

Presidential Address November 2025

By Martin Gorick, Bishop of Dudley and Acting Bishop of Worcester

This will be my last Presidential Address as the Acting Bishop for the Diocese. It has been a real privilege to be the acting Bishop of Worcester during this vacancy, and a real pleasure too, most of the time anyway! I'm very much looking forward to Bishop Hugh joining us and hope to see you all at his installation on the 17 January.

Although there are still more than two months to go, I want to say a big thank you now to each and every one of you for your prayers, love and support over the last 15 months. It has meant the world to me. Of course I have the most amazing colleagues, my PA Helen, Stuart, Catrine and Fleur in the Bishops Office, Mark and Nikki our archdeacons, Andy Todd, Sam Setchell and all the Directors and Staff who with me seek to serve our parishes and their hard working clergy.

Thank you too to area deans and lay chairs, all those who serve on synods, boards and committees and to Stephen and all at the Cathedral. The list could go on all night! I am deeply grateful to all of you here understanding in tough times. Covering two jobs was always going to be challenging, and with our wonderful Dean off sick at the Cathedral, the pressures recently have been particularly intense. As we pray for his speedy recovery, I want to say a huge thank you to him, and to all of you for your kindness to me, and for all that you do to serve God and neighbour across Dudley and Worcestershire in this great diocese.

Are you worried about the state of the world? I am! It so often feels an angry place, with all of us looking for who to blame.

But in the end the responsibility is ours. What kind of a people do we want to be?

We want a country that feels safe and secure, where good people can prosper, and those bent on violence are stopped. We want to have secure borders where those with evil intent are stopped, and those trafficked or in danger are helped. We need courage and determination to build a better Britain, where racism and prejudice have no place, and where goodness can prevail. Where the young are challenged and encouraged, and where older people are valued and know they are needed as together we build a land fit for all to live in.

To be that country, to become that people we need, as Jesus said, to love God with all we have, and love our neighbour as ourselves. To love, as St Paul said, with a self-giving love that is patient and kind, a love that is not envious or boastful or rude.

Fifty years ago, the then Archbishop of Canterbury said in a Call to the Nation that we need to 'Put God first, others next and self last.' We need to hear that call afresh today. I need to hear that call afresh today.