

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

**Canon John J Harvey  
Cathedral Dean**

**Father Gary Dench  
Assistant Priest**

**Clergy House: 01277 265235**

**Deacon Paul Conrad: 01277 810321**

**Deacon Nicholas Holmes: 01277 373788**

**Email: [cathedral@brcdt.org](mailto:cathedral@brcdt.org)**

**Website: [www.brentwoodcathedral.org.uk](http://www.brentwoodcathedral.org.uk)**

**TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B)  
Sunday 1st September 2024**

**Spiritual Reflection:**

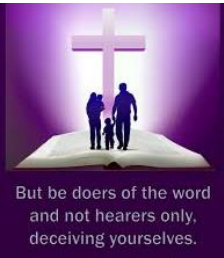
In his teaching Jesus highlights a problem, if you like, with practice the of faith. Those who are diligent, externally faithful, dutiful and adhere to the rules can appear as holy and righteous. In truth, many are, because how else do we witness to faith than by practicing it? But what if this practice of faith - these acts of piety, intend to express both our love of God and our neighbour - masks the true condition of our hearts, as we know was the case with many of the Pharisees in Jesus' day?

The Pharisees had strict rules on ritual cleanliness, which they adhered to scrupulously. Jesus' disciples, it appears, were more laid back in this department, earning them the rebuke of the Pharisees. Jesus, however, as he so often does, strikes at the heart of the matter. We are not made clean or righteous or acceptable to God by some kind of external cleansing process because such things do not change our hearts.



Let us look into our own hearts. Do we recognise any of the following in our own heart: evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance, and folly? If the answer is yes, what then do

we conclude? That we are righteous? No, of course not. We recognise that we are sinners in need of salvation, and we cry out, as Paul cried out, 'Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.'



We need to resist the spirit of the Pharisee, which lurks in us all. The spirit of the Pharisee is alive and kicking when we think things such as: don't say anything that could offend anyone; focus on what is right with the 'church' and its leadership; don't be critical; promote the status quo; don't make 'waves'; don't call anyone 'out'; respect 'authority'; don't expose 'wrong doing'; cover up those who 'spiritually abuse others - keep it 'secret' within the family; don't ask any hard questions. The refuge of the Pharisee in us is hypocrisy - in the name of Jesus, resist it, cast it out and strive to live truthful, honest, and authentic Christian lives.

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Dear Friends in Jesus Christ,

This weekend we bid a fond farewell to Fr Gary. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the



Cathedral Parish to express our sincere and grateful thanks to Fr Gary for his past five years as Associate Priest here. When I was appointed Parish Priest a year ago, the Bishop informed me that Fr Gary would only be here another year. It has truly been a wonderful year, and I thank him most sincerely for helping me through the transition into the Cathedral Parish, and more importantly for the kindness and friendship that we share. His efficiency and pastoral zeal have certainly enriched the life of the Cathedral, and he deserves the Pastorate of St Joseph's Parish, Hutton. I know he will do a wonderful job as the new Pastor, and it's fortuitous that we are both in the same Deanery still and the Partnership of our two parishes. Please keep Fr Gary in your prayers as he takes up his new assignment this week on the 4th September. There will be a special **Thanksgiving** and

**Farewell Mass on Sunday 22nd September at 6.30 p.m.** Please put this date in your diaries.

**FR GARY WRITES** *Five years ago, a newly ordained priest arrived here in Brentwood, a little nervous but excited about what the next years would bring. Five years later that same priest is now leaving - still a little nervous but still excited about what lies ahead. I have received so many messages of support and it is very touching to know that I have been able to play a small part in people's lives. Thank you so much for the cards and gifts I have received since the announcement of my new appointment. I also want to thank all of you for your love and support over these past years. It has been one of the many things which has kept me smiling! With my other roles I know that I will be back in the not-too-distant future, but I wanted to be able to say goodbye, and to show my gratitude for how happy I have been here. A blessing I wish to you all. With love and prayers, Fr Gary.*

**INTRODUCTION TO FR MATÚŠ MELEG** I recently met with Fr Matúš (pronounced Matoosh) and talked to him about life here at the Cathedral Parish. At present, he is on holiday at home in Slovakia with his family before he takes up his assignment on Friday 6th September. Please extend him a very warm welcome next weekend.

