

SCARBOROUGH CATHOLIC PARISHES

CHURCHES OF ST PETER, ST JOSEPH, ST EDWARD THE CONFESSOR

Part of the Middlesbrough Diocesan Trust: Reg. Charity No. 233748

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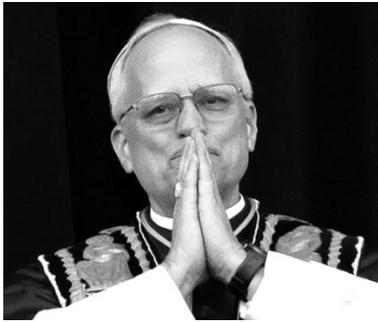
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22 FEBRUARY 2026 – FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR A

Divine Office: Week 3

FULL MESSAGE OF POPE LEO XIV - LISTENING AND FASTING: LENT AS A TIME OF CONVERSION



Dear brothers and sisters,

Listening and Fasting: Lent as a Time of Conversion: Lent is a time in which the Church, guided by a sense of maternal care, **invites us to place the mystery of God back in the centre of our lives, in order to find renewal in our faith and keep our hearts from being consumed by the anxieties and distractions of daily life.** Every path towards conversion begins by allowing the word of God to touch our hearts and welcoming it with a docile spirit. There is a relationship between the word, our acceptance of it and the transformation it brings about. For this reason, the Lenten journey is a welcome opportunity to heed the voice of the Lord and renew our commitment to following Christ, accompanying him on the road to Jerusalem, where the mystery of his passion, death and resurrection will be fulfilled.

Listening: This year, I would first like to consider the importance of making room for the word through *listening*. The willingness to listen is the first way we demonstrate our desire to enter into relationship with someone. In revealing himself to Moses in the burning bush, God himself teaches us that listening is one of his defining characteristics: “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry” (*Ex 3:7*). Hearing the cry of the oppressed is the beginning of a story of liberation in which the Lord calls Moses, sending him to open a path of salvation for his children who have been reduced to slavery.

Our God is one who seeks to involve us. Even today he shares with us what is in his heart. Because of this, listening to the word in the liturgy teaches us to listen to the truth of reality. In the midst of the many voices present in our personal lives and in society, Sacred Scripture helps us to recognize and respond to the cry of those who are anguished and suffering. In order to foster this inner openness to listening, we must allow God to teach us how to listen *as he does*. We must recognize that **“the condition of the poor is a cry that, throughout human history, constantly challenges our lives, societies, political and economic systems, and, not least, the Church.”**

Fasting: If Lent is a time for listening, *fasting* is a concrete way to prepare ourselves to receive the word of God. Abstaining from food is an ancient ascetic practice that is essential on the path of conversion. Precisely because it involves the body, fasting makes it easier to recognize what we **“hunger”** for and what we deem necessary for our sustenance. Moreover, it helps us to identify and order our “appetites,” keeping our hunger and thirst for justice alive and freeing us from complacency. Thus, it teaches us to pray and act responsibly towards our neighbour.

With spiritual insight, Saint Augustine helps us to understand the tension between the present moment and the future fulfilment that characterizes this custody of the heart. He observes that: *“In the course of earthly life, it is incumbent upon men and women to hunger and thirst for justice, but to be satisfied belongs to the next life. Angels are satisfied with this bread, this food. The human race, on the other hand, hungers for it; we are all drawn to it in our desire. This reaching out in desire expands the soul and increases its capacity.”* Understood in this way, fasting not only permits us to govern our desire, purifying it and making it freer, but also to expand it, so that it is directed towards God and doing good.

However, in order to practice fasting in accordance with its evangelical character and avoid the temptation that leads to pride, it must be lived in faith and humility. It must be grounded in communion with the Lord, because “those who are unable to nourish themselves with the word of God do not fast properly.” As a visible sign of our inner commitment to turn away from sin and evil with the help of grace, fasting must also include other forms of self-denial aimed at helping us to acquire a more sober lifestyle, since “austerity alone makes the Christian life strong and authentic.”

In this regard, I would like to invite you to a very practical and frequently unappreciated form of abstinence: that of refraining from words that offend and hurt our neighbour. Let us begin by disarming our language, avoiding harsh words and rash judgement, refraining from slander and speaking ill of those who are not present and cannot defend themselves. Instead, let us strive to measure our words and cultivate kindness and respect in our families, among our friends, at work, on social media, in political debates, in the media and in Christian communities. In this way, words of hatred will give way to words of hope and peace.

Together: Finally, Lent emphasizes the communal aspect of listening to the word and fasting. The Bible itself underlines this dimension in multiple ways. For example, the Book of Nehemiah recounts how the people gathered to listen to the public reading of the Law, preparing to profess their faith and worship through fasting, so as to renew the covenant with God (cf. 9:1-3).

Likewise, our parishes, families, ecclesial groups and religious communities are called to undertake a shared journey during Lent, in which **listening to the word of God**, as well as to the cry of the poor and of the earth, becomes part of our community life, and fasting a foundation for sincere repentance. In this context, conversion refers not only to one’s conscience, but also to the quality of our relationships and dialogue. It means allowing ourselves to be challenged by reality and recognizing what truly guides our desires — both within our ecclesial communities and as regards humanity’s thirst for justice and reconciliation.

Dear friends, let us ask for the grace of a Lent that leads us to greater attentiveness to God and to the least among us. Let us ask for the strength that comes from the type of **fasting that also extends to our use of language, so that hurtful words may diminish and give way to a greater space for the voice of others.** Let us strive to make our communities places where the cry of those who suffer finds welcome, and listening opens paths towards liberation, making us ready and eager to contribute to building a civilization of love.

I impart my heartfelt blessing upon all of you and your Lenten journey. LEO PP. XIV

Masses at St Peter's Church are also LIVE STREAMED via YouTube:

<https://youtube.com/@stpeterschurchscarborough>

Saturday	21	5.30pm	St Edward's	
Sunday	22	9am	St Mark's (not St Josephs)	
		9.30am	St Peter's (Polish)	
		11.30am	St Peter's	
Monday	23	10am	St Joseph's	<i>St Polycarp</i>
Tuesday	24	5.30pm	St Edward's	
Wednesday	25	8.15am	St Peter's	
Thursday	26	10am	St Joseph's	
Friday	27	11.30am	St Peter's (<i>Cafod hunger lunch 12.30pm</i>)	<i>St Gregory of Narek</i>
Saturday	28	10am	St Peter's	

MASS IN THE SYRO-MALABAR RITE celebrated monthly 9.30am on 4th Sunday of month at St Edward's Church.

CONFESSIONS Normal times **Sat: 10.30-11am** at St Peter's & **5-5.20pm** at St Edward's; **Sun: 9-9.20am** at St Joseph's; & **by request**

ADORATION OF BLESSED SACRAMENT weekdays **9.30-10am** at St Peter's, 1 hour before Mass at St Joseph's, 5pm St Edward's
 CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD (Children only) St Peter's 1st Sunday monthly; St Joseph's Sundays, weekly
 HOLY FATHER'S FEBRUARY PRAYER INTENTION: *that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.* DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET Fridays before Mass

LATELY DEAD: Sister Dymphna, Grace Foster, Eric Hayes, Daniel Roberts; ANNIV'S: Ella Connor, Maureen Francis Steed;
 MASS INTENTIONS received: Wainwright, Cooper, Tymon, Dale; ATTENDANCE: Saturday Vigil St Edward's 77;
 Sunday: St Joseph's 112; St Peter's 194; Polish 50 (est); Total 433; Ash Wednesday 10am 120, 12 noon 102, 7pm 125, total 327;
 OFFERINGS: Loose Plate: £698; Gift Aid Envelopes: £225; Av. Standing Orders: £740 (av.); Contactless £80; Polish: £30; Total £1,773; Thank you. ONLINE GIVING You can use the QR code (right) or you can donate online at donate.myдона.com/scarborough-parishes, or direct from your account: Parish bank account details: Barclays Bank Account No: 50003417, Sort Code: 20-56-90, Account name: *Diocese of Middlesbrough*. Include a reference - your name. If you wish to Gift Aid your offerings, please sign a Gift Aid Form if you haven't already done so). 300 CLUB WINNERS: £25 No.46; £10 No.18



PASTORAL LETTER FOR LENT FROM BISHOP MARCUS STOCK TO BE READ AT ALL WEEKEND MASSES

WEDDING BELLS Congrats to Sonia Kokkaravarayil & Andrew Cooper of Greenfield, Scarborough married Fri 20 Feb at St Peter's

FUNERAL SERVICE of Daniel Roberts 3pm on Tuesday 24 February at Woodlands Crematorium.

ST JOSEPH'S SUNDAY MASS is held each Sunday in St Mark's church at 9am (not 9.30am) until further notice.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS devotions will take place after every weekday Mass during Lent in each of our churches. If any of our parish groups would like to lead stations (eg. UCM, Legion of Mary, Catechists, Readers, Eucharistic Ministers, prayer groups) get in touch with Fr Gubbins.

LENT COURSE Tuesdays from 24 Feb at 2 pm in Saint Edward's Hall for 6 weeks, on the theme of *Exploring Faith*. All welcome

CAFOD SOUP LUNCH 12noon Fri 27 Feb (*Family Fast Day*) in St Peter's Parish Centre. Contact parish office. Mass 11.30am

CAFOD BIG LENT WALK Are you ready for a challenge this Lent? Walk anytime, anywhere for 40 days, and raise funds for CAFOD for life-saving water. For more info or to sign up, go to <https://walk.cafod.org.uk>

LENTEN PRAYER BOOKLETS *Praying with The Psalms* and *Walk with Me* devotion booklets for Lent are now available – devote a short time each day this Lent in reflections and prayer. Suggested donation 50p.

THE CHILDRENS CHOIR lead singing at 11.30am Mass today. New comers are welcome to join. Practice 10.30am Parish Centre

FIRST CONFESSION/HOLY COMMUNION: PREPARATION MASS at 11.30am Mass today at St Peter's Church.

PARENTS MEETING 6.30pm on Wed 25 Feb in St Peter's Church. CATECHISTS in St Peter's School Tuesday 24 Feb 3.15 to 4.45pm (*session changed from the Wednesday due to parents evening*). REGISTER Reminder that the children should sign the register each time they attend Mass, at whichever church they attend.

ST PATRICK'S NIGHT TABLE QUIZ AND SING ALONG at North Cliff Golf Club with finger buffet: £12 per person. Proceeds towards St Joseph's heating renovations. Add your name to lists at back of church.

ECUMENICAL WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE 10.30 am on Friday 6 March (Originally Women's World Day of Prayer) at Northstead Methodist Church, Givendale Road, Scarborough, YO12 6LG. 2026 theme: *I will give you rest, come*. The World Day of Prayer is an international, women-led, ecumenical movement that shares the hopes, concerns, and prayers of women from around the globe. Each year, women from a different country craft a service, sharing their unique spiritual journey and culture. For 2026, the women of Nigeria have created a service that speaks to our need for peace and solace, drawing on their faith and experiences in a world filled with struggles and anxieties.

ANNUAL DIOCESAN DAY WALSINGHAM PILGRIMAGE led by Bishop Marcus Stock (Apostolic Administrator): Sat 26 Sept. Coach pickups: Middlesbrough Cathedral 5am & York Train Station 6am. Cost £40pp. Further info email Bishop's Secretary at bishopsecretary@rcdmidd.org.uk. We would run a Day bus from Scarborough if there is sufficient interest. Leave 6am and back 10pm

MARY'S MEALS Old & foreign coin collection: Place in sealed bag & hand in at weekend Masses – last opportunity this Sun 22nd

MASS-BY-PHONE is offered by St Mary's Cathedral. They upload the service every Sunday. This is offered for all who cannot get to Mass and don't have the internet, wherever they live in the UK. Call 01642 130120. Call costs are as provided for in your usual package or charged at usual rate for 01 numbers. Do pass this on to anyone who may benefit.

SUNDAYSMILE: 3 things most people find difficult to say 1. I'm sorry. 2. I need help. 3. Pass me the Worcestershire sauce

