

In Touch

5th Week of Lent (A)
21st March / 22nd March 2026
No. 1463

Dear Parishioners

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

I hope that you are finding these weeks of Lent a time of growth and spiritual renewal. On Sunday we celebrated Laetare Sunday, when we were invited to rejoice in God's call to us to know him more deeply.

Pope Leo has written a reflection for Lent for us, and I would like to offer you a few lines from this. He begins: *Lent is a time in which the Church invites us to place the mystery of God back in the centre of our lives, in order to find renewal in our faith and keep our hearts from being consumed by the anxieties and distractions of daily life. Every path towards conversion begins by allowing the word of God to touch our hearts and welcoming it with a docile spirit.* He goes on to speak of the importance of listening. *Our God is one who seeks to involve us. Even today he shares with us what is in his heart. Because of this, listening to the word in the liturgy teaches us to listen to the truth of reality. In the midst of the many voices present in our personal lives and in society, Sacred Scripture helps us to recognize and respond to the cry of those who are anguished and suffering. In order to foster this inner openness to listening, we must allow God to teach us how to listen as he does. We must recognize that "the condition of the poor is a cry that, throughout human history, constantly challenges our lives, societies, political and economic systems, and, not least, the Church."* (Listen is the first word of the Benedictine Rule and should be a fundamental part of every monk's conversion; and this active listening can play a part in every Christian's progress in virtue.)

Pope Leo then goes on to reflect on the traditional practice of fasting, but from a new perspective. *I would like to invite you to a very practical and frequently unappreciated form of abstinence: that of refraining from words that offend and hurt our neighbour. Let us begin by disarming our language, avoiding harsh words and rash judgement, refraining from slander and speaking ill of those who are not present and cannot defend themselves. Instead, let us strive to measure our words and cultivate kindness and respect in our families, among our friends, at work, on social media, in political debates, in the media and in Christian communities. In this way, words of hatred will give way to words of hope and peace.*

I commend Pope Leo's words to you and wish you a fruitful last two weeks of Lent in your preparation to celebrate Easter.

<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2026/02/13/0124/00243.html#en>

I send you my very best wishes. *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

Inside this week's In Touch...

✓Prayers and Mass Readings, page 2

✓Worth Parish Community Billboard, page 2

✓Parish Activities and Announcements, pages 3-4

✓Other Activities and Announcements, pages 4-5

✓**New!** Social Action for Parishioners - A Call to Prayer for Life, page 6

✓**New!** Community of Saints – St Patrick: Apostle of Ireland, pages 7-8

Mass Readings: (22 March – 29 March)

Sun 22 March 2026: 1st Reading – Ezekiel 37: 12-14 2nd Reading – Romans 8:8-11 Gospel – John 11:1-45
Mon – Daniel 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62; John 8:1-11 **Thu** – Genesis 17:3-9; John 8:51-59
Tue – Numbers 21:4-9; John 8:21-30 **Fri** – Jeremiah 20:10-13; John 10:31-42
Wed (Annunciation of the Lord) - Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10c; Luke 1:26-38 **Sat** – Ezekiel 37:21-28; John 11:45-56
Sun 29 Mar (Palm Sunday): 1st Reading - Isaiah 50:4-7 2nd Reading - Philippians 2:6-11 Gospel - Matthew 26:14-27:66

Prayers

Please pray for the sick of our parish: Mackynsie Stribbling, 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 continue praying for the souls of Pope Francis; and for Fr. Kevin Taggart and parishioners Gerry Loney, Rory Clarke, Tony Hicklin and Peter Annabring, who died recently. Please pray for the souls of Geoffrey Weeden, Patrick Lamb, Fr Bruno Grogan, Mrs Whinney, Josephina Holland, Gordon Jones, Edward Allen, Ian Parker, Sally Winn, Robin Williamson, Charles Carlos, John Marsh and Maureen Ponsford whose anniversaries are this week. ***Eternal rest grant unto them, oh Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace.***

Worth Parish Community Billboard

CAFOD during Lent at Worth Parish

CAFOD's focus this lent will be on addressing hunger via improved farming methods.



