

IN TOUCH

Parish Website: www.worthabbeyparish.co.uk

6th/7th May 2017

Sunday 4 of Easter (A)

No: 1092

If you notice something good in yourself, give credit to God, not to yourself, but be certain that the evil you commit is always your own (Rule of St Benedict 4: 42-43)

Pastoral Letter, 4th Sunday of Easter

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On 5th January this year, Pope Francis said, in an address to the Bishops of Italy:

“The doors [of vocation] are opened through prayer, through good will, through risk,” he said. “Jesus told us that the first way to have vocations is prayer, but not all are convinced of this... Pray with the heart, with your life, with everything.”

Today, Good Shepherd Sunday, the Church throughout the world is called to reflect on the theme of Vocations to Priesthood and the three themes given to us by the Holy Father – prayer, good will, risk – provide an ideal path for our reflection.

As we look to the future of our Diocese and the ways in which the Mission given to us by Christ will be continued, the Eucharist will always be the centre of our lives. The encounter that we have with the person of Jesus, the Word who is Life, is the pinnacle of our worship and the source of our activity in His Name. While the Diocese is blessed with many wonderful priests, I call on each and every person in this Diocese to join with me in prayer for vocations – for we need priests. Pope Francis’ insistent words – “pray with the heart, with your life, with everything” – must find a home in us in every aspect of our lives, and our prayer for vocations to the priesthood is no exception.

To assist us in this work, a new Vocations Prayer Card has been produced and is available in every parish today and will be available in our schools. I ask you to join with me in praying this prayer each and every day.

The praying of the Rosary is a part of many people’s lives of prayer. I invite parishes to form groups of people who will commit to praying the Rosary for Vocations to Priesthood.

The practice of Eucharistic Adoration is an aspect of parish life in many parts of the Diocese. Times of Adoration provide excellent opportunities for prayer for Priestly Vocations and I ask every parish to hold a Holy Hour each month for this intention. Materials to assist in this are available on the National Vocations Website.

The Holy Father speaks of good will and risk. For the one whom God calls to Priesthood, both of these are necessary. Good will leads to an openness of mind and heart that enable us to listen to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit. The call to Priesthood, more often than not, comes in quiet ways: the example of a priest; the example of parents and family members as they persevere in Faith; a thought about service to the Church; a renewed experience of God’s presence when on retreat or at a day of prayer and celebration; a reawakening of awareness of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. These are some examples, but good will is a prerequisite if we are to open our minds and hearts to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

There is also the element of risk – for the decision to reflect further on Priestly Vocation and to offer oneself for Formation and Ordination is a step into life-long commitment and service; of “following Christ the Head and Shepherd, not seeking any gain, but moved only by zeal for souls.”^[2]

To those of you who sense these stirrings of the Holy Spirit, calling you to service of Christ and his Church, I say this: be open to the call, pray, take the risk. Be a part of the Mission of this Diocese as a Priest. You are needed and valued by the whole of our Diocesan Family and can be assured of the prayers and support of all.

With every Blessing,

+Richard

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Bishop of Arundel & Brighton

^[1] POPE FRANCIS, Address to Italian Bishops’ Conference, 5th January 2017.

^[2] ROMAN MISSAL, Renewal of Priestly Promises at the Chrism Mass.

This Sunday is World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

Second Collection this weekend for The Education of Future Priests (World Day of Prayer for Vocations)

Service of Prayers for Healing: Blessed Sacrament Chapel after 9.30 am Mass this Sunday.

Thursday 11th May, Mass at 5.30 pm

Please remember in your prayers – Mike Goodridge for recovery of health; Dr Salvo Xerri, RIP (Funeral in the Abbey Church on Friday 12th May at 2pm). Please pray for vocations to the religious life.

Anniversaries - Please pray for the souls of Veronica Andrea Maria Paterson, Jim Kilduff, Hilary Walker, Sam Bryant, Peter Hutchings, Stan Bogacz, Pamela Kennedy, Sean Lyons. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them, may they rest in peace. Amen.

Vacancy for Parish Secretary: CV and covering letter, marked "Application for Parish Secretary" by post please to Fr Paul Fleetwood, OSB, Parish Priest, Worth Abbey Parish, Paddockhurst Road, Turners Hill, West Sussex RH10 4SB Job Description available at www.worthabbeyparish.co.uk or email parish@worth.org.uk Closing date 19th May.

