



LIFE

ISSUE 4
OCTOBER 2025

FROM THE ABBOT...



This summer, we began the project of creating an orchard at Worth Abbey: fifty young apple trees, one for each year since the Abbey Church was dedicated for worship in 1975. At first sight our new orchard will seem a modest thing: slender trunks, a few green shoots, fragile branches staked against the wind. Yet the orchard will be a powerful symbol. It will speak of continuity and hope, of patient tending and generous fruitfulness, of roots that reach deep while branches stretch outwards.

In many ways monastic life itself is rather like an orchard. Each day can appear uneventful: times of prayer, work, reading, silence, and rest. Yet over time these small acts become fertile soil. They shelter the weary, nourish the hungry, and quietly create the conditions for God's grace to flourish. As it takes shape, the new apple orchard will remind us of the Benedictine wisdom that stability and persistence in simple things bear fruit beyond our imagining.

This year we have been blessed with many such fruits. Retreatants come here seeking silence and renewal, greeted with a Benedictine welcome by our new hospitality team; parish life is flourishing, especially among the young families who have become a vital feature of our

weekend liturgies, while the Abbey Choir is beginning to develop an international reputation! Our Abbey Pilgrims generously support a range of spiritual and cultural events across the year, as well as continuing to find here an oasis of peace and prayer for their own lives. In a more hidden way, some young men are once again exploring the call to monastic life, a reminder that the Holy Spirit is still planting seeds in new soil.

The rhythm of a Benedictine Abbey is never static. Just as an orchard must be pruned, grafted, and renewed, so too does our community move and adapt. Early in 2026 we shall mark a significant moment in our community's mission. Fr Peter and Fr Patrick will be moving from Worth to join Fr Aidan in our Brighton, St John the Baptist, mission community, continuing our offering of hospitality, prayer, and witness in the heart of that city. At the same time, Fr Gabriel and Br Anthony will return from Brighton to Worth Abbey, bringing with them fresh insights and experience. Br Anthony will become the Prior of Worth, and Fr Gabriel will begin to create the role of Chaplain to Worth School. This exchange of personnel is a reminder that Benedictine stability does not mean immobility: it is a rootedness in Christ and in community that allows movement and change, when the needs of the monastery and the world require it.

Looking ahead, we are taking a further step by opening up new opportunities for volunteers to share in our life and work. Just as the orchard cannot thrive without careful tending, so the Abbey flourishes when many hands and hearts contribute. We already benefit from the time and talent of many generous friends who support Worth Abbey in a variety of practical ways. New volunteer opportunities will appear as our Welcome Centre and Benedictine Study Library come into being. We are already seeking support for the work of our archives, our library, and in caring for the gardens and grounds of the wider estate. These may

seem like small tasks, but each plays a part in making Worth a place of prayer, beauty, and hospitality for all who come here.

The Rule of St Benedict reminds us that all guests are to be received as Christ (RB 53). Volunteers, too, will be welcomed not simply as helpers but as companions in the journey of faith. And just as Benedict urges discretion and gentleness in leadership, we hope that those who come here to give of their time will also find space for their own lives to grow and deepen.

Scripture tells us: "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms" (1 Peter 4:10). Our volunteer initiative is an invitation to do precisely this. It is a chance for the many friends of Worth, longstanding or newly arrived, to share their gifts and discover how service and prayer enrich one another.

While our Church is now fifty years old, Worth Abbey itself is approaching the first centenary of its foundation from St Gregory's, Downside, in 1933. Our founding brethren entrusted us with a legacy of faith, vision, and generosity. With your help, we hope to hand on that same spirit to those who will come after us. Just as the orchard will, in time, bear fruit for generations not yet born, so too may our shared life of prayer, work, and service become a source of nourishment for many.

My prayer is that Worth Abbey will continue to be a community of Christian hospitality where monks, parishioners, retreatants, pilgrims, and volunteers grow together in faith and friendship. With God's grace, the harvest will indeed be abundant.



Abbot Mark





Christopher Jamison OSB, Abbot Mark Barrett OSB, and Fr Luke Jolly OSB will lead the retreat *"Listening to the Future: Monastic Wisdom for Today's World"*

RETREATS

YOUNG ADULTS' ADVENT RETREAT 28th – 30th NOVEMBER 2025

Cost £130 – half price places available
(email retreats@worth.org.uk)

Prepare your heart for the Coming of God this Advent. Step away from the noise of daily life and discover the beauty of this sacred season with a retreat designed especially for young adults.

- Inspiring talks from the monks of Worth Abbey
- Friendship & discussion with other young adults
- Prayer & silence to rest in God's presence
- Join the monastic community in praying the psalms
- Breathe in peace surrounded by the Sussex countryside

At the heart of this retreat is the Benedictine way of life — a balance of prayer and work, silence and conversation, solitude and community. Guided by the rhythm of monastic prayer and meals, you'll find the space to reflect, discern, and allow God to transform your heart as Advent begins.

