

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

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**THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD  
Sunday 7th January 2024**

**Spiritual Reflection**

The great feast of the Epiphany marks the manifestation of Jesus as Messiah of Israel and Saviour of the world. The Magi, the three kings or



wise men whom tradition has named Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, come to worship, and adore, thus representing the acceptance of the 'Good News' by the pagan nations.

Their coming to Bethlehem to pay homage to the King of the Jews is significant because it shows that they seek in Israel, in the messianic light of the Star of David, the one who will be the King of the nations. The Jewish nation remains God's special and chosen people. The pagan nations can discover Jesus only by turning towards the Jewish people and receiving from them the Messianic promise latent in the Hebrew Scriptures but revealed fully in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

Mission is at the very heart of the feast of the Epiphany because it reveals how those who do not know Christ can be moved, compelled and convinced by the gospel (as the Magi were) to bow down and worship. In fact, every effort we make at mission - sharing our faith and giving witness by deeds - is nothing less than an epiphany. Why? Because when we do this God's world is manifested and fulfilled in the world.

On this most holy feast-day we can re-cover and re-discover a sense of our own mission to make Christ known, not only to the nations but to those we live and work among. If we ask him, the Holy Spirit will imbue us with a new confidence to witness to Christ. Whatever is good, whatever is pure, whatever is beautiful and whatever is true in other cultures and natures is of Christ and in Christ. The message of Christ won over the Magi, and it will win over pagan nations and those who resist the gospel - not by force or power but by the grace of the Holy Spirit, who reveals and convinces that there is only one King for all the nations, and that is Christ Jesus our Lord.



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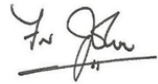
Dear Friends in Jesus Christ,

As the next part of the Nativity story unfolds for us, we see the Wise men arriving from the East. They represent the outside world who would encounter the 'God-child'; their lives would never be the same again! Jesus Christ came for peoples of all nations, and He continues to invite us to share in His life. They brought Him gifts as a sign of love and respect; what gift can I bring to the Lord in 2024? As the carol states: 'What can I bring Him, poor as I am; If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb; If I were a wise man, I would do my part; Yet what I can I give him: give my heart!' To give our Love to Jesus is the greatest gift of all! Perhaps this could be at the heart of our New Year's resolutions, to get closer to the Lord through prayer & a deepening of personal spirituality!

**THANK YOU** Once again, sincere, and grateful thanks to the whole parish community for your incredible kindness and generosity to the Seminarians who were with us over Christmas and New Year. I've had several messages from them expressing their gratitude. Please continue to pray for Vocations to the Priesthood, especially here in our own Diocese of Brentwood. Thank you to all those parishioners who provided desserts and goodies over the holiday period, you are very kind! It was much appreciated! Also, on behalf of Fr Gary and myself grateful thank to you all for your Christmas Offerings, we truly appreciate your thoughtfulness and generosity!

*In the spirit of giving,  
we thank you for  
your generosity!*

A Happy New Year and May God Bless You All in 2024



**YOUR CRIB OFFERINGS** Will go to the work of the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society. This wonderful Diocesan organisation does not receive government funding, so is heavily dependent upon all charitable diocesan contributions. It works with thousands of children and families each year. You have always been very generous with offerings in the past. The Crib will remain in our church until the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord 2nd February 2024

**FOOD BANK DONATIONS** A very big Thank you to all of our parishioners who donated so generously throughout December and the Christmas period to the Foodbank, and of course, to all the helpers who kindly collected it all in and arranged for it to be dropped off at the Foodbank centre.

**FORWARD PLANNING** Just to inform you that I've organised a series of Lenten talks on the Synod that took place in Rome in October and secured 4 of the participants who were present. Fr Timothy Radcliffe



OP, Wednesday 21st February 2024) who was the Preacher and Spiritual Director for the whole Synod; The Revd Dr Jan Nowotnik (Wednesday 28th February 2024) Director of Mission for the Bishops' Conference, and its National Ecumenical Officer; Mr Austen Ivereigh (Wednesday 6th March 2024) Roman Catholic Journalist, Biographer of Pope Francis; Writer, speaker on contemporary Church affairs; Bishop Nicholas Hudson (Wednesday 13th March 2024) Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster, (former Rector of the Ven English College, Rome), appointed delegate at the Synod this year. This will be a wonderful opportunity to learn about the Synod on Synodality, and it will be open to the whole Diocese. All the talks will take place in the Cathedral, and this will also be open to all Parishes in the Diocese.

