



# Friends

The Newsletter for Friends  
of the Lay Community of Saint Benedict

March 2023

Let us add something to the usual amount of our service, private prayer, and abstinence from food and drink so that each one will have something above the prescribed measure to offer to God in free will, "with the joy of the Holy Spirit".

RB49

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## WELCOME

Welcome to this first edition of a new monthly newsletter which we are simply calling Friends.

It reminds me of the Gospel when Jesus says he calls us friends because that's what we are. Thank you for your friendship. We hope that you enjoy these regular updates of what is going in the LCSB.

In this edition you will see an invite to join us in online prayer - please feel very welcome to come at any time - the times are indicated and all you need to do, if you have not done so already, is register on the website, and you will be able to enter the online space where our hosts will welcome you.

Maybe you are interested in Lectio Divina - if so, there are three Community lectio groups online on Wednesdays in St Scholastica led by our Discipleship and Digital Coordinator, Mary Hirst ([lcsbdigitalevangelist@gmail.com](mailto:lcsbdigitalevangelist@gmail.com))

11am: Adult  
7.30pm: 18-25 Young adults  
8.30pm: 25-35 Young adults

You will see a short introduction to Mary, who has been with us since August 2022, and she has included an introduction to the programme for young adults in 2023.

You will also see coverage from our Caring for Creation group. In the last 18 months since the start of COP26, many members have come together to develop our awareness and response to climate change.

This year's Lenten calendar online (which is on the public pages of the website) contains reflections and images preparing us for the celebration of Easter.

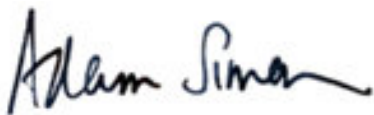
Lastly, booking for Easter at Cefn Lea are open and we look forward to coming together around the theme "Awake O Sleeper!", with two Cross walks - a young adult and an all-adult - with Fr Chris Dobson as the main celebrant of the Triduum, and with much time for sharing, prayer and fun.

Here is a thought from St Benedict for Lent in the Rule, chapter 49:

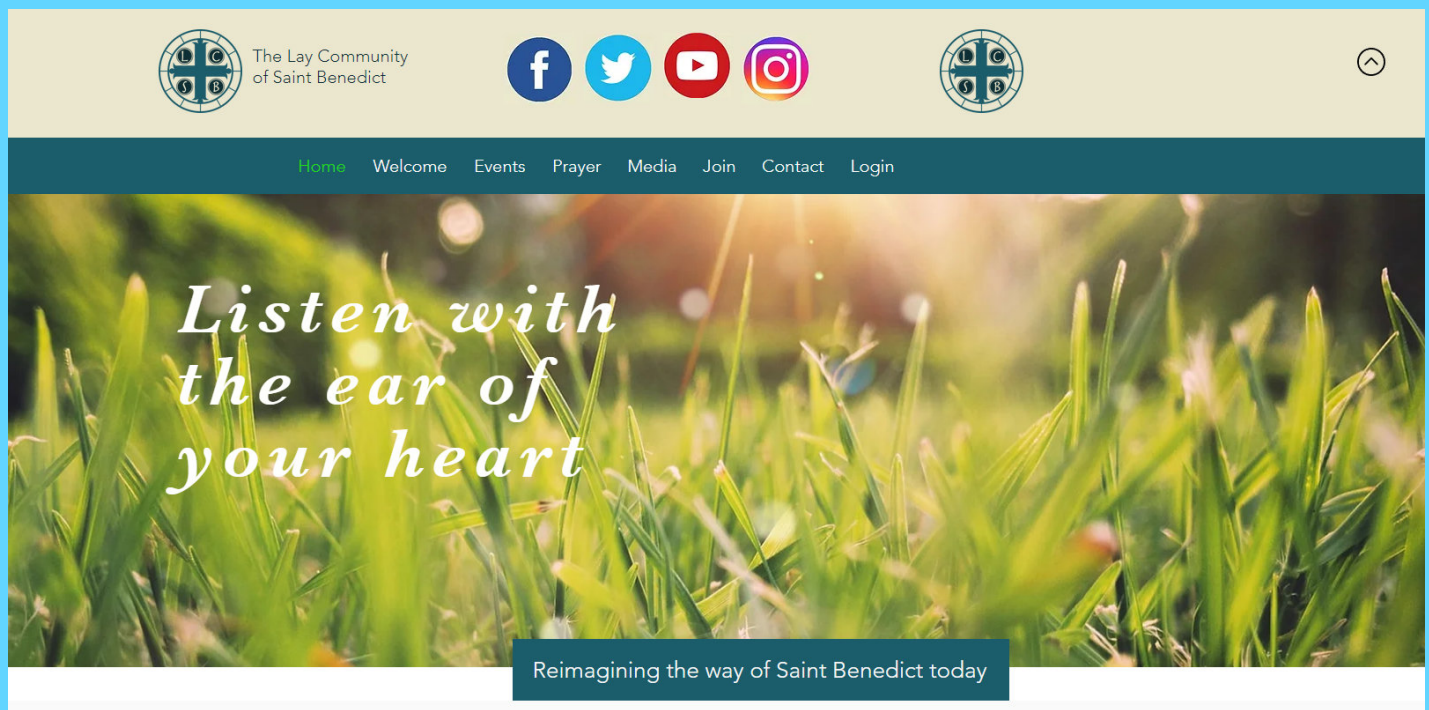
"let us add something to the usual amount of our service, private prayer, and abstinence from food and drink so that each one will have something above the prescribed measure to offer to God in free will, "with the joy of the Holy Spirit" (1 Thess 1:6)