Gift Aid Envelopes: If you have not received yours for 2017/18 please contact Paddy Hall at the Parish Office.

PARISH DIARY DATES

Marian Month of May The month of May is dedicated to The Blessed Virgin Mary. The first 24 days fall within the liturgical season of Easter which is represented by the liturgical colour white — the colour of light, a symbol of joy, purity and innocence (absolute or restored). The remainder of the month (beginning the Monday after Pentecost) is in Ordinary Time which is represented by the liturgical colour green. This symbol of hope is the colour of the sprouting seed and arouses in the faithful the hope of reaping the eternal harvest of heaven, especially the hope of a glorious resurrection. Pope Francis asks us to recall the courage of the Blessed Mother to place her youth and enthusiasm in God's hands. He prays and invites us to pray, that we all may be "granted that same openness of heart, that same readiness to respond 'Here I am,' to the Lord's call, and that same joy in setting out, like her, to proclaim him to the whole world."

LORD of the Harvest,

BLESS young people with the gift of courage to respond to your call.

Open their hearts to great ideals, to great things.

INSPIRE all of your disciples to mutual love and giving—

for vocations blossom in the good soil of faithful people.

INSTILL those in religious life, parish ministries, and families

with the confidence and grace to invite others

to embrace the bold and noble path of a life consecrated to you.

UNITE us to Jesus through prayer and sacrament,

so that we may cooperate with you in building your reign of mercy

and truth, of justice and peace. Amen. (Pope Francis)

Bike Ride 6th June-13th July – Les Whittaker is undertaking a 1500 mile route from the Memorial for Unborn Children, East Grinstead to Fatima, Portugal, to celebrate and support the Message of Fatima in its Centenary and in memory of the 8.7 million unborn babies killed since the passing of the 1967 Abortion Act. Les will be speaking after masses **this weekend** about his forthcoming trip. To sponsor Les, visit justgiving.com/crowdfunding/fatima100.

Episcopal Ordination, Fr John MacWilliam, former Worth School student, has been appointed Bishop of the Diocese of Laghouat, which covers a huge area of the Algerian Sahara. Fr John has served as a White Father for many years in North Africa. His Episcopal Ordination will be held here in the Abbey Church at 2pm on Saturday 20th May. You are most welcome to attend.

Meditative Walk during Refugee Week, around the grounds of Worth Abbey, with prayer, and with the Lampedusa Cross. Saturday, 24th June, beginning at 3 pm, from the Narthex, followed by Mass at 5 pm, with prayers for refugees, and then supper. Please let us know if you can come. Everyone welcome to all or part of this.

Thank you to all who completed the Brexit trade petition, a joint initiative between Traidcraft, The Fairtrade Foundation and Global Citizen. It reached an amazing 38,000 signatures, strengthening the call for a Brexit that works for people who trade with us from the poorest countries.

First Holy Communion: The classes begin Sept 2017, for children who will turn 8 years old by May 2018 and older. For details or to register, please contact Rachel Davies on 07801-696354 before the end of July.

OTHER EVENTS:

Aged between 13-29 years old? The Catholic Church in England and Wales would like to hear your thoughts on life, faith and connection with the Catholic Church: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/parish-youth-poll or search for 'Catholic Mega Youth Poll.'

Sussex Uncovered 2: Bridging the Gap. It's easy to think of Sussex as a county of great wealth... However..there are significant numbers of others struggling to cope with disadvantage and deprivation. Sussex Community Foundation's new report, *Sussex Uncovered 2: Bridging the Gap* shows that child poverty is still shockingly high. Within Sussex, Crawley has the greatest proportion of children at 20.19%. Sussex has the 12th highest proportion of population aged 65 and over out of 53 sub-regions in England & Wales. Crawley has the smallest proportion of population aged 75 and over at 7.09%. Visit www.sussexgiving.org.uk/about-sussex-community-foundation/sussex-uncovered-2/

Marriage Care volunteers needed! Marriage Care is a Catholic organisation providing marriage preparation and relationship counselling services through 50 centres across England and Wales. Our centre for Crawley and the surrounding area is in need of Marriage Preparation Course Facilitators to present and facilitate courses to small groups of engaged couples (training provided) and a Parish Liaison Officer to help promote services and volunteer opportunities in the local parishes. We are also in need of Qualified Relationship Counsellors to deliver relationship counselling. Visit: www.marriagecare.org.uk or email volunteer@marriagecare.org.uk