ADVENT RETREAT 2nd – 4th DECEMBER 2025

Cost £220

Take a step back from the hectic of life and enter the quiet beauty of Advent — a season of hope, preparation, and renewal.

This retreat offers space to pause, pray, and reflect as we prepare our hearts for Christmas and the coming of Christ.

Guided by scripture, prayer, and reflection, Fr Peter will lead us on a journey into the meaning of Advent — opening ourselves more deeply to the presence of God.

Begin the liturgical year with peace, purpose, and renewed faith.

TIME OUT RETREAT AT WORTH ABBEY 8th – 11th DECEMBER 2025

Minimum 2 nights - £90 per person, per night

Step away from the noise of daily life and spend a few days at Worth Abbey, immersed in the rhythm of monastic prayer, quiet reflection, and the peace of the Sussex countryside.

There is no set programme—simply the flow of the Abbey's daily prayer, Mass, and liturgy, with the option to join a session of Lectio Divina and meet 1:1 with a member of the monastic community.

"LISTENING TO THE FUTURE: MONASTIC WISDOM FOR TODAY'S WORLD" 10th – 12th APRIL 2026

Cost £250

In a fast-changing and often uncertain world, many are searching for a deeper rhythm to live by; something rooted, enduring, and quietly wise. What might the monastic tradition have to offer us today, particularly those not called to the cloister?

We're delighted to invite you to a truly special retreat that brings together three distinguished voices from the Benedictine world of monasticism.

- Abbot Mark Barrett OSB, current Abbot of Worth
- Fr Luke Jolly OSB, former Abbot of Worth
- Abbot Christopher Jamison OSB, Abbot President of the English Benedictine Congregation

Together, they offer decades of lived monastic experience, spiritual leadership, and pastoral insight. Their combined perspectives promise a rich and timely conversation on how Benedictine values can guide us in the future.

This retreat is now open for booking by calling St Bruno's, our Retreat Centre or by clicking on this link, worthabbey.net/monasticwisdom





HONOURING DESIGN; ABBEY CHURCH FURNITURE RESTORATION

WORTH ABBEY CHURCH FURNITURE RESTORATION PROJECT

Since late 2017, Worth Abbey has been working closely with master-craftsman Ed Johnson to restore the congregational and choir furniture in the Abbey Church, bringing to life the full vision of Thomas Heatherwick's original design. This long-term project reflects our commitment to preserving the integrity and beauty of our sacred space for generations to come.

CONGREGATIONAL PEWS – NEARING COMPLETION

Following an extended period of design and testing, restoration of the congregational pews began in earnest in early 2023. The penultimate set of pews is currently in the workshop, and once returned, only one final pew will remain to be completed—marking a significant milestone in the project.

CHOIR FURNITURE – NEXT PHASE BEGINS

Attention now turns to the choir furniture, with the first set of monastic seats scheduled for removal in late October or early November. Restoration will begin with the Abbot's seat and progress westward. This phase is expected to continue through to the summer of 2026. The final piece to be addressed is the expansive desk in front of the choir seats. To improve its structure and usability, we are introducing a gap on each side and reinforcing the legs. As the Abbey Church is a listed building, these design changes required formal approval from the Historic Churches Committee, which was granted on 18th September, pending a three-week appeal period.

FUNDING AND COMPLETION TIMELINE

Funding for the choir seats has been fully secured. However, we are actively fundraising the remaining £72,000 needed to complete the choir desks. Subject to securing these funds, we anticipate the entire restoration project will be completed by Christmas 2026.

Once finished, this restoration will support the varied daily uses of the Abbey Church for many years to come.





Images courtesy: Pierre-François Dub-Attenti / AROSS (Association pour le rayonnement des orgues Aristide Cavallé-Coll de l'église Saint-Sulpice)

MUSIC

A choir of around sixty singers descended on Paris this August for the Worth Abbey Choir tour to the French capital, following a tour to Venice last year. Worth Abbey Choir's main function is to enrich the Sunday Mass musically alongside the monastic community at Worth, and is an inclusive, non-auditioned choir formed of members of the parish community, with the addition of three choral scholars from local secondary schools. The recently-established tradition of a short summer choir tour provides an opportunity for the choir to spend some time together after such dedicated work throughout the year, and to prepare larger-scale pieces of sacred music more suited to a concert performance.

In the spirit of Benedictine hospitality, guests from other choirs were welcomed to sing alongside the Abbey Choir's regular members in preparing and singing two concerts based on the theme of the Assumption – one at Saint-Sulpice, a church known to musicians throughout the world for its two superb Cavallé-Coll organs and renowned organists, and the other at the beautiful church of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont, known for the shrine of St Genevieve, patron saint of Paris. In addition to guests from outside the Diocese, the presence of the two choral directors of the Diocesan School Singing Programme plus five members of the wonderful Lourdes Pilgrimage music team (rested and refreshed after the recent pilgrimage) meant that it was a wonderful occasion for Diocesan musicians to come together to make music – and also to gather socially.