Free giving...in joy. What inspiring words!

With all best wishes from all in the LCSB



Visit [www.lcsb.uk](http://www.lcsb.uk)



The screenshot shows the website header with the logo 'The Lay Community of Saint Benedict' and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. A navigation menu includes 'Home', 'Welcome', 'Events', 'Prayer', 'Media', 'Join', 'Contact', and 'Login'. The main banner features a close-up of green grass with the text 'Listen with the ear of your heart' and a tagline 'Reimagining the way of Saint Benedict today'.

[\*\*Subscribe / Unsubscribe to Friends Newsletter\*\*](#)



# JOIN US IN PRAYER THIS LENT

A full programme of talks,  
formation and liturgies, as well  
as daily prayer.

Find out more at [www.lcsb.uk](http://www.lcsb.uk)

Dear Friend

On behalf of the Lay Community of St Benedict we warmly invite you to join us in this season of Lent.

Since the start of the pandemic, the community lives daily fellowship online and experiences the deep joy and support that we can give each other through the love of Christ and of each other.

There is a short video introducing the way that our prayer is organised [lcsb.uk/prayer](https://lcsb.uk/prayer)

Weekdays:

Early morning prayer at 6.45am (St Benedict)  
Contemplative Prayer at 7.05am (Candle Chapel)  
Morning prayer at 9.00am (St Benedict)  
Contemplative prayer at 5.25pm (Candle Chapel)  
Evening prayer at 6.00pm (St Benedict)

Night prayer at 9.30pm (St Benedict)

Weekends (all services in St Benedict)

Saturday: Morning prayer at 7.30am,  
Stations of the Cross at 6pm

Sunday: Morning prayer at 8.00am,  
Evening service at 6pm

You are welcome to join us at any time.  
Contact [laybenedictines@gmail.com](mailto:laybenedictines@gmail.com)



## Introducing our

## Discipleship & Digital Coordinator - Mary Hirst



I'm 27, married to my best friend Will and we live in York. I'm originally from London and I'm half Belgian.

I'm a promised member (for a year at the moment) of the Manquehue Movement, a lay Benedictine community from Chile. I came across them when I went to a Benedictine school, Ampleforth College, for sixth form.

They taught me to pray Lectio Divina and I've never looked back! I ended up living in a Manquehue community for a total of 3 years, some of that time in Santiago, Chile, when I was 18, 4 months in Patagonia after graduating university and 2 years as part of the Manquehue Community, St Scholastica, at Downside school. I feel like I've found my charism and it's lay Benedictine!

My journey with the LCSB so far has been great, I am so struck by your welcome and hospitality and I am very excited for what the Lord has in store for me during this time with you all.

As to what the future holds, I have no idea but He does and that is good enough for me - well, I pray to live with that faith anyway!

