



# **PARISH DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2010-2015**

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**A BENEDICTINE PARISH**

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**A PRAYING PARISH**

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the second Parish Development Plan, to be implemented in the years 2010 to 2015. The Plan is the sequel to the original plan of 2005 that gave the parish House Groups, our friendship parish in Irundu, and other important aspects of our parish life.

This document sets out the overall objectives of the Plan. An additional document, available on the Parish web site and at the Welcome Desk, contains various suggestions and ideas which could be used when implementing the Plan.

Starting with the Parish Survey of December 2009, the whole parish has been involved in the planning process through meetings and communications through our web site. Three Groups, headed by Chris Dobson, Michael Keenan and Robin Williamson, formed working parties to consider key aspects of the Plan, and meetings with the Parish Pastoral Council brought the final Plan together.

I am very happy to be working with such an ambitious Plan. It gives me a tool to enable the parish to move forward spiritually by becoming more clearly a Benedictine Parish.

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## **A BENEDICTINE PARISH**

Worth Abbey Parish is unusual. Within the diocese of Arundel and Brighton, we are one of only a handful of parishes in this country that worships with a Benedictine monastic community. Our plan for the next five years is to become more fully a **Benedictine Parish**. We will encourage parishioners to deepen their faith by a greater understanding of the Rule of St Benedict, drawing from the Rule elements that will enhance our lives.

Taking the three major Benedictine themes of Learning, Prayer and Service as our guide, our aim is to become in five years' time:

- *A Learning Parish* where opportunities are available to deepen our understanding of the Faith
- *A Praying Parish* where personal and family prayer is encouraged and where a prayerful reading of scripture is supported
- *A Serving Parish* in which bridges are built with the needy, the young, non-active Catholics, those outside the church and the poor.

Every parishioner has something to contribute as we develop our vision for the next five years. We will seek to involve everyone in the parish in our work, and will strive to avoid any appearance of reserving participation in parish activities to a small circle of parishioners. As we draw new people into our parish work we will be open and welcoming.

## A LEARNING PARISH

*“A School of The Lord’s Service”*

RB: Prologue

We strive to be a Parish where opportunities are available to deepen our understanding of the Faith.

### **Continued Learning**

The School of the Lord’s Service is open to us all, whatever our age or spiritual development, and never closes. We will offer opportunities for continued learning about the Faith through a fully integrated scheme, starting with young people and continuing through to adult formation. This will offer an opportunity for all of us to learn and better understand our faith, whatever our age and circumstances. We will do this through:

- Infant baptism preparation  
*which leads on to*
- First Communion preparation  
*and then*
- membership of the Follow On Group (FOG)  
*which prepares the young for*
- Profession of Faith - a new ritual to mark the commencement of Teenage years  
*leading on to*
- Confirmation preparation  
*then*
- Post-Confirmation instruction  
*which becomes*
- a forum for young adults  
*and finally*
- a programme of regular conferences and seminars for adult parishioners.

### **Catechists**

Many more catechists drawn from the parish will be needed for such an ambitious programme to succeed. Training of up to twenty suitable catechists, therefore, will be a priority. Training will be offered in a number of ways:

- the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) programme at Brighton University
- in-house training
- diocesan programmes
- simply learning on the job.

For such a large scale operation, a voluntary or paid Catechetical Coordinator will be appointed and all other catechists will be reimbursed their expenses. The Coordinator will be contracted for two years and will also lead the Faith Group Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) programme.

### **The Rule of St Benedict**

We will strive to make the Rule better known and understood by all in the Parish, by making copies widely available, printing weekly extracts in In Touch, and through the programme of continuing learning described above.

## **A PRAYING PARISH**

*“First of all whatever good work you undertake ask him with the most insistent prayer to perfect it”*

RB: Prologue

We strive to be a Parish in which the Rule of St. Benedict can inform our lives, where personal and family prayer is encouraged and where a prayerful reading of scripture is widely offered.

### **Sunday Mass**

We are guests of the Monastic Community at the Abbey. We recognise that because of this we have a limited influence on the liturgy at the main 9.30 a.m. Mass at the Abbey Church. We will seek an understanding with the Monastic Community so that we can find ways of enhancing Parish involvement in the 9:30 Mass.

At other masses where we do not need to consult the monastic community we will endeavour to learn from the Rule of St Benedict and develop our liturgy accordingly.

### **Prayer and Sacraments**

Prayer is a central concern of St. Benedict, and prayer in the home has recently been given great encouragement in our parish. We will promote full use of the newly refurbished Abbey Church by encouraging Parishioners to attend the daily Community Mass and Monastic Offices. We will encourage parishioners to use the Rule of St Benedict in their own daily prayer.

### **Lectio Divina**

This is the prayerful reading of scripture and is central to any Benedictine life. We will promote it using existing structures or newly implemented ones.

### **House Groups**

The members of the house groups, which are an important outcome of our first five year plan, have become close knit groups of friends who support each other spiritually through their reading of scripture and prayer, and we will build on this current structure.

**Spiritual Growth**

Humility is a virtue given great prominence in the Benedictine life. We will seek this virtue especially, in our parish. We will encourage regular use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation by organising monthly Services of Reconciliation instead of the present three a year. We will also encourage greater parish participation in retreats and pilgrimages.

## **A SERVING PARISH**

*“Before all things and above all things care must be taken of the sick”*

RB: Ch 36

We strive to be a Parish in which bridges are built with the needy, the young, non-active Catholics, those outside the church and the poor.

### **Bridges with young people**

Besides the catechetical programmes described earlier, we will build bridges to young people from confirmation to leaving school by:

- Appointing a Youth Worker for at least two years to implement our plans
- Forming a Youth Group (in two divisions, for Post Confirmation until leaving school and for School leavers until completion of further education)
- Involving members of the Youth Group in the Liturgy and other Parish activities, including Lourdes, Irundu and other parish social work.

### **Bridges with Young Adults**

We will establish a Young Adults Action Group for the purpose of:

- Bringing together young adults and providing a forum for mutual support for their journey in faith
- Involvement in the lay ministries (readers, intercessions, Welcome ministry, Eucharistic ministry...)
- Active support of Parish activities (social events, Justice & Peace, ecumenical work...)
- Active involvement and support for the Youth Group

### **Bridges with non-active Catholics**

We will implement a programme to help those who have become less regular in the practice of their faith to come back to an active role in the parish.

### **Bridges with those outside the church**

We will work with the following groups in our area:

- The Crawley Interfaith Group
- Other Christian groups
- High Weald Churches

**Bridges with the needy and the poor**

We will build bridges by

- Developing our welcoming ministry
- Developing a ministry to those in need in our parish area
- Learning more from our friendship parish in Irundu, and publishing news from Irundu regularly
- Encouraging parishioners to become involved in local charities