With scores and rehearsal tracks sent out in advance, the choir gathered at Worth Abbey in late July for a whole-day rehearsal. The music for the tour included the Quatre Motets by Maurice Duruflé, of which the Ubi Caritas is perhaps the best-known of those four pieces; with one of the concerts falling on the Feast of the Assumption (15th August), and the following the day after – a good number of Marian-themed works were also featured. Given that the first of the two concerts was at Saint-Sulpice, the opportunity to perform Louis Vierne's Messe solennelle for two organs and choir presented itself – and around half of the rehearsal day was dedicated to making sure this monumental work came off in a way that could compete with Saint-Sulpice's famous organs (for which the piece was written). The concert was promoted as part of the internationally-known summer organ concert series, meaning that Saint-Sulpice's organists accompanied us: Karol Mossakowski and Axel de Marnhac. Many organists, liturgical musicians and organ builders were in attendance and told us they had travelled from various cities across France, Germany and even Brazil to hear a rare performance of Vierne's masterpiece in its original setting.

With everyone making their own way to Paris – whether that be by train, plane, or in another way – the spacious interior of

Saint-Sulpice gave welcome respite from the prevailing Parisian heatwave. A rehearsal just after midday prepared us all for singing in the middle of the church – almost half way between the two organs in a space larger than Paris' Notre Dame cathedral. A packed nave of eager listeners greeted us at that Assumption Day concert, with the Vierne Messe solennelle in particular captivating those present. Shortly after the concert, one of the audience members uploaded a video of the end of the Vierne Kyrie – and that video now has over 67,500 views and 1,000 'likes' on the original post – a great recognition for all the work the singers put in both at home, at the rehearsal day, and in coming to sing so beautifully and heartily.

A group meal at the end of the tour's first day provided a great opportunity to reflect on such a joyful musical experience, interspersed as it was with the reedy tones of an accordion, the strumming of a guitar, and two French chanteurs weaving between tables.

Saint-Étienne-du-Mont was the church of Maurice Duruflé – the composer of those four motets mentioned earlier – who was the church's organist from 1929 until his death in 1986, receiving a papal designation for his outstanding contribution to Catholic church music. We were treated to performances of some of his organ works, and to top off the four motets, the choir was keen to sing Duruflé's hauntingly beautiful Notre Père (his choral setting of the 'Our Father' in French). Starting the concert as at Saint-Sulpice, Bruckner's Tota pulchra es resonated through the visually-striking church – this was a piece Worth Abbey Choir last sang for the visit of the relics of Saint Bernadette back in 2022, so it was wonderful to revisit it for these two Parisian concerts. In contrast to the formal concert at Saint-Sulpice, a more transient group of tourists enjoyed the varied programme – and for the choir, the opportunity to sing music written for that particular church was very powerful and memorable.

The tour, being only two days in length (15th & 16th August, with a rehearsal day on a Saturday in July), was designed to help enable those with professional or family engagements to participate in full.

Guests are always welcome at Worth Abbey – and should you be interested in learning about future tours or come-and-sing style events, or singing more regularly with the Abbey Choir, please contact Edward Dean (Director of Music and Monastic Organist) at edean@worth.org.uk

**Edward Dean,
Abbey Director of Music and Monastic Organist**



A MOMENT OF BLESSING: HONOURING ST BENEDICT IN STONE

On Sunday 23rd August, following morning Mass, the Abbot and monastic community, joined by members of the Lay Community of St Benedict and parishioners, gathered for a special blessing of the new statue of St Benedict.

Timed to coincide with the LCSB's summer gathering, the ceremony marked a meaningful moment of dedication. The statue was blessed with holy water and incense, a ritual that underscored its spiritual significance and welcomed it into the sacred space of the Abbey.

The sculptor, Richard Watts, a long-standing member of the LCSB, shared reflections on his creative journey. He spoke of the deep personal resonance in sculpting the young St Benedict, capturing the moment he first set out to explore his monastic vocation. Richard chose Portland stone for the piece, to complement the existing ambo, altar and font within the church.

The occasion was thoughtfully documented by Michael Woodward, whose photographs offer a visual record of the blessing.

This new addition to the Abbey Church stands not only as a work of art, but as a symbol of vocation, tradition and shared faith rooted in the legacy of St Benedict.

The wonderful photographs and a video recording of the event can be viewed on the News page of the Abbey website at worthabbey.net.



WORTH ABBEY INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

We warmly invite you to apply for the next session of our Monastic Internship Programme at Worth Abbey. Running from **27th April to 19th June, 2026**, this is a unique opportunity to step into the rhythm of monastic life, rooted in prayer, community, and reflection.

