

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

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**SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C)  
JUBILEE YEAR - 'Pilgrims of Hope'**

**Sunday 20th July 2025**

**Spiritual Reflection:**

In a story unique to St. Luke's Gospel, we read of a remarkable and beautiful incident in Jesus' life. Mary of Magdalene, whose feast we celebrate tomorrow, is traditionally associated with the Mary before us today but scholars think that it is unlikely to be the same person, believing this woman to be Mary of Bethany. What is clear is that, like Mary Magdalene, Mary of Bethany loved the Lord. In this account, she did not wash his feet with her weeping or anoint his body with expensive nard, but she showed that one thing was needed, and that was to sit at the Master's feet and learn from him

There has always been a tension between the contemplative arm and the apostolic arm of the Church. The contemplatives are accused of being too focused on prayer whereas the Apostles are criticised for being too preoccupied with action and not placing enough emphasis on the interior life.

Of course, this is too simplistic juxtaposition but there is an element of truth in it.

It is, however, hard not to feel some sympathy for Martha, who in this understanding embodies the apostolic approach, Mary can come across as a kind of ‘goody two shoes.’ Martha on the other hand, has not got airs and graces; she is a worker and not a shirker. Clearly both women were serving the Lord, but Mary, in Jesus’ own words, chose what is better. This doesn’t mean what Martha was doing in that moment wasn’t good or noble or worthy, or even right for her to be doing; it simply means that ultimately sitting at the Lord’s feet and learning from him who is humble and gentle of heart is the goal of our faith.



The great saints of the Church did not hesitate to serve others practically. It was in aid of St. Catherine of Genoa, for example, that she used to be so preoccupied in prayer that she appeared to be in a trance. Nevertheless, if anyone needed her help, she would stop praying immediately to respond. The late Pope Francis called us all to serve others in a spirit of love and charity, but all service of God must be first rooted in prayer and hearing God speak through his Word.

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Dear Friends in Jesus Christ,

As I write this Newsletter, we are preparing for the end of the academic year in all our schools. We have been celebrating end of year school masses, bidding farewell to our year 6 children, thanking our staff for another successful and productive year. Personally, I would like to thank all our Headteachers and their staff for all the hard work that has been achieved this past year. A big thanks you to all the faculty members from the various schools who are moving on to new

posts, thank you so much for your contribution in teaching our children over the past years. We also look forward to welcoming new staff in September. I trust and pray that you will all get the opportunity for a good break and holiday, to recharge your batteries and come back refreshed in September.

**FAREWELL TO MO RUSTON:** On behalf of the whole community of the Cathedral Parish of St Mary & St Helen, Brentwood, I would like to express my sincere and grateful thanks to Mo for her service to the parish over the past 11 years. Many of you know Mo personally and hopefully will be able to attend the 9.30am Mass this Sunday. It will be our opportunity to say a personal thank you to Mo. Mo recently moved to a new home in a different part of the Diocese and as she retires, this will give her more time to spend with family and pursuing all those things that she's put on hold for a long time. Many of you may not know that Mo trained as a Chef at the beginning of her working career, now she can pursue her great love of cooking once again.

On a personal note, I would like to thank Mo for her incredible kindness to me over the past two years, she stayed on an extra year for my sake and I'm truly grateful. Her administrative skills and efficiency have been extraordinary. I always felt very safe leaving the administration of the parish in Mo's very capable hands.

Please join us after the 9.30am Sunday Mass in the Parish Hall for refreshments, this will give you an opportunity to speak to Mo and say goodbye.

**OUR NEW PARISH SECRETARY:** A big welcome to Theresa Croll, our new parish Secretary & PA to the Dean. Theresa started work here last Monday. When you meet Theresa at Clergy House please make her welcome.

**BON VOYAGE:** As the schools all close this week, I would like to take this opportunity of wishing everyone a very happy holiday. I trust and pray that you will get time to have a break and get away and relax for a couple of weeks. Of course, the Cathedral will be open as usual; daily and Sunday masses will continue to

be celebrated. As I stated last week, travelling abroad is always a wonderful way to see some of the beautiful churches in the world, also to experience the celebration of Holy Mass in another country.

**RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS** As we have just completed this year's RCIA programme. I am calling the whole parish once again to see if there are any people who may be interested in learning more about the Roman Catholic faith, with the view of

receiving the Easter Sacraments next Easter 2026. The RCIA is a programme of systematic instruction of all aspects of Catholicism. Examining the Sacred Scriptures - Old & New Testaments. Understanding the whole concept of God. The Incarnation of Jesus Christ - the Lord's Mission and Teachings. The Gift of the Holy Spirit - Pentecost. The Sacramental Life of the Church - The 7 Sacraments (with special emphasis on the Eucharist). What is the Church - Origins, and the church in 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The Laws of the Church - Canon Law. The Four Last things - Death Judgement, Hell & Heaven. Sacramentals - The Rosary, Benedictions, the Lives of the Saints, other Catholic Devotions. The Role of the Virgin Mary in God's plan of Salvation. "Lord, teach us how to pray." - Many different kinds of Prayer. The Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. The Paschal Mystery. Journey through Holy Week.

