



In Touch

1st Week of Lent (A)
21st February/ 22nd February 2026
No. 1459

Dear Parishioners

I hope that you and your families are well. I send you all my prayers.

I hope that you have made a good beginning to your celebration of Lent. At mass on Ash Wednesday, we received ashes on our foreheads as a sign of our wish to repent – to undergo a change of heart. *Repent, and believe the Good News, (or Gospel)*, is the prayer which we hear as we are marked with the ashes. (Ashes are a traditional symbol of repentance in the Bible. It always comes with sackcloth, a detail which we have set aside nowadays. Perhaps this is a mercy!) Lent, above all, is a time to come closer to God; or, rather, to allow Him to come closer to us; and for this reason, we speak of *celebrating* Lent.

The word “Lent” refers to the lengthening of the days as we move into spring, and one emphasis in Lent is that of personal renewal, so that we may enjoy more fully the celebration of Easter, and the fruit of the Resurrection, the new life which Jesus offers us.

In other European languages the word refers to “forty” – an allusion to the forty days which Jesus spent in the desert after His baptism, in fasting and prayer, meditating on His vocation to be Son of God, and the ministry which lay ahead of Him.

In the early Church, Lent became the final moment of preparation for those who would be baptised at the Easter Vigil, when they would descend into a font of water dug into the ground, to be submerged and rise up at the other side, so symbolising their wish to die and rise with Jesus. The custom developed for the entire Church to accompany the Catechumens in their last, and most intense, stage of instruction and prayer before their entry into the Christian community.

Lent offers us many themes for meditation. It is an especially good moment to receive the grace of the sacrament of Reconciliation. We will have a Liturgy of Reconciliation on Monday, March 30th, and there is also an opportunity for the sacrament on Sundays from 8.45. (*Be reconciled to God*, Paul begs us in his reading on Ash Wednesday.) We can also think with gratitude about our adoption as sons and daughters of God, and what can help us deepen the relationship of love and trust into which God our Father invites us. We can meditate on our own baptism, and what it means to be called to share in Jesus’ ministry – as prophet, priest and king: how can we bring the presence of God and the message of His love and His Kingdom into a world which often seems to be hostile to the Gospel?

In the Gospel on Ash Wednesday, we were reminded of the three traditional practices, prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Today we are accustomed to give up some treat during Lent, and it is good to remember the CAFOD fast day on Friday, February 27th. Perhaps we might also consider giving up some time – to visit someone in need, to spend time in prayer, or to take part in one of the discussion groups which we are offering. (See below) Do please consider all the various ways in which you could make Lent special this year.

I send my very best wishes to you all for a very happy and fruitful Lent.

Yours. *Fr Paul*

Mass Times at Worth Abbey:

Sundays - 9.30am (family Mass, with choir)

Mondays to Fridays - 5.30 pm

Saturdays - 9am and 5pm (First Mass of Sunday),
Feast Days 5.30pm

Days of Obligation - *see website*

**Next weekend there will be a Second collection
for CAFOD Lent Fast Day**

Inside this week’s In Touch...

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Mass Readings: (22 February – 1 March)

Sun 22 Feb 2026: 1st Reading – Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7 2nd Reading – Romans 5:12-19 Gospel – Matthew 4:1-11
Mon – Leviticus 19:1-2, 11-18; Matthew 25:31-46 **Thu** – Esther 4:17m, 17o-17q, 17x-17z; Matthew 7:7-12
Tue – Isaiah 55:10-11; Matthew 6:7-15 **Fri** – Ezekiel 18:21-28; Matthew 5:20-26
Wed – Jonah 3:1-10; Luke 11:29-32 **Sat** – Deuteronomy 26:16-19; Matthew 5:43-48
Sunday, 22 Feb: 1st Reading – Genesis 12:1-4a 2nd Reading – 2 Timothy 1:8b-10 Gospel – Matthew 17:1-9

Prayers

Please pray for the sick of our parish: John Maher, Elfriede Huckstep, John Mulhall, Sandra Flexman, Margaret Ogden, Anne Wise, Mandy Horton, Patricia Horsman, Stella Higham, Jim Tierney, Krysia Smith, Catherine Elia, Patrick Cambridge, Barry Wingrove, Rowena Leaney, Beryl McNulty, Lin Eade, Jelly Labto, Sheila Charman, Gillian Maher, Pamela Bagwell, Terry and Susan Scoble, Sue Pearson, John and Sue Rutherford, Demelza Waring, Liz Hicklin, Mike and Jill Carter and Laura Rawlinson. And, please pray for the healing of our Diocese Youth Adviser Lizzie Wakeling.

