



WORTH  
ABBAY PARISH

3rd Sunday of Advent (year C)  
11<sup>th</sup> / 12<sup>th</sup> December 2021  
No: 1283



Journeying Together:

Collaboration

Co-operation

Co-Responsibility

# In Touch

## Dear Parishioners

I hope you and your families are well.

I should like to begin this week by congratulating all those who have volunteered to take part in one of the Synod groups which are meeting around the parish. There is still chance to join a group. They meet at Worth on Saturdays (please contact Sr Jo for all information about the Synod - Jo Threlfall [jo.threlfall@btinternet.com](mailto:jo.threlfall@btinternet.com) tel: 01293 544331) and Sundays, please contact George and Christina Fitzsimons [george@fitzsimonsonline.com](mailto:george@fitzsimonsonline.com); there are also groups in Balcombe and Crawley Down. Please see details below – Journeying Together. The groups are a response to the invitation of Pope Francis for us to become the *Pilgrim People of God*, the Church searching together to find the right way forward, humbly putting ourselves into the hands of the Holy Spirit, through prayer and listening.

This week we celebrated the feast of The Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, the model for all Christians of humble prayer and an obedient response to God's loving invitation. We offer as a meditation for Advent an extract from a homily by St Bernard for the feast of the Annunciation. The author invites us to share the angel's dialogue with Mary.

*You have heard, O Virgin, that you will conceive and bear a son; you have heard that it will not be by man but by the Holy Spirit. The angel awaits an answer; it is time for him to return to God who sent him. We too are waiting, O Lady, for your word of compassion; the sentence of condemnation weighs heavily upon us.*

*The price of our salvation is offered to you. We shall be set free at once if you consent. In the eternal Word of God, we all came to be, and behold, we die. In your brief response we are to be remade in order to be recalled to life.*

*Tearful Adam with his sorrowing family begs this of you, O loving Virgin, in their exile from Paradise. Abraham begs it, David begs it. All the other holy patriarchs, your ancestors, ask it of you, as they dwell in the country of the shadow of death. This is what the whole earth waits for, prostrate at your feet. It is right in doing so, for on your word depends comfort for the wretched, ransom for the captive, freedom for the condemned, indeed, salvation for all the sons of Adam, the whole of your race.*

*Answer quickly, O Virgin. Reply in haste to the angel, or rather through the angel to the Lord. Answer with a word, receive the Word of God. Speak your own word, conceive the divine Word. Breathe a passing word, embrace the eternal Word.*

*Why do you delay, why are you afraid? Believe, give praise, and receive. Open your heart to faith, O blessed Virgin, your lips to praise, your womb to the Creator. See, the desired of all nations is at your door, knocking to enter. If he should pass by because of your delay, in sorrow you would begin to seek him afresh, the One whom your soul loves. Arise, hasten, open. Arise in faith, hasten in devotion, open in praise and thanksgiving. Behold the handmaid of the Lord, she says, be it done to me according to your word.*

Meanwhile, on Friday we mark Human Rights Day. Do please see the article on our website - <https://www.worthabbeyparish.co.uk/human-rights-day-10th-december-2021/>

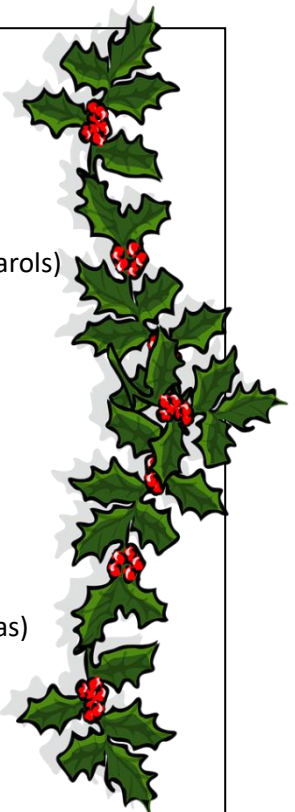
One particular right which has been very much in the news recently is the right to claim asylum. Pope Francis has written a speech to mark the anniversary of the International Organisation for Migration. He says that behind every statistic on migration is the face of a brother or sister who needs to be protected; while in reality they are treated as "merchandise", "pawns on the chessboard", and as "victims of political rivalries". He says: The fundamental lack of human respect across national borders diminishes us all in our humanity. [Click here](#) to continue reading.

You will also notice below that the annual Justice and Peace Assembly will examine this theme.



