

Crawley Deanery News

Connecting Catholic Communities

SPRING & SUMMER 2026

THE WORD IS LIFE: News from the New Parish (to be)

Pastoral Plan update

Bishop Richard published *The Word Who is Life: The Call to Mission* in January 2024. Underpinning the Plan's vision for the growth of prayer, formation and mission in our community was the transformation of the Diocese's 11 deaneries into 11 mission-focussed new parishes, which will be 'communities of communities'. Brighton & Hove, Guildford, and Weybridge each became new parishes in the Autumn of 2025 and more deaneries were due to follow this year.

Sede Vacante – Vacant See

The Diocese entered the state of Sede Vacante on 14 February, when Archbishop Richard took possession of the See of Westminster. Until a new bishop is appointed for Arundel & Brighton, Canon Jonathan Martin has been elected by the College of Consultors to serve as the Diocesan Administrator. While the See is vacant no significant or consequential decisions can be made that would limit the ability of the next bishop to make his own decisions about the future of the Diocese. However, this does not mean that the future needs of our community have changed, or alter the logic that led to the writing of the Pastoral Plan. Canon Kieron O'Brien, who served under Bishop Richard as Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Planning, recently wrote that: "During this time, the diocesan Pastoral Plan, *The Word Who is Life*, is not put on hold... rather, we should redouble our efforts and prayers to transform our parishes into the 'communities of saints' mentioned in the founding vision for the Plan. Although no more of our new parishes can be officially set up until we have a new pastor for the Diocese, there is much that we can, and should, still do. Ongoing support and resourcing from the central team in the Diocese will always be available to moderators and their teams as they look to the future. Although we would not want to present a new bishop with a fait accompli about the future of the Diocese, we can hopefully present him with a gift: a gift [of] parishes and communities which are flourishing and committed to renewal and mission, with clergy and lay people in shared leadership and collaboration - all of us united by the call of our baptism."

Congratulations to Fr. Stephen Wang on his appointment as our new bishop.



PRAYER FOR OUR BISHOP- ELECT

*'O God, eternal and loving Shepherd,
we bless and thank you for the appointment of
your servant, Stephen, to our Diocese of
Arundel and Brighton.
May your Holy Spirit grace him with a spirit of
counsel and fortitude,
a spirit of knowledge and piety,
so that he may gently and courageously sanctify,
teach and govern the Church of Arundel and
Brighton as we work together to build up the
kingdom of heaven.
May he be a shepherd after your own heart,
who, with compassion and wise discernment,
will care for and lead your people with the joy of the
Gospel.*

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.'

Confirmations 2026

Congratulations to all our young people who were confirmed this year. Below is the group confirmed at the Friary, Crawley.



Bible Course at the Parish of Our Lady & St. Peter's East Grinstead and St. Bernard's Lingfield.

For several weeks leading up to Easter, 40 members of our parish community gathered at Our Lady and St. Peter's to embark on the Bible Society's 'The Bible Course'. This provided a fantastic whistle-stop tour of salvation history, helping us see how the big picture of the Bible fits together. It was a great opportunity to grow in faith and understanding of God's Word. The feedback from those who took part was overwhelmingly positive. Many people said that a high point of the ten weeks was simply the fellowship. It was lovely to meet new people and hear their views. Many participants noted that they now understood the Bible much better than they did before. Between the videos, course book and daily readings everyone felt less overwhelmed by the size of the Bible as a whole and more comfortable with how it fits together. Based on the success of this course there is huge enthusiasm for another one.

Communications Team for East Grinstead and Lingfield Parish

The Promise of the Father; Life in the Spirit Seminars and the Pentecost Vigil 23rd May 2026 at Our Lady of Consolation and St. Francis, West Grinstead

The Arundel and Brighton Charismatic Diocesan Service of Communion (A&B CDSC) team organized a 7-week Life in the Spirit Seminar 'The Promise of the Father' in support of 'The Word Who is Life' Pastoral Plan. The course was based at St. Joseph's in Redhill, and online in community parish hubs and in peoples' homes to prepare for the coming of the Holy Spirit culminating in a Pentecost Vigil Mass at Our Lady of Consolation, West Grinstead.

For those who do not know the A&B CDSC is a local expression of CHARIS the international Service of Communion Catholic Charismatic Renewal called for by Pope Francis to promote and encourage the grace of baptism in the Spirit in the Catholic Church. The Arundel and Brighton CDSC team promote this vision for CHARIS which is the revitalisation and renewal of the Church in order to evangelise the culture, within and across the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. CHARIS was established by the Holy See, through the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and

Life, and is endowed with a public juridic personality. The team's aim is to bring together the various manifestations of the Renewal across A&B, promote the grace of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, promote Christian unity, and serve the poor and needy. All four being at the service of evangelisation, which endeavours to include the youth of the Diocese.