Please pray for Gerry Loney who died on last Sunday and keep his wife, Aileen & their sons in your prayers. Please continue praying for the souls of Pope Francis; and for Fr. Kevin Taggart and parishioners Rory Clarke, Tony Hicklin and Peter Annabring, who died recently. Please pray for the souls of Mrs Maynard, Cornelius Faber, Maida McCurdy, Stephen Loftus, Josephine Burridge, Audrey Lane, Kitty Adams, Karen Rozum, Roy Hemming, Anthony Francis Rowland, Albert Mason, Peter Reeve, Rose Fleetwood and Christopher Innes whose anniversaries are this week. ***Eternal rest grant unto them, oh Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace.***

Lenten Surrender Litany

by Fr Columba Jordan, CFR

Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.
Christ have mercy. Christ have mercy.
Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

(For each line of prayer below, pray, Jesus help me.)

Jesus, help me to let go of the belief that prayer and fasting are optional practices. Jesus help me.

Jesus, help me let go of the belief that my physical life is separate from my spiritual life.

Jesus, help me to let go of the belief that I am too busy to exercise.

Jesus, help me to let go of the belief that exercise is something that others are capable of, but I am not.

Jesus, help me to let go of the belief that I do not need to use the gift of the body that you have given me.

Jesus, help me to let go of the believe that it is too difficult to fast.

Jesus, help me to let go of the belief that I need to do large or extreme fasts for my fasting to matter.

Jesus, help me to let go of the belief that I cannot offer up even the smallest fast for you.

Jesus, help me to let go of the belief that I need to prove myself through fasting and working out, instead of resting in my identity as your beloved child.

Jesus, help me to let go of the belief that Lenten disciplines are for my own temporary self-improvement, instead of helping me grow closer to you.

Jesus, help me to let go of the belief that I can grow in my relationship with you without reading your word in the Bible.

Jesus, help me to let go of the belief that I am not capable of planning time during my day for you.

Jesus, help me to let go of the belief that something is wrong with my prayer if I'm not delighting in your presence or perceiving insights.

Jesus, help me to let go of the belief that I need to constantly examine my progress in the spiritual life while praying.

Jesus, help me to let go of the belief that I am a soul without a body.

Jesus, help me to let go of the belief that I am a body without a soul.

Jesus, help me to let go of the belief that I can do anything without you. Jesus help me.

Lord Jesus Christ, help me to bring my weakness to you each day, so that through me your power may be made known. Guide me through this Lent, helping me to persevere and stay faithful to you, as you lead me deeper into relationship with you, our Father, and the Holy Spirit during my pilgrimage on earth, and most importantly, forever in the kingdom of heaven.

Amen.

Worth Parish Community Billboard

Worth Pro Earth - Listen to the Podcast

One of our parishioners, Paul Mallinder, has been working with Worth Pro Earth to trial short podcasts covering some of the important work taking place. We are now pleased to share a link and would ask parishioners to follow the link and listen to the podcast.

The "AI Worth Listening" YouTube Channel link is: <https://www.youtube.com/@AIWorthListening>

Our most recent podcast: <https://youtu.be/zFR0Aj30pc>

Did you listen? What did you think?

This has been generated using AI. Do you think we could use AI for other things?

Would you like other types of podcast?

Would you like to be able to listen to any parts of InTouch?



Please let us know what you think. Contact Charles McCarthy charles_mccarthy@hotmail.co.uk



WE NEED YOUR FEEDBACK!