### *December/ January Services*

<b>Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> December –</b>	<b>7.30pm</b> Reconciliation Service.
<b>Friday 24<sup>th</sup> December –</b>	<b>09.00am</b> Concelebrated Mass <b>3pm</b> Parish "Crib Mass" (2.45pm for Carols)  <b>11pm</b> Midnight Mass 
<b>Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> December –</b>	<b>09.30am</b> Christmas Morning Mass
<b>Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> December –</b>	<b>09.30am</b> Concelebrated Sunday Mass
<b>Monday 27<sup>th</sup> December-Friday 31<sup>st</sup> December –</b>	<b>5.30pm</b> Concelebrated Mass
<b>Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 –</b>	<b>09.00am</b> Concelebrated Mass <b>5pm</b> Vigil Mass (2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Christmas)
<b>Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2022 –</b>	<b>09.30am</b> Concelebrated Mass
<b>Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022 –</b>	<b>7.30pm</b> Epiphany Vigil



*Please note that everyone is requested to wear a mask in church, to use the hand sanitiser by the doors, and practice social distance, to reduce the chance of infections.*

*Thank you. We look forward to welcoming you.*



## Prayers

Please pray for our parishioners Fred Green, Michael Grech and Laura Rawlinson.

Please see link for an update on Laura

<https://www.worthabbeyparish.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Lauras-Christmas-update-2021.pdf>

### Prayer for our Common Home

*Creator God, who made our beautiful world,  
appointed us as its guardians and gifted us with everything we need,  
Forgive us for the times we cause it harm;  
for the times our way of life affects our neighbours.  
Inspire us to care for the environment; to help rebuild lives and communities;  
to share in the griefs and anxieties, joys and hopes of all your people,  
so that all your creation may flourish.  
Amen.*

### A prayer for the Synod:

*We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name.  
With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts;  
Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.  
We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder.  
Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions.  
Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life  
and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.  
All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time,  
in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever.  
Amen.*

## Anniversaries

**Please pray for the Souls of** – Margery Hemming, Dom Michael Smith, Mary (Molly) Hansford, Brian Hemming, Sean Duggan, Tom Fieldwick, Liam Dunbar, Mrs Elizabeth Shrimpton, Molly Cox, Ralph Etherton and Anne O'Reilly.

**Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them, may they rest in peace. Amen.**

## Daily Readings

Monday – Num 24:2-7, 15-17a Matt 21:23-27 (**St Lucy**)

Tuesday – Zeph 3:1-2, 9-13 Matt 21:28-32 (**St John of the Cross**)

Wednesday – Isa 45:6b-8, 18, 21c-25 Luke 7:18b-23

Thursday – Isa 54:1-10 Luke 7:24-30

Friday – Gen 49:2, 8-10 Matt 1:1-17

Saturday – Jer 23:5-8 Matt 1:18-25

Next Sunday's Readings: **Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year C)**

1st Reading – Micah 5:1-4 2nd Reading – Hebrews 10:5-10

**Gospel:** Luke 1:39-45

**Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord?**

## Worth Retreat

*"Be still and know that I am God" Psalm 46:10*

A hybrid retreat where you are invited to come to Worth or join the retreat online. A section of the retreat is silent. FINDING STILLNESS. The Open Cloister @ Worth Abbey

Mon 13th-Thurs 16th December 2021

For further information or to book a place online go to: [worth.co.uk/retreat-programme](http://worth.co.uk/retreat-programme)

Enquiries: [retreats@worth.org.uk](mailto:retreats@worth.org.uk)

### **Parish Groups – Journeying Together**

Groups will meet:

- After Sunday mass (on 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> December and January 16<sup>th</sup>), at Worth;
- On Saturdays, either before or after the parish mass, at 3.30 and 6 pm, on 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> December and 8<sup>th</sup> January, at Worth;
- There will be a group in Balcombe: please contact Rachel Davies ([rfrmaison@protonmail.com](mailto:rfrmaison@protonmail.com))
  - And a day time group in Crawley Down. Please contact Carol Morice (C. Morice [carolmorice251@btinternet.com](mailto:carolmorice251@btinternet.com))

Please also see the website [www.worthabbeyparish.co.uk/parish-life/synodal-church/](http://www.worthabbeyparish.co.uk/parish-life/synodal-church/) for more information, including the text of an excellent article by Austen Ivereigh.

We look forward to welcoming you.

