

IN TOUCH

Parish Website: www.worthabbeyparish.co.uk

25th/26th March 2017

Sunday 4 of Lent (A)

No: 1088

Do not repay one bad turn with another. Do not injure anyone, but bear injuries patiently (Rule of St Benedict 4: 29-30)

Fr Paul writes:

We offer the conclusion of Pope Francis' meditation on the season of Lent, as we prepare to begin our celebration of Holy Week on Palm Sunday, in two weeks' time. Please pray that our parish community may be blessed in these last weeks of Lent.

The Gospel of the rich man and Lazarus helps us to make a good preparation for the approach of Easter. The liturgy of Ash Wednesday invites us to an experience quite similar to that of the rich man. When the priest imposes the ashes on our heads, he repeats the words: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return". As it turned out, the rich man and the poor man both died, and the greater part of the parable takes place in the afterlife. The two characters suddenly discover that "we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it" (1 Tim 6:7).

We too see what happens in the afterlife. There the rich man speaks at length with Abraham, whom he calls "father" (Lk16:24.27) as a sign that he belongs to God's people. This detail makes his life appear all the more contradictory, for until this moment there had been no mention of his relation to God. In fact, there was no place for God in his life. His only god was himself.

The rich man recognizes Lazarus only amid the torments of the afterlife. He wants the poor man to alleviate his suffering with a drop of water. What he asks of Lazarus is similar to what he could have done but never did. Abraham tells him: "During your life you had your fill of good things, just as Lazarus had his fill of bad. Now he is being comforted here while you are in agony" (v.25). In the afterlife, a kind of fairness is restored and life's evils are balanced by good. The parable goes on to offer a message for all Christians. The rich man asks Abraham to send Lazarus to warn his brothers, who are still alive. But Abraham answers: "They have Moses and the prophets, let them listen to them" (v. 29). Countering the rich man's objections, he adds: "If they will not listen either to Moses or to the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone should rise from the dead" (v. 31).

The rich man's real problem thus comes to the fore. At the root of all his ills was the failure to heed God's word. As a result, he no longer loved God and grew to despise his neighbour. The word of God is alive and powerful, capable of converting hearts and leading them back to God. When we close our heart to the gift of God's word, we end up closing our heart to the gift of our brothers and sisters.

Dear friends, Lent is the favourable season for renewing our encounter with Christ, living in his word, in the sacraments and in our neighbour. The Lord, who overcame the deceptions of the Tempter during the forty days in the desert, shows us the path we must take. May the Holy Spirit lead us on a true journey of conversion, so that we can rediscover the gift of God's word, be purified of the sin that blinds us, and serve Christ present in our brothers and sisters in need. I encourage all the faithful to express this spiritual renewal also by sharing in the Lenten Campaigns promoted by many Church organizations in different parts of the world, and thus to favour the culture of encounter in our one human family. Let us pray for one another so that, by sharing in the victory of Christ, we may open our doors to the weak and poor. Then we will be able to experience and share to the full the joy of Easter. (FRANCIS)

Message from Mandy:

Dear Parishioners of Worth Abbey

After much consideration, it is with a heavy heart that I have decided to step down from my role as Parish Secretary after Easter. As you can imagine, the loss of my Mum and the sudden death of my brother have had a profound effect on me. I feel now is the time for me to make the family my main priority. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your kind words of support and prayers during this difficult time.

It has been a privilege to work with Fr Rod, Fr James, Fr Aidan and Fr Paul, and also with you and for you, the Parish Community, over the last 15 years.

Nick, Abigail, Rebecca and I will remain very much a part of this special Parish.

With my heartfelt thanks and love,

Mandy

Fr Paul writes: *We thank Mandy very much for her many years of such generous and committed service to us all. I would like to thank her in particular for the patient and reassuring guidance which she has given me during my first year in harness. Thanks be to God that she and her family will still be active in our parish. We pray for her very specially, and for Nick, Abigail and Rebecca.*

New PPC Members: Rachel Davies, Christina Fitzsimons, Ana Griffiths, Paddy Hall, Martin Harewood, D'Arcy Trinkwon, Sophia Vaughan and Michael Weston-Burt. Please do approach them, now or in the future, on any matters you wish to raise concerning the Parish. Many thanks to them for their generous service.

