

# The Catholic Parish of Our Lady of the Rosary, Bexhill-on-Sea

The Communities of St Mary Magdalene, Bexhill & St Martha, Little Common

## PARISH NEWS

22<sup>nd</sup> February 2026  
FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT A

### Message and Invitation from the Holy Father Leo XIV for Lent 2026:

<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2026/02/13/260213d.html>

### Lent 2026

#### Celebrate – Family Activity Pack

[Celebrate Lent Pack 2026](#)

#### Cafod Lent Challenge The Big Lent Walk 2026

There are some sponsorship forms in the church porches, for those who cannot access the internet, and they can also be found online on the Cafod website:

[TBLW Sponsorship form A4 v2.pdf](#)

Jack Doherty is also organising a Cafod Community Walk around Bexhill on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February after 11am Mass and Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March after 9am Mass. For more information and if you would like to attend, please contact Jack: [jackdoherty@sky.com](mailto:jackdoherty@sky.com) or 01424 214605.

### The Parish Office

Unfortunately, we are still operating without a complete telephone system, due to the continued upheaval after the sale of the presbytery and hall!  
The best way of contact continues to be by email only: [bexhill@abdiocese.org.uk](mailto:bexhill@abdiocese.org.uk)

To contact Fr Stephen:  
[stephen.obrien@abdiocese.org.uk](mailto:stephen.obrien@abdiocese.org.uk)

Sylvia Cousins Safeguarding:  
[sg1.bexhill@abdiocese.org.uk](mailto:sg1.bexhill@abdiocese.org.uk)

Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.

We are in the desert. Given the weather of the last few days, this is a bold statement to make, but, just as at Christmas we may use the Jesuit form of Biblical prayer and imagine ourselves standing at the crib with the newborn Saviour, so now, going forward three decades in his life, we may imagine ourselves with Jesus, in a place of sensory deprivation (we symbolise this by such acts as not singing or saying the Gloria in Mass). Why does the Church ask us to do this as we enter this season of spiritual warfare?

One of the reasons is the dramatic juxtaposition presented to us in today's readings. As St Paul puts it in the second reading, sin came into the world through one man- Adam. His fall into sin is depicted in the first reading. Salvation comes through the one who, far from listening to the siren song of the evil one, actively resists and rejects him.

However, we must once again recall that Genesis is not history, but a foundation myth. Just as the Creation in seven days is a way of explaining God's making of everything, and not a blueprint for how he did (as well as giving Haydn a good reason to create one of the finest pieces of choral music!), so the figure of Adam is an allegory. His name comes from *Ha Adamah*, the Hebrew for "earth" or "soil". It shows that he is a depiction of how the world gave in to the Devil's temptations and turned away from God.

The Gospel account is somewhat different. Adam may not have been the prototype of human sin, but Jesus is the cure to it. Jesus, as St Augustine notes, has to be tempted so that, unlike Adam's surrender, he may resist the evil one and show us how to do likewise in him.

Note that Adam is wheedled into sin by the evil one. We can so easily slip into sin by thinking it is virtuous. The devil is, sadly, clever, but Jesus is therefore all the more to be welcomed as the Divine remedy to sin. We can win out even in the greatest temptation if we have Jesus.

And why now? This is the preparation for Jesus' public ministry. We too can use this time of Lent to cleave to him, and thus make ourselves more ready and able to fight this good fight in our ministry throughout the year.

God bless, Fr Stephen.

**We pray for those who have died:** Neville Austin Jr, Yseult Phillips, Veronica Bennett, Frank Twambley, Rodolphe Killingbeck, Lynne Coward RIP.

**We pray for the sick:** Dorothy Smyth, Margaret Hitchman, David Spooner, Samuel Barden, Pete Cornfield, Cecila Weathers, Margaret Carley, Jackie & Laurence Keep, Stephen Doyle, Ron Harbin, Jean Clifford, Margaret McNamara, Elizabeth Doust, Pat Payne, David Ball, Fr Andrew Pinsent, Sian Stevens, John O'Brien, Kate Brignall, Sally Moore, Terence Phillips, Veronica Bennett, Jackie Malcolm, Bridget Bailey.

**Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Website:** <https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/>

**News:** <https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/news> & **Events:** <https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/events>

**New Temporary Deanery Website & Newsletter:** [www.eastbourne-stleonards.org.uk](http://www.eastbourne-stleonards.org.uk).