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 until 25th March in Compass House 2-3.30pm.

There will be a special presentation each week and a 'pay what you wish' bottomless cafe, with all donations going to CAFOD. Coffee, tea and sweet treats are on offer. Please note there will be no coffee meeting during Holy Week.

We would be grateful to Parishioners and Community members for your support if you can spare a few minutes to join us. The coffee is good, but the conversation is even better. You can pop in and out as your schedule allows, there is no need to stay for the full session. This is a lovely opportunity for parishioners, students and community to meet.

Upcoming presentations:

25/3 Father Rod will speak



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](#)

School Tenebrae Service - Thursday 26th March, 7.45pm, Abbey Church

You are warmly invited to attend the school's beautiful annual Tenebrae service.

Tenebrae is a deeply moving service of prayer and scripture held in the days leading up to Holy Week. Rooted in Christian worship from at least the ninth century, it invites us to journey into the mystery of Christ's Passion through silence, candlelight, and the slow unfolding of the biblical story.

The school service is shaped around a series of short readings from Scripture, interwoven with chant and responses. As the service progresses, candles are gradually extinguished, allowing darkness to gather and creating a powerful space for reflection on suffering, hope, and redemption. Tenebrae offers a rare opportunity to pause, listen, and pray together as we prepare our hearts for Easter.



Parish Activities and Announcements

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES...

Saturday 21st March – Family Stations of the Cross at 10:30am. Children of all ages welcome, followed by biscuits and drinks. Any questions please contact Emily Coughlan [emily . mary@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:emily.mary@hotmail.co.uk)

Friday, 27th March - Stations of the Cross, 7.15pm, Abbey Church

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

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 - Thursday at 2.30pm, starting next Thursday 26th February. 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 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!**

For those that have requested them, Gift Aid Envelopes will be ready to collect in the Narthex next weekend (28th/29th March)

Calling all I.T people!

Anyone with experience of Ebay and similar sites who might like selling for charity, please contact the Parish Office.



Easter Eggs at the Fair Trade stall

The Fair Trade stall has children's Easter Eggs for sale.

On sale is the creamy Fairtrade milk chocolate Easter Egg from The Meaningful Chocolate Company, complete with a large 24 page Easter story-activity book.



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.*



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.



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

<https://worthabbey.net/our-retreats>



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

TIME: 7pm - 8:15pm UK time, Tues 24 Mar



Or register using the QR code:



100 x 26

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

Men's Way of the Cross 2026 - Friday 20th to Saturday 21st March - Our Lady of Ransom Church, Eastbourne

The event will follow the same format as previous years - beginning at Our Lady of Ransom Church, Eastbourne, with Adoration and Confessions at 9pm, Holy Mass at 10pm, and the Way of the Cross departing at 11pm. We return at dawn for a period of quiet Adoration, testimonials, and breakfast together. If you know a man who would benefit from this night - a friend, family member, or fellow parishioner - please pass this on to him directly or share the event website.

Full information, including route details and how to confirm your attendance, is available at www.menswayofthecross.co.uk We hope to see you on the trail.

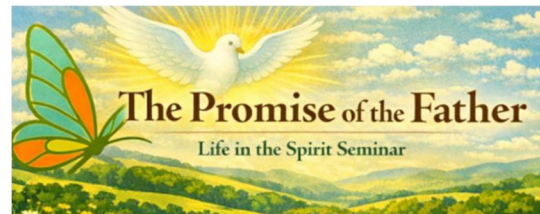


Life In The Spirit Seminars - St Joseph's, Redhill, starting Tuesday 14th April – 2nd June 2026

You are warmly invited to take part in our upcoming Life in the Spirit Seminar in support of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan, taking place in St Joseph's Redhill with Pentecost Vigil at Our Lady of Consolation West Grinstead.