**BAPTISMS IN THE PARISH** If you have a child due for Baptism, please let me know as soon as possible. To avoid any disappointment with dates, contact the Parish Office to book your date. If you are first-time parents, you also need to contact Mo at the Parish Office who will organise a Baptismal Preparation of two sessions and then one of the Priests or Deacons will arrange to see you in advance of the Baptism itself. Obviously, Baptism is the greatest act of faith that a parent will make on behalf of their child, and you should really be practicing your faith regularly with the worshipping Community at Sunday Mass. A child is baptised into the Catholic Community of Faith, and therefore, as part of the Community we all have a responsibility towards each other in love and charity.



**THE CATHEDRAL YOUNG ADULTS GROUP** meets this Sunday evening (and every first Sunday of the month) after the 6:30 p.m. Mass in clergy house - starting around 7:15. All aged 18-35 are warmly welcome to join for some supper, community and prayer.

**THERE WILL BE A SECOND COLLECTION FOR PAX CHRISTI** (The Peace of Christ) next Sunday 14th January. Pax Christi prays

and works for a world where people can live in peace, without fear of violence in any form. Pax Christi is rooted in Catholic Christianity but is open to all who share its values and work. You can Gift Aid your offering by using a Gift Aid envelope or you can give online at [www.paxchristi.org.uk/about-us/support-us/donation/](http://www.paxchristi.org.uk/about-us/support-us/donation/)

**WINTER WARMER SOUP LUNCHESES** will be held every Friday during January, February and March in the parish hall from 12 - 2.00 p.m. You and your family, friends and neighbours are most welcome to come along for free hot soup and crusty bread. There is no cost and there will be plenty of chat and warmth to help see us all through the winter months. Please do join us!

**JUST FOR INFORMATION** Clergy days off are Tuesday (Fr John) and Wednesday (Fr Gary); if you need to contact them at these times, please leave a message and they will call you back when they are able.

**COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS** today and will be hosted by the PACE team and the following week is the turn of the Scouts.

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

**PLEASE PRAY** for the repose of the soul of Sr Imelda OSU who died recently.

*Sr Imelda's Requiem Mass will be celebrated in the Cathedral on Thursday 11th January 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.

**JOURNEY OF FAITH PROGRAM:** Our next meeting, Session 11, will take place on **Thursday 11th January 2024 at 7.30 p.m.** in Clergy House.

The Theme: EUCHARIST (1) Jewish Notion of Memory.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2024** Session 1 will commence on **Saturday 20th January** with the celebration of Family Mass at 9.15 a.m. which will be followed by the children's session from 10.00 a.m. 11.30 a.m.

**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.

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

**250 CLUB** - Renewals are due now and new members are very welcome to join. This is an easy way to help raise funds for the Parish halls and every month a member of the club wins a prize! For those paying by ongoing standing order either monthly or annually, no action is required. If you pay in one annual instalment by cash, cheque or bank transfer, this will be **due by 31st January 2024** please.

If I have your email address, you should have already received a renewal form from me. Alternatively, forms are available from the Narthex, the Parish Office (during office hours), by email or I can arrange to post one to you. New and renewal forms, along with payment, can be returned to Clergy House for my attention. Should you receive an email in error, please advise me so that I can remove you from the mailing list.

Please also contact me if you are unsure how to make your payment or have any other queries. Thank you for your continued support. Pat Austin - email [pat@familyaustin.co.uk](mailto:pat@familyaustin.co.uk) or call 01277 824 363 / 07733 103 588.

**PLEASE REGISTER TODAY AS A CATHEDRAL PARISHIONER:**

It is very simple. Each adult parishioner should either go to "Parish Census" at [www.cathedralbrentwood.org](http://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.

**SICK AND HOUSEBOUND PARISHIONERS** If you know anyone who is unable to come to Mass but would still like to receive Holy Communion in their home, contact Clergy House so we can put them on our Sick Communion list.

**THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK** is available to anyone who is gravely ill or about to have an operation, so if you know someone who should receive this important sacrament then please speak to a member of the clergy or ring the parish office on 265235.

**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, Charlotte Donnelly, Margaret F, Rebecca Florendo, Julian Goode, Deacon Nicholas Holmes, Wong Su Hwa, Jess, Brian Kelleher, Lisa Landy, Lawrence, Susan Maskall, Romek Matyszczuk, Tony Maule, John McCarthy, Mary McCarthy, Carmel Micallef, Harry Newman, Barney O’Driscoll, Joe

O’Herlihy, Steven Poole, Geraldine Sheehan, Robin Shenton, David Spring, Mary Stretch, Tim, TCT and all our sick.

