

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

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**THIRD and FOURTH SUNDAYS OF LENT (C)
JUBILEE YEAR - 'Pilgrims of Hope'**

Sundays 23rd & 30th March 2025

Spiritual Reflection:

There is no fun in fundamentalism. This darkened and destructive way of thinking was alive in Jesus' day as it is in our own. Fundamentalism sees no shadows of grey but thinks only in black and white. Its orthodoxy is a weapon with which it beats others, should they not fall in line with its world view.

In the classic strain of fundamentalism we encounter in today's reading a disaster is associated with punishment for sin. This is an ancient and modern disease and is even found in the book of Job, 'Consider now: Who being innocent, has ever perished? Where were the upright ever destroyed? As I have observed, those who plough evil...reap it. At the breath of God, they perish...'

In today's Gospel the construction accident at Siloam reservoir at Jerusalem in which eighteen people died was attributed to their sin. This erroneous and misleading view still prevails today. For example, when the AIDS crisis broke out in the early 1980's people regarded it as the judgment of God. And

in the aftermath of 9/11, it was suggested that this terrorist attack reflected in some way God's righteous judgment.

Jesus was adamant that this way of thinking was simply wrong: 'do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you no!' When people die in tragic and awful ways it doesn't reflect God's judgement. These events do, however, remind us of two sober truths: first, that we all must die and, second, that now is the right time to change our lives, because after death we cannot repent and change - it is too late. Today is always the day for conversion and repentance.



Lent is the season of change, repentance and conversion, and a wonderful time to seek out God's healing and mercy in the sacrament of mercy, the sacrament of reconciliation. If you have not been for a while, take heart; God's mercy and forgiveness awaits you. If you receive the sacrament frequently, you are blessed because through it, with it and in it we touch the very mercy of God, who always leads us on the holy road of interior repentance and conversion.

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Dear Friends in Christ

As the Parish Office is closed until Monday 31st March, this Newsletter will cover two weekends; please do keep it somewhere safe at home. Also, for information an extended newsletter appears each week on the Cathedral Website. If you have any information for the Newsletter, always let us have it no later than Wednesday each week.

As the Third Week of Lent begins, I would like to remind you that our Lenten Talks each focus on some aspect of the Holy Eucharist. As the Eucharist is 'the source & summit' of the Christian Life, it's imperative that that every Catholic Christian understands the Eucharist. The miracle of the Mass celebrated every time



we gather, makes truly present the Body, Blood, Soul & Divinity of Jesus Christ. Not a sign or a symbol, but the 'Real Presence' of Jesus. Tragically, there are some Catholics who do not believe that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist.

When Christ triumphed over sin and death on the Cross of Calvary, through the power of Resurrection, the world changed forever. The Apostolic Mission began. Jesus had prepared the Apostles in those few short years, to continue that which he had started; and even though the early Christians were hounded and persecuted, they continued to grow in number. There are over 1 billion 400 million Catholics throughout the world, but sadly the only Continent where Catholicism has diminished is Europe. There are 6.2 million Catholics in England & Wales, and less than 18% practice their faith. According to the latest statistics from the Bishops' Conference, 554,000 Roman Catholics attended Mass in 2023. Covid, has had a devastating effect on the Church worldwide. As you may be aware approximately 4% of the Catholic population did not return to the practice of their faith after Covid.



The most wonderful thing about the life of faith, is that it is never too late to return to the practice of the faith. And practice means being present weekly and participating in the Eucharistic Celebration. As the great Catholic author Matthew Kelly said in his recent book 'Thirty-three days to Eucharistic Glory' "Those who believe, don't leave!" This Lent may be an opportunity for you to return to the practice of your faith. It is our faith that truly gives meaning to the whole journey of life itself.

May God Bless You All,

### **THIRD & FOURTH LENTEN LECTURES ON THE EUCHARIST: Wednesday 26th March, 7.30 p.m.:**

**BISHOP ALAN WILLIAMS SM:** The Diocesan Bishop of Brentwood since 2014.

Bishop Alan is a member of the Marist Order. He holds degrees in Theology, Psychology and Religious Education and has served in several pastoral roles. He served as a teacher, and Chaplain to Sheffield Hallam University; he

also taught Christian Spirituality at Graduate level. Bishop Alan was the Director of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham for several years prior to his appointment at Bishop of Brentwood. He is an experienced Retreat giver and Counsellor. Theme: Our Blessed Lady & the Holy Eucharist



**Wednesday 2nd April, 7.30 p.m.:**

**FR. STEPHEN MORRISON (O Praem):**

Fr Stephen is a priest of the Norbertine Order, based in Peckham, South London. Fr Stephen was born in Rugby, raised in Hemel Hempstead, and was educated in Hertfordshire (primary and secondary) and France (sixth form). He read French at Oriel College, Oxford, before joining the noviciate of the Norbertine Order in Chelmsford, pursuing studies for the priesthood in London, Rome, and Maryvale.