This journey over seven sessions is an opportunity to deepen your relationship with Jesus and to experience anew the abundant power of His Holy Spirit. Each session includes inspiring teaching from excellent speakers, personal testimonies, small-group sharing and prayer.

For further information, please visit <https://www.abcharismatic.org/the-promise-of-the-father-2026/>



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

Join us for what promises to be a wonderful, engaging and affirming day with guest speaker, David Wells. You will be able to listen to the inspirational experience of David Wells as evangelist, father and grandfather. A chance to meet with people from across the grandparent network of the diocese and those who are keen to bring the faith to the next generation. For more details on David's powerful, fun and engaging talks on our faith you might like to visit his website: davidwellslive.com



To register, go to the Events page of the Diocesan website W: www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/events

If you have any questions about the day please contact Deacon Simon South, Diocesan Marriage & Family Life Adviser E: simon.south@abdiocese.org.uk

Mental Health Awareness training – Saturday 9 May 2026 10-3pm at the St Philip Howard Centre, Crawley - Tickets are just £40 per delegate (usual price £120)

One of the challenges that we are experiencing in our modern world is the growing number of people, of all ages, experiencing the darkness and challenge of various mental health conditions. Thanks to the support of Mental Health England, we are able to offer this training, to explore the realities, symptoms and impact of living with these many debilitating conditions. Thanks to the support of the trainer, we are able to highly subsidise the event.

To register go to the Events page of the Diocesan website: www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/events

If you have any questions about this course, do not hesitate to contact Deacon Simon South, Marriage & Family Life Adviser at: simon.south@abdiocese.org.uk



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>)



Please join us on a Mary's Meals walking pilgrimage

Would you like to join a Mary's Meals walking pilgrimage this year? Details of all the pilgrimages are available here: <https://www.marysmeals.org.uk/get-involved/charity-events/walk-for-hope>.

Options include the Augustine Camino from Rochester to Ramsgate via Aylesford Priory, Canterbury Cathedral and Minster Abbey from 5-11 September, and The Way of Our Lady of Consolation from West Grinstead to Storrington and onto Arundel Cathedral from 8-9 May.

You are very welcome to join us for a single day, for several days, or for a whole pilgrimage. Come on your own or as a group. To find out more or to sign up, please go to <https://www.marysmeals.org.uk/get-involved/charity-events/walk-for-hope> or contact Roy Peachey from Mary's Meals at info@marysmeals.org.



Social Action for Parishioners

A Call to Prayer for Life

Archbishop **John Sherrington**, the Lead Bishop for Life Issues for the Bishops' Conference, has issued a statement as members of the House of Lords prepare to vote on the Crime and Policing Bill on **Wednesday, 18 March**.

Certain clauses in the Bill could change current abortion law, and the Archbishop is urging prayer and careful consideration of these matters.

In his statement, Archbishop Sherrington reminded the faithful that the dignity of every human life - born and unborn - is at the heart of the Church's teaching. He highlighted the importance of protecting the health and well-being of both mother and child, and he encouraged support for amendments that would ensure women receive proper medical care and consultation.

"As we approach these votes, I urge everyone to pray for our legislators, and for a healthcare system that respects the dignity of both mother and baby. We also give thanks for those who provide compassionate support to women facing difficult pregnancies.

St Joseph, protector of pregnant women and the unborn, pray for us." Parishioners are invited to join in prayer. This is a moment to reflect on the Church's mission to uphold the sanctity of life, and to offer support, care, and prayer for mothers, children, and families across the country.