Each intake welcomes up to five men to live alongside our Benedictine monks, sharing in the daily life of the monastery. Interns receive teaching, spiritual guidance, and full board—free of charge—and contribute to the Abbey through work and service.

Whether you're discerning a vocation, seeking spiritual renewal, or simply curious about the monastic way, we welcome you to explore this journey with us.

Visit our *Come as an Intern* page on our website to learn more about the programme and how to submit an application.



VOLUNTEER SHOUT OUT

Are you free Saturday 18th October 09:00-15:00?

Worth Abbey Estate is looking for volunteers to help with an important task: beating back the bracken and laying protective matting around the 6000 saplings planted earlier this year (February/March). These young trees need a bit of extra care to thrive, and your help would make a real difference.

All you need is some sturdy footwear, warm clothes (if necessary), some gardening gloves and to meet us up at the Bermondsey Huts, just off Back Lane.

If you are free, please email saldridge@worth.org.uk



ARCHWAY LODGE – A RETREAT WITHIN WORTH ABBEY ESTATE

Welcome to Archway Lodge, a charming retreat nestled in the tranquil grounds of the Worth Abbey Estate. Here, heritage meets comfort in a setting surrounded by peaceful woodland and the calming presence of the Abbey itself. Whether you're seeking quiet relaxation, a countryside adventure, or simply the space to pause and reflect, Archway Lodge is the perfect place to escape the bustle of everyday life.

A Home with History

Archway Lodge is more than just a place to stay — it's a piece of the estate's story. Built in the 19th century as a gatehouse to the Abbey, it once marked the threshold into monastic life. Today, carefully restored and thoughtfully furnished, the lodge blends timeless character with modern comfort. Guests have the rare opportunity to experience history while enjoying the warmth of a true home-from-home.

Stay With Us

We're thrilled to share that Archway Lodge is now available to book through Airbnb, where it has already received glowing 5-star reviews from our guests. Whether you're visiting for a weekend break or a longer stay, we'd be delighted to welcome you.



Guest Reviews for Archway Lodge

Russell – August 2025 | ★★★★★ "A truly beautiful and unique place to stay, with fabulous views of the Sussex countryside. Extremely spacious, and very clean accommodation. Highly recommended!"

Drishan – September 2025 | ★★★★★ (7 years on Airbnb) "An absolutely amazing stay, The lodge was even better than we expected. We'll be looking forward to booking again!"

HEART AND SOUL CAMPAIGN

OLD WORTHIAN SUPPORT FOR THE HEART AND SOUL CAMPAIGN

For Paddy Jago (class of 1975), Worth was more than a place to learn — it was where he first discovered the values that continue to shape his life. From leading sports teams to embracing the Benedictine ethos of service and community, Paddy's time at Worth left a lasting impression.

Decades on, he remains connected to Worth School and Worth Abbey. Paddy has been involved in alumni events and retreats, and stays engaged with the life of the community he remembers so fondly. "Worth provided me with a great education but the Abbey and monastic community also left a lasting impression on me, which shaped my appreciation for thoughtful living, perseverance, and the strength of community," he says.

Recently, Paddy has also thrown his support behind the Worth's *Heart and Soul Campaign*. For him, the campaign is about sustaining the qualities that make Worth unique — a place where people are welcomed, inspired, and challenged to grow.

His involvement is a reminder that the bonds formed at Worth last a lifetime. Through engagement and giving, Paddy exemplifies the enduring connection that alumni have with Worth, and the shared commitment to ensure its heart and soul continue to thrive.



FROM THE ABBEY ARCHIVE



A glimpse into Worth's past: this photograph dates from the 1920s. It shows an area of the formal gardens of the Paddockhurst Mansion at a time before the property was sold to the monks of Downside to become Worth Abbey.

Taken from a point in what is now the Church car park, this view towards Archway Lodge (seen just off-centre, at the back of the picture) offers a sense of the elaborately cultivated environment maintained by roughly 50 gardening staff around the Mansion itself.

Today, the Abbey Church sits behind and to the right of the viewpoint in the photograph.

The grounds around the Abbey Church remain a vital part of life at Worth, cherished not only for their beauty but for the sense of peace and connection they bring. Many of our visitors enjoy walking here, with access to the network of paths that weave through the grounds.

