

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

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**SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C)  
Sunday 16th February 2025**

Spiritual Reflection:



The *Beatitudes* occur in only Matthew's and Luke's Gospel. Matthew's version is delivered on a mountain (just as Moses delivered the Ten Commandments) and Luke's version on a plain or level ground. There are many comparisons to be made. Luke's version doesn't have the 'poor in spirit' - simply 'the poor' - and omits the Beatitude about the meek inheriting the earth. His version also has a set of 'woes', which highlight the downside of being rich, well fed, socially affirmed, etc.

Mining the Scriptures for hidden depths yields fruit and many blessings. The *Beatitudes*, be they *Matthean* or *Lucan*, do a variety of things. They shed light on the actions and attitudes characteristic of the Christian life. They're the paradoxical promises that sustain hope amid tribulations. They're also the very heart and essence of Jesus's teachings and reveal his face, character and personality.

Jesus lived the *Beatitudes*; he incarnated them, if you like. Perhaps he is the only one whoever has, for to live them is to be perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect. Mind you, given that in his lifetime St Francis was called the ‘Second Christ’, it’s likely that he came close, alongside other great saints, especially Mary, the Mother of God.

However, the *Beatitudes* aren’t just for the saints, but for all of us. They contain both promises of what we shall become, and the revelation of what we have begun to be, albeit in perhaps a somewhat hidden way.

One way of living the *Beatitudes* and putting them into practice is to memorise them, to become familiar with them as with the *Our Father* or the *Hail Mary*. This straightforward step will help us to take them to heart and cherish them during our daily lives. St Augustine said, ‘We all want to live happily; in the whole human race there is no one who does not assent to this proposition, even before it is fully articulated.’

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Dear Friends in Christ

“First and foremost, I would like to welcome our many guests this weekend, who have come to share in the 70th Birthday celebrations on Saturday evening. I welcome members of my own family, and parishioners from former parishes I have served in, spanning 44 years of Priestly Ministry in the Diocese of Brentwood. I’m extremely happy that you have been able to come and join us here this Saturday evening. Of course, I always welcome our own parish family, thank you kindly for your presence here.



I was thinking of my own parents this week, who gave me life and were my first teachers in the ways of faith, both who are now with God. You can never quantify in a few sentences

what your parents give you in life. Sadly, my father died just after I was Ordained to the Priesthood, and my mother some 13 years later. I vividly remember praying together as a family at night. I would like to thank my brothers and sisters for their support through the years also.

I'm truly grateful to you my parish family here at the Cathedral Parish for your great kindness and generosity of spirit. I have been overwhelmed by your incredible thoughtfulness, and your involvement within the life of the parish. It is truly inspiring, and at the same time, very humbling. We are all working together in this little portion of the Lord's vineyard achieving great things. My philosophy of life has always been "If everyone does a little, a lot gets done."

I would like to thank everyone who has helped to prepare this 70th Birthday Celebration; for the Sacred Liturgy, to Andrew and the Choirs who have combined on this occasion. To all those who set up and prepared the two halls, and for the Caterers who provided the food for the reception. A joint effort all round. Thank you kindly for the many cards received and various gifts. I'm humbled by your thoughtfulness.



Finally, I thank Almighty God for the gift of Life, the most precious gift of all; and for calling me to serve through the Priesthood of Jesus Christ. I have had a truly wonderful and happy life and wake every day thanking the Lord for the beauty of life itself. I'm grateful to have lived this long so far and treasure each day as a blessing."

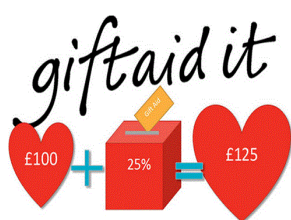
Thank you all once again. With love and many blessings,

Handwritten signature of Fr. John

**WISHING A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO FR MATÚŠ** who celebrates his 33rd birthday this Sunday. We wish him many happy returns of the day. For a priest of Jesus Christ, 33 is always a very special year. We give ourselves to the Lord through the Sacred Priesthood. We mould ourselves into his image throughout our priesthood, and witness to his presence in the world and the Church. This is his gift to us as his priests. We wish Fr Matúš a very special day and a special year.