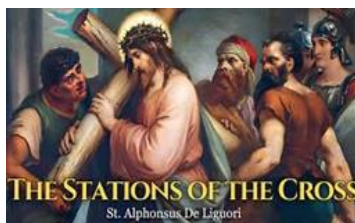
He was the first priest ordained by the then new bishop Alan Williams SM. Fr Stephen was appointed assistant priest at Our Lady Immaculate and Holy Name, Chelmsford, from 2016 until 2022 when the Norbertines moved to Our Lady of Sorrows, Peckham (Archdiocese of Southwark), where he serves as Parish Priest and Sub-Prior. He speaks fluent French, Spanish, and Italian, and has a great love for Ecclesiastical Latin. He enjoys singing, playing the organ, and learning how to sew. In addition to his parish duties, he is a regular retreat giver and homilist and serves as a chaplain to the Order of Malta, participating regularly in their charitable projects and pilgrimages. Theme: "Eucharistic Doctrine of Song: The 'Lauda Sion' of St Thomas Aquinas."



**A BIG THANK YOU** On behalf of our parish community, I would like to thank all our speakers this year for giving us a wonderful insight and deeper understanding of the Holy Eucharist. Hand in hand with the Holy Year Theme 'Pilgrims of Hope', we have included the Eucharistic theme, giving us the opportunity to worship Jesus Christ.

**AN EXTRA MASS EACH WEEK DURING LENT** The Eucharist is the 'source and summit' of the Christian Life. It is the most intimate expression of God's love for us by giving us the gift of His Son Jesus Christ, His Body & Blood, Soul & Divinity. There is no greater gift! I would like to invite all our parishioners to consider attending an extra Mass each week during the Holy Lenten Season. This can be an incredibly beautiful expression, not only of our love of the Lord, but an additional and positive discipline for Lent.

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS** This is the traditional devotion for the Lenten Season. It retraces the Lord Jesus' last day here on earth, from the condemnation by Pilate to the Crucifixion on the Hill of Calvary. It is a very moving journey, and we are invited to share the Lord through the 14 stations to remember his Passion and Death. If you have never been to the Stations before, please try to attend at least once during the Lenten Season. Stations of the Cross will be on Fridays at 7.00 p.m. & Sundays at 5.00 p.m. Parents, this is a wonderful way to instruct the children about the Passion of the Lord, why not attend as a family!



**RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS** As we rapidly approach the conclusion of the RCIA - Journey of Faith Programme for this year. I



I commend to your prayers our 3 Catechumens & 5 Candidates who will receive the Easter Sacraments at the Holy Saturday Easter Vigil on the 19th of April this year. It's wonderful each year how

people respond to the Almighty God and embark upon this incredible journey.

If anyone is interested in joining the new RCIA Programme commencing in September, please kindly speak to Fr John, Tel No: 01277 265 235. It is always good to have a large group of enquirers. It is a systematic programme, covering all areas of the Roman Catholic Faith. We use the Creed as the basis for all instruction, and cover areas of the Old & New Testaments, Catholic Teaching and Tradition, The Sacraments, The Person of Jesus Christ, The Trinity, The Pascal Mystery, The role of Our Blessed Lady, The four last things, Sacramentals & the Saints, Catholic Moral Teaching, Celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession), How to Pray, Extensive Tour of the Church.

**BRITISH SUMMER TIME BEGINS** - a reminder that clocks will go forward one hour at 1.00 a.m. on **Sunday 30th March**.

**MOTHERING SUNDAY** this year is **30th March**.

We would like to wish all of our mothers a very Happy Mothering Sunday this weekend. This is our opportunity to show our gratitude and love to our dear mums, for all they do, and are for us. Let us also remember our dear mothers who are now with God; in their lives they gave us so much love and guidance. May they rest in peace in heaven. We look to Our Blessed Lady, the Mother of Jesus as a wonderful model and example to all mothers.