Do you have a spare 5 minutes? We would love to get some feedback on whether you have interacted with Worth Pro Earth. Please follow the link below and tell us your thoughts!

[Worth Pro Earth feedback form – Fill in form](#)

CAFOD during Lent at Worth Parish

SAVE THE DATE - Please note that CAFOD Lenten Family Fast Day is Friday 27 February. CAFOD's focus will be on addressing hunger this Lent.



COFFEES FOR CAFOD:

This Lent's 'Coffees for CAFOD' will be offered in the memory of Rory Clarke.

The Parish's CAFOD team and the Worth School CAFOD Young Leaders will host these coffees on Wednesday's during Lent from 25 February to 25 March in Compass House 2-3.30pm. There will be a speaker each week and a 'pay what you wish' bottomless cafe, with all donations going to CAFOD. Please note there will be no coffee meeting on Ash Wednesday or during Holy Week.

Our first speaker on Wednesday 25th February will be Father Paul. He will inspire us as we begin our Lenten journey.

A BIG Thank You!

Many thanks to Ciro Candia from Pro Family who came to speak to family formation last weekend. For those who would like to know more about his work please visit his website: <https://theprofoundation.com/>



Reflecting on the 10 Commandments as we prepare to enter the season of Lent

(Excerpts from Fr. Paul's Homily last Sunday)

'If you desire, you will keep his commandments. To act faithfully is a matter of choice.' – Sirach 15:15

God has given us free will. He made us with the capacity and the duty to make the right moral choices. Life and death are in front of you. Whichever you choose will be given to you. We have free will and God longs for us to choose life, to choose what is good.

We must not make the mistake to imagine that moral constraints diminish our life. On the contrary, to choose what is good brings us the fullness of life and happiness. And this is what God longs for us to have. And our goodness brings fullness of life also to those around us.

To live a life in service of others leads to happiness. Maybe this is what St. Paul means when he speaks of the secret and hidden wisdom of God as shown by our crucified Lord. Self-denial leads to greatness in God's eyes. And so, Jesus affirms in the gospel today, whoever fulfils the commandments will be called great in the kingdom of heaven...

Each time Jesus quotes from the written law, he says, "you have heard how it was said," and then he goes on, "but I say this to you". Jesus is the living revelation of God our father. Each time he takes a written commandment and develops

it from an action such as murder or adultery and dwells on the thoughts, the intentions and emotions which can lead us to those evil actions, anger, lustful thoughts.

So, what does our reading say to us today? Firstly, and most importantly, I believe that there are elements of morality which God has identified for us very clearly. Morality is not subjective. As Jesus says, whoever relaxes a commandment is the least. There is no room for compromise. Secondly, we need to control our thoughts. If we don't try to do this, we will indulge them. As someone said, maybe you can't stop birds landing on your head, but you can stop them making nests there. So, we need to take care over what we watch, what we look at, how we look, what we read, the company we keep and the friendships we develop. All of these will influence the way we think and all those stray thoughts that come into our minds. We need to control our speech and emotions. We need to speak simply and clearly.

Truth is not subjective. There is no matter of my truth as opposed to your truth. Above all, we need to remain in Jesus' presence to allow him to help us to remain true to his teaching. God will always be present to us if we allow him to touch us.



Three Simple Ways to Deepen Your Faith This Lent

Lent is not just about giving something up. It is a season of renewal — a chance to make more time for God and allow Easter to make us Christians anew. If you're wondering where to begin, here are three simple, joyful ways to grow closer to the Lord this Lent.

1. Read along/ Listen to the Bible in a Year

Why not kickstart your prayer life by listening to *The Bible in a Year* podcast with Fr. Mike Schmitz? In just 20–25 minutes a day, you'll journey through the whole of Scripture with clear guidance, thoughtful reflection and prayer. Following the Great Adventure Bible Timeline, the podcast helps you see how all the pieces of salvation history fit together — and how your own life fits into God's story. You won't just read the Bible in a year...you'll finally understand how all the pieces of the Bible fit together to tell an amazing story that continues in your life today! Feel more confident about your understanding of Scripture. Experience the transformative power of God's Word in your daily life.

