

**CATHEDRAL OF ST MARY & ST HELEN
HOLY CROSS AND ALL SAINTS**

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**Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Sunday 19th November 2023**

Spiritual Reflection

So, let's do the maths: a talent wasn't a coin but a unit of weight about 80lb or 36 kg, if you prefer your weights in metric. However, when used as a currency its weight was not assessed in gold but in silver, and one talent was worth something in the region of 6000 denarii. Since in the first century one denarius was a day's pay for a labourer in the Middle East, 6000 divided by 365 (the number of days in a year) would have been a little less than 16½ year's pay. So the servant with 5 talents was given something in the region of £2million - the amount of money we are dealing with here is colossal! Imagine how Jesus' first hearers must have smiled when they heard this parable.

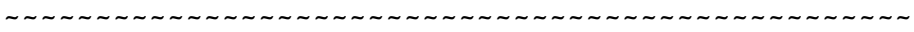


One of the interesting things about the parable, and not often understood, is that in the ancient world, believe it or not, the notion of making money wasn't heralded like it is today. People traded to survive, not to make a killing, and business (in the way we understand it today) was akin to prostitution and exploitation. Nevertheless, the Jewish people were known as shrewd business people and canny investors.



Now clearly, the parable isn't simply about the benefits of making a return on an investment versus burying our capital and not even making any interest. It's a parable after all: it's meaning is deeper. The parable isn't simply about using our God-given natural talents to bless our friends and neighbours, for example - there is no reward (return) in that. NO, the talents or gifts are primarily spiritual gifts - the charisms, graces, blessings, and fruits of the Holy Spirit (which are worth more than gold).

We too eagerly (yes eagerly) desire the spiritual gifts, especially the gifts of prophecy. We are not to be ignorant about the spiritual gifts (like the servant who buried his talent). There are different kinds of gifts (talents) given by the Spirit: the message of wisdom or knowledge, the gift of healing, miraculous powers, discernment, or spirits, speaking in tongues and interpretation of tongues.



My Dear Friends in Christ Jesus,

“LORD TEACH US HOW TO PRAY” These words spoken by the Apostles to Jesus, have echoed down through the centuries. There are many forms of prayer in the spiritual life, and the Prayer of the Church (The Divine Office) is one of them. The Psalms we use are the same Psalms that Jesus himself would have prayed in the Synagogue.

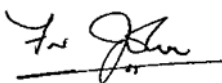
The Liturgy of the Hours, also known as the Divine Office or the Work of God (Opus Dei), is the daily prayer of the Church, marking the hours of each day and sanctifying the day with prayer. The Hours are a meditative dialogue on the mystery of Christ, using scripture and prayer. At times the dialogue is between the Church or individual soul and God; at times it is a dialogue among the members of the Church; and at times it is even between the Church and the world. The Divine Office "is truly the voice of the Bride herself addressed to her Bridegroom. It is the very prayer which Christ himself together with his Body addresses to the Father." (SC 84) The dialogue is always held,

however, in the presence of God and using the words and wisdom of God. Each of the five canonical Hours includes selections from the Psalms that culminate in a scriptural proclamation. The two most important or hinge Hours are Morning and Evening Prayer. These each include a Gospel canticle: the Canticle of Zechariah from Luke 1:68-79 for Morning Prayer (known as the Benedictus), and the Canticle of Mary from Luke 1:46-55 for Evening Prayer (known as the Magnificat). The Gospel canticle acts as a kind of meditative extension of the scriptural proclamation in light of the Christ event. Morning and Evening Prayer also include intercessions that flow from the scriptural proclamation just as the Psalms prepare for it.

In the Hours, the royal priesthood of the baptized is exercised, and this sacrifice of praise is thus connected to the sacrifice of the Eucharist, both preparing for and flowing from the Mass. "The hymns and litanies of the Liturgy of the Hours integrate the prayer of the psalms into the age of the Church, expressing the symbolism of the time of day, the liturgical season, or the feast being celebrated. Moreover, the reading from the Word of God at each Hour (with the subsequent responses or troparia) and readings from the Fathers and spiritual masters at certain Hours, reveal more deeply the meaning of the mystery being celebrated, assist in understanding the psalms, and prepare for silent prayer." (CCC 1177)

The faithful people of God are encouraged also to participate in the Prayer of the Church. Every Wednesday & Friday at 6.00pm at the Cathedral there is Sung Vespers in English. The choir members lead the prayer with Psalms and readings following the four-week cycle of the Divine Office. I would like to encourage parishioners to attend Vespers if you can.

May God Bless You All,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fr. John", written over a horizontal line.

DEACON NICHOLAS AND HIS WIFE ALIX would like to thank all those who have sent messages of support, encouragement and prayers during his recent 11 week stay in hospital, after being

diagnosed with an autoimmune encephalitis. We are pleased to report that Deacon Nicholas has made good progress and has now been discharged home where he is continuing his recovery, although this is expected to be a long process. He asks that you continue to keep him, Alix and his family and friends in your thoughts and prayers.

SEMINARIANS FROM THE PONTIFICAL NORTH AMERICAN COLLEGE Once again, we will welcome 4 Seminarians from the PNAC this weekend. For many of them it's their first visit to the UK. They like to explore London and its sites. Also, it's good for them to be in a parish and participate in the Sacred Liturgy, which assists and helps them in their formation and training for the sacred priesthood. If there are any parishioners who are willing to help with make some home-made desserts, apple pie or brownies, these will always be gratefully received. Thank you in anticipation.

READERS & EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS This Sunday, 19th November, is the last day to let Ann know if you are able to continue or return to ministry for the period 15th December 2023 - 17th March 2024 so that new rotas can be compiled. Many thanks Ann 01277 231593 or messina21@btinternet.com.

CHORAL VESPERS is celebrated in the Cathedral on Wednesdays and Fridays at 6.00 p.m. (during term time). Everyone most welcome.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2023/24 Please note that the closing date for the return of forms for the First Holy Communion programme has now passed and no further applications are being accepted for this year's course.

Please would parents who have applied for a place on this course ensure that you collect a **Mass Registration Card** (available in the narthex of the Cathedral) and remember to bring it to along with you each week so your child can get it signed by a member of clergy following Mass on a Sunday.

JOURNEY OF FAITH PROGRAM: Our next meeting, Session 7, will take place on **Thursday 23rd November** at **7.30 p.m.** in Clergy House. The Theme: What is the Church? Foundations of the Church.

THERE WILL BE A SECOND COLLECTION next weekend **25th/26th November**, for the Brentwood Catholic Youth Service; any money raised on will go towards supporting those in need of financial support to go on pilgrimages and to events, as well as allowing the BCYS to continue running events. Please be as generous as you are able.

WALK WITH ME BOOKLETS will available for purchase **from next weekend**. These provide day-to-day reflections that will help you remember the real meaning of this sacred time of preparation for Christmas. Price £1 each. Please place money in wall safe marked 'Publications/Booklets'.

THE CAMPION SCHOOL SENIOR CITIZENS' PARTY will be held at the school on Sunday 17th December, between 1.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. If you would be interested in attending, please contact Mo at Clergy House **by Tuesday 28th November** at the latest.

COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS today will be hosted by the SVP group; next week will be the turn of the Confirmation group. Why not come along for a cuppa and a chat?

THE HOLY HOUR of prayer and adoration before the Blessed Sacrament takes place every Monday evening from 6.30 - 7.30 p.m. and will be preceded by the **ROSARY** for Ukraine and peace in our world at 6.10 p.m.

PLEASE PRAY for the repose of the soul of Ann O'Connell, Frances Denham and Kenneth Blackett who died recently.

Ann's Requiem Mass will be celebrated in the Cathedral on Monday 27th November at 10.30 a.m.

Kenneth's funeral service will be celebrated in Bentley Crematorium on Thursday 30th November at 2.30 p.m.

Frances's funeral service will be celebrated in Bentley Crematorium on Wednesday 6th December at 11.30 a.m.

May the souls of the faithful rest in the bosom of all God's saints and one day dwell in the land of the living.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS are Monday to Thursday from 8.30 a.m. - 3.00 p.m.

NEW CTS SUNDAY MISSAL Copies of the new CTS 2024 Sunday Missal are available to purchase from the parish office at a price of £9.00 each.

REPOSITORY - CAN YOU HELP? We hope to reopen the Repository next weekend and will have a number of Christmas items such as religious cards, statues etc available for purchase. Going forward, if you are able to help and would be willing to be included on the rota, please give the parish office a call and leave your details.

FOODBANK COLLECTION Our next Foodbank collection will take place on the weekend of **2nd /3rd December** however, in the meantime, there will be a box available in the narthex from for people wishing to drop off seasonal treats in advance; thank you for your generosity.

FRIDAY LUNCHES every Friday from 12-2.00 p.m. everyone is welcome to come along to the parish hall for a light lunch and chat. Why not come along and give it a try? All ages are welcome and please pass the word on to anyone else who might be interested (e.g., neighbours, friends, colleagues). All are very welcome!

CALLING ALL RED MISSIO BOXES Please leave the red boxes at Clergy House on or before **Sunday 3rd December**. Replacement boxes will be available to collect in the new year. Thank you.

APPEAL FOR HELP If you would be available and willing to help with the Missio coffee morning on **Sunday 29th December**, please would you ring the parish office to pass on your details? Many thanks.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION - CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

APPLICATIONS. If you are going to apply for a primary or secondary Catholic school with your child starting in September 2024, you must have first **registered** as a parishioner (see website).

For this year, Fr John and Fr Gary will be working together to see parents requesting Certificate of Catholic Practice forms.

Please note that:

- a) Fr Gary will know those families who have been practising their faith by coming to Sunday Mass. These families will receive a Certificate of Catholic Practice.
- b) If you have not been practising your faith, please do not approach Fr John and Fr Gary for a Certificate of Catholic Practice as they will not be able to provide you with this document. Instead, apply directly to the Catholic school of choice.
- c) If you plan to send your daughter or son to St Helen's Infant School, you do not require a Certificate of Catholic Practice.
- d) If you are applying for a non-Catholic school that requires evidence of religious practice and you have been practising your faith, please come to see Fr Gary and Fr John
- e) If you are applying for a non-Catholic school that requires evidence of religious practice and you have *not* been practising your faith, please simply apply directly to the non-Catholic school of your choice.

- f) Please note that Fr John and Fr Gary will not supply additional references or documentation to parents who may go to appeal for a place at a non-Catholic school.

Fr John and Fr Gary will be available only at the following times in the Cathedral to see parents who are **registered as parishioners** and who are practicing their faith by attending Sunday Mass. There is no need to make an appointment:

PRIMARY SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

Thursday 23rd November~ 4.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.

IRREGULAR MARRIAGES: What is an irregular marriage? Every Roman Catholic is bound by Church Law by virtue of their Catholic baptism to celebrate all the Sacraments within the context of the Roman Catholic Faith. If a marriage contracted by a Roman Catholic outside of this context, e.g. in a Non-Catholic Church without dispensation from the Bishop, in any secular venue, in Las Vegas, on a beach, or a hotel. These marriages, though Civil, are not recognised the Church. If a person wishes to rectify this situation with the Church and their faith, we have a process called Convalidation. If there are no preventative measures for Convalidation, e.g. a previous marriage that needs annulment; we can offer couples this very private and confidential service. Both Fr John & Fr Gary are Canon Lawyers and will be able to explain the whole process to you if you want to know more. Please contact Clergy House for an appointment. Tel No: 01277 265235 or speak personally to one of the priests.

PLEASE REGISTER TODAY AS A CATHEDRAL PARISHIONER:

It is very simple. Each adult parishioner should either go to "Parish Census" at www.cathedralbrentwood.org or use the QR code:



For those of you who cannot complete the registration form online, forms are available in the narthex of the Cathedral. Once you have filled in the form, please return it to Clergy House.

MASS TIMES in the Cathedral:

SATURDAY VIGIL MASS at 6.30 p.m.

SUNDAY: 8.00 a.m./ 9.30 a.m. / 11.30 a.m. & 6.30 p.m.

WEEKDAY MASSES Monday to Friday at 9.15 a.m.

SATURDAY: 9.15 a.m.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION is available in the Cathedral on Saturdays from 10.00 - 11.00 a.m. Confessions in Italian are also offered.

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK and housebound parishioners and friends, including: Merle Anderson, Alistair Bailey, Yvonne Ball, Hermine Bayley, Madeleine Bevan, Eda Bright, Phil Carr, Roisin Cassels, Keith Chester, David, Iris Davis, Jenny Dean, Patricia Decup, Sheena Docherty, Charlotte Donnelly, Margaret F, Rebecca Florendo, Julian Goode, Deacon Nicholas Holmes, Wong Su Hwa, Jess, Brian Kelleher, Lisa Landy, Lawrence, Susan Maskall, Romek Matyszczyk, Tony Maule, John McCarthy, Mary McCarthy, Carmel Micallef, Harry Newman, Barney O'Driscoll, Joe O'Herlihy, Steven Poole, Anne Rowe, Helena Rowe, Geraldine Sheehan, Robin Shenton, David Spring, Mary Stretch, Tim, TCT and all our sick.

GENERAL NEWS

CAFOD's ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CRISIS APPEAL Donate to CAFOD's Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal at cafod.org.uk/ipc or call 0303 303 3030 to support those affected and get funds to local trusted experts in Gaza and southern Israel who have been working alongside communities helping those most in need. Your donation will help support aid workers providing urgent humanitarian aid including food, water and emergency shelter to those in need. Thank you for your prayers.

ADVENT TALK ON THE PROPHET ISAIAH In preparation for the beginning of Advent Fr Adrian Graffy, parish priest of Gidea Park and Scripture scholar, will be giving a talk on the Prophet Isaiah at 7.00 p.m. on **Wednesday 29th November** in the parish hall at the Catholic Church of Christ the Eternal High Priest, Gidea Park, RM2 6DH. The talk is free and is in person, and it will also be live-streamed on www.whatgoodnews.org. No booking necessary. A recording of the talk will be made available subsequently on the same website.

BCYS YOUTH MASS in the Cathedral on **Thursday 7th December**. Beginning with pizza and refreshments in the Parish Hall from 6.00 p.m. and an Advent Reconciliation service in the Cathedral before Mass. Youth Mass will then be celebrated in the Cathedral at 7.30 p.m. Absolutely everyone is welcome, please bring instruments, and sing, serve or read if you wish! No need to book, but do let us know if you have a group coming - just email info@bcys.net

SILENT WEEKEND RETREAT 'Be Still My Soul'. 8th - 10th December 2023 at the Sion Community, Brentwood. Our theme focuses on the need to learn the 'art' of being still and at rest in the midst of a busy and noisy society. Guest speaker: Grace Nowakowska, full-time lay missionary member of Sion Community. This silent weekend retreat during Advent offers us the opportunity to spend time with the Lord in quiet prayer and reflection. 40-HOURS of CONTINUOUS Adoration, spiritual guidance and prayer ministry included. For more information or to book, visit <https://sioncommunity.org.uk/adults/> or email allegra.mutanda@gmail.com

BRENTWOOD CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S SOCIETY - TREE OF ANGELS BCCS is pleased to re-launch their virtual Tree of Angels which will allow you to light up a symbolic angel on a virtual Christmas tree in memory of a loved one who has died while making a donation to the work of BCCS. Please visit www.bccs.org.uk and click on the Christmas tab where you will see 'Tree of Angels'. You can read more about this initiative and can click onto the Tree of Angels portal to make your dedication

and secure donation. If you have any questions about lighting an angel, please contact Damian ddillon@bccs.org.uk.

WALSINGHAM HOUSE VOLUNTEER TEAM Applications for the Walsingham House at Abbotswick volunteer retreat team are now open. If you are aged between 18-23 and are considering a gap year then please consider the Walsingham House Team. The volunteer team work with around 5000 young people from across the diocese running retreats for Yr5-Yr13 students. For more information, please see our website: <https://bcys.net/whabbotswick/be-on-team/> or email clairebailey@brcdt.org

WALSINGHAM HOUSE AVAILABLE FOR DAY GROUPS The house is a beautiful setting for days of reflection, retreats or meetings. They are open to accept bookings for day groups on Wednesdays - Saturdays. For more information or to make a booking please email the Hospitality Manager, Issy, at issyccording@brcdt.org

BCYS SUMMER LOURDES YOUTH PILGRIMAGE - July 2024 (exact dates TBC) Bookings are now open online for the Brentwood Catholic Youth Service pilgrimage to Lourdes in July. The week is spent serving the main Diocesan pilgrimage, assisting the elderly and infirm, alongside times of retreat, reconciliation, visiting the baths, taking part in the beautiful Processions, an afternoon in the mountains, party and social nights - all with other young Catholics from around our Diocese. The pilgrimage is open to all those in school year 10 - 13, with all those of school leaver age (18+) invited to join us as young leaders (subject to attending a training weekend). All details and applications can be found on the website www.bcys.net/events/sl24

VACANCY for a Parish Secretary, Rayleigh Parish. Required to provide administrative support services to the Parish Office by implementing and maintaining office systems, processes and procedures and delivering a welcoming, appropriate service to those attending the parish office. Hours: 10 hours per week (to be negotiated). Start Date: February 2024. Apply by sending a CV

and covering letter (no longer than A4) rayleigh@brcdt.org.
Closing date for applications is **1st December 2023**.

VACANCY for an Office Clerk; required to provide effective and efficient support in relation to administration requirements at Cathedral House. 21 hours per week 09.00 until 17.00 (Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays). Start Date: December 2023 /January 2024, salary- £13 per hour. Apply by sending a CV and covering letter (no longer than A4) hr@brcdt.org. Closing date for applications is **5th December 2023**.




VACANCIES IN DIOCESAN SCHOOLS:

<https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/education/vacancies/school-vacancies/>

QR CODES and CONTACTLESS GIVING A new online donation system has been set up so that parishioners and visitors are now able to donate by using a QR code directly to the Parish; donations can be made either with or without gift aid using the QR codes below or by scanning those displayed around the Cathedral:

giftaid it

Please treat as gift aid donation, all qualifying gifts of money made from the date of this declaration. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that, if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations, it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Donate £3.00	Donate £5.00	Donate £10.00	Donate £20.00
			

Donate without Giftaid-it

If you are unable to donate with Giftaid-It then please use the codes below.

Donate £3.00	Donate £5.00	Donate £10.00	Donate £20.00
			