Please keep me in your prayers, you are all in mine! God bless, Mary

### Lenten Calendar

[Details and Form](#)

The **Caring for Creation** group invites you to contribute to a Lenten Calendar. We're just looking for a short reflection of one or two lines (about 50 words) that will help us deepen our response to God's call to care for his world.

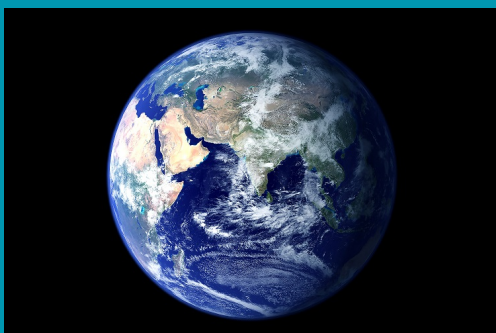
If you'd like to include a picture (500 kb minimum) that would be lovely, but not essential.

We will start on Ash Wednesday and hope to have a reflection for every day of Lent. We need your contributions to make possible our Lenten journey of hope and love for our beautiful world.



[Form to submit your reflection & image](#)

Our theme for the Lenten Calendar is "Caring for Creation". Every day members of the LCSB are contributing a short reflection of about 50 words that will help us deepen our response to God's call to care for his world.



[lcsb.uk/lent](https://lcsb.uk/lent)

## Hello Young Adults!

I started working for the LCSB last August and a lot of what I do is aimed at supporting and encouraging other young adults in their life of faith and prayer.

For 2023, the programme for Young Adults consists of the opportunity for weekly meetings online (with no obligation to come every week) and in person gatherings almost every month until September -events post August are in the pipeline!

More info can be found at [lcsb.uk/ya](https://lcsb.uk/ya)

Lectio Wednesdays

We have two opportunities for Lectio Divina on Wednesday evenings:

7:30pm Under 25s

8:30pm 25s-35s

Lectio is a way of praying with the Scriptures, listening to what the Lord says to me personally in the Word and listening to how He speaks to others too. It is really powerful yet gentle way of praying together and the Lectio groups have become the highlight of my week!

Everyone is really welcoming and there is no expectation or obligation to come each week. We would love you to join us!

For the Zoom link, email me at [lcsbdigitalevangelist@gmail.com](mailto:lcsbdigitalevangelist@gmail.com)

## Young Adult Crosswalk

Come and join us on a pilgrimage during Holy Week!

We're going to be carrying a wooden cross from Wolverhampton to Wales. A crosswalk is a walk of witness, a chance to build new friendships in faith and an opportunity to journey together with other young Christians in preparation for the Easter weekend.

## Mary Hirst



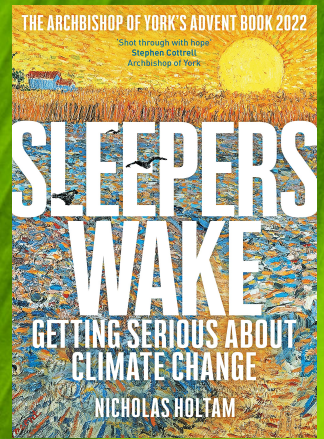
# 2023

## Upcoming Events for Young Adults

- 1ST-6TH APR** **CROSSWALK**  
*Journey to Easter on a walking pilgrimage with other young adults.*  
Wolverhampton - Wales
- 6TH-9TH APR** **EASTER**  
Come and celebrate the Easter Triduum with a community.  
Cefn Lea, Wales
- 19TH-21ST MAY** **RETREAT**  
*How can we develop as Missionary Disciples?*  
Worth Abbey
- 24TH JUN TO 2ND JUL** **PILGRIMAGE**  
*Join us for a week in Taizé!*  
France
- 25TH-28TH AUG** **SUMMER GATHERING**  
*Come and join us for our summer gathering at Worth Abbey.*  
Worth Abbey

**MORE INFORMATION** [lcsb.uk/ya](https://lcsb.uk/ya)  
[lcsbdigitalevangelist@gmail.com](mailto:lcsbdigitalevangelist@gmail.com)

# CARING FOR CREATION



## Sleepers Wake!

*Sleepers Wake: Getting Serious about Climate Change*, written by Bishop Nicholas Holtam, was the LCSB Advent book in 2022 and some of us met on-line in December and again in January to share our thoughts and reflections on what we had read.