### **Liturgy & Prayer**

**Child Led Masses at 9am St Marthas:** Our next Child led mass will be on Palm Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> March. Children are all invited to join in our Palm Sunday procession.

**Singing at the Easter Services:** The Parish Choir from St Mary Magdalene and St Martha's will be practicing every Friday during Lent, at 6pm, St Martha's Hall. All parishioners are welcome and invited to join the rehearsals and sing at the Masses at Easter. Margaret Smart & Jo Apicella.

**Stations of the Cross:** During Lent, starting on the first Friday of Lent, 7.30pm, 20<sup>th</sup> February, St Mary Magdalene Church, led by different groups of our Parish community. **Stations of the Cross for Children accompanied by Parent / Carer:** 11am, Good Friday Morning, 3<sup>rd</sup> April, St Martha's Church. All are Welcome. **Stations of the Cross:** CWL, 11.30am, Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March, St Martha's Church.

**Prayer for Priests:** Every first Tuesday of the month, after 10am Mass, St Mary Magdalene (Rosary before the Blessed Sacrament and prayer).

### **Bereavement Support**

**Ministry of Consolation:** if you are recently bereaved or still struggling with Bereavement, our Ministry of Consolation Bereavement befrienders are here to offer support. We also have trained counsellors who can offer support. In the first instance, contact our administrator: 07783 598238 or E: [bexhill@svp.org.uk](mailto:bexhill@svp.org.uk)

### **Social & Pastoral**

**Next SVP Tea at 3:** Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March, St Martha's Hall. Info: [bexhill@svp.org.uk](mailto:bexhill@svp.org.uk) All Welcome.

**Catholic Women's League (CWL):** Meet at 7.30pm on 1st Mon. of the month, in St Martha's Hall. Contact: 211717 or 221803. Following Stations of the Cross 20<sup>th</sup> March, their Lenten Lunch will be in St Martha's Hall. Tickets on sale from 1st March in the Church porch. All proceeds will go to Cafod.

**St Richards Catholic College:** An Evening of Irish Music & Dance, 7pm, Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March. Please [click here](#) for more information and booking details.

**Sussex Catenians:** A Catholic organization for men and their families in Hastings & Bexhill. More info: <https://sussexcatenians.org/> or scan the QR opposite,



Parish Priest: Fr Stephen O'Brien.

Parish Deacon: Rev. Simon Kirkdale.

Administrator: Bonita Osmond. Safeguarding: Sylvia Cousins.



### Parish Offertory & Fundraising

**Mass Intentions & other payments:** BACS: Name: RCD St Mary Magdalene, Acct No. 21077139, S/C 40-05-20. (Please add a reference). **Contactless Payments:** To give by Card, please use the Dona Contactless Machines; select the appropriate category. **GIFT AID:** Some collections are Gift Aid-able.

**Retiring Collections – 22<sup>nd</sup> February – Parish Church Boilers:** To help with the continued maintenance for boilers at both churches, to ensure you hopefully stay as warm as possible whilst attending Mass.

**Weekly Collections 15<sup>th</sup> Feb:** Offertory: £899.26 / GA: £211.00 / Second Collection: £289.00 / GA: £335.00

### Formation & Sacraments

#### **Journey in Faith: Adult Formation & RCIA - Adult Baptisms, Receptions & Confirmations:**

Next Session: 25<sup>th</sup> February, 7pm, St Martha's Hall. Please pray for our Catechumen for Baptism & Candidates for Reception, who now deepen their appreciation of the Catholic faith. The next event is the Rite of Election with Bishop Richard on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February, at Arundel Cathedral.

**Confirmation: Next Session:** Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March – 5pm, St Martha's Church and Hall.

**First Holy Communion 2026:** The next parents meeting for FHC candidates - 6.30pm, 10<sup>th</sup> March, St Martha's Hall.

**Infant Baptism (Aged 0-6):** Applications submitted via the website: <https://stmbexhill.co.uk/baptism/>

**Baptism: Children of Catechetical Age (7+):** These children must be individually prepared, and we will assess your needs on a case-by-case basis. Applications: <https://stmbexhill.co.uk/we-journey-together/>

**Marriage:** 12-months' notice required. Please contact the parish office if getting married in Spring 2026.

**Home Visits:** you need a non-urgent sacramental or pastoral visit, please use the form:

<https://stmbexhill.co.uk/visiting-the-sick-and-housebound/> or telephone 01424 210263 opt, 4.