**PLEASE PRAY** for the repose of the soul of Roland Sapsford and Nijole Gosmariene who died recently; funeral details are as follows:

*Nijole's Requiem Mass will be celebrated in the Cathedral on Thursday 20th March at 10.30 a.m.*

*Roland's Requiem Mass will be celebrated in the Cathedral on Friday 21st March at 10.30 a.m.*

May they rest in the peace of Christ.

**CATHEDRAL REPOSITORY** Please do visit the repository where you will be able to purchase a variety of religious items for Easter, Baptism, First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

**COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS** today will be hosted by the Brownies and next week will be the turn of the Scouts; the following week will be the turn of the PACE team. Please do join us for a cuppa and a chat.

**LENT FOODBANK COLLECTION** - Lent is an ideal time to give to others. One way of doing that is to contribute to the parish food bank collection that will be taking place on the **weekend of 22nd/23rd March**. All the donations go to the Brentwood Food Bank to help local people in need. Donations of non-perishable items such as tinned meat/vegetables/fruit as well as toiletries and treats (biscuits and even Easter eggs!) will be gratefully received. If you wish to donate money instead, please place cash in an envelope clearly marked with 'Brentwood Foodbank Donation' or make cheques payable to Brentwood Foodbank.

**THERE WILL BE A SECOND COLLECTION FOR JUBILEE YEAR** on **Sunday 23 March**; this is a national collection and will take place in all parishes across England and is dedicated to supporting the Jubilee initiatives and projects at the Catholic National Shrine & Basilica of Our Lady, at Walsingham. These initiatives aim to enhance the Jubilee pilgrim experience and further the spiritual mission of the Shrine. Please be as generous as you are able.

**JOURNEY IN FAITH COURSE** The next two meetings will be on **Thursday 27th March** and the theme will be: THE CATHEDRAL: a conducted tour and on **Thursday 3rd April** there will be a social gathering for the RCIA candidates in Clergy House.

**THE BIG LENT WALK 2025 - will commence on Sunday 9th March**. 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. 23rd March - Seven Arches Road to Woodman Road Cemetery and back via Warley Hill- mainly pavement
2. 30th March (Mother's Day) - Seven Arches Road, around King Georges Park and back via Cornsland & Rose Valley - mainly pavement
3. 6th April - To St Georges Church via old hospital grounds and back via Ongar Road and Sawyers Hall Lane - mainly pavement
4. 13th April - High Street down to St Faiths to Honeypot Lane and back via Ongar Road - mainly pavement

**MISSIO BOXES** We would be grateful if you could return Missio boxes to Clergy House by **Monday 21st April**; replacement boxes will be available for you to collect from the narthex.

**VOLUNTEERS FOR CHILDREN'S LITURGY GROUP** The Children's Liturgy group are looking for some new team members to join the rota to help lead the Liturgy for the children at the 9.30 a.m. Mass. If you are able to help on a monthly basis as part of the team, please contact Jane Davenport, via Clergy House, to find out more, we would be very pleased to welcome you.

**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.

**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.

**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)



**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.

**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

**IMPORTANT PETITION** Please consider signing the Care Not Killing petition which calls on MPs to vote against legalising assisted suicide in England and Wales. The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill would make vulnerable people - including the

elderly and disabled - feel a burden on family or carers resulting in pressure to end their lives.

**MAJESTY & GLORY: AN EVENING OF CHORAL AND ORCHESTRAL SPLENDOR!** Join Brentwood & Ingatestone Choral Societies for an evening of sacred and orchestral music at St Thomas of Canterbury Church, Brentwood, on **Saturday 22nd March**, at 7.00 p.m. This concert will feature two glorious choral masterpieces: Mozart's Coronation Mass (a radiant and triumphant setting of the Mass, full of grandeur and lyrical beauty) and Rutter's Gloria (a thrilling and jubilant work, bursting with rhythmic energy and vibrant harmonies). Alongside these choral works, the orchestra will perform Warlock's "Capriol Suite," a lively and evocative suite of Renaissance dances, adding a touch of historical charm to the programme. The evening will be brought to life by a specially assembled orchestra featuring musicians from the Brentwood Philharmonic Orchestra, Brentwood Cathedral Music Group, and talented students from Becket Keys School and New Hall School. Art Wangcharoensab, Assistant Music Director at Brentwood Cathedral, who directs the Cathedral's 9:30 am Masses will be conducting the concert. Tickets are £15 (Under-16s £8, includes programme) and can be purchased at [www.brentwoodchoralsociety.org.uk/tickets](http://www.brentwoodchoralsociety.org.uk/tickets) or at the door. Or please contact [info@brentwoodchoralsociety.org.uk](mailto:info@brentwoodchoralsociety.org.uk) for any other enquiries.