A BLOOMING SUMMER AT WORTH

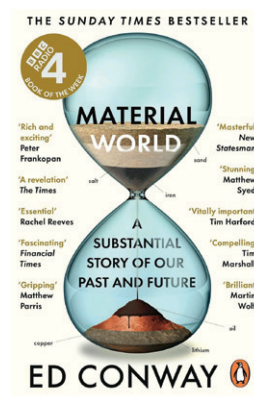
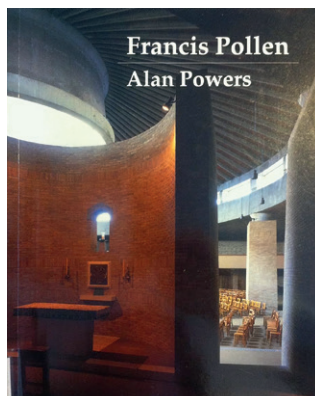
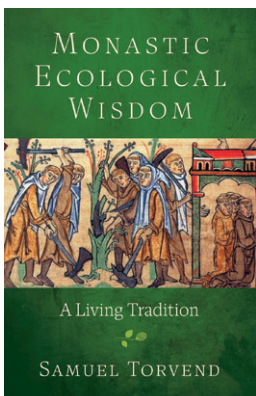
If you've passed by Archway Lodge recently, you may have noticed a burst of colour brightening the grounds. Over the summer, a group of Worth School students teamed up with some of our monks to cultivate a vibrant patch of sunflowers and dahlias. These beautiful blooms have since found their way into the Abbey Church and our Retreat Centre, St Bruno's, bringing joy and life to our sacred spaces.

Originally envisioned by Br Anthony, the flower garden was lovingly revived under the guidance of Tim Atkinson, our Estate Farm Manager. With the students' enthusiasm and care, the garden has flourished once more and is now a thriving display of nature's beauty.

A true Worth collaboration, rooted in community and a love of nature.



ABBAY READING ROOM



Welcome to the Abbey Reading Room, this is where we share the books, our monks are reading each month, along with other recommended readings. We hope these selections inspire and enrich your spiritual journey.

August book: *Monastic Ecological Wisdom: A Living Tradition* by Samuel Torvend, published by the Liturgical Press in 2023.

September book: *Francis Pollen* by Alan Powers, published by Robert Dugdale

October book: *Material World: A Substantial Story of Our Past and Future* by Ed Conway, published in 2023 by W H Allen



IN QUIET COMPANY

Each edition, we invite you into a moment of quiet companionship with a member of our monastic community. Through personal reflection, we glimpse the wisdom and humanity that shape life within the Abbey. These voices offer insight into the spiritual journey, the Benedictine way, and the quiet joys of a life devoted to prayer and service.

IN QUIET COMPANY WITH FR AIDAN MURRAY



Personal Journey & Vocation

What first drew you to monastic life?

What drew me to monastic life? A chance encounter. I was a first-year chemistry student and in the Lent term Worth Abbey invited six men to a retreat weekend; it was this invitation that sparked my vocation. When I visited the Abbey I was impressed by the monks' friendliness and the interest they showed to me. They were normal human beings and I was enlivened by their outward looking approach to life. The Monastic office and the psalms were a new dimension. The seed had been sown. But it was three years before I visited again, and then the Lay Community was starting and I soon became fully involved with that community. That is how I came to the Abbey and monastic life. I never set out to explore a monastic vocation, the vocation found me.

What was it like to begin something new in Brighton, away from the monastery at Worth?

Moving from Worth to Brighton was a big change, a stepping out into the unknown. For me it came after a sabbatical which I had found very renewing and energising so I was ready for something. When we arrived in January 2021 it was during COVID and the third lockdown kicked in the day after we arrived. So our first days and months in Brighton were an extraordinary time and the churches were closed for six weeks. However, it was a positive experience for us, as we could take time to get to know each other better, take time to get to know the geography of Brighton and we had plenty of exercise on the Downs, which are so close.

How has your understanding of the Benedictine way evolved over time?

Over time it is the virtue of perseverance which has meant the most to me, to stick with the Benedictine way and accept changes of direction, opportunities I could not have predicted. This is the spirit of the rule of St Benedict "*persevering in his teaching until death in the monastery*" (Prologue of the Rule).

Daily Life & Rhythm

What part of the daily rhythm do you find most grounding?

In Brighton the most grounding part of the day is undoubtedly the morning. We start with a pretty decent chunk of time dedicated to prayer. As far as possible we follow the horarium at Worth Abbey. The day starts at 6:15am with the Office of Readings; we then have an opportunity for our private prayer and a silent breakfast. At 9:00am we celebrate Morning Prayer and welcome parishioners to that Office which is followed at 9:30am with our Conventual Mass which is also a parish Mass. So from 6:15am until 10:00am we have a generous time for prayer and reflection, a time which we guard carefully.

How does monastic life in Brighton differ from life at Worth Abbey?

It is more difficult to maintain a regular pattern throughout the day in Brighton, especially with pastoral commitments in the parish. Each day is different although we try to maintain the framework of Midday Prayer at 12:30pm followed by lunch, Evening Prayer at 6 pm and Compline, the last Office of the day, at 9pm. The difficulty is in maintaining the balance between this monastic framework of community life and prayer, our principal witness, and the demands from parish needs and other commitments.

Is there a particular practice prayer, work, silence that speaks most deeply to you?

The Jesus Prayer, repeating in time with my breathing:

Lord Jesus Christ

Son of the living God

Have mercy on me

A sinner"

How do you experience community within the monastery?

The monastic community in Brighton is a small community of three. Smaller communities are harder work because we are in close proximity every day and have to make constant adjustments to each other. However the small community can be more rewarding than a larger community because of the relationships we have, the ways in which we rely on each other, the shared aspirations we have and, by and large, working in a shared work.

Reflection & Wisdom

What do you hope for the future of the Brighton monastic presence?

With Brighton we have a two-centre monastery. Brighton can be a gateway to Worth, and Worth is the place of retreat and spiritual refreshment. I believe there is something hugely valuable to our presence in Brighton and a new form of monastic life. There is a hunger and thirst for prayer and contemplation and for the things of God in every generation. Not infrequently at the Sunday Mass we encounter someone who has stepped into a church for the first time, people who are looking for something, for meaning. We are living in new missionary times and we have a contribution to make though living our witness to community life and prayer in the city.



Is there a piece of scripture or a line from the Rule of St Benedict that resonates with you often or right now?

Scripture that attracts me, I'm very fond of Psalm 8 on the beauty of God's creation and also Saint Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:14-21.

Connection & Outreach

What kind of connections have you built with the local community?

When COVID restrictions were eased I made it a priority to network with as many churches, faith communities and social action projects in Brighton as I could. We have got to know ministers and lay folk from a number of churches across Brighton, as well as leaders of other faiths. So I feel very much connected to the community of Brighton. Some of our endeavours came through a campaigning organisation, *Citizens UK*, which the East Brighton Catholic community is quite committed to, and though them to a wide cross section of the local community.

What do you enjoy most about engaging with visitors or the wider community?

One feature of Kemptown where we are based is that it has a village-like atmosphere so in walking to the local Co-op or to the hardware store, the book shop, the butchers or the bakery I usually encounter someone I know and I find that rewarding experience.

How do people in Brighton respond to the presence of the monastic community?

When we go into town, which is a mere 15 minutes' walk down Saint James Street to the Old Steine, not infrequently I will meet people I know - parishioners or people who frequent the Fitzherbert Community Hub (the parish hall extended and refurbished to a high standard which serves as a social outreach hub). Someone unknown might greet me and say *Hello Father* and then I know they have Catholic roots or they may say *Hello Vicar* then I know they have Church of England roots. My experience has been, overwhelmingly, that the presence of someone in a habit is respected and often results in a conversation which not infrequently has a faith dimension. This I think is part of our witness in Brighton, we're still recognised as a symbol of faith and this presents an opportunity to engage in dialogue and to evangelise.

Is there a quote or reflection you'd like to share with our readers?

Pope Francis in *Fratelli Tutti*:

'What the Lord asks of us today is a culture of service, not a throwaway culture. But we can't serve others unless we let their reality speak to us.' (p15)

'Our greatest power is not in the respect that others have for us, but in the service we can offer others. In every action we carry out for the sake of others we lay the foundations for restoring the dignity of our peoples and communities, and in so doing to better heal, care and share.'

MONKS IN THE CITY

A BENEDICTINE PRESENCE IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

In Season 7, the Monks in Brighton continue their quiet mission: to be a prayerful presence in the city, offering stillness, hospitality, and spiritual depth.

This season includes:

Midday Stillness – A pause for silence and prayer each Friday

Saturday Sanctuary – Is a monthly dive into a deeper space for reflection and renewal

Monk Talks – Thoughtful conversations on faith, community, and the challenges of modern life

Location: St John the Baptist, 2 Bristol Road, Kemptown, Brighton
More information at www.monksinthecity.uk

UPCOMING TALKS IN BRIGHTON

"THIS ENCLOSED MONASTIC LIFE"

MONDAY 28TH OCTOBER

Sister Walburga, Minster Abbey

Sister Walburga of St Mildred's Priory, Minster Abbey, will share her journey into monastic life. After converting to Catholicism, she joined the Compass discernment programme at Worth and spent a year with the Wellspring community in Brighton before entering Minster Abbey.

Her talk will explore the theme of *finding peace in an 11th-century abbey*, offering a rare glimpse into the contemplative life and its relevance today.

"THE LAY BENEDICTINE LIFE"

MONDAY 18TH NOVEMBER

Adam Simon, Lay Community of St Benedict

The Brighton community is pleased to host Adam Simon for an evening exploring the richness of lay Benedictine spirituality. Join the community for Evening Prayer at 6pm, followed by a simple supper, and the talk at 7pm.