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

Crawley InterFaith Network Speaker Evening: 18th May 7-9pm 'Commonalities between the Abrahamic Religions', Michael Harris: Eastbourne Faiths Forum / World Congress of Faiths. The Orchard, 1-2 Gleneagles Court, Brighton Rd Crawley, RH10 6AD. Contact Iyad Daoud contact@crawleyinterfaith.net Tel: 01293 883372

"March for Life" in Birmingham, Saturday 20th May. This year is the 50th Anniversary of the Abortion Act and over 8 million babies' lives have been lost since 1967. Good Counsel are arranging 3 coaches from London and many others are being arranged from around the UK. For details, visit www.goodcounselnetwork.com or phone 0207 723 1740

Vocations Weekend, Broadstairs, Kent. 26th -28th May, for young women considering the vocation to religious life. Input from FCJ sisters on different aspects of vowed life, as well as opportunity for prayer, reflection & discussion. Contact: Sr Lynne fcj: lynnefcj@hotmail.com (Faithful Companions of Jesus)

The Big Church Day Out: Annual Christian Gathering at Wiston House, West Sussex, from 27th-28th May. Visit www.bigchurchdayout.com/south or contact Jack.Regan@dabnet.org to book.

Meals for the Homeless in the Friary Hall. Next date Sunday, May 28th meeting at 11.30 am. Please contact Ashwin Soni if you can help ashel@hotmail.co.uk

SAVE THE DATE:

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. Box Office 01293 553636. Info at www.amnesty.org.uk

Brightlights Festival: annual live music event for Catholic young adults (16-30) Alton Castle in Staffordshire, June 23rd-25th. Visit brightlights.org.uk, call 0300 075 0115 or find us on social media T/FB/IG

Annual National Justice & Peace Conference: 21st-23rd July at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire on 'A Sabbath for the Earth and the Poor: The Challenge of Pope Francis. Contact: admin@justice-and-peace.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 7th June **Christian Meditation Group in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel** 7.45-8.45pm followed by Compline. Next dates 10th & 31st May, 14th & 28th June, 12th & 26th July . Contact: Gabrielle Joyce: 01342 326118/Caterina Brown: 01243 554001. **Vigil for Vocations** (1st Friday) 9.00pm to midnight in the Abbey Church. Next date 2nd June. **Children's Liturgy** (1st Saturday) Next date 3rd June, 5pm. **Sunday Prayers for Healing** Once a month, there is a half hour Service of Prayers for Healing in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel after 930 Sunday Mass. All welcome! Next dates NO June, 2nd July. **Bereavement Session:** Next date Tuesday 6th June. St Benedict's 10-11.30 am. Clare and Marian invite you to drop in for support, a chat, a cuppa and cake. If you are unable to attend and would like us to include your bereaved or deceased loved ones in our prayers at the beginning of our session please email the Parish Office with details.

Parish contacts: parish@worth.org.uk

Parish Priest: Fr Paul Fleetwood

Safeguarding: Rachel Davies 07801 696354

In Touch: worthintouch@hotmail.co.uk

Night time emergencies only 07956 782634

01342 710313 (Mob 07764 260216)

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 Fr Paul.

Next Sunday's readings:

First reading – Acts 6: 1-7

Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, 'It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait at tables. Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.' What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith. (NRSV)

Second reading – 1 Pet 2: 4-9

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture:

'See, I am laying in Zion a stone,

a cornerstone chosen and precious;

and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'

To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,

'The stone that the builders rejected

has become the very head of the corner',

and

'A stone that makes them stumble,

and a rock that makes them fall.'

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. (NRSV)

Gospel – John 14: 1-12

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.'

Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. (NRSV)

Monday, 8th: Acts 11: 1-18; John 10: 11-18

Tuesday, 9th: Acts 11: 19-26; John 10: 22-30

Wednesday, 10th: Acts 12: 24 – 13: 5; John 12: 44-50

Thursday, 11th: Acts 13 : 13-25; John 13: 16-20

Friday, 12th: Acts 13: 26-33; John 14: 1-6

Saturday 13th: Acts 13: 44-52; John 14: 7-14

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