**A NEW GIFT AID ORGANISER** After nearly eleven years of voluntarily running the Parish Gift Aid Scheme, our organiser Lorna Green is now stepping down from the post. On behalf of the whole parish community, I would like to thank Lorna for her commitment to the invaluable work she has performed for the parish. The Gift Aid scheme certainly does make a difference to the parish finances each year. We can claim back 25% from the Inland Revenue for offertory donations made to the Cathedral Parish.



We are now looking for a new voluntary Gift Aid organiser. If you feel that you can give some of your time and talent to the Parish in this important role, please contact Fr John. Lorna will be only too happy to explain what is involved. I hope and pray that someone will respond to this invitation.

**COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS** today will be hosted by the SVP representatives; next week will be the turn of the Love in Action group who are planning to hold some taste testing activities for the children to join in with. Please do join us for a cuppa and a chat.

**FORWARD PLANNING - LENTEN TALKS 2025** Just to inform you that I've organised a series of Lenten talks on the power and significance of the Holy Eucharist in our lives of faith, entitled, *"Those who believe, don't leave."* Details of the lectures are as follows:



**Wednesday 12th March:** Brendan Thompson who is the U.K. Programme Director for Word on Fire Ministries. Brendan is a Lay Theologian speaking to thousands of people each year.

**Wednesday 19th March:** Fr Philip Caldwell who is a parish priest of the Salford Diocese who taught Theology for many years at Ushaw Seminary before its closure; he writes for the Catholic Truth Society and gives retreats.

**Wednesday 26th March:** Bishop Alan Williams, our own Bishop of the Diocese, a Marist, former Director of the Shrine in Walsingham, and Bishop of the Diocese for over ten years. A Doctor of Psychology, and the Conference of Bishops' delegate on many commissions.

**Wednesday 2nd April:** Fr Stephen Morrison (O Pream), Norbertine Parish Priest of Our Lady of Sorrows, Peckham. After studying French at Oxford entered the Norbertine Order. Latin Scholar and speaks several other languages. Gifted preacher.

The talks will take place in the Cathedral and begin at 7.30pm. Please put these dates in your diaries.

**PLEASE PRAY** for the repose of the soul of Mary Owers and Jennifer Dean who died recently; funeral details are as follows:

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

*Jennifer's Requiem Mass will be celebrated in the Cathedral on Monday 24th February at 11.00 a.m.*

May they rest in the peace of Christ.

**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. *The team are still seeking additional volunteers to help on Fridays to serve food, make tea and chat to our guests. For more information, please contact Clergy House.*

**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.

**JOURNEY IN FAITH COURSE** The next meeting will be on **Thursday 27th February 2025** and the theme will be: The Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**SEEKING NEW CATHEDRAL USHERS** Due to retirement, the 11.30 a.m. Mass has recently lost five of the ushers. We are therefore seeking new people to assist. If you would be interested in finding out more, please email [peterdowse69@gmail.com](mailto:peterdowse69@gmail.com)

**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.

**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.

**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](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.

**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, Patricia Decup, Sheila Deed, Charlotte Donnelly, Margaret F, Rebecca Florendo, Julian Goode, Deacon Nicholas Holmes, Wong Su Hwa, Jess, Lisa Landy, Lawrence, Peter Madden, Romek Matyszczyk, 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

**MARANATHA** Join us for Prayer and Praise on **Thursday 20th February** from 7.00 to 9.00 p.m. This month we will also include hosting The Rescue Project which seeks to proclaim the gospel in a compelling and attractive way over eight sessions. Join us for the first one at the Sion Community, Sawyers Hall Lane, Brentwood, Essex CM15 9BX - All are welcome and there is no need to book, just come along

**WALSINGHAM HOUSE TEAM 25/26** Applications are 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/](http://www.bcys.net/whabbotswick/be-on-team/) or email [clairebailey@brcdt.org](mailto:clairebailey@brcdt.org)

**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](http://www.whatgoodnews.org). A recording of the talk, and the q and a session, will be available subsequently on the same website.

