



WORTH
ABBAY PARISH

4th Sunday of Advent (year C)
18th / 19th December 2021
No: 1284



Journeying Together:

Collaboration

Co-operation

Co-Responsibility

Dear Parishioners

I hope that you and your families remain well in these difficult and troubling times. As always, I send my prayers and very best wishes to you all.

I am sure that in many of your homes you will already have set up your Christmas crib. I do hope so. I have some (quite literally) wonderful memories from childhood of the nativity scene standing in our sitting room, illuminated by a candle, or the flickering light of the coal fire, which was sometimes reflected by the snow outside.

Pope Francis, in his reflection, *Admirabile Signum*, writes: *The enchanting image of the Christmas crèche, so dear to the Christian people, never ceases to arouse amazement and wonder. The depiction of Jesus' birth is itself a simple and joyful proclamation of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God... We come to realize that so great is his love for us that he became one of us, so that we in turn might become one with him.* The stable and the manger evoke truths about Jesus' poverty, embraced for all of us: *Coming into this world, the Son of God was laid in the place where animals feed. Hay became the first bed of the One who would reveal himself as "the bread come down from heaven" (Jn 6:41). Saint Augustine was impressed by this symbolism: "Laid in a manger, he became our food".* Pope Francis relates how St Francis began the tradition in 1223, at Greccio, wishing to make the Nativity visible to all. The friars prepared everything on the night of December 25th, together with local farmers: *When Francis arrived, he found a manger full of hay, an ox and a donkey. All those present experienced a new and indescribable joy in the presence of the Christmas scene. The priest then solemnly celebrated the Eucharist over the manger, showing the bond between the Incarnation of the Son of God and the Eucharist.* Pope Francis continues: *The crib shows God's tender love: The Creator of the universe lowered himself to take up our littleness. The gift of life, in all its mystery, becomes all the more wondrous as we realize that the Son of Mary is the source and sustenance of all life. In Jesus, the Father has given us a brother who comes to seek us out whenever we are confused or lost, a loyal friend ever at our side. He gave us his Son who forgives us and frees us from our sins... From the time of its Franciscan origins, the nativity scene has invited us to "feel" and "touch" the poverty that God's Son took upon himself in the Incarnation. Implicitly, it summons us to follow him along the path of humility, poverty and self-denial that leads from the manger of Bethlehem to the cross. It asks us to meet him and serve him by showing mercy to those of our brothers and sisters in greatest need.*

Do look for the full text of the meditation to help you enter more deeply into the mystery of the coming feast. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap_20191201_admirabile-signum.html

Anniversaries

Please pray for the Souls of – Eric Frankton, Fr Jerome Tomlins, Mike Wheeler, Mary Lovell, Ernest Constable, Fr Alan Downs, Josephine McLoughlin, Alec White , John Hall, Joanna Mackey, Jack Mantelow, Stanley Pitt, Joy Argent, Veronica Lamarche and Ambrose Rigby.

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

Daily Readings

Monday – Isa 7:10-14 Luke 1:26-38

Tuesday – Songs 2:8-14 or Zeph 3:14-18a Luke 1:39-45

Wednesday – 1 Sam 1:24-28 Luke 1:46-56

Thursday – Mal 3:1-4, 23-24 Luke 1:57-66

Friday – 2 San 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16: Luke 1:67-79

Saturday – **Christmas Day**

Next Sunday's Readings: **Feast of the Holy Family (Year C)**

1st Reading – 1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28 2nd Reading – Colossians 3:12-21

Gospel: Luke 2:41-52

Family life in the Lord

Parish Groups – Journeying Together

Groups will meet:

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

Please also see the website 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](#)

Counters Needed

We 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.

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.

Junior Church

*Our last class for this Term is on
Sunday 19th December.*

We resume Sunday 9th January 2022

Monastic Community

*Please note that the monastic community will be on
retreat from **20th to 22nd December.***

We will, of course, respond to any emergency.

News from Julian Gabriel about his charity Running Well, which is supported by the parish through Worth Uganda Friendship)

Please see link on our website –

<https://www.worthabbeyparish.co.uk/parish-life/african-friendship/>

Afghanistan Appeal

CAFOD write: At present, more than half the population of Afghanistan are facing extreme hunger, with some parts of the country close to famine conditions. The situation will deteriorate with the onset of winter. Due to the instability of the country, many – as we know – are leaving their homes in search of sanctuary elsewhere.

CAFOD's partners and sister agencies are already at work in Afghanistan, but the numbers of people seeking aid increases daily. Further information and links to make donations can be found on:

[Afghanistan Crisis Appeal | CAFOD](#)

CAFOD is hosting a webinar on **Wednesday 15th December at 7pm**, with an update on CAFOD's response. It is open to all and those interested need to register in advance, here:

<https://www.bigmarker.com/cafod/Afghanistan>

Invited December Reflection

This month we reflect on some of the characteristics of Jesus as we prepare to celebrate his birth at Christmas.

There are two phrases worth focussing as we prepare for Christ's coming, 'the light shines in the darkness' and 'full of grace and truth' This past couple of years have been difficult, the circumstances we have all lived through have brought out the best and the worst in humanity.

Sometimes it is easy to be overcome by the struggles and cares of the world. It is easy to feel despondent when we know about this great gift of faith and yet we see how others determination to be independent of God can cause so many issues. It can feel like a world of darkness.

But Jesus is the light that shines in the darkness, and John goes on to tell us why – it is because he is full of grace and truth. Grace without truth is empty, and truth without grace can be downright mean! Jesus perfectly embodies both. And in order to bring his light into the world, we must try to emulate him.

John 1:1-5, 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

To join our Invited Mission or receive these emails and future Invited news directly to your inbox, please contact our team; E: invited@abdiocese.org.uk

See our website - <https://www.worthabbeyparish.co.uk/diocese-of-arundel-and-brighton-latest-news/>

Annual Justice and Peace Assembly

Our Annual Justice & Peace Assembly will take place in person on **Saturday 15th 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 your place - we look forward to welcoming you

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

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. *(please check with Parish Office before coming)*

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

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

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 Parish Office Tel: 01342 710313 Parish Website: 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
([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.