final days were lived in Midsomer Norton and we give thanks for his generosity and Christian witness within the life of the church. This celebration will be led by Dom James Hood, together with other members of the community of St Gregory

16th August

Responsorial Psalm— Ps 45(44):10. 11. 12. 16. R10b
On your right stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

The daughters of kings are those whom you favour.
On your right stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

Listen, O daughter; pay heed and give ear:
forget your own people and your father's house.

So will the king desire your beauty.
He is your lord, pay homage to him.

They are escorted amid gladness and joy;
they pass within the palace of the king.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

Mary has been taken up into heaven;
the host of angels rejoice.

Alleluia.

Gospel—Luke 1:39-56

‘He who is mighty has done great things for me; he has exalted those of humble estate.’

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, ‘Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.’

And Mary said, ‘My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring for ever.’ And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

Memorial Acclamation

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

23rd August

Responsorial Psalm—Ps 138(137):1-2a. 2bc. 3. 6, 8bc. R8bc
O LORD, your merciful love is eternal; discard not the work of your hands.

I thank you, LORD, with all my heart;
you have heard the words of my mouth.
In the presence of the angels I praise you.
I bow down towards your holy Temple.

I give thanks to your name
for your merciful love and your faithfulness.
On the day I called, you answered me;
you increased the strength of my soul.

The LORD is high, yet he looks on the lowly,
and the haughty he knows from afar.
O LORD, your merciful love is eternal;
discard not the work of your hands.

Gospel Acclamation—Matthew 16:18

Alleluia, alleluia.

You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church,
and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
Alleluia.

Gospel—Matthew 16:13-20

‘You are Peter, and I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.’

At that time: When Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.’ Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

Memorial Acclamation

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again

The Holy Eucharist is the Bread of the strong: it is meant to energize us and to vitalize us, not merely to discipline and to soothe us! Let us pray our Blessed Lady and all the saints of the Blessed Sacrament to win for us, in these times that are so difficult, so dark for the future of religion, more generosity in our dealings with God, more boldness and imaginativeness in the graces we ask from Him. May the grace of this holy feast be new life, new energy, new adventurousness to us all (*Mgr Ronald Knox*)

Parish Safeguarding— Parish Representative – Hettie McDermott
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