

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

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**THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD (C)
Sunday 2nd February 2025**

Jesus is in his hometown of Nazareth. He has already been visiting towns and synagogues in the Galilee area, so the word has gone out. His reputation goes before him. Last week we saw that Jesus went into the synagogue at Nazareth and read from the prophet Isaiah and then announced that the text was being fulfilled even as the people listened. In other words, Jesus was firmly placing his own activity of preaching, healing and bringing deliverance within the context of the promises of the Old Testament. He was laying claim to being the fulfilment of the Scriptures. Indeed, he was revealing himself to be the very heart and centre of Scripture - the goal towards which the whole plan and purpose of God was moving. This was an enormous claim, and it is perhaps not entirely surprising that the people of Nazareth were unable to come to terms with it.

The evidence for the truth of what Jesus was claiming lay in the very actions he was performing. Unfortunately, the people of Nazareth made it difficult for Jesus to carry out his ministry - either preaching or



healing. When Jesus quoted examples from the Old Testament where the people prevented God's action through their lack of faith, his countrymen were enraged and drove him out of the town - even attempting to bring him to a violent end. It almost seems like anticipation, a rehearsal, of what is to happen later in Jerusalem. We might also remember the violent reaction in Jerusalem when the news was brought to King Herod by the wise men of a star rising in Bethlehem.

It seems that whenever there is a suggestion that the promise of a Messiah is about to be fulfilled and become a concrete reality, there is an extreme and violent reaction. As long as the promise just remains a promise it is not really a challenge. When Jesus claims to fulfil the promise, then everyone's life is challenged. Do we accept Jesus as the Saviour, promised by God, or not? If we accept, we are required to re-orientate our lives around a new centre. It calls us to become disciples and to place every aspect of our lives under his Lordship.

Dear Friends in Christ

As this Holy Year focuses on the Eucharist, and being Pilgrims of Hope, I would like all parishioners to seriously think about different ways we can all become 'Heralds of the Gospel' in our little portion of the Lord's vineyard here in Brentwood. Since the Covid pandemic of 2020/2021, many people did not find it necessary to return to the practice of their Roman Catholic Faith. This may be for all sorts of different reasons. But when you have been part of a worshipping community all your life, and suddenly you stop sharing with that community, it's very much like a bereavement. We grieve your absence, and I'm sure there is some part of the individual that still desires the solace and comfort of that family of faith surrounding us. Whatever the reasons, as a Christian Family we are not here to judge, we are here to welcome home any 'lost sheep.' There are all sorts of different ways of being Heralds of



venues, on beaches or Las Vegas; marriage in a non-Catholic Church without dispensation from the Bishop. These marriages are not recognised by the Catholic Church, and therefore are non-sacramental & irregular. But there is a facility in the Church to rectify these situations called a Convalidation (this is a strictly private facility that is offered by the church). As marriage and family life is what I specialised in while studying Canon Law, if anyone wishes to speak to me confidentially, please don't hesitate to contact me: Tel No: 01277 265235

HOLY YEAR 2025 Bishop Alan has designated the Cathedral & Our Lady of Light Church in Clacton as the two Churches to gain the Indulgence of the Holy Year. Our Holy Year Door is the original door of the 1860 Brentwood Church (located behind the choir stalls). If you are unable to make a Pilgrimage to Rome, you can be a Pilgrim to the Cathedral and enter through the Holy Door. The Jubilee Indulgence is a gift of grace granted by the Church. It involves the remission of all temporal punishment due to sin for those who are: Truly repentant and free from attachment to sin. Purified through the Sacrament of Penance.



COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS today will be hosted by the St Helen's Ladies group. Unfortunately, due to a late cancellation, there is now no group in place for next week but if you would be willing to host, please call the office as soon as you can.

PLEASE PRAY for the repose of the soul of Brian Kelleher, David Cutter and Mary Owers who died recently; funeral details are as follows:

Brian's Requiem Mass will be celebrated in the Cathedral on Wednesday 5th February at 12 Noon.

David's Requiem Mass will be celebrated in the Cathedral on Tuesday 11th February at 12 Noon.

Mary's Requiem Mass will be celebrated in the Cathedral on Friday 14th February at 11.00 a.m.

May they rest in the peace of Christ.

250 CLUB WINNERS are Frank Garbutt (November draw) who wins £50.00. For the December draw, winners are Lorraine Cowley (£300.00) and Bessem Tambi and Stacey Souza who each win £100.00. Congratulations to all.

PILGRIMS OF HOPE PRAYER GROUP - for this special jubilee year why not join the parish Pilgrims of Hope prayer group? It couldn't be easier. The group pray every Monday evening at 8 .00 p.m. Prayers and reflections are shared on a WhatsApp group with each person praying privately wherever they find themselves. If you'd like to join the WhatsApp group then please give your mobile number and name to the parish secretary.

JOURNEY IN FAITH COURSE The next meeting will be on **Thursday 6th February 2025** and the theme will be: **PRAYER: Is it necessary? Methods of prayer.**

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2025 Next **Saturday 8th February** at **9.30 a.m.** will be the second session for our First Holy Communion children; please ensure the children arrive in time for a prompt start of the session.

CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP will meet in the Upper Room of the Cathedral on **Thursday 12th February** 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.

VESPERS FOR UKRAINE There will be a special Vespers in the Cathedral on **Wednesday 26th February** at 6.00 p.m. to pray for peace in Ukraine on the eve of the third anniversary of the Russian invasion.

The service will feature a mixture of Ukrainian music and familiar English church music, including a contribution by Ukrainians who are now part of our community. We will be privileged to be joined by the Ukrainian Eparch (Bishop) for Great Britain, Rt Rev Kenneth Nowakowski, who will preach at the service. There will be refreshments available in the Parish Hall after the service.

THE BIG LENT WALK 2025 Walk 200km in 40 days to fight global poverty. If you can't manage 5km every day, let's try as a parish community to walk the 200km together. Lorraine, Margaret & Roy from the Love in action group will be walking 5km every Sunday during lent after the coffee morning. Every walk will start and finish at the parish hall and should take about an hour.

1. 9th March - To Butterfly meadow and back via Sawyers Lane & Merrymeade woodland paths - parts may be muddy
2. 16th March - Crescent drive, walk through Brentwood community hospital woodland and back via Worrin Road/Priest's Lane - parts may be muddy
3. 23rd March - Seven Arches Road to Woodman Road Cemetery and back via Warley Hill- mainly pavement
4. 30th March (Mother's Day) - Seven Arches Road, around King Georges Park and back via Cornsland & Rose Valley - mainly pavement
5. 6th April - To St Georges Church via old hospital grounds and back via Ongar Road and Sawyers Hall Lane - mainly pavement
6. 13th April - High Street down to St Faiths to Honeypot Lane and back via Ongar Road - mainly pavement

PARISHIONER ROBERT WIZIK, who is currently on the parish Journey in Faith course, will be undertaking, a walk to raise funds for CAFOD. Robert was due to walk the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage this year but, due to unforeseen circumstances, was not able to do this. Instead, on Tuesday 14th January, he undertook a personal challenge to walk the same distance (744km) and complete the walk at the Cathedral on Holy Saturday when he will be received into the Catholic Church along with the other JIF candidates. He hopes to raise £1000 for CAFOD; if you can help, please see the information poster displayed in the narthex which gives the QR code to donate.

THE FRIDAY FRIENDSHIP LUNCH Every Friday all are welcome to come along to the parish hall (12 noon - 2.00 p.m.) for a light

lunch, cakes and drinks and most importantly, friendly faces and an opportunity to meet up with others.

DIOCESAN DIRECTORY 2025 A few remaining copies of this are available for purchase from the narthex - £3.20 per copy. Please place money in the wall safe marked “Publications / Booklets”. Many thanks.

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.

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 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.

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

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, Eda Bright, Roisin Cassels, Esmeralda Chester, Keith Chester, Dermot Dalton, David, Iris Davis, Jenny Dean, Patricia Decup, Charlotte Donnelly, Margaret F, Rebecca Florendo, Julian Goode, Deacon Nicholas Holmes, Wong Su Hwa, Jess, Lisa Landy, Lawrence, Peter Madden, Romek Matyszczuk, Tony Maule, John McCarthy, Carmel Micallef, Stephanie Murray, 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

WALSINGHAM HOUSE TEAM 25/26 Applications are now open for the volunteer retreat team at Walsingham House. If you are in Yr13 or finishing university and enjoy working with young people, then a year on the retreat team could be the perfect next step. Live and work as part of a young Catholic Christian community, sharing your faith and helping to run retreats for the young people of Brentwood diocese. For more information then please see the website: www.bcys.net/whabbotswick/be-on-team/ or email clairebailey@brcdt.org

OPENING THE DOORS TO FREEDOM FROM HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The National Justice and Peace Network are delighted to invite you to their first event of this Jubilee Year: **Thursday 6th February**, 7.30 p.m.–9.00 p.m. via Zoom. Facilitated by Brian O' Toole, who is a member of the National Justice and Peace Network (NJPN), Act to Prevent Trafficking (APT Ireland), the Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking in Europe (RENATE) and Talitha Kum. At this event you will learn a little more about the insidious issue of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery in the UK and importantly what we can do as "Pilgrims of Hope" during this Jubilee Year to help victims of Human Trafficking as we shine a light on this important issue. You can register your interest to attend this event by emailing admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk and a Zoom link will be sent out to you nearer the time.

CARITAS BRENTWOOD NETWORKING DAY

You are warmly invited to the 2025 Caritas Brentwood Networking Day, taking place on **Sunday, 9th February**, from 2-6 pm at St. Edward the Confessor Church Hall, Romford. This event is an opportunity to explore the Catholic response to pressing issues such as homelessness, welcoming refugees and migrants, supporting those affected by the Cost-of-Living Crisis, and addressing climate change. Join us to find inspiration during this Jubilee year, exchange ideas and best practices with parishioners across Essex and East London, and learn about the charities and

resources available to support your efforts. Registration is free - find more details at www.caritasbrentwood.org/network

WORD ON FIRE UK BIBLE CONFERENCE Join Bishop Robert Barron and thousands of other Catholics from across the UK for Evangelisation & Culture: The Bible. Come to the Excel Centre in East London this February to gain a deeper appreciation of the Sacred Scriptures and their relevance to the Church's mission today. Date: **Friday 21st - Saturday 22nd February 2025** at the Excel Centre, East London. Speakers Include: Bishop Robert Barron, N.T. Wright, Professor Tracey Rowland and more. For more information and to register, please visit: [//wordonfire.org/the-bible-event](http://wordonfire.org/the-bible-event).

INTER FAITH DIALOGUE This year marks sixty years since Nostra Aetate, the document on relations with other Faiths of the Second Vatican Council. Cardinal Michael Fitzgerald worked for decades in this area, particularly in the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. Cardinal Michael will be speaking on 'Inter Faith Dialogue' at 11 am on **Saturday 22nd February** at the Catholic Church of Christ the Eternal High Priest, Gidea Park, RM2 6DH. You are invited to attend free of charge. Refreshments will be available from 10.30. Please bring a packed lunch. The event is also available live stream free of charge at www.whatgoodnews.org. A recording of the talk, and the q and a session, will be available subsequently on the same website.

BRENTWOOD CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S SOCIETY (BCCS) is delighted to host a Shrove Tuesday Afternoon Tea at the Roslin Beach Hotel in Southend-on-Sea on **Tuesday 4th March 2025**. Guests are kindly invited to arrive for 1 p.m. to be greeted and seated in good time for tea between 1.30 and 3.30 p.m. This event is open to all and promises to be a lovely afternoon celebration. Tickets are £35 per person and are available to purchase via the BCCS webpage <https://www.bccs.org.uk/get-involved/events/> If you have any dietary requirements, please contact Julie once you have purchased your tickets, at jabbott@bccs.org.uk so that we can note these. Guests will be

seated at tables of 12 so if you are coming in a group, do please email Julie to let us know your preferred seating arrangements.

MENS' SPIRITUAL EXERCISES A 5-day version of the Ignatian Exercises offered specifically for men (whether lay or ordained) **31 March - 5 April 2025**; this retreat will be preached by the Benedictine Monks of St Joseph's Abbey, France. Founded in 1988, this community has retained its charism of a specific apostolate to men and of engaging them through a shortened version of the Ignatian Exercises. One-to-one direction will be offered alongside the talks. Priests are welcome to attend and concelebrate or celebrate their own Mass. Information or to book visit: <https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/mens-spiritual-exercises/>

CAN YOU VOLUNTEER at the St John Bosco Children's Camp next summer? Applications are now open for anyone aged 17+ to volunteer for a week at the end of July 2025. From helping in the kitchen to running sports and other activities, your skills will mean that 100 children have a wonderful holiday. For most of the children, it is their only summer holiday. The Camp is a special work of Caritas Brentwood. More information - including training date and DBS requirements, along with volunteering FAQs - can all be found at www.boscocamp.co.uk. Applications for children to come to Camp will open in the spring.

THE DIOCESAN LOURDES PILGRIMAGE, led by Bishop Alan, will be from **Friday 18 July - Friday 25 July 2025**. The flights will be Southend to Lourdes. Details, including how to book, will follow.

JUBILEE 2025 - PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY The Jubilee year 2025 is inviting us to visit a holy place and obtain plenary indulgence by entering through the holy door. The parish of Our Lady and All Saints, Basildon is arranging a pilgrimage to Italy visiting the holy places along with some tourist attractions. We will visit the Vatican, Rome, Assisi, Padua, Venice & Pisa. Date of pilgrimage: **30th August-4th September 2025** (6 days). Superior 4* hotel accommodation. Adults and children over 9 years: £775; Children

(2-9 years): £730. Single room supplement £220. For more details and to book your place, email: frsabupariyadan@brcdt.org.

VACANCY St Helen's Catholic Infant School Vacancy: Learning Support Assistant: 8.45 a.m. - 3.15 p.m. (term-time only). We are seeking to appoint an enthusiastic and well-motivated person to join our staff in either April or September 2025. Please contact the school office for further information and an application pack: office@st-helens-inf.essex.sch.uk The deadline for applications is **Tuesday 25th February 2025**.

VACANCY The Diocese of Brentwood is seeking to appoint a Secondary School Link Adviser who is a practising Catholic, to support the Diocesan Board of Education and its family of schools. This is likely to be a part-time post of either 3 or 4 days a week, however, consideration will also be given to applicants who are seeking a full-time opportunity. The Secondary Link Adviser will report to the Diocesan Director of Education and Deputy Director. Further details and an application form can be obtained by emailing: victoriabarnes@dioceseofbrentwood.org Salary range: from £51,000 to £60,000 (FTE) Term time plus 5 days, depending on experience. A full enhanced DBS Disclosure will be required for this position. The closing date for applications is midday on **Tuesday 25th February 2025**.




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
			