Mothering Sunday, 26th March. Held on the 4th Sunday of Lent, Mothering Sunday was originally a time when people returned to their 'mother church' - the church in which they were baptized or where they attended services when they were children. This meant that families were reunited as adults returned to the towns and villages where they grew up. It's said that the services often focused on Mary, mother of Jesus. In time, it became customary for young people who were working as servants in large houses, to be given a holiday on Mothering Sunday. They could use this day to visit their own mother and often took a gift of food or hand-me-down clothing from their employers to her. The traditional Lent fast was lifted slightly on Mothering Sunday and many people prepared a Simnel cake to eat with their family on this day. Simnel cake is a light fruit cake decorated with 12 marzipan balls to represent Jesus and the apostles (with the exception of Judas).

Thursday 30th March, Mass at 5.30pm

Junior Church Holiday. Final class on Mothering Sunday in the Unity Room. We resume on 30th April for Summer Term

Please remember in your prayers – Terry Fallon, RIP, his widow Jo, daughter Jo and all their family; John Surtees, RIP and his widow Jane; Terry Smith and his wife Peggy; Barry Devlin, and Mary, RIP, his wife; Angus MacDonald RIP, his wife Pat and family; Wilfred Ng, RIP and his family; Nick Hely-Hutchinson; Tim Wheeler; Queenie Hopcroft; Emily Martin; Paul Frohock.

Anniversaries – Please pray for the souls of Charles Carlos; John Marsh; Maureen Ponsford; Mgr John Vance; Tom Shann; Evelyn Ticehurst. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them, may they rest in peace. Amen.

Circle Club/Day Centre: need volunteer drivers to join the rota. If you can help occasionally or regularly, please speak with Fr Paul. Drivers undergo DBS checks and need to confirm with their insurers that they will be volunteer driving.

Worth Irundu Friendship Committee are looking for new volunteer members. Please contact Fr Paul.

Refugees Welcome Crawley AGM and shared meal Tuesday 18th April, 7pm, United Reform Church Pound Hill.

Used Stamps and Rinsed Milk Bottle Tops collected for charity via Rachel Davies.

OUTREACH PERU: Sr Charo, a result of Fr Paul's youth group ministry in Parroquia San Benito, Lima, visits Worth Abbey from 9th April to 9th May. First time in Europe, first time in England, English rudimentary: if anyone would like to accompany/host/take her out, please contact Fr Alex (dalex@worth.org.uk 01342 710 328)

EVENTS FOR LENT

Silent Adoration on Fridays in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel.
1-5pm; 7-9pm. ('Holy Hour' 7-8pm)

'Holy Hour' followed by Stations of the Cross at 8pm, every Friday in Lent
in the Abbey Church. The service ends before Compline at 9pm

Discussion Group in St Benedict's on Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm.
We will study the Passion narratives together as a preparation for Holy Week.

CAFOD Lenten Soup Lunches from 12.30pm on Mondays during Lent,
Cinderhill House, Cinderhill, Sharpthorne, RH17 7BD.

Palm Sunday, 9th April

Palm Sunday Procession and Mass 9.30am, starting in the Piazza.

Confession/Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available in Holy Week:

Maundy Thursday from 8 pm;

Good Friday, from 2.30 pm, and after the liturgy;

Holy Saturday from 8.30 pm; Easter Sunday morning, from 10 am.

PARISH DIARY DATES

In Touch - The parish would welcome your feedback on whether you would like to receive In Touch via email, rather than printed copy? Please write to parish@worth.org.uk (or to the parish office).

Counters: Each week the Parish has to count and bank the weekly collections as well as sundry other items (second collections, Irundu tins and various other one-off items). It requires nimble fingers to open gift aid envelopes, a modicum of IT skills to put the results into a spreadsheet having banked the proceeds at HSBC, usually East Grinstead or Crawley, and a bit of patience if the coin counter at the bank breaks down!. About half a day a week once a month. Full training provided by John Fitzpatrick or other members of the counting team. Please contact John Cooper cooperjohn888@gmail.com if you can offer your help. Many thanks.

TRAIDCRAFT: Many thanks to those of you who visited our stall during the recent Fair Trade Fortnight and congratulations if you were a raffle winner. The stall will be open again after 930am Mass this Sunday, 26th March, the 5pm Mass on Saturday, 1st April and after the 930am Mass on Sunday, 2nd April. This will be your last opportunity to buy our Traidcraft Easter eggs!