**ADoRE SPIRITUAL MINI-RETREAT** on Saturday 22nd February from 10.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m. on Zoom. "Pilgrims Of Hope - The Holy Spirit Is our Guide." Including Mass, Adoration, Praise, Prophecy, Prayer for the gifts of the Holy Spirit and inspiring guest speaker Gerry Penfold. Please register for the free Zoom meeting in advance at [//bit.ly/ADOREFEB2025](http://bit.ly/ADOREFEB2025) Please see [www.altonrenewal.com](http://www.altonrenewal.com) for further information.

**FILM EVENING IN ROMFORD PARISH** An inspiring film about a pioneering black female leader, “On a bet and a prayer,” tells the story of Mary Stretch, formerly a BBC TV and Radio presenter, and more recently the founder of the refugee support charity Calais Light. Along the way she has battled cancer. The film will be shown at St Edward the Confessor Catholic Church, Romford RM1 4AT, on **Friday 28th February** as part of an evening running from 6.30 - 9.00 p.m. Gather from 6.30, film at 7.00 p.m., and then after the film Mary herself will be available for a Q&A session. The cost is £10; book on the website: <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/sheerahnetwork/1481185> - for any questions about the evening please contact the organisers via the website.

**A DAY WITH MARY** is taking place at Westminster Cathedral on **Saturday 1st March** (9.45 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.) Further information at [www.adaywithmary.org/](http://www.adaywithmary.org/) or <https://eventcatholic.com/>

**HUTTON PARISH SOCIAL WITH DISCO** St Joseph the Worker parish will be holding a Parish event on **Saturday 1st March**, from 6.30 to 9.30 p.m. in their Parish Hall. Adults £10, children free. Wine and soft drinks will be available to purchase or alternatively, feel free to bring along your own drinks and snacks. Due to space restriction in the hall, they are limited to a total of 100 attendees. Therefore, it is imperative that you buy your ticket in advance to ensure your place for this popular event. Tickets will be available to purchase from St Joseph the Worker Church.

**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/>

**THE DIOCESAN LOURDES PILGRIMAGE 2025:** Join Bishop Alan in Lourdes from **Friday 18th to Friday 25th July**. We can support those with medical needs. For further information, please 'phone Tangney Tours on 01732 886 666 or book online: Brentwood Lourdes Pilgrimage - Tangney Tours

**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** A vacancy has arisen for a part-time **Parish Secretary** to work at Billericay- The Most Holy Redeemer Church. The successful applicant will need to have excellent communication and administration skills. The post will be part-time working 20 hours per week with hours planned to suit the requirements of the parish. The salary is £12.46 per hour. If you have any queries

or if you would like to apply, please send your CV and covering letter by email to [billericay@brcdt.org](mailto:billericay@brcdt.org) Closing date: **25th February 2025**

**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](mailto: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](mailto: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**.

**VACANCY** Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School, Upminster are looking to appoint a **Deputy Headteacher** from September 2025. Please see the TES or the School website - [www.sacredheartofmary.net](http://www.sacredheartofmary.net) for details. Closing date: **25th February 2025** at 10.00 a.m.

**VACANCIES** - **Headteacher** required for Holy Family Primary School, Witham. Deadline for applications is 12.00 noon on **Thursday 27th February 2025** and **Headteacher** required for St Peter's Primary School, Romford. Deadline for applications is 12.00 noon, **Monday 17th March 2025**. Further details of these vacancies can be found on the diocesan website.


**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
			