

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

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**THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B)
Sunday 21st January 2024**

Spiritual Reflection:

We all like to receive good news. It's said that Good News doesn't sell newspapers, but there's no doubt that it lifts our spirits and gives us hope. You name it - any kind of good news is a tonic. The birth of a child, securing a new job, exam success, winning a competition, gaining a pay increase or a bonus: the list goes on and the enjoyment is wonderful. As St. Basil once said, 'Truly unexpected news makes both ears tingle.'



The Gospel, however, is a very special kind of good news. It doesn't just last for a day, or a week then then fade into the background: it lasts forever. If we haven't understood the gospel as good news, we have seriously missed the point. The essence of the Good News is distilled in the words of Jesus: 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel'.

This verse unveils so much treasure about the gospel. For example, the Greek word used here for 'time' is *kairos*, which captures the idea of an anointed, special, and unique opportunity (unlike the word *chronos*, which simply expresses

time as a succession of moments). The Good News is that when time had reached its fullness God sent his Son. Time itself is now charged with the presence and mystery of God. God himself entered into human history, sanctifying time itself.



The Greek verb translated ‘fulfilled’ is *pleroo*, which means to fill up, indicating a fullness of being, completion and wholeness. God’s plan of salvation finds its perfection and wholeness in the coming of Jesus. How are we to respond? By repenting and believing. The Greek word for ‘repent’ is *metanoia*, which means to change

one’s mind: it implies turning away from sin wholeheartedly with a true change of heart towards God. Finally, the Greek word translated ‘gospel’ here is *euaggelion*, which means simply ‘good news’ - the good news is that in Jesus the Kingdom of God is at hand, and that we can now be reconciled to God, restored to the fullness of the humanity for which we were created.

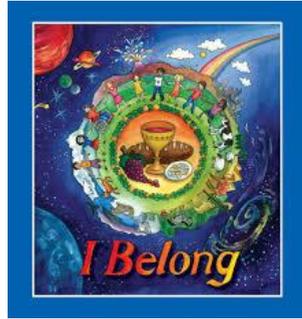
Dear Friends in Christ,

This week the Gospel mentions various themes, listening to the Good News, Repentance and believing in the Gospel. These are fundamental to our Catholic Faith. When we hear God’s Word proclaimed each week at Holy Mass, hopefully it evokes within us a response and sometimes a ‘change of heart’. It means that God’s Word is working within us, we are responding to the Gospel message. And of course, this is how God continues to communicate with us. Many are under the impression that God’s final Word was at the end of the last Gospel. But God continues to communicate to His people in Word and Sacrament. To read the Sacred Scriptures, and to celebrate the Sacraments, especially Holy Mass & the Eucharist, bring us closer to the Lord every time we gather. Let us never underestimate the power of that Word & Sacrament working within us.



FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME

2024_The children from our parish began their preparations for the Sacraments of the Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist this weekend. This is a wonderful time in their young lives of faith and marks the next stage on their Sacramental faith journey.



I would like to thank all our parents who are helping your children at this next important juncture in their lives. Never underestimate what you are doing with your child during these years of growth, especially with regards to the Roman Catholic Faith. What we share and teach with our children now, will remain with them throughout the whole of their lives. My grateful thanks also go to our Catechists who give of their time freely to help our children. Their wonderful example, and the teaching of the faith, will most certainly help the children in these months ahead. Each child received their 'I Belong' book this weekend, and this will be the workbook we will use throughout the programme. It has been beautifully produced and is extremely child friendly.

I ask all parents to sit down with your child at least once a week and go through the various themes with the children; it not only engages with the children in the preparations, but it also shows your interest and involvement in the programme. When we had the Parents' Meeting a few months ago I asked you to show the children their Baptismal photos and talk to them about the day of their Baptism. Also show them their Baptismal Candle, their Shawl, their Certificate, talk about their Godparents, and talk to them about how important it was for them to be Baptised and who was present at the ceremony. They will want to ask questions, and this is a good thing.

I commend to whole parish in prayer all the children who are preparing for First Holy Communion and Reconciliation.

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 Guest 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. Considering the Bishop's Pastoral Letter last weekend this will be a wonderful opportunity to gain experience 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.



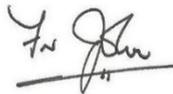
YOUR CRIB OFFERINGS will go to the work of the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society. This wonderful Diocesan organisation does not receive government funding, so is heavily dependent upon all charitable diocesan contributions. It works with thousands of children and families each year. You have always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

RENEWAL IN THE FAITH As we are now into the third week of the New Year; in his Pastoral Letter last week, the Bishop asked us to think seriously about the future of the Church in our Diocese of Brentwood. Much has changed since the pandemic; sadly, many people did not



return to the practice of their Catholic faith, it would be wonderful if more people return to the practice of faith. I am making this special appeal to the whole parish community, also to those who may be lapsed from the practice of the faith, to think very seriously about what it means to be Roman Catholic, and also how commitment in faith involves every aspect of our lives, our marriages and family life, our community, the way we relate to one another, the practice of our faith by being actively present and involved in the Sacred Liturgy of the Mass. Our time, our treasure, and our talent are all contributing factors to leading an active committed life of faith. It's never too late to come home to the Lord!

May God Bless You All

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

ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE WORK to the housing of the organ will be taking place this week from **Tuesday 23rd to Thursday 25th**; the Cathedral will remain open and Mass will be as usual but please be aware if you are visiting the Cathedral during the day.

THERE WILL BE A SECOND COLLECTION FOR RACIAL JUSTICE DAY next **Sunday 28th January**. On this day Catholics are called to pray for those who experience unjust discrimination or are marginalised because of their race and ethnicity. All the money raised will go towards supporting the Church's work on racial justice issues. Please give generously.

WINTER WARMER SOUP LUNCHEAS are 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. Special thanks to Sainsburys for their continued generous support for this initiative. 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 Catenians and the following week will be the turn of Sara De La Cruz who will be raising money for the parish in memory of her beloved late father, Luis De La Cruz Cuba.

THE MISSIO REPRESENTATIVES extend thanks to those generous parishioners who returned the red boxes; a total of £1206.00 was banked by our parish. New boxes will be available for collection from the narthex from this weekend. Thank you.

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

JOURNEY OF FAITH PROGRAM: Our next meeting, Session 13, will take place on **Thursday 1st February 2024 at 7.30 p.m.** in Clergy House. The Theme: SACRAMENT OF THE SICK; Extreme Unction, Ministry of Healing / Suffering.

CANDLEMAS - THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD is on Friday **2nd February**. On this day candles that will be used during the year are blessed. If you would like any candles to be blessed for your own personal use at prayer, please bring them to the 9.15 a.m. Mass where together we will pray "Behold our Lord will come with power, to enlighten the eyes of his servants, alleluia"

SEED SOWING - a simple way for us all to marvel at the gift of creation is to sow plant seeds and watch them grow! On **Sunday 3rd March** everyone is welcome to come along to the coffee morning in the parish hall where there will be a selection of seeds for you to sow and take home and nurture. It's a wonderful opportunity for children to learn how they can enjoy caring for our environment.

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 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 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, Julia Blencowe, Eda Bright, Phil Carr, Roisin Cassels, Keith Chester, David Cutter, 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 Matyszczyk, 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

BCYS YOUTH MASS - Thursday 1st February, 6.00 p.m. at Brentwood Cathedral. Beginning with pizza and refreshments in the Parish Hall from 6.00 p.m. with a speaker from the SVP joining us to help prepare for the start of Lent. 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

YEAR 12 RETREAT - "Life to the Full" Friday 16th to Sunday 18th February. You are at a stage where you are about to start making decisions and dreaming about future plans. You might be at a stage where you are looking to explore your faith further and learn more about the role God plays within your life. This retreat will give you time to think, pray and chat with those in your year from across Essex and East London. There will be a mix of fun and games, along with times of reflection and personal prayer. For just £35, the cost includes meals, accommodation and youth-led formation. Apply now at www.bcys.net/events/yr12retreat/

ST FRANCIS LEPROSY GUILD (SFLG) Did you know that leprosy still exists in over half the countries in the world? Did you know that leprosy can be treated successfully if caught early? If left untreated, however, it leads to disability and disfigurement and many leprosy-affected people and their families are subjected to stigma and discrimination. For example, there are over 100 discriminatory laws that still exist around the world against leprosy sufferers and many people with leprosy are cast out of their families and communities and left to beg on the streets for their survival. Founded in 1895, SFLG is one of the oldest Catholic charities and the only Catholic leprosy charity in the UK, with Cardinal Vincent Nichols as our patron. Since its foundation, SFLG has provided care to individuals and communities affected by leprosy and we currently support over 40 leprosy centres in 14 countries. Today we also fund vital research projects, hospitals and an active case-finding programme to diagnose and

treat leprosy as early as possible to stop the transmission of the disease and prevent lifelong disabilities occurring. Only by seeking, identifying and treating leprosy early can we beat it once and for all. Will you support us and help SFLG work towards a leprosy-free world? For more information, please visit www.stfrancisleprosy.org / email enquiries@stfrancisleprosy.org / call 07754 592240. Alternatively, email Clare Barton (clare.barton@stfrancisleprosy.org), one of our trustees, who attends Mass at the Cathedral. (Please note that we are NOT Lepra, which is a secular charity).

CALLING EX-ST EDWARD'S PUPILS FROM UPTON PARK On 5th February 1973, Bobby Moore, Captain of England and West Ham United, had this photograph taken with 99 pupils of St Edward's Roman Catholic Primary School. The photograph was a memento of the incredible achievement by Bobby Moore in playing 100 games for England. This iconic image was taken in the playground of St Edward's, just yards from West Ham's stadium and shows Bobby Moore and the children, arms folded, each of them wearing an England cap.



If you were one of the children in the photograph on that historic day, 51 years ago, we would love to hear from you, as we would be delighted to find out about your memories from that wonderful day.

Please contact Paul Underwood, Head Teacher, St Edward's, at info@st-edwards.newham.sch.uk

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 - or visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk

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 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

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

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 P.A. to the Headteacher at Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School. Salary: Scale 5 points 12-15 (£30,036 - £31,443 pro rata) (Actual £27,011 - 28,276). Hours: 36 per week (Term time + 2 weeks). Contract type: Term Time + 2 Weeks /fixed contract. The school is a short walk from Upminster town centre and station where Overground (C2C) and Underground (District Line) services are available; the school is also a short drive from the M25, A12 and A13. The locality is also well served by frequent bus services. Closing date for applications **24th January 2024**.

VACANCY St Peters Primary School, Goresbrook Road, Dagenham is seeking to appoint a School Office Administrator. Hours 8am to 4pm, term-time only plus one week. Closing date **29th January 2024**. Please call school office for more information tel.0208 270 6524 or email: office@st-peter.bardaglea.org.uk.

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 For more information please read: NSSP Choral Director Application Pack (002). Closing date **7th February 2024.**

VACANCY Pact, the Prison Advice & Care Trust, seeks a 'Head of Faith in Action' to engage and inspire Catholic people and other Christians to offer the hope of a fresh start to people caught up in the criminal justice system.

The role is home-based with frequent national travel. This post is subject to a Genuine Occupational Requirement that the post holder is a committed active Roman Catholic Christian under Part 1 of Schedule 9 to the Equality Act 2010. Salary: £46,225 per annum. A full job description, person specification and application form can be found here: Head of Faith in Action job - Homebased with extensive national travel - PACT (Prison Advice and Care Trust) (livevacancies.co.uk). 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:

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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
			