#### **Links for our common world**

[Help Reduce Food Waste](#)

[Greenpeace 101 ideas to live more sustainably](#)

#### **Heaven’s Road Catholic Online Radio**

[www.heavensroadfm.com](http://www.heavensroadfm.com) is an online radio broadcasting features like prayers, interviews and music to appeal to a Catholic audience – they also have many podcasts and broadcast over 40 daily live Masses from 15 churches in England and Ireland from their website [www.heavensroadfm.com](http://www.heavensroadfm.com)

#### **Readers Needed**

We need volunteers to write and read the Universal Prayers at Sunday mass.

Training will be given, and, if you prefer, someone will offer to write the prayers for you. This would not be more frequent than once every two months.

Do please get in touch if you can help.

#### **Counters Needed**

We also need volunteers who can count the weekly collections, and bank the cash. Training will be given. Please get in touch. Thank you for offering your time and skills.

#### **BIG Green Steps**

Due to COP 26 the United Nations Climate Change Conference there is a lot in the media and conversations around climate change mitigation and reducing our carbon footprint. In our last newsletter we talked about how we need to make lifestyle changes, aiming to achieve ‘a 5-tonne lifestyle’. Well how on Earth do we do this you might ask. Well we have three ideas to help you learn and take action to reduce your carbon footprint:

1. At the Sussex Green Hub on the last Saturday of every month we are just starting up our ‘Carbon Watchers Clinics’, which is loosely based on the philosophy of Weight Watchers – encouragement, no blame, no shame and sharing ideas and tips to reduce our personal Carbon footprint.
2. Buy and read a book called How Bad Are Bananas? [by Mike Berners-Lee](#). Mike tells us the effects of big carbon footprint activities such as aviation, heating, swimming pools etc and small changes we can make (bananas, naturally packaged, are good!). You can learn about other fantastic [books and documentaries on this page](#). Read, watch, learn and take action now!
3. Don’t forget to use the [WWF Carbon Footprint calculator](#) app to see what your current lifestyle looks like, at the end it directs you to pages with information about areas you can improve.

Four schools over the last month have asked us about how they measure and reduce their carbon footprint, you will be pleased to hear that the WWF are working on a tool to help them.

### **Annual Justice and Peace Assembly**

Our Annual Justice & Peace Assembly will take place in person on **Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2022**  
from 9.30am – 2pm **NOW ONLINE.**

This Year's event "To a Safer Shore?" focusses on the considerable difficulties and challenges faced by individuals and families of all ages who are compelled to leave their homes and seek safety - and longed for sanctuary - in countries that can be considerable distances from their homes.

Speakers this year include **Canon Rob Esdaile** who will provide insight on Pope Francis' Encyclical Fratelli Tutti, **Aidan Cantwell**, from the Jesuit Refugee Service who will explore current legislation in the UK and how best we can respond, and **John Paul de Quay**, from the Ecological Conversion Group, who will examine the links between the plight of refugees and climate crisis. Click on the link below to secure you place - we look forward to welcoming you

<https://abdiocese.churchsuite.com/events/8llnbi1a>

### **Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales**

#### **Honouring Sunday**

As the Synodal Pathway of listening and discerning unfolds, we the bishops of England and Wales, are paying particular attention to the hopes and fears, the joys and anxieties of all who are sharing their thoughts and feelings with us.

#### *Longing for our Lord*

We are attentive to the experience of the last year or so, when we have lived our faith through the limitations of the pandemic. We have heard of the longing which some express as a "homesickness." We want to be in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. We yearn to celebrate the sacraments together, especially the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. We desire to be nourished by our Lord in Holy Communion. The live streaming of the Mass and the remarkable response of our Catholic communities to those in need, have provided comfort, sustenance and resilience.

#### *The Eucharist, source and summit*

The Eucharist is the source and summit of our spiritual and pastoral life. Many people have said to us that they have appreciated the noble simplicity of the Mass at this time, which has allowed the mystery and majesty of our Lord's sacrificial love to shine through. The central appeal of the Mass, its beauty and its transcendence, raises our minds and hearts to God in an unambiguous and compelling manner. Our Lord Jesus invites us to receive anew the gift of Sunday as the preeminent day, the day of the Resurrection, when the Church gathers to celebrate the Eucharist. Here we stand together before our heavenly Father, offering our thanksgiving and prayer, through our Saviour in the Holy Spirit. Here we receive Christ in his Word. Here we are nourished by Christ in his precious Body and Blood. This is our primary joy, for which there is no substitute, and from which we draw our strength.

#### *The Gift of the Sunday Eucharist*

The Sunday Eucharist is a gift; as God's holy people we are called to praise and thank God in the most sublime way possible. When the Church speaks of the Sunday obligation, it reminds us that attending Mass is a personal response to the selfless offering of Christ's love. At this time, we recognise that for some people there may be certain factors which hinder attendance at Sunday Mass. The pandemic is clearly not over. The risk of infection is still present. For some, there is legitimate fear in gathering together. As your bishops, we recognise that these prevailing circumstances suggest that not everyone is yet in the position to fulfil the absolute duty to attend freely Sunday Mass.

#### *Responding to the Gift*

We now encourage all Catholics to look again at the patterns which they have formed in recent months with regard to going to Mass on Sundays. This would include consideration and reflection about what we might do on Sundays, such as sports or shopping, or other leisure and social activities. This review, and the decisions which arise from it, fall to every Catholic and we trust this will be done with honesty, motivated by a real love for the Lord whom we encounter in the Mass.

The Sunday Mass is the very heartbeat of the Church and of our personal life of faith. We gather on the "first day of the week," and devote ourselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2:42). The Eucharist sustains us and spurs us on, renewing our gratitude and our hope. When we say "Amen" to Christ in receiving his Body and Blood, we express the love of God which is deep within us, and at the end of Mass, when we are sent forth, we express our love for our neighbour, especially those in need. These two dimensions reveal the full meaning of our faith. We are gathered together and sent out, we pray and are fed, we worship and we adore; these are intrinsic to our lives as those baptised into Christ.

*Approved at the Plenary Assembly of Bishops in Leeds  
Thursday 18th November 2021*

## REGULAR EVENTS IN THE PARISH



**Mass Times** - Saturday: 9.00 am (Concelebrated) and 5.00 pm (First Mass of Sunday),  
Sunday: 9.30 am

Daily Mass: 5.30 pm (Concelebrated), Holy Days of Obligation: Vigil Mass: 7.30 pm;

Feast Day: 5.30 pm

**Adoration** - Friday evenings 7.00- 8.00pm in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. Reflection, music and silence.

**Confessions (Sacrament of Reconciliation)** - Sundays 9.00-9.30am and Thursday 2pm.

**Rosary Group** - Mondays in the Abbey Church after Vespers - 7:15pm until 8:15pm when Compline is due to begin; Please get in touch with Rachel Davies: 07801 696354

**Lectio Divina** - Tuesdays at 7.40pm via Zoom. Please contact Jenny Chapman [jenny\\_chapman@sky.com](mailto:jenny_chapman@sky.com)

**Christian Meditation Group** - 7.00pm in the Unity Room, please contact Richard by email

[rbrownd1@gmail.com](mailto:rbrownd1@gmail.com). **There will be no group in December.**

**Vigil for Vocations** - (1st Friday). After Compline 8.30pm - 9.00pm.

**Bible Study Group** - 11.15am on Mondays in St Benedict's (Parish Office). Please double check with the Parish Office.

### For other regular items, please see the website:

For readings for the coming week, see Universalis: [Universalis](#)

For prayers and anniversaries see our homepage: <https://www.worthabbeyparish.co.uk/>

Our Facebook page: [Parish Facebook](#)

Children's Junior Church liturgy: [Junior Church](#)

Diocesan Family Materials: [Family Materials](#)

Parish Giving: [Parish Giving](#)

For D'Arcy's music, please visit our website homepage under Organ voluntaries:

<https://www.worthabbeyparish.co.uk/>

### *Parish Priest: Fr Paul Fleetwood*

Mobile: 07764 260216

Parish Office Email: [parish@worth.org.uk](mailto:parish@worth.org.uk) Parish Office Tel: 01342 710313 Parish Website: [www.worthabbeyparish.co.uk](http://www.worthabbeyparish.co.uk)

(Parish office is currently closed please email and we will be in touch)

Secretary: Maria Stribbling, available 9.15am-1.15pm Mon-Fri

Night time emergencies only: 01342 710331

Any cheques to be made payable to - Worth Abbey Parish

Safeguarding: Rachel Davies (07801 696354) and Maria Stribbling (01342 710313)

In Touch: If you would like anything to appear in 'In Touch', please contact Maria Stribbling at [parish@worth.org.uk](mailto:parish@worth.org.uk)

[\(by Wednesday 10am\)](#)

If you are unable to attend Mass and would like to receive Holy Communion at home, or if you have any prayer intentions, please let Fr Paul know.