**Unbound UK Prayer Course:** The next course starts on 10<sup>th</sup> March. The meetings will take place every Tuesday and last for 14 weeks. For more information go to: <https://www.unboundprayer.com/>

**World Day of Prayer: Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March, 10.30am, Little Common Methodist Church, TN39 4SG.**

Annual 'Service for Everyone' hosted by '3 Churches in Little Common'. This year the Service, prepared by Christian Ladies from Nigeria. ***'I will give you rest, Come'***

**Wild Goose Course:** 7.30pm, Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February, St Martha's hall. Topic: The Spirit convicts.

**Mass Intentions:** Don't forget that every Mass celebrated in the parish can be offered for either the repose of the soul of your departed loved ones, or for the well-being and good intentions of yourself, or your family and friends. We have lots of availability in the coming months, both on Sundays and weekdays. If you would like to book a Mass Intention (suggested donation £10) please contact the parish office.

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February**

St Mary Magdalene Church	<b>No Mass</b>	--
St Mary Magdalene Church	10.30am	No Confessions
St Mary Magdalene Church	5.30pm	Confessions on Request
St Mary Magdalene Church	6.00pm	People of the Parish

**Saturday after Ash Wed**

**FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT A**

*Gen 2:7-9; 3:1-7, Rom 5:12-19 & Mt 4:1-11*

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February**

St Martha's Church	9.00am	Liz O'Rourke Andres RIP
St Mary Magdalene Church	11.00am	Francesco Russo RIP
St Martha's Church	11.00am	Syro-Malabar Mass

**Second Collection: Church Boilers Maintenance (GA)**

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February**

St Mary Magdalene Church	<b>No Mass</b>	-
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**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February**

St Mary Magdalene Church	<b>No Mass</b>	-
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**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February**

St Mary Magdalene Church	<b>No Mass</b>	-
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**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February**

St Mary Magdalene Church	<b>No Mass</b>	-
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**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February**

St Mary Magdalene Church	<b>No Mass</b>	-
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**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February**

St Mary Magdalene Church	<b>No Mass</b>	-
St Mary Magdalene Church	10.30am	No Confessions
St Mary Magdalene Church	5.30pm	Confessions on Request
St Mary Magdalene Church	6.00pm	James Spittal RIP

**SECOND 'TRANSFIGURATION' SUNDAY OF LENT A**

*Gen 12:1-4a; 2 Tim 1:8b-10, & Mt 17:1-9*

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March**

St Martha's Church	9.00am	People of the Parish
St Mary Magdalene Church	11.00am	Alexander & Lawrence MacDonald RIP
St Martha's Church	11.00am	Syro-Malabar Mass

**Second Collection: Church Boilers Maintenance (GA)**

**Fr Stephen's Studies:** Please be aware that for the next week Fr Stephen needs to be in Leuven on weekdays for his lectures for the Canon Law course; there will be no weekday Mass on those days. Please keep an eye on the newsletter. Please note also that weekday Mass in Hastings is currently very irregular; for St Leonards parish please see their website for Mass times: [Mass – Parish of the Good Shepherd](#) Our Lady of Ransom in Eastbourne where weekday Mass is usually at 11am; the Church is a 5-minute walk from Eastbourne station and the 99 bus-stop. It also has limited parking.

**Sacrament of the Sick Urgent Visits**

*'Last Rites does not mean Last Minute! "As soon as a person begins to be in danger of death because of illness, injury or old age, the time for anointing has surely already come".*

**Home Visits**

**Office hours:**

[bexhill@abdiocese.org.uk](mailto:bexhill@abdiocese.org.uk)

01424 210 263 opt 4.

**Out of hours:**

[stephen.obrien@abdiocese.org.uk](mailto:stephen.obrien@abdiocese.org.uk)

**For emergencies**

**i.e. Last Rites:**

07872 396683

**In Eastbourne or**

**Conquest Hospital:**

Contact the Chaplaincy on 0300 131 5307 or 5308 who will coordinate the visits to both hospitals (out of hours ask the Ward to call the on-call Catholic chaplain).

**In Bexhill Hospital:** ask

the ward to contact the Parish Office on 01424 210263 opt. 4.

**Going into Hospital?**

Ask for the Sacrament of the Sick in Advance at your usual Sunday Mass.

**Care Home Visits:** Please

clear the visit with the Home before contacting the Parish.