It's available via Ascension, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Audible and YouTube. You can visit:

<https://app.ascensionpress.com/podcasts/bible> to get things going. A small daily commitment could transform the way you read Scripture and see the world.

2. Pray As You Go

If your days are busy, Pray as You Go offers a beautiful 10–13 minute daily prayer, perfect for commuters or a quiet moment at home. Rooted in the spirituality of St Ignatius of Loyola, each session blends music, Scripture and gentle reflection, helping you imaginatively enter the Gospel and notice God at work in your daily life. Check it out via the Pray as You Go free app, or via <https://prayasyougo.org/>

There are also Lent retreats and resources available online — an accessible way to build prayer into even the fullest schedule. <https://prayasyougo.org/category/advent-and-lent-25>

3. A Family Prayer Journey

Finally, why not journey through Lent together? Using a simple family prayer intention sheet from CAFOD, you can pray as a family for a different intention each day from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday. As you colour in a leaf each day, you'll see your Lenten tree grow — a lovely reminder that faith flourishes when we pray together. You can access an electronic copy of the Lenten tree using this link - [Lent prayer intentions.pdf](#) or use the Lenten tree on the next page.

This Lent, let's not simply "give something up". Let's make space for God. A few minutes a day could open the door to a deeper, steadier joy — and prepare our hearts for the wonder of Easter.

ASH WEDNESDAY

- 1. Pray for people who are hungry.
- 2. Pray for people who are sick.
- 3. Pray for lonely people
- 4. Thank God for the gift of creation
- 5. Pray for people without a safe home.
- 6. Pray for refugees.
- 7. Pray for your friends.
- 8. Pray for your family.
- 9. Pray for your Church community.
- 10. Thank God for something that brings you joy.
- 11. Pray for the government.
- 12. Pray the 'Glory Be...' today.
- 13. Pray for your neighbours.
- 14. Pray for someone you love.
- 15. Pray for people in places where there is conflict or war.
- 16. Pray for creation to be cared for.
- 17. Pray for people in your class at school or your workplace.
- 18. Pray for a more just and fair world.
- 19. Pray for people suffering because of climate change.
- 20. Pray for people without access to safe, clean water.
- 21. Thank God for your family and friends.
- 22. Ask a saint to pray for you today.
- 23. Pray the 'Our Father' today.
- 24. Pray for people who don't have a job.
- 25. Pray for your teachers or mentors.
- 26. Pray for mothers and the people who care for us.
- 27. Pray for people who are treated badly because of their beliefs.
- 28. Pray for world leaders.
- 29. Tell God something you are sorry for.
- 30. Pray for children who can't go to school.
- 31. Pray that God will help you make good choices.
- 32. Pray for people who are poor.
- 33. Pray for someone who has hurt or upset you.
- 34. Pray for people in prison.
- 35. Pray for the Pope.
- 36. Pray for the elderly.
- 37. Pray for people affected by flooding.
- 38. Pray for someone you find difficult.
- 39. Thank God for your food today.
- 40. Pray for peace in the world.
- 41. Pray for Christian unity.
- 42. Pray for people affected by droughts
- 43. Ask Mary to pray for you and say the 'Hail Mary...'
- 44. Pray for an end to racism and prejudice.
- 45. Pray for people who are grieving or sad.
- 46. Pray that you will be close to Jesus today.
- 47. Pray for patience and hope.
- 48. Thank God for the new life that Jesus brings.

GOOD FRIDAY

HOLY SATURDAY

EASTER SUNDAY



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Parish Activities and Announcements

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES...

Saturday 21st March – Family Stations of the Cross at 10:30am

Friday, 27th February - **Stations of the Cross on Fridays through Lent at 7.15pm**

Holy Monday 30th March – Service of Reconciliation at 7:30pm

Friday, 6th March - **Stations of the Cross on Fridays through Lent at 7.15pm**

LENT HOUSE GROUPS

Cuckfield/Balcombe - Monday afternoons at 3.30pm starting Monday 23rd February. All Welcome.