**FR MATÚŠ WRITES** *"My name is Matúš Meleg. I was born in Slovakia to a Catholic family soon after the end of communism. When I was 16, I received a scholarship to study A-levels in the UK. I studied at Culford School near Bury St Edmunds for a year. After I had finished my lower sixth form I decided to continue my studies back in Slovakia. In 2010 I started my university studies in Maths during which I realised I could no longer delay my response to my vocation. In 2014 I moved back to the UK and started my degree in Theology at King's College, London. At that time, I stayed with a Polish priest in South Woodford. As I finished my degree, I realised that Brentwood diocese was my new home, and it was precisely this diocese God wanted me to serve. Therefore, in 2018 I became a seminarian. After spending couple years in Allen Hall and then in Grays parish, I got ordained first deacon in 2023 and then last March, I got ordained*

*priest. For my first placement, the Bishop decided that I should remain in Grays and now, I am looking forward to serving the parish in my new placement, here in Brentwood Cathedral. Please keep me in your prayers and God bless you all."*

**OUR HEARTFELT THANKS** go to Peter and Ann Ayer who have now stepped back from their ministry as Ushers in the Cathedral. Peter and Ann have tirelessly ministered in this role for many years; always there with a smiling face to welcome parishioners and visitors alike at both parish Masses and Diocesan services and events. We thank them most sincerely for their friendship, warm welcome and gentle guidance over the years.

May God Bless You All,

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

**A VERY BIG THANK YOU** To all the parishioners who braved the very inclement weather last Saturday morning to help with the new Peace Garden in the Cemetery. Over the past months the preparations for this new Peace Garden have been taking place, and a lot of hard work has gone into the ground and the planting of shrubs and plants. Once they are established it will look wonderful. I blessed the Garden last Saturday and expressed my gratitude personally to the twenty-plus people who were present. Also, to all of the dear ladies who fed us with bacon rolls! The new Statue of Our Blessed Lady has arrived, and we are awaiting a plinth for her to be placed in the Garden. Also, grateful thanks for helping to clear a great deal of Ivy from many parts of the graveyard. I really would like the parish to look after the graveyard and make it a bit more presentable. Hopefully, we will be able to organise another workday before the winter sets in. We are one of the only Catholic parishes in the diocese that has a graveyard, and it is very much a place of peace.



**WELCOME BACK** This week we welcome back all our children in both the Primary & Senior sector of our schools here in Brentwood. I trust and pray that you have all had a good holiday over the past several weeks. In this new term we also welcome any new students and teachers who will be starting for the first time at our various schools There will be a special school Mass at St Helen's for both Infant and Junior schools on Friday 6th September at 10.30 a.m. to ask God's Blessing on this new academic year.

**MONTHLY 'BIG CLEAN' OF CATHEDRAL** This will take place on **Monday 2nd September** at 9.45 a.m. immediately after the morning Mass. If you are willing to give half an hour or so to assist and help us keep our Cathedral nice and clean, please come along and join us. Could I ask this month for several of you to bring buckets and mops, as there are parts of the cathedral that are extremely dirty as there is so much foot traffic each week. With thanks!

**PLEASE CAN YOU HELP FR JOHN?** I am appealing for some help this week to prepare Fr Matúš' apartment and study for his arrival next Friday. At present, it is full of boxes etc as Fr Gary prepares to move on the 4th September. If you can help us, please come along to Clergy House on **Thursday 5th September** immediately after the morning Mass. There will be some moving of furniture, and a general 'Big Clean' to prepare everything. This will be Fr Matúš home for the foreseeable future, so we want to make him really welcome with his new living accommodation. Thanking you in anticipation! Fr John.



**WANTED! A BRICKLAYER** Is there a bricklayer in the Parish who would be willing to build a brick plinth for the Peace Garden to house the statue of the Blessed Virgin? If you can help, please contact Fr John at Clergy House as soon as possible. We would like to get this completed before the bad weather sets in. This will add the final touch to the Peace



Garden. We will also be placing a couple of benches in the garden so that people can really find a sense of tranquillity and quiet as they spend time in prayer and reflection.

**COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS** today will be hosted by the Altar Servers; next week will be the turn of the Scouts.

**CHILDREN'S LITURGY** Following the summer break, Children's Liturgy will resume again, for children aged 3 and older, at the 9.30 a.m. Mass next **Sunday 8th September**.

**THE NEXT CHAPTER OF CANONS MASS** will take place in the Cathedral at 10.30 a.m. on **Monday 9th September**. Please note this Mass will replace the morning Mass. All are very welcome.

**PLEASE PRAY** for the repose of the soul of Dympna Doran and John Scannell who died recently; funeral details are as follows:

*Dympna's Requiem Mass will be celebrated in the Cathedral on Monday 9th September at 2.00 p.m.*

*John's Requiem Mass will be celebrated in the Cathedral on Monday 23rd September at 10.30 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.

**CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP** will meet in the Upper Room of the Cathedral on **Thursday 12th September** from 7.00 p.m. Everyone is welcome so please do feel free to join us for prayer and praise. Contact Liz Hart on 07716 424043 if you have any queries.

**THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS** An Information Evening for the RCIA (Journey of Faith Programme), will commence on **Thursday 12th September** at 7.00 p.m. in Clergy House. For those interested in learning more about Catholicism, possibly with the view of receiving the Easter Sacraments, please contact Fr John as soon as possible: Tel No: 01277 265235 or Frjohnharvey@brcdt.org Also, if there are any parishioners who

would like an update in the faith, please feel free to join the Programme. I am hoping to develop a Catechesis Programme for all parishioners, who so wish, to learn more about their Roman Catholic Faith. This would be a good programme for Catechists.

**FRIDAY FRIENDSHIP LUNCH** Please note, the Friday Friendship Lunches will resume again on **13th September**.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2024/25** The Parents' Information Meeting will take place on **Wednesday 25th September** at 7.00 p.m. in the Cathedral. The pre-requisites for the programme are that you are a registered parishioner at the Cathedral Parish of St Mary & St Helen, and that your child will have commenced Year 4 (8 years old rising 9) at Primary School in September 2024. If you are a weekly attendee at the Cathedral and live in another parish, as a matter of courtesy, you will need the permission of the Parish Priest for your child to attend our programme. Thank you!

**FORWARD PLANNING** At a recent PACE meeting it was agreed that there should be some more social events for the Parish Community. We have agreed, that after the great success of the last Parish Quiz Night, that there will be another Quiz held in February 2025. But before that we have agreed that we should hold a **Parish Bazaar**, in preparation for Christmas. **Saturday 14th December** 11.00 a.m. - 3.00 p.m. I'm not sure how long it is since a Bazaar was held in the Parish, but they are truly wonderful community events. They bring the whole parish community together.



In September there will be a meeting for all those interested in helping with the Bazaar. I would ask each parish organisation to be involved in some way. It can be a wonderful fund-raiser during the winter months, especially to pay the soaring utility costs at the Cathedral. If you're going on holiday, and you can purchase some duty-free alcohol, please keep the Bazaar in

mind. Thank you! I will share more information at the beginning of September.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION - CATHOLIC SCHOOLS APPLICATIONS** If you are going to apply for a primary or secondary Catholic school with your child starting in September 2025, please make a note of these dates in your diary; at these meetings, Certificate of Catholic Practice forms will be issued to those families who are known in the parish and are regularly practicing their faith. Please note the following important information:

- a) Fr John 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 for a Certificate of Catholic Practice as he 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 the Ursuline 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 see 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 will not supply additional references or documentation to parents who may go to appeal for a place at a non-Catholic school.

Fr John 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.

**SECONDARY SCHOOL APPLICATIONS**

Wednesday 16th October ~ 4.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.

**PRIMARY SCHOOL APPLICATIONS**

Wednesday 13th November~ 4.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.

***Please ensure you make a note of these dates***

**REFERENCES FOR WORK AND OTHER POSITIONS** Fr John receives many requests for references which he is happy to write for people that he knows. However, it is not helpful to mention to him in passing that you have given his name as a referee or for him to receive unexpected reference requests. Therefore, before you give his name as a referee, please ensure that you make an appointment to meet with Fr John first to discuss the position you are applying for and the nature of the reference required. Thank you.

**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.

**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 below:



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.

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

**THE HOLY HOUR** of prayer and adoration before the Blessed Sacrament takes place on a 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.

**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: Sylvia Allum, Merle Anderson, Alistair Bailey, Yvonne Ball, Hermine Bayley, Madeleine Bevan, Eda Bright, Phil Carr, Roisin Cassels, Keith Chester, David Cutter, Dermot Dalton, 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, Carmel Micallef, Harry Newman, Barney

O'Driscoll, Joe O'Herlihy, Matthew Pegg, Steven Poole, Geraldine Sheehan, Robin Shenton, David Spring, Mary Stretch, Tim, TCT, Siobhan Vaughan and all our sick.

## GENERAL NEWS

**ENVIRONMENT FOOTPRINT** Interested in learning how your parish can reduce its environmental footprint? This free webinar hosted by CAFOD, CBCEW and St Mary's University on **4th September** at 7.00 p.m. can help. Drawing inspiration from this year's Season of Creation theme, "To Hope and Act with Creation," and the collaborative "Guardians of Creation" project, the event will showcase how innovative parishes can serve as inspirational models for others. Sign up for this free one-hour webinar here: <https://www.bigmarker.com/cafod/Pioneering>

**BBQ AND MASS FOR YOUNG ADULTS** at Our Lady Immaculate, Chelmsford, **Sunday 8th September**. If you are 18+, having left school, from 1st September then you are very welcome to join a group of young adults for a BBQ from 3.00 p.m. with Mass at 7.00 p.m. at Our Lady Immaculate Church in Chelmsford. No need to book, simply come along to meet other young adult Catholics and find out more about upcoming events just for you!