DIY Skills needed! A small group, in association with SVP in Crawley, will be doing occasional decorating and DIY jobs for people that the SVP are supporting in Crawley. No need to be an expert – just willing to help. Contact Christina cfitzs3287@aol.com or Theresa tree@waitrose.com or Paddy paddy901@googlemail.com.

OTHER EVENTS:

Easter Triduum Retreat for Young Adults 13th-16th April. Worth Abbey and The Wellspring Community invite young adults (ages 18-35) to celebrate the Easter Triduum in prayer, community and reflection with a retreat at Worth. You are also invited to take part in a "Cross Walk" from Arundel on the 9th April, walking across the South Downs and arriving at Worth for the beginning of the retreat. Contact fcarbone@wellspringbrighton.org.uk

Crawley InterFaith Network Speaker Evening: Thursday, 27th April, *The Beliefs of East Asian Faiths*, Satish K Sharma: General Secretary, National Council of Hindu Temples (UK) The Orchard, 1-2 Gleneagles Court, Brighton Road, Crawley, RH10 6AD Contact Iyad Daoud 01293 883372; contact@crawleyinterfaith.net

Morning for Baptism Catechists at DABCEC Saturday, 13th May. Contact david.wills@dabnet.org

SAVE THE DATE:

National Justice & Peace AGM & Open Networking Day: 13th May 10.30am–4.00pm at CAFOD
55 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7JB. Email: admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk; Tel: 0207 901 4864

Horsham Amnesty Presentation of "Asylum Monologues" at the Hawth studio, Crawley on 20th June, 7.30pm. Based on interviews with three asylum seekers, it tells their stories, in their own words, as if the three were in conversation. Presentation about 50 minutes, followed by representatives from a number of local groups, each explaining the work they do with asylum seekers and refugees. Box Office 01293 553636 www.amnesty.org.uk; www.refugeeweek.org.uk

REGULAR EVENTS IN THE PARISH

Adoration: Friday evenings 7.00- 8.00pm in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. Reflection, music and silence. **Confessions (Sacrament of Reconciliation)** Sundays 9.10-9.30am before Mass. **Marian Prayer Group** - 2nd/4th Monday NEW TIME 7.30pm, Lady Chapel. **Lectio Divina** - Tuesdays 8.20pm, for 30 mins, Parlour 3 (entry from the Narthex). Followed by Compline. **Mass with Prayers for Healing** (1st Wednesday) 7.15pm Blessed Sacrament Chapel. Next date 5th April **Christian Meditation Group in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel** 7.45-8.45pm followed by Compline. Next date 29th March; 5th & 26th April Contact: Gabrielle Joyce: 01342 326118/Caterina Brown: 01243 554001. **Vigil for Vocations** (1st Friday) 9.00pm to midnight in the Abbey Church. Next date 7th April. **Children's Liturgy** (1st Saturday) Next date 1st April. **Sunday Prayers for Healing** - Half hour Service in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel once a month after 9.30am Sunday Mass. Next date 7th May. **Next Bereavement Session** 28th March, St Benedict's from 10am.

Parish contacts: parish@worth.org.uk

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01342 710313 (Mob 07764 260216)

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Car Share: Jill Carter 07836 316525

Parish website: worthabbeyparish.co.uk

If you are unable to attend Mass and would like to receive Holy Communion at home, please contact Mandy.

Next Sunday's readings:

First reading - Ezek 37:12-14 Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.'

Second reading - Rom 8:8-11

..and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

Gospel – John 11:1-45

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' But when Jesus heard it, he said, 'This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it. Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?' Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.' After saying this, he told them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.' The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.' Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow-disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.' And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?'

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead for four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upwards and said, 'Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.' When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.' Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

Monday, 27th: Isa 65:17-21; John 4:43-54

Tuesday, 28th: Ezek 47:1-9, 12; John 5:1-3, 5-16

Wednesday, 29th: Isa 49:8-15; John 5:17-30

Thursday, 30th: Exod 32:7-14; John 5:31-47

Friday, 31st: Wis 2:1, 12-22; John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

Saturday 1st: Jer 11:18-20; John 7 1:40-53

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