Adam reflects:



"Not long ago, when I explained to someone who we are in the Lay Community of St Benedict, she replied: "Ah – so you're monastic light!" It made me stop and think. We are not a watered-down version of monastic life — we are laypeople living in the world. Inspired by the Rule of St Benedict, our way is to live conversatio morum in daily life: through prayer, lectio, community, service, and welcome. This is our strength — a lay Benedictine life that sustains us and sends us out to be a force for good in church, parish, workplace, and beyond. As Abbot Mark put it so beautifully in a recent address to the LCSB: "A commitment to live Benedictine values, whether in families, workplaces, or parishes, is no small thing. Lay Benedictines carry the spirit of the Rule into places where monks cannot."





PAST EVENTS

An inspirational presentation by Fred Manson; Celebrating 50 Years of Worth Abbey Church

As part of our year-long celebration marking the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the Abbey Church, Abbot Mark welcomed Fred Manson—Associate Director at Heatherwick Studio and a member of the original design team responsible for completing the church's interiors—for a memorable presentation on Saturday 4th October. The event offered a fascinating exploration of the architectural significance of this remarkable building.

The presentation honoured Francis Pollen's visionary design of Worth Abbey Church, celebrating its unique fusion of modernist architecture with spiritual purpose. Architect Fred Manson brought the design journey to life, offering fresh insights into Pollen's creative process and reflecting on the church's enduring relevance.

His objective was to demonstrate why Worth Abbey is not only a good building, but also a meaningful one, revealing what it tells us about Worth and monastic life. The presentation explored the relationship between architecture, design, and monastic rituals, with Fred highlighting how the church's structure supports both individual contemplation and communal worship, achieving a profound harmony between form and function.

Following the presentation, Fred joined Abbot Christopher Jamison, Abbot President of the English Benedictine Congregation and a monk of Worth, who worked with Fred and the team on the design of the interiors, for a lively and illuminating conversation. Together, they explored the factors that led the monastery to choose Heatherwick Studio for the interior furniture design, and shared reflections on the collaborative process with Fred and Thomas Heatherwick. The discussion captivated a packed Unity Room, with every seat taken and many standing to listen.

The morning concluded with a light lunch and the opportunity to join the monastic community for Midday Prayer, grounding the celebration in the rhythm of Benedictine life. Many guests lingered to reflect on the church's unique design, now seen with fresh eyes, thanks to Fred's passionate and thoughtful presentation.

We've received an overwhelming amount of positive feedback from attendees. For those who were unable to join us, we're pleased to share a recording of Fred's presentation and his conversation with Abbot Christopher, including his presentation slides. Please visit worthabbey.net/latest-news

High Weald Walks to Worth – Mornings to Remember

A joyful group of 20 walkers, including Worth School parents and parishioners, joined Fr Patrick Fludder, a monk of Worth, for a sunlit stroll through the High Weald. Along the way, Fr Patrick shared rich insights into the land's history and ecology, with memorable stops at the Abbey's apiary, a thriving ant hill, and the majestic redwoods.

Afterwards, many joined the monastic community for Midday Prayer and enjoyed refreshments from our trusty Tuk-Tuk. A beautiful morning of nature, reflection, and community.





MASS FOR ALL SOULS

Monday 3rd November, 5:30pm, Abbey Church



Join us at Worth to commemorate the faithful departed
An opportunity to remember and pray for loved ones who have gone before us

If you would like your loved ones to be remembered in prayer by the monks of Worth Abbey throughout the month of November, please fill in their details on the back of this card and place it in the box in the Narthex. Alternatively, you can submit their names online at worthabbey.net/allsouls

Requiem Aeternam Dona Eis, Domine

UPCOMING EVENTS

Looking Further Ahead to 2026; Corpus Christi – A very special Summer Gathering

We warmly invite you to join us for a Pilgrims celebration of Corpus Christi on Sunday 7th June 2026. The day will begin with Parish Mass at 9:30am in the Abbey Church, followed by an outdoor procession of the Blessed Sacrament.

This event offers an opportunity to come together in prayer and witness, honouring the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. All are welcome. We hope you'll join us, so please save the date.



ADVENT EVENTS 2025

**ADVENT TALK BY ABBOT MARK BARRETT,
SATURDAY 29TH NOVEMBER, 10:30am, THE UNITY ROOM, ABBEY CHURCH**

Watching in Silence: A Benedictine Advent
Finding God in the quiet heart of Advent, a Benedictine guide to waiting with hope

Advent is a season of waiting, watchfulness, and hope. We will explore how the Benedictine values of silence, listening, and stability can open our hearts to Christ's coming; past, present, and future. Drawing on Scripture, the Advent liturgy, and the witness of Mary, this talk invites us to discover a deeper way of preparing for Christmas: watching in silence, so that we may recognise the Lord when he comes. Silence, stillness, and watchfulness for Christ's coming.