The Promise of the Father Life in the Spirit Seminars were made up of prayer, praise and worship, personal testimonies, inspiring talks to help people live lives inspired by the Holy Spirit and small group discussion. Speakers included Fr. Terry Martin, Deacon Phil Richardson, Fr. Raymond Tumba, Michelle Moran among others. All attendees were encouraged to read the first 4 chapters of the Acts of the Apostles and pray the Novena to the Holy Spirit before the Pentecost Vigil Mass where all



came together in-person from across the Diocese. 180-200 were in attendance at varying times and around 85 attended the Pentecost Vigil.

On the 23rd May excitement built with all expecting the coming of the Holy Spirit in power and might. Fr. Chris Benyon was celebrant helped by Fr. Raymond Tumba and Deacon Colin Purchase. Music ministry was provided by Catherine and Jon who created an atmosphere of gentleness and beauty with Catherine's angelic voice. The Mass was followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament with the opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Prayer ministry was offered by 7 prayer ministry teams who laid on hands and prayed over those who requested prayer. The weather was beautiful so many prayer teams were scattered around the grounds of the Church as the sun went down. Those who had received prayer ministry came away refreshed and full of God's Spirit of love. At this Pentecost Vigil Mass the Holy Spirit came but not in the way expected. He came in such gentleness, like a whisper with the touch of a feather resting on all present. It was utterly beautiful and extremely profound as expressed in feedback received.

If you would like to know more about the work of the A&B CDSC go to <https://www.abcharismatic.org>

CFG

The Christian Friendship Group in the parish of Our Lady of Consolation and St. Gabriel was formed and recognized as a parish group in January 2015 and has become a valued part of parish life. The 19 founding members were formerly part of a UCM Diocesan group but, for various reasons, membership was discontinued. However, the underlying principles of love and friendship has underpinned the CFG in its commitment to the parish and the wider community. All are welcome; however the majority of the the present 23 members are over 60! Many are grandparents and the groups ethos is therefore able to include the specific role and responsibilities within the wider CFG framework.

The Group meets on the 3rd Wednesday morning of each month (except December and August), in St. Gabriel's church hall, when available, or in members' homes.



The leader (annually elected) starts the meeting with prayers. The general substance of the meeting is a discussion of activities, and ideas for future events. These may include suggestions for fundraising activities and the proposed local charity beneficiaries, outings (garden centres are popular!), coffee mornings and talks. The floor is open to ideas!

The highlight of the year is a major fundraising event, held near Christmas and is well supported by the parishioners! There is usually time for impromptu chats and the meeting ends with a fun raffle, and of course coffee, biscuits and sometimes a celebration cake are an integral part of the proceedings!

The World Day of Prayer Service 2026

The origins of World Day of Prayer date back to the 19th century when Christian women in the USA and Canada initiated a variety of cooperative activities in support of women's involvement in mission, at home and abroad. It is from such roots as these that WDP has taken its present shape as a worldwide ecumenical movement of Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action.

The first World Day of Prayer took place in 1927 and was welcomed enthusiastically. In 1969 the World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations encouraged Roman Catholic women worldwide to participate in WDP. To make this possible, WUCWO moved their own day of prayer from March to May. To find out more please visit <https://www.wwdp.org.uk>

The World Day of Prayer in Horsham this year was hosted by St. John the Evangelist on March 6th, and was a great success. In the service we joined a great wave of prayer which encircled the globe, beginning in Samoa and ending, 146 countries later, in American Samoa, all praying with and for the country of Nigeria. The service was written by our Nigerian sisters in response to the theme 'I will give you rest, come' (Matthew 11: 28 -30). The service shared the stories of four Nigerian women: Chioma, Beatrice, Jato and Blessing. They talked about four burdens, those of insecurity, marginalisation, religious persecution and poverty & despair. These are the burdens we brought to the Lord in prayer at the service. We sang some beautiful songs including 'All are Welcome' by the Irish American song writer Marty Haugen. The most memorable thing was the when the offertory was taken and some Nigerian ladies from the parish sang some African hymns, culminating in 'Our God is a God of miracles' - wonderful!

Next year marks the centenary of the organisation and the theme of the service will be for the WDP International Committee - United in Prayer for Justice and Peace. This service will be hosted by St. Mary's Parish Church, Horsham, on March 5th 2027, and all are welcome, especially those from St. John's who can just enjoy the service without presenting it!

Alison Hudson

WDP Horsham Branch Secretary

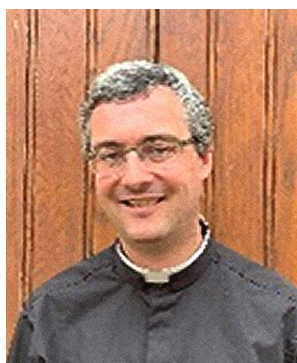
The New Parish Steering Committee

Now up and running. It meets roughly a week after each Clergy Deanery Meeting.

The committee consists of:



Canon Tim Madeley



Fr. Tristan Cranfield



Fr. Nelson Daniel



Dcn. Paul Russell



Claire Fairlie



Steve Innes



Jordan Devi-Taylor

To submit news and events from your parish for possible inclusion in future editions, then email Kathy Bishop at:

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