**THE LITURGY OF THE WORD** In the second talk in the series 'Proclaim the Word', entitled 'A richer table of God's word', Fr Adrian Graffy explains how after the Second Vatican Council readings from all parts of the Bible were arranged so that more abundant provision of Sacred Scripture is available to all at Mass. The talk will be at 7.00 p.m. (tea and coffee from 6.30 p.m.) on **Wednesday 2nd April** at the Catholic Church of Christ the Eternal High Priest.

**LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINARS** Please save the date for the upcoming Life in the Spirit Seminars which are being held in Brentwood Cathedral Large Hall over 6 Tuesday evenings (**29th April - 3rd June**). Come along to hear inspiring speakers, be

filled with the Holy Spirit and travel through your own 'Holy Door' as we celebrate this Jubilee Year. More details will follow shortly. The *Life in the Spirit Seminars Registration* is now **OPEN**. Register by scanning the **QR code below** and receive more information on this special Diocesan event taking place from Easter to Pentecost in Brentwood Cathedral Large Hall. The Seminars are being held over 6 Tuesday evenings from **29th April - 3rd June** inclusive and are open to all. You are warmly invited to come along to hear inspiring speakers, be filled with the Holy Spirit and travel through your own 'Holy Door' as we celebrate this Jubilee Year as "*Pilgrims of Hope*".



**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/>

**BEGINNING EXPERIENCE WEEKEND** Beginning Experience is a special residential weekend programme for widowed, separated and divorced people, which helps participants with natural feelings of grief and loss. The weekend is led by trained volunteers, who have experienced having to adjust to life as single people again. This next programme will be held on **4-6 April** at the Sion Community, Essex; further details from: Mary: 07730 884315, or email [BeginningExperience.SoE@gmail.com](mailto:BeginningExperience.SoE@gmail.com).

**THE ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY AND CAFOD** are working together to offer a week of free residential work experience for 20 young adults in England and Wales. The experience will run from 22nd 27th June in London. Candidates must be aged have completed their first or second year at university and have a

passion for social justice. Applications close on the **20th April**. For any queries, please contact [KeziaH@svp.org.uk](mailto:KeziaH@svp.org.uk)

**BRENTWOOD URSULINE - 125th ANNIVERSARY** To mark our 125th anniversary, we invite past and present staff and students to attend an anniversary Mass at Brentwood Cathedral at 11.15 a.m. on **Saturday 26th April 2025**, to be followed by a community celebration at the Brentwood Ursuline School from 1.00 to 5.00 p.m. For further details and to book a place at the event, please visit the website: [www.brentwoodursuline.co.uk](http://www.brentwoodursuline.co.uk)

**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

**VACANCY - Director of Education.** Bishop Alan is seeking to appoint a Director of Education to promote and implement his vision for Catholic education within the Diocese. This is an inspiring, rewarding and fulfilling position as the Diocese serves a network of 90 schools, providing for the formation and educational needs of some 40,000 children and young people. The successful candidate will have extensive leadership experience in an education context, a strong grasp of current educational issues (including CMATs' evolving role within the parish, diocese and local community); excellent leadership and management skills; and a deep knowledge and understanding of Catholic education as structured in this country. The closing date for applications will be **Monday 7th April** at 12 Noon. See: [www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/diocese/working-for-us/](http://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/diocese/working-for-us/) for more information.

**VACANCY - Caritas Development Officer.** This new role within the Diocese will help develop and strengthen our charitable action and ministry. Working alongside the Director of Caritas, the successful applicant will have excellent digital media, organisation and presentation skills, and a heart for Catholic Social Teaching, helping to share this valuable work in schools and parishes, supporting existing volunteers. £24,000 -

£27,000pa depending on experience. Full time, including some evenings and weekends. Deadline **31st March** at **noon**. More information and application: [caritas@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:caritas@dioceseofbrentwood.org)

**VACANCY** The Canonesses of the Holy Sepulchre invite applications for the post of **Bookkeeper**. (Relevant skills and experience required). 20 hours a week. Office based in Colchester CO4 3XD. For further details please look at our website - [www.canonesses.co.uk](http://www.canonesses.co.uk) Closing date for applications **9th May 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                                                                     |
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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                                                                       |
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