If you know anyone who may be interested in learning about the faith, please give them this information, and ask them to contact Fr John - Tel No: 01277 265235. It is always good to sit down personally and explain to all enquirers who the programme works. The new programme commences in September. Watch this space!!

**SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION 2026** At a recent meeting of the Confirmation Catechists, a unanimous decision was made to open the Confirmation Programme to young people in Years 10 to 13. Obviously, this will change the dynamic slightly, as there will probably be more candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation





& St Helen. This is an extremely important time in your child's life, and their spiritual preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist should be treated with seriousness and total commitment. If you are not practicing your faith, please don't waste our time. A **Parent Information Meeting** will be held on **Monday 6th October at 7.30 p.m.** in the Cathedral, explaining the First Holy Communion programme and its requirements. *Please put this date in your diary.*

## **CHILDREN'S SUNDAY LITURGY**

**CATECHISTS:** I would like to thank all our current Catechists for their hard work throughout the year.



Of course, we are always looking for more help; I know many parents accompany their young children on Sunday mornings to the Sunday Liturgy. Would you please consider becoming one of the Catechists, to help with the sessions. The more volunteers we have, your service would only be required about once a month. We really are desperate for new catechists, as several have stepped down recently. If you are willing to help, please contact Jane Davenport, or Fr John at Clergy House. Thank you!

May God bless you all

**PLEASE PRAY** for the repose of the soul of Lilly Bortoli who died recently; funeral details are as follows:

*Lilly's Requiem Mass will be celebrated in the Cathedral on Monday 21st July at 1.00 p.m.*

May she rest in the peace of Christ.

**COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS TODAY** will be hosted by St. Helen's Ladies Group; next week will be the turn of the Love in Action group. Please do join us.

**READERS' AND EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS ROTA** The new rota starting the weekend of **25th/26th July** has been sent out to all

Readers and Eucharistic ministers. If you need to change any and don't know who to swap with, please email me (alixholmes22@gmail.com).

**VESPERS FOR UKRAINIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY** There will be a special Vespers in the Cathedral on Sunday 24th August at 4.00 p.m. as part of the celebrations for Ukrainian Independence Day. This is a service to show our support for the people of Ukraine, especially those who have made their home in our community since the outbreak of the war in their country. There will be face painting and activities for children in the Parish Hall from 3.30 p.m. and everyone is invited to join the celebrations in the hall after the service.

**VACANCY** - housekeeper/support worker (16 -24 hours) to a small religious community at The Marillac, Warley. Assisting elderly sisters to maintain their home and independence. Pay £12.60 per hour. Contact Sr Kathleen on 01277 220276 or email kathleen.page@dcmillhill.org.

**THE FRIDAY FRIENDSHIP LUNCH** will return again after the summer break; details of the return date will be given through the newsletter in due course.

**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.

**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.

**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, Angela Gavin, Julian Goode, Deacon Nicholas Holmes, Wong Su Hwa, Jess, Lisa Landy, Suzie Law, 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, Margaret Ross, Geraldine Sheehan, Robin Shenton, David Spring, Mary Stretch, Tim, TCT, Siobhan Vaughan, Kalcho Yankov and all our sick.

## GENERAL NEWS

**NATIONAL PILGRIMAGE OF REPARATION & PRAYER** for the Sanctity of Life to Walsingham, **Saturday 2nd August** to be led by Bishop John Keenan of Paisley diocese, Scotland. Everyone is invited to join in this pilgrimage either in person or via the Shrine livestream at <https://www.walsingham.org.uk/live-stream/>. Details of the day and travel arrangements can found at [www.prolifepilgrimage.org](http://www.prolifepilgrimage.org)

**INGATESTONE HALL TEA & TOUR** Brentwood Catholic Children’s Society is excited to invite you to a special day exploring the beautiful Ingatestone Hall! Join us for a private guided tour led by Lord Petre or his son, giving you a rare glimpse into this stunning 16th-century Grade I listed manor house. The tour lasts about 1½ hours, and afterwards, you’ll be treated to tea and cake in the parlour – a lovely way to relax and chat!

**Date: Thursday, 11th September**

Times: 10.30 am and 12.30 pm (two tour options)

Tickets: £25 per person – you can reserve yours here: <https://eu.jotform.com/form/251772844632361>

Note: Please be aware that access is limited due to the historic nature of the building, which may not be suitable for individuals with mobility challenges

If you’d like more info, please get in touch with Julie: Email: [jabbott@bccs.org.uk](mailto:jabbott@bccs.org.uk) / 07912277413 and we look forward to welcoming you to Ingatestone Hall for a day of history, hospitality, and stunