

Richard



Bishop of Arundel & Brighton

PASTORAL MESSAGE
for the 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time
26th January 2020
SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In his recent letter *Aperuit illis* Pope Francis has designated today as **The Sunday of the Word of God**. This day takes on a particular significance for us this year here in England & Wales, as we reflect very particularly on the theme: "The God Who Speaks."

The Scriptures are, of course, central to our lives. Our reading and reflection on the inspired texts of Old and New Testaments enable us to encounter the God Who is love; Who sustains His people on their pilgrim way; Who is always faithful to us even when we go our own way; Who calls us back to Him and Who sends His Son, the Word made flesh, to dwell amongst us, to suffer and die for us and enable us to find new life through His resurrection. It is in the Scriptures that we read the account of the early Church as those who first responded to Jesus' call, through their encounter with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, began the Mission that we continue today.

The practice of Lectio Divina has been spreading in the Diocese in recent years and renewed copies of the leaflet outlining this way of prayer are available in parishes today. Join me in your encounter with the Word Who is Life through this way of prayer.

During this year, we shall have particular opportunities to join with our brothers and sisters in England & Wales in our celebration of "The God Who Speaks", notably at the Corpus Christi Celebration at Arundel Cathedral and – most especially for our school communities – at the Good Shepherd Celebration and the Secondary Schools' Pilgrimage to Arundel.

May we all deepen our experience of God's love for us as we read the Scriptures and hear them proclaimed in our Liturgy, that we may be formed by the Word for the Mission to which we are called.

With every Blessing,

+Richard