## GENERAL NEWS

**THE SVP ARE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS** willing to help children put their faith into action. Could this be you? The St Vincent de Paul Society have primary school groups called Mini Vinnies, and volunteers would support teachers or youth leaders wishing to start a group in their school or parish. They will talk to children about how they can make a difference to those living in poverty and share resources to support the group. The role is flexible but does need people with some availability during school hours (at least 2 mornings or afternoons per month) who are willing to travel within the diocese (all costs are covered). If you are passionate about helping children discover how they can make a difference in their communities, please email Sarah for more information on [youngvincentians@svp.org.uk](mailto:youngvincentians@svp.org.uk). You do not have to have previous experience of working with children as all training will be given. Our next initial training day is on Tuesday 27th February 2024.

**HELP YOUR MARRIAGE** Do you feel alone? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Do you argue ... or have you just stopped talking to each other? Does talking about it only make it worse? Retrouvaille is a programme to support couples who have difficulties in their marriage. It brings a positive focus, new hope and helps nourish and grow your marriage. Tens of thousands of couples headed for divorce have successfully saved their marriages by attending and using the tools provided. The programme helps spouses uncover or re-awaken the love, trust and commitment that originally brought them together. It helps them through difficult times whether they are disillusioned or in deep misery. There is no group therapy or group work. For confidential information about ‘Retrouvaille’ or to register for the next programme commencing with a Virtual weekend on 8 - 11 February 2024 or a face-to-face weekend in Welwyn Garden City on 14-16 June 2024, call or text 07887 296983 or 07973



380443 or email [retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com](mailto:retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com) - or visit [www.retrouvaille.org.uk](http://www.retrouvaille.org.uk)

**VACANCY Assistant Headteacher Vacancy - St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Stanford-le-Hope.** For more information see [www.essexschoolsjobs.co.uk](http://www.essexschoolsjobs.co.uk) Deadline - **14th January 2024** at 12 Noon.

**SAHARA DESERT RETREAT IN MOROCCO** - 26th February - 11th March 2024. Including a day visiting Marrakesh and 9 full days in the Desert. With Fr Arnaud and Deacon Vladimir from St Antony's in Forest Gate. Designed for young adults, open to all adults able to hike 4 - 6 hours a day for 9 full days in the desert. £952 (plus flight). [www.desert-retreat.com](http://www.desert-retreat.com) or phone Catherine at 07807 348223.

**ESCORTED PILGRIMAGE To Knock & Co Mayo, 7th April 2024.** £899.00 pps. Price includes flight, 10kg hold luggage, 5 nights in 4\* Castlecourt Hotel, Westport with Dinner, Bed & Breakfast. Lunch on three days. All entertainment, excursions and transport included. Visit Knock, Galway City, Kylemore Abbey, Croagh Patrick & Ashford Castle. Single supplement on Enquiry. Contact Patricia or Natali on 01268 762 278 or 07740 175557 or email [knockpilgrimages@gmail.com](mailto:knockpilgrimages@gmail.com)

**BCYS SUMMER LOURDES YOUTH PILGRIMAGE** - July 2024 (exact dates TBC in due course) 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](http://www.bcys.net/events/sl24)

**40 YEARS OF WALSINGHAM HOUSE TEAMS 2024** marks 40 years of retreat teams at Walsingham House. There will be a celebration Mass with Bishop Alan on **Saturday 31st August 2024** at Walsingham House at Abbotswick. Please save the date as it would be wonderful to see Walsingham House and BCYS alumni and friends gather together to mark this milestone. More information to follow in the new year.

**VACANCY** The Diocese of Brentwood seeks to appoint an outstanding Choral Director to assist the Director of Music in the establishment and delivery of the Diocese of Brentwood Schools Singing Programme, and to continue the development of Sacred Music in the parishes of the Diocese, including the Cathedral. To deliver choral provision primarily in schools.

To apply for this post, applicants can complete the Recruitment-Application-Form-March-2022 available on the following link <https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/diocese/working-for-us> and send a supporting statement of no more than two A4 pages (font size 11 minimum) which outlines why you are a suitable candidate for the post and which aspects of the job description particularly attract you to the post. These documents should be returned by email to [hr@brcdt.org](mailto:hr@brcdt.org) For more information please read: Nssp Choral Director Application Pack (002). Closing date **7th February 2024**.

**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:



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 |
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*Donate without Gifaid-it*

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

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