Easter Triduum Timetable at Worth Abbey 2026

Maundy Thursday – 2 April 2026

06:15–06:50 Matins

07:30–08:00 Lauds

13:00–13:10 Midday Prayer (no Vespers)

20:00–20:20 Confessions

20:30–21:30 Community Concelebrated Mass of the Lord's Supper – followed by Watching at the Altar of Repose (Unity Room) until midnight

Good Friday – 3 April 2026

06:15–06:50 Matins

07:30–08:00 Lauds

13:00–13:10 Midday Prayer

14:30–14:50 Confessions

15:00–16:40 Good Friday Service of the Lord's Passion

Immediately After Service Confessions for 30 minutes

20:15–20:30 Compline (no Vespers)

Holy Saturday – 4 April 2026

06:15–06:50 Matins

07:30–08:00 Lauds

13:00–13:10 Midday Prayer

18:45–19:15 Vespers

20:30–20:50 Confessions

21:00–22:30+ Easter Vigil Mass of the Lord's Resurrection – followed by refreshments in the Narthex

Easter Sunday – 5 April 2026

08:30–09:00 Lauds

09:15–09:45 Confessions

10:00–11:00 Parish Easter Morning Mass

13:00–13:10 Midday Prayer

18:00–18:30 Pontifical Vespers

Community of Saints

St Patrick: Apostle of Ireland

Saint Patrick is one of the most beloved saints of the Church and the principal patron of Ireland. His feast day, on 17 March, honours the missionary who helped spread Christianity across the island during the fifth century.

Patrick was born in Roman Britain in the late fourth century into a Christian family. His father, Calpornius, served as a deacon. When Patrick was sixteen, Irish raiders captured him and carried him to Ireland as a slave. During the six years he spent tending sheep, he turned deeply to prayer and faith. Eventually he escaped and made his way back to Britain after a long and difficult journey.

After returning home, Patrick experienced a powerful spiritual call to return to Ireland as a missionary. Following years of preparation and ordination, he went back to the land of his captivity to preach the Gospel. Travelling widely, he baptised converts, established Christian communities, and strengthened the faith of existing believers. Because of these efforts he is often called the “Apostle of Ireland.”

Two short writings attributed to Patrick—Confessio and the Letter to Coroticus—offer rare personal insight into his faith, humility, and pastoral concern for his converts. In them he credits God alone for the success of his mission and reflects on the hardships he endured while preaching the Gospel.

Many stories grew around Patrick after his death, including the well-known tradition that he used the shamrock to explain the mystery of the Holy Trinity and the legend that he drove snakes from Ireland. While these stories belong to later tradition, they reflect the deep affection with which generations of Christians have remembered him.

Today, St Patrick remains a powerful symbol of faith, mission, and perseverance. His life reminds Christians that God can work through even the most unlikely circumstances to bring the Gospel to new peoples and places.



Story Time With The Saints

Saint Patrick: The Boy Who Brought God's Love to Ireland

Hello, friends! Today we're going to hear the story of Saint Patrick.



Long, long ago, a boy named Patrick lived in Britain with his family. His father was a deacon, and his family believed in God. But when Patrick was sixteen years old, something frightening happened.

Pirates came by ship and took Patrick away across the sea. He became a shepherd, looking after sheep on green hills far from home. Patrick was often cold, lonely, and far away from his family. Poor Patrick!

But during those quiet days and nights with the sheep, Patrick began to pray. Slowly, his faith grew stronger and stronger. He talked to God every day.

One night Patrick had a dream. In the dream, God showed him a way to escape. So Patrick walked for many miles until he found a ship that carried him safely home.

Patrick was happy to see his family again. But then... Patrick had another dream. In this dream, the people of Ireland were calling to him. They were asking him to come back and tell them about God's love.

So Patrick studied hard, and prayed hard. After many years, he became a priest. He returned to Ireland – not as a slave this time, but as a missionary.

Patrick travelled across the island, visiting towns and villages. He told people about Jesus and about God who loves everyone.

One simple way Patrick explained God was by picking up a tiny shamrock – a little green plant with three leaves. "See," he said, "there are three leaves, but just one plant. In a similar way, God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – three Persons, but one God."

Many people listened to Patrick and chose to follow Jesus. Patrick grew old after many years of sharing God's love. But people never forgot the brave man who came to their island to help them know God.

Today we celebrate Saint Patrick every year on 17 March. So next time you see a little green shamrock, remember Saint Patrick – the boy who prayed on lonely hills, the man who trusted God, and the friend who brought God's love to Ireland.



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