



STANBROOK BENEDICTINES

Consolamini, consolamini



NO. 25 ADVENT 2024



CALENDAR

2025



CALENDAR

2025

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January
St Julian



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July
St Therese



August
St Anthonia



September
St Philippa



October
St Anthonia



November
St Philippa



December
St Benedicta



THE STANBROOK STORY

400 years of consolation and hope

MOTHER ABBESS WRITES...

‘If only you knew the gift of God’, Jesus said to the Samaritan woman at the well. He then revealed himself as that gift.

Christmas is about gifts, gift-giving and gift-receiving, and about enjoying the gifts because we know they are given, and received, in love. The greatest gift of all is the Son of God, whose significance the Christmas masses gradually reveal: the babe at Bethlehem, announced by angels and welcomed and received with joy by shepherds, is then proclaimed in John’s Prologue at the Day Mass as the eternal God now become fully human: ‘the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.’ Children easily tire of gifts; we never tire of the gift of the Child born at Bethlehem. Over a lifetime and into eternity, we immerse ourselves in his life and love, enjoy his presence and hand on his gift of salvation.

Isaiah gives names of profound significance to the Child: Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. At this time of extraordinary world turmoil, we place our hope in the Prince of Peace and pray that he heal the world with his peace, the peace only he can give.

May you all have a blessed and holy Christmas, filled with the peace and joy of the new-born Child.

News

On 1 January 2025 we shall celebrate the 400th anniversary of the day our foundresses made their solemn profession as Benedictine nuns in our first monastery in Cambrai. This day will officially close the year of Jubilee celebrations which began on 31st December 2023, 400 years after those same nuns had received the Benedictine habit which marked the beginning of their monastic life. It has been a joyful year of encounters and deep thanksgiving for all the gifts God has given this community over the centuries, not least the gift of our families, oblates and friends. It has been wonderful to see so many of you over the past year and to know that others have been with us in spirit. We hope to include a full account of the Jubilee year in the bumper edition of *Stanbrook Benedictines* due out at Eastertide 2025. Meanwhile, you can catch up on Jubilee events on the new website which was launched at Easter this year: www.stanbrookabbey.org.uk

FRONT COVER: 2024 Stanbrook Christmas Card by D. Julian Falkus

BACK COVER: 400th Anniversary Roundel Logo of our Foundresses, designed by Castlegate IT, YORK, based on an original design by D. Werburg Welch OSB.

Community News

On 28 October 2024 Emma Vardon entered the monastery as a postulant in order to continue to discern her vocation as a Benedictine nun. Emma, who hails from Jersey, has a background in librarianship and has been visiting Stanbrook for over two years. Please pray for her.

D. Agnes Wilkins has, owing to increased care needs, been resident at Omega Oak Barn Care Home in Beadlam, near Helmsley, since the summer. She has settled well and enjoys regular visits from the community and her family.

Requiescant in Pace

On 26 March 2024 at Oulton Abbey Care Home, in the 89th year of her life and the 70th of her monastic life the **Very Revd Dame Benedicta Scott OSB**, nun of Stanbrook and formerly Conventual Prioress of St Mary's Abbey, Oulton, died peacefully after a life of dedicated service. There will be a full obituary in a future publication.

On 1 April 2024 the **Rt Revd Dame Gertrude Baker OSB** was born to eternal life in the 98th year of her life and 68th of her monastic life. Dame Gertrude had been Abbess of St Mary's Abbey, Colwich 1994-2010 and became a nun of Stanbrook when our communities fused in 2022. She slipped away peacefully at Oulton Abbey Care Home; it was Easter Monday. Full obituary to follow.

We were saddened by the sudden death of **Richard Cavadino** on 2 January 2024. As Project Manager, Richard had been a driving force in the building of the abbey church and hospitality wing which opened in 2015, on schedule, largely thanks to Richard's dedicated, and always good-humoured, service. We remember him with gratitude and affection and send condolences to Jane and all the family.

This year also saw the death, on 1 January, of **Paul Elm** who had been a great help in steering us through the planning application process for building the new monastery at Wass. We owe him a great debt of gratitude and remember him in our prayers.

Publications and Artwork

This year's Christmas Card, designed and executed by D. Julian and featured on the front cover, is inspired by the story of the Flight of the Holy Family into Egypt to escape the tyrant Herod (Matthew 2: 13-15). The word 'Arise' was heard by Jacob in a dream when an angel commanded him to take the child Jesus and Mary into Egypt. It also evokes the Easter message of resurrection when Jesus defeated the tyrant of death. The card reminds us to pray for all migrants and refugees fleeing conflict zones and oppressive regimes today. Ref. X24A, 80p each or £3.50 for a pack of 5, plus p.& p.

The 2025 Stanbrook Calendar reverts to traditional photographic views. £9.50 plus £2.50 p.& p.

'The Stanbrook Story: 400 Years of Consolation and Hope' has been well received. £6.50, plus p.& p.

There remain a few copies of the lavishly produced *One Psalm, One Abbey* by Marie-Line Burguière, featuring stunning photographs of 12 European abbeys, including Stanbrook, with commentaries on the psalms by monks and nuns of those abbeys. £39.99 plus p. & p.

All the above available from Stanbrook Abbey Bookshop
Tel. +44 (0) 1347 868927; bookshop@stanbrookabbey.org.uk

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INSIDE BACK COVER: JUBILEE celebrations

Top left: GUESTS at 31st May celebration for families, oblates and friends

Top right: SR Kathy Yeeles (Grace & Compassion Benedictine) chats with D. Julian at the 5th July celebration for monastic friends.

Foot: CARDINAL Arthur Roche and Abbot Primate Gregory Polan, 5th July.

The Back Page

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