**"ADOREMUS" FESTIVAL** On **Saturday 14th September** at Oscott College in Birmingham, the "Adoremus" National Eucharistic Congress and Pilgrimage is taking place with representatives from dioceses across England and Wales. Our diocese has been allocated 43 places. If you would like to attend, please contact the Diocesan Co-ordinator, Father Dan Mason at [frdanmason@brcdt.org](mailto:frdanmason@brcdt.org) There will be a coach leaving for the Congress from Brentwood Cathedral at 8.00 a.m. on the day. There is no charge for the coach or attending the Congress but you will need to bring a packed lunch. Parishes are also encouraged to arrange a time for Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament either on the 14th or 15th September. More information about this will be sent out to parishes in the coming months.

**CALLED AND GIFTED TEACHING DAY** On **Saturday 14th September** from 9.00 a.m. to 4.15 p.m. at the Most Holy Redeemer Church in Billericay we will be running a “Called and Gifted” teaching day. “Called and Gifted” is a discernment process developed by the Catherine of Siena Institute which enables everyone to understand the gifts and the charisms that God has given to them so that they are able to share these gifts with others. Those who have taken part in the Called and Gifted process have found that their faith has deepened and that they have been able to discover new ways of serving God in their parish and the wider community. As well as the teaching day, participants are invited to complete an online “Gifts Inventory” prior to the day, as well as having a 1-1 Zoom session with a member of the Called and Gifted team. The total cost of the process including the Teaching Day is £120 which includes online access to the Gifts Inventory as well as a Resource book which will be given out during the Teaching Day. In order to secure your booking please register your interest before Thursday, 1st August by emailing the Billericay Parish Office at [billericay@brcdt.org](mailto:billericay@brcdt.org). If you would like more information about Called & Gifted, please visit their website: <https://www.calledandgifted.org.uk/>

**OPEN HOUSE BILLERICAY** On **Saturday 12th October** the Most Holy Redeemer Church, Billericay will be hosting a day focusing on parish renewal with talks and workshops designed to help parishes transition from maintenance to mission. Bishop Alan will also be presiding at the Midday Mass. Get inspired by priests and parishioners as they share stories of transformation. Hear what they are learning and dream about the change that could be possible in your own parish. The day will last from 9.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. and the cost is £20 per person. In order to attend you will need to register in advance by following this link: <https://divinerenovation.org/events/>

**YOUTH GATHER**, Essex Outdoors, East Mersea, **26th - 27th October**. For anyone in year 9 and above, join us for a weekend of speakers, workshops, prayer and more, alongside the opportunity to try high ropes, archery or climbing at the amazing Essex Outdoors in East Mersea. **Applications are now open** and

you can apply and find all information at [www.bcys.net/events/youth-gather-2024/](http://www.bcys.net/events/youth-gather-2024/)

**VACANCY** A vacancy has arisen for a part-time Parish Secretary to work at Forest Gate - St Anthonys. The successful applicant will need to have excellent communication and administration skills. The post will be part-time working 25 hours per week with hours planned to suit the requirements of the parish. The salary is dependable on skills and experience. Full job description please see Parish Secretary - Forest Gate at Vacancies - Brentwood Diocese ([dioceseofbrentwood.net](http://dioceseofbrentwood.net)) If you have any queries or if you would like to apply, please send your CV and cover letter by email to [hr@brcdt.org](mailto:hr@brcdt.org) Closing date: **9th September 2024**

**INSPIRE, NURTURE AND ACCOMPANY YOUNG PEOPLE** on the edge of East London. The parishes in the Romford Parish Partnership are recruiting a Parish Partnership Youth Coordinator. Salary £30,000/year, start date no later than January 2025. This is a new role, with amazing potential to bring young people into leadership in the Church, and provide a wide range of opportunities for them to live and deepen their faith within a diverse and vibrant part of London. Full details: <https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/diocese/working-for-us/> Closing date **10th September 2024**.

**VACANCY** Governors are seeking to appoint a dedicated and inspirational Headteacher who is a committed, practising Catholic. Someone who shares our vision and passion and has the leadership and ambition to build on the successes of our school. Our Lady Immaculate Catholic School is a caring, friendly school and community where our Catholic ethos is central to all that we do. Our new Headteacher will work with governors to shape the strategic direction of the school and will be responsible for the day-to-day leadership and management of Our Lady Immaculate School. Our new Headteacher will lead a team that strives together in the best interest of all our children. Deadline for applications: 12:00 noon on **Monday 30th September 2024**. We warmly welcome and encourage applicants to visit our school,

please speak with the Admin & Finance Officer, Lindsey Murgatroyd for more information. For an Application Pack please email: [lindseymurgatroyd@ourladyimmaculate.essex.sch.uk](mailto:lindseymurgatroyd@ourladyimmaculate.essex.sch.uk)


**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
			