

Saint Peter and Saint Paul — 28th June 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

SS Peter & Paul The fifth book of the New Testament (the Acts of the Apostles), like the fifth book of the Old (Deuteronomy), shows how God's people, in Biblical times, were enabled to live in accordance with God's promise: in the Promised Land (according to the Old Testament) and in the Kingdom of Heaven (according to the New). SS Peter & Paul, the two major figures in the Acts of the Apostles, illustrate the spiritual freedom enjoyed by the early followers of Jesus – accessible to all the baptised – through the evangelical missions that were theirs: between the day of Pentecost and Simon Peter's new Passover (described in today's first reading), the conversion of St Paul is narrated – to prepare us for the second half of the Acts, in which Paul will be the leading figure. Following the events described in the first reading, St Peter disappears from the Acts, escaping 'to another place' which might be thought of as a first stage on his journey to Rome; his two epistles give examples of his preaching along the way. It can be suggested that the letters of St Paul outshine those of St Peter in illustrating the work of the Holy Spirit in the various different churches he founded in the eastern Mediterranean; a final testimony is given by St Paul (perhaps from his Roman prison) in today's second reading. Whereas the journeyings of St Paul, prior to his final voyage to Rome, illustrate his fidelity to the church in Jerusalem, a deeper sense of unity is manifest in the work of St Peter ('who established the early Church from the remnant of Israel', in the words of today's Preface). Both Apostles encourage us to celebrate the diversity and the unity of today's worldwide Church – and to maintain the prayers of all the Apostles for the Church of the future

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

Weekday Masses

Tuesday 30th June — Week 13 in OT	9.30am	Holy Ghost
Thursday 2nd July — Week 13 in OT	6.30pm	St Benedict's
Rosary	7.00pm	
Friday 3rd July - St Thomas Apostle	9.30am	Holy Ghost
Saturday 4th July — Week 13 in OT	9.30am	St Benedict's

Downside Abbey Festival 16-19 July. There will be a series of concerts by artists including David Bednall and the Bristol Brass Consort, the Choir of St Mary's, Wimbledon and the Tenebrae Associate Artists. The highlight of the four-day festival will be a 'Come and Sing', directed by Sir John Rutter – full details and information to book tickets is available on the website [Downside Abbey Festival 2026 | Downside Abbey](#) or collect a pamphlet at the back of the church

First Holy Communion— is now only a week away & we continue our prayers for Nikolai Asquith, Dara Breddy, Wilfrith Carter, Augustin Cooney, Jeanna Galera, Rowan Goldstrom, Namaali Liedong, Alfred Medicott, Samantha Medrana & Saoirse Ryan – and all their families, whom we thank for their loyalty and support. Of course we are grateful also to Mrs Bennett and the other catechists who have organised the First Communion course. There will be a brief rehearsal for the First Communion Mass today (Sunday June 28th) in St Benedict's at midday. First Confessions will be held on Saturday, July 4th, starting at 10 am. Please be aware that some of the front rows in church will be reserved for the First Communion families on the morning of Sunday July 5th

Opening Time(s) As advertised in the Village Newsletter, St Benedict's is open on Friday afternoons between 2.00 and 4.15 – for the Hour of Mercy prayers (3.00 – 4.00 pm) and also for visitors who might like to see the church and stay for tea. A small number of us have been maintaining the Divine Mercy prayers for more than a year by now; if others would like to help on Fridays or at other times – by showing the church to your visitors, and / or boiling the kettle – please let Fr Martin know

First reading—Acts 12:1-11

‘Now I am sure that the Lord has rescued me from the hand of Herod.’

In those days: Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. He killed James the brother of John with the sword, and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread. And when he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people. So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.

Now when Herod was about to bring him out, on that very night, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries before the door were guarding the prison. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood next to him, and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him, saying, ‘Get up quickly.’ And the chains fell off his hands. And the angel said to him, ‘Dress yourself and put on your sandals.’ And he did so. And he said to him, ‘Wrap your cloak round you and follow me.’ And he went out and followed him. He did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. When they had passed the first and the second guard, they came to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord, and they went out and went along one street, and immediately the angel left him. When Peter came to himself, he said, ‘Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting.’

Responsorial Psalm—Ps 34(33):2-3. 4-5. 6-7. 8-9. R5
From all my terrors the LORD set me free.

I will bless the LORD at all times,
praise of him is always in my mouth.
In the LORD my soul shall make its boast;
the humble shall hear and be glad.

Glorify the LORD with me;
together let us praise his name.
I sought the LORD, and he answered me;
from all my terrors he set me free.

Look towards him and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.
This lowly one called; the LORD heard,
and rescued him from all his distress.

The angel of the LORD is encamped
around those who fear him, to rescue them.
Taste and see that the LORD is good.
Blessed the man who seeks refuge in him.

Memorial Acclamation

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

Second reading—2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18

‘There is laid up for me the crown of righteousness.’

Beloved: I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but also to all who have loved his appearing.

The Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion’s mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory for ever and ever.
Amen.

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 16:13-19

‘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.’

from a Letter on Prayer

The loving reverence which is pleasing to almighty God, and deserving of reward from Him, rests upon two thoughts: fear and hope. It may be likened to a tree laden with fruit. Fear is the part of the tree below ground - the roots; hope is the part above ground - the trunk and branches. The trunk represents the stability and certainty of hope; the waving branches represent the way it impels people to acts of love. Loving reverence is the fruit, and as long as the fruit remains on the tree, it is second-class merchandise, since it still has the greenness of the tree about it; once it has been picked and allowed to ripen fully, it is first-class fare – loving reverence, full of merit. So prepare to pluck the fruit and offer it up to the King of heaven; then you will be called a child of God with good cause, since you will then be loving Him for His own sake rather than for the favours He bestows – *Anon (medieval)*