Please contact Christina cfitzs3287@aol.com or Christie christiegrieve@gmail.com

Worth Abbey Parish Office - Friday mornings at 10.30am starting Friday 27th February. All Welcome.

Please contact Jenny jenny_chapman@sky.com

Crawley Down - All Welcome. Please contact Carol carolmorice251@btinternet.com

AND OUR REGULAR ACTIVITIES...

Sacrament of Reconciliation – Sundays 08.45–09.15am in the church, or by appointment with Fr. Paul.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament – Wednesdays 2:30-3:30pm; Sundays 6.30pm after vespers, and every first Sunday of the month, 10:30am (right after Mass)–11am

Rosary Group – Mondays 7:10-8pm in the church after vespers. Please contact Rachel Davies: 07801 696354.

Lectio Divina – Tuesdays at 8pm via Zoom. Please contact Jenny Chapman jenny_chapman@sky.com.

All are welcome!

Christian Meditation - Unity Room, 7-8pm, 4th Wednesday of the month

Vigil for Vocations – Every first Friday of the month at 8.30-9pm, after compline.

Bible Study Group – Mondays, 11am at St Benedict's (Parish Office). Please contact the Parish Office. **Family**

Faith Formation – Monthly, every 3rd Sunday. **New parishioners, all families welcome!**

Car Parking on Sunday mornings:

Please do keep the parking spaces adjacent the church piazza, for less mobile parishioners. Could we also keep the parking area directly outside of Compass House free for residents and groups using the building. Many thanks.

Would anyone like to learn more about the Catholic Faith?

Please get in touch to join a group which meets on Tuesday evenings, from 7.30 pm.

If you know of anyone who might be interested, please pass on this invitation.

Please get in touch with the office.



Worth Intercessory Team (WIT):

Soon, we hope to start a new group of prayer warriors. We'll meet online via Microsoft Teams at 8pm on the first Wednesday of the month (45 min - 1hr), creating a welcoming space to pray together. Would you like to join? Please sign up and we'll get this prayer group started.

This is a chance to grow in prayer, deepen parish connection, and make a difference—without leaving your home. If you'd like to join, please email worthabbeyparish@gmail.com. Come join us. We look forward to praying with you!



“For where two or more are gathered in my name, there I am in their midst.” – Mt 18:20



COME AND SING AT WORTH ABBEY

Saturday 18th April 2026

Take part in an afternoon of beauty and joy as Worth Abbey Choir prepares and performs Louis Vierne's Messe solennelle, op. 16

Rehearsal (singers)	11am-12:40pm
Lunch break (singers)	12:40-1:30pm
Rehearsal (singers)	1:30-2:30pm
Pre-concert Refreshments	2:30-3pm
Concert	3-3:45pm



£10 per singer (includes free take-home score). Registration required.
Free entrance to guests attending the concluding concert.

For further information and to register, please visit worthabbey.net/latest-news



FRAMING THE FUTURE: A BENEDICTINE APPROACH

A talk by Abbot Christopher Jamison
Saturday 11th April – Unity Room, Worth Abbey

What frame will we choose to face the future?
Abbot Christopher will look at ways in which the Benedictine life can offer a creative approach to facing the future.



About Abbot Christopher Jamison

Abbot Christopher Jamison OSB is the Abbot President of the English Benedictine Congregation and former abbot of Worth. Known for his thoughtful teaching and his writing on monastic spirituality, he has introduced Benedictine wisdom to a wide audience through his books and public work.

10.30	Coffee in Narthex
11.00	Talk and Q and A
12.00	Optional light lunch
1.00	Midday Prayer



To reserve a place, please visit our website at <https://worthabbey.net/latest-news/>
For further assistance email kohara@worth.org.uk

Other Activities and Announcements

Lent 2026 Bible Studies

You're warmly invited to join the **Lent 2026 Bible Studies**, a FREE, six-week journey presented **LIVE ONLINE** by Mauro Iannicelli of Come & See Catholic Formation Ministries. We will lead you through an in-depth exploration of the six Lenten Sunday Gospels, preparing you to hear them proclaimed at Mass. **INFO & REGISTRATION:** comeandsee.org/lent26

- Breaking open each Lenten Sunday Gospel
- 'Expository preaching' teaching method
- Life Application Questions
- **The Holy Mass will come alive in a new way!**

STARTS: Tues 17th February 2026 @ 7pm UK Time **TIME:** 7pm - 8:15pm UK time
6 Tuesday Sessions: Tues 17 Feb | Tues 24 Feb | Tues 03 Mar | Tues 10 Mar | Tues 17 Mar | Tues 24 Mar

We hope to see you online. Many thanks & God bless, *Mauro & Janet Iannicelli* **Come & See Catholic Formation Ministries**



Or register using the QR code:



Int 0-26

Adrian IV: The Only English Pope - 14 March, 3pm, Cathedral Centre, Arundel (Cost: £10-15)

Join a fascinating Friends of Arundel Cathedral talk by Adrian Waddingham CBE about the only English Pope and discover what he accomplished and the changes he made. [Click here](#) to book your place.

Applications for the Arundel & Brighton Lourdes Pilgrimage this July are now open!

The Diocese takes more than 700 pilgrims to visit the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes each year, including young people, families, and those who are sick, disabled, frail or elderly and need our help to make the journey.



Is Our Lady calling you to Lourdes this summer? To find out more about our pilgrimage week in France [click here](#) and visit the diocesan website (<https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/lourdes>)

CAFOD - Sign up for daily Lent emails

CAFOD daily Lent emails of prayer and reflection will offer an opportunity to pause, reflect, pray and take action as we prepare for Easter. Join us as we journey through Lent with our global family. Our Lent calendar emails offer daily prayers and reflections through your Lenten journey, alongside information about ways in which you and the wider CAFOD family can support our ongoing activities. The daily emails start on Ash Wednesday and end on Easter Day. This email subscription also auto-renews for succeeding Lent seasons, but you can unsubscribe at any time.



Please follow the following link to sign up - [Lent calendar with daily prayers and reflection](#)

The Rite of Election - 21 February at Arundel Cathedral

The Rite of Election will be celebrated by Canon Jonathan Martin on 21st February at Arundel Cathedral. We look forward to welcoming people across the Diocese who are preparing for baptism, reception into the Church, and confirmation, to this year's Rite of Election. Please pray for them as they move forward on their journey of faith.

Grandparents' Formation Day - 23 April, 10am-4pm, St John the Evangelist, Horsham

How can we accompany younger generations to experience the joy and hope that faith brings into our lives? With guest speaker David Wells. [Click here](#) to book.

Our Parish is committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable groups within its community. Safe-guarding reps are Charles and Ann McCarthy.

Report safeguarding concerns to the Diocese 01293 651148 or via email: sg1.worth@abdiocese.org.uk



At **In Touch**, we'd love to hear from you—what you've enjoyed reading, what you'd like to see more (or even less!) of, and any ideas for improvement. This is our parish community newsletter, and our hope is that it offers both inspiration and a useful service.

If you have any announcements, articles, or activities you would like us to publish in In Touch we need you to send them the Friday before the intended publication date please.

Please do get in touch! worthabbeyparish@gmail.com

Parish Priests: Fr Rod Jones and Fr Paul Fleetwood. To contact both, please call the Parish Office: 01342 710313

Parish Office: Maria Stribbling - 01342 710313

Parish Office Email: parish@worth.org.uk

Parish Website: www.worthabbeyparish.co.uk

Nighttime emergencies only: 01342 710331

Cheques to be made payable to Worth Abbey Parish **Online banking payments** - Account 61076892 Sort Code 40-05-20

Safe Spaces: 0300 303 1056 **Web:** www.safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk/ **Email:** safespaces@victimsupport.org.uk

If you're unable to go to Mass and would like to receive Communion at home, or if you have prayer intentions, please contact Fr Paul