

Monday in 33rd Week in Ordinary Time (I) – 17th November 2025:

As Ordinary Time draws to a close, the readings exhort us to a fidelity in our obligations to the Commandments, so we are ready to stand before the judgement seat of God, and that the excuse *'but everyone else gave into the secular culture'* will not serve us well. The gifts of the Holy Spirit and the graces of prayer and the sacraments provide the Christian with the strength to give witness to the faith and morals expected of one grafted onto Christ in Baptism. The Christian lives a moral lifestyle vastly different from the secular world, avoiding practices contrary to the Divine and Natural Law, even if the civil law has said that they are legal – hence why we can never participate in practices such as abortion or euthanasia which are always intrinsically evil.

The opt. mem. of the Basilicas of St Peter & St Paul – Tues. 18th Nov. 2025:

Peter is buried on the *'Via Cornelia'* Road just 150 metres from his crucifixion. Christians remembered his burial place, passing this knowledge on, and the site was used for many years as a burial site for subsequent Christians who chose to be buried near St Peter. After Christian emancipation in 313AD, it was an obvious place for Constantine to build a shrine and Church. In the modern Basilica, Peter's relics are under the Altar of St Peter's Confession in the heart of the Basilica. In 1939, there was extensive archaeological research which revealed shrines of previous Popes and a vessel of bones were found with the inscription *'Petrus'* and the rare vestments suggested a burial of great importance, leading Paul VI in 1968 declaring that the connection to Peter was convincing. Paul's burial site is marked by the Basilica of *'St Paul's outside the walls'* on the Ostian Way. The site was owned by Lucian a Christian women, and it became a place of veneration, where Christians during persecution could pray and draw the strength to continue their work of evangelization. The first Church was constructed by Constantine and consecrated by Pope Sylvester in 324AD.

Wednesday in 33rd Week in Ordinary Time – 19th November 2025:

Christians should be brave in standing up to persecution, assured that in the resurrection, the just rise to glory, and evil doers to eternal punishment. We believe our sufferings can be offered as a sacrifice for the atonement of our sins or of a loved one. The death of the martyrs has expiatory value, helping us see the redemptive meaning of Christ's death which deflected the punishment that humanity rightly deserved and by his grace made us righteous and capable of living with him in heaven.

Thursday in 33rd Week in Ordinary Time (I) – 20th November 2025:

Here in this Church, the parish of Farnham comes to '*give thanks*' for our redemption. In the Eucharist, we thank God for all the blessings that he has bestowed upon us. This building has stood as a testimony to Christ for 95 years and it will only be here in the future if it remains a house of prayer, a place where we visit Jesus and allow him to nourish us in Word and Sacrament. Holy Communion is our '*viaticum*' – our food for the journey on our earthly pilgrimage and our strength against eating the '*junk food*' of the world, which fails to satisfy our souls, causing them to wither and fade away. Please God, we will not be like those who failed to see what Jesus was offering and called for his crucifixion. Jesus calls us to conversion, repentance, and to mission. We go from here and proclaim that in this celebration of Mass we have encountered Our Lord and Saviour and wish to make his gospel known to our town and to the world.

The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Friday 21st November 2025:

Per the law, Joachim and Anne present their child to God in the Temple. In part, this still happens at Baptism as parents bring their children to receive the Lord's Blessing. Of course, Baptism, is much richer because we receive the gift of God himself, the Holy Spirit making his home in us, so that one day, we might reside in the heavenly temple with God for eternity. We infer from this Feast, that parents should ensure that they make their home a place of faith, hope and love. Parents should make their homes a domestic Church, a place where children first learn to pray and revere God, and his commandments. The home is the place where children learn to offer their lives back to the Lord, parents helping their children understand the notion of vocation, the way in which we will bring glory to God and how we will announce the gospel.

The Memorial of St Cecilia, Virgin & Martyr – Saturday 22nd November 2025:

Cecilia prayed before her marriage, imploring heaven to guard her virginity. At her wedding and before consummation of her nuptials, she sang to God making her the patron of musicians. She told her husband she had taken a vow of virginity and had a guardian angel protecting her. Valerian wanted proof, so she sent him along the Appian Way to be baptised by Pope Urban. Following the baptism, he returned to his wife and found the angel at her side. Valerian crowned her with a chaplet of Rose, and he and his family dedicated themselves to burying the martyred saints, preaching the gospel and converting many to the faith, until they themselves were arrested and executed.