Join us from 10:30am for registration and light refreshments, followed by the talk and deeper reflection on our theme. The morning concludes with a light lunch and Midday Prayer at 1:00pm. To register your interest in attending the Advent Talk, please email Kelly at kohara@worth.org.uk



**WORTH ABBEY PILGRIMS ADVENT CAROL SERVICE,
SUNDAY 21ST DECEMBER, 3:30pm, ABBEY CHURCH**

We warmly invite you to join us for one of the most treasured events in our annual calendar: the Advent Carol Service. Taking place on Sunday 21 December at 3.30pm, this beautiful tradition brings together the Worth community in a celebration of the Advent season.

The service will feature a selection of traditional and contemporary carols performed by the Abbey Choir. Their music fills the space with harmony and hope, offering moments of reflection and spiritual enrichment.

Following the service, guests are invited to gather in the Narthex for a generous array of festive refreshments, which offers a chance to share conversation and enjoy the warmth of the season.

Everyone is welcome, including families. We recommend arriving early, as the church is always full of familiar faces and new friends alike.

Come and experience the joy, music and sense of togetherness that make this Worth occasion so special. We look forward to welcoming you.



For full details of all our events, please see

www.worthabbey.net

CHRISTMAS 2025 & NEW YEAR 2026 LITURGY TIMES AT WORTH ABBEY

You are advised to arrive at least five or ten minutes before the times published here.

Wednesday, 24th December 2025, Christmas Eve:

06:15-06:50 Matins
07:30-07:55 Lauds
09:00-09:40 Concelebrated Mass (of Wednesday 4 of Advent – 24th December)
13:00-13:10 Midday Prayer
15:00-16:00 Parish Children's Crib Mass
18:45-19:10 Pontifical Vespers (of Christmas)
20:15-20:45 Vigils
22:15-22:45 Confessions available
22:30-23:00 Carols and Organ Music to prepare for...
23:00-00:00 Concelebrated Midnight Mass (followed by refreshments in the Narthex)

Thursday, 25th December 2025, Christmas Day:

08:30-08:55 Lauds
09:30-09:45 Confessions available
10:00-11:00 Concelebrated Christmas Day Mass
18:45-19:10 Pontifical Vespers (of Christmas)

Friday, 26th December 2025:

07:00-07:30 Matins
08:30-08:55 Lauds
17:30-18:10 Concelebrated Mass
18:45-19:10 Solemn Vespers (of Christmas)

Saturday, 27th December 2025:

07:00-07:45 Matins & Lauds
09:00-09:40 Community Mass of Saturday
17:00-18:00 Parish Vigil Mass of Sunday (Holy Family)
18:45-19:10 Solemn First Vespers (of Holy Family)

Sunday, 28th December 2025:

07:30-08:15 Matins & Lauds
08:45-09:15 Confessions available
09:30-10:30 Concelebrated Sunday Mass (Holy Family)
(followed by refreshments in the Narthex)
18:00-18:30 Solemn Vespers (of Holy Family)

Monday, 29th December 2025 until Thursday, 1st January 2026:

07:00-07:30 Matins
08:45-09:10 Lauds
17:30-18:10 Concelebrated Mass
18:45-19:10 Solemn Vespers (29th / 30th of Christmas) (31st / 1st of Mother of God)

From Friday 2nd January 2026

The normal timetable is resumed



WIDER ESTATE

OUR ANNIVERSARY ORCHARD – CELEBRATING 50 YEARS WITH A LIVING LEGACY

As part of our 50th Anniversary celebrations, we are delighted to share plans for a commemorative orchard that will be planted on the estate. This orchard has been made possible through the generosity of our community, whose donations to the anniversary appeal will leave a lasting and meaningful legacy.

The orchard will bring together a carefully chosen variety of trees from Sussex, reflecting both our heritage and our commitment to sustainability. Over time, it will become a place of beauty and tranquillity, enhancing the landscape while providing a space for reflection, learning, and enjoyment for generations to come.

More than just a collection of trees, the 50th Anniversary Orchard will stand as a symbol of gratitude for the past fifty years and as a hopeful investment in the future. Each tree represents the kindness and support of those who contributed to the appeal, and we are deeply grateful for this collective generosity.

We look forward to watching the orchard grow and flourish, just as our community has done over the past five decades. This living, growing legacy will remind us of where we have come from, while pointing towards the possibilities of the years ahead.

Further updates about the 50th Anniversary Orchard will follow shortly.

If you were unable to join us for the 50th Anniversary celebrations but would still like to make a donation, please visit worthabbey.net/donate and select *50th Anniversary Orchard* from the drop-down menu.

YOUR VOICE, YOUR ABBEY LIFE

We want Abbey Life to reflect what matters most to you. Whether it's more local stories, behind-the-scenes glimpses, upcoming events, or something entirely new—we promise that we're listening.

Tell us: What would you like to see more of?

Drop us a line, share your thoughts. Every idea helps shape the next issue.
Email Kelly at kohara@worth.org.uk