The book concerns the climate and biodiversity crises facing our world, and in a series of short(ish) reflections, one for each day in Advent, Bishop Holtam explores the science of climate change and ecological loss, their present and likely future consequences on the world and humanity, and the response required from Christians. While the subjects addressed are of the utmost seriousness, and raise many challenging questions, the book also finds many signs of hope and encouragement. If you didn't get round to reading it in Advent, it's not too late to do so (available at £9.25 from Amazon). You will find it beautifully illustrated and containing an appendix with pointers to excellent resources for deeper learning and taking action.

In our discussions, we found ourselves facing questions like: How is it that despite knowing the facts about climate change we find it so hard to make the changes needed? How are we called to repentance and conversion in relation to these matters? What contribution could the LCSB make to helping its members, and the wider society of which we are a part, to address the challenges we face?

It was in relation to this third question that the clearest conclusions emerged, and we thought they should be shared with the Community as a whole.

They included:

- We can continue to pray, recognising that the future of the world is ultimately in God's hands, and also that prayer is a means by which we ourselves are converted to a new way of life, in gratitude to God for the wonderful world we live in, and in determination to preserve it for future generations
- We could encourage and support each other in taking action to change our own way of life, and to offer to others the opportunity to make changes also;
- We could build taking action in response to the climate and ecological crises into our understanding and practice of community
- We could continue to share our ideas and practice for saving resources and reducing waste
- We should recognise that living simply, taking what steps we can to reduce our impact on the world, and sharing what we have with others, is a core teaching in the Rule of St Benedict
- We might witness publicly to the need for change in public policy and business practices
- We might work with others, of all faith traditions and none, who seek the same goals
- We could support the development and dissemination of a theology of the earth, which might draw on insights from both Christian tradition and those of other faiths, that can engage our hearts as well as our minds.

As a first step, we were delighted that Bishop Holtam accepted our invitation to speak to the LCSB on Sunday 26 February at 6pm. A review will appear in the next newsletter. You can see a recording of Bishop Holtam's talk at [lcsb.uk/talks](https://lcsb.uk/talks).

**Peter Stott**

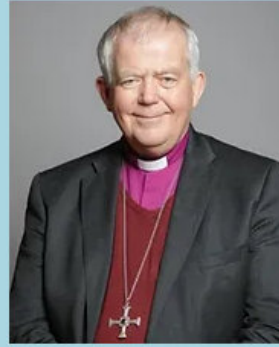
# Spring Talks 2023

Theme: On being Christians in today's world



Thursday 16th February 7pm  
[Alejandro Olayo-Mendez SJ](#)  
Assistant Professor at Boston College, Researcher into Migration and Migration Policy

Theme: Caring for Creation



Sunday 26th February 6pm  
**[Bishop Nicholas Holtam](#)**  
Bishop of Salisbury from 2011 to 2021 and, from 2014 to 2021, the Church of England's lead bishop for the environment.  
Author of 'Sleepers Wake'.



Thursday 9th March 7pm  
[Christine Allen](#)  
Director of CAFOD since 2018.

*And In collaboration with Root and Branch*

Theme: Laudato Si'

- Care for our common home



Thursday 30th March 7pm  
[Rev Andrew Teal](#)  
Chaplain, Fellow & Lecturer in Theology at Pembroke College Oxford.



Thursday 23rd February 8pm  
[Kathleen McLaughlin](#)  
Executive vice president and chief sustainability officer for Walmart Inc.

**Register for future talks and see  
videos of past talks at  
[www.lcsb.talks](http://www.lcsb.talks)**

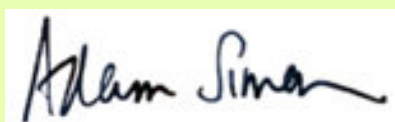


## **19-21 May 2023 - a weekend at Worth Abbey (Members and Seekers only)**



As the azaleas bloom at Worth Abbey next May, so we will be gathering for an inter-generational weekend of prayer, discernment and community reflection on the theme "How do we develop as Missionary Disciples?"

In the last two Councils of November 2022 and February 2023, we have discussed how the LCSB can follow up the Synod and respond to needs in the Church in particular the shortage of priests and the need to find new models to support parish and community life. We are looking at ways in which the LCSB could develop as missionary disciples in the service of the Church.



Adam Sima

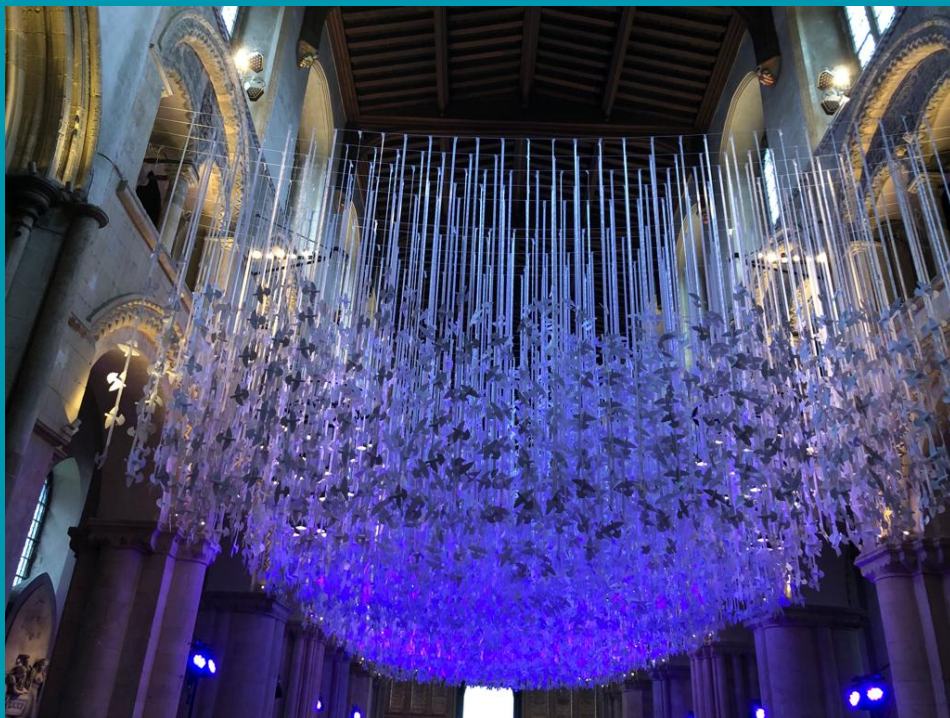


## **YOUNG ADULTS RETREAT: DISCOVERING THE DIVINE OFFICE**

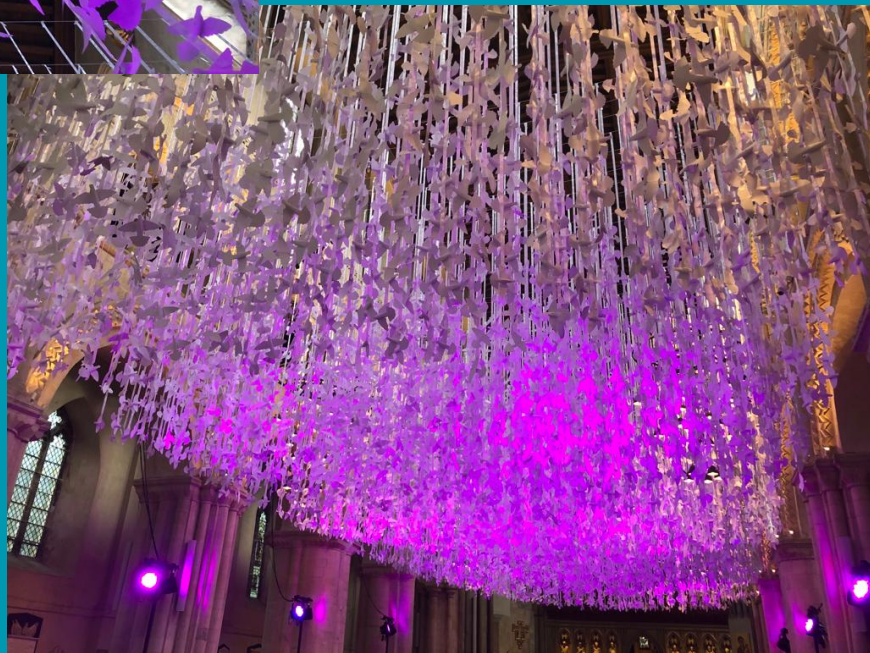
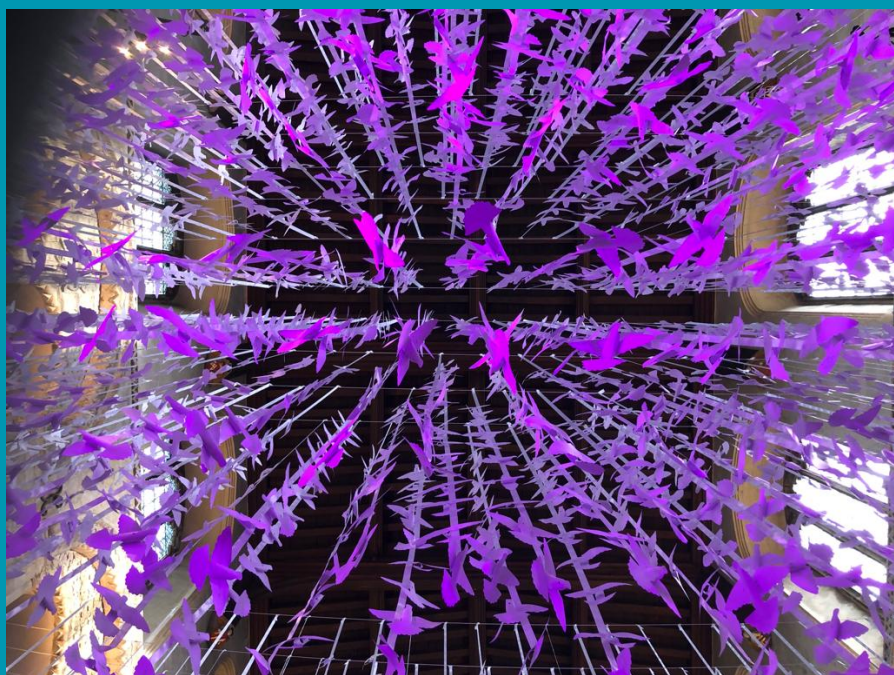
A lot of hard work went into it with lots of support from various places - including a visit from Christine and Richard Watts on the morning of the retreat with mountains of cake and scones for everyone attending! It was exciting to bring together two lay Benedictine communities and share what our charism gives us. There was a lot of joy - in friends seeing each other again and also in welcoming new people. There was a wonderful atmosphere throughout the retreat (particularly in the celebration on Saturday evening) and everyone embraced the rotas for serving each other over the weekend. It was an enriching experience learning more about the Divine Office/Liturgy of Hours, its roots, and the role it has to play in our daily lives. I am still waiting to hear feedback from those who attended but coming together in person has built up excitement for upcoming YA events and strengthened the community.

**Mary Hirst**





On Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February, Mary Hirst was with Derek & Heather Gallagher to record the next in the series of podcasts. They popped in to Rochester Cathedral to see Peter Walker's artwork 'Doves of Peace'.





## LCSB EASTER 2023: 6th - 9th April

Come and join The Lay Community of St Benedict for Easter at Cefn Lea Christian Centre, Dolfor, Newtown, Powys SY16 4AJ, from Thursday 6th – Sunday 9th April

### Residential costs:

Adult (standard rate)	£215
Adult (subsidy rate)	£60
Children (5-17)	£60
Children (0-4)	free

### Non-residential costs:

Day visitor (whole weekend)	£117
Day visitor (one day)	£35

### Online only:

Full weekend	free
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Details and booking at [www.lcsb.uk/easter](http://www.lcsb.uk/easter)

**Deadline Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March**

**Spaces are limited.**

Please send future items for Friends Newsletter to:  
[laybenedictines@gmail.com](mailto:laybenedictines@gmail.com)

[www.lcsb.uk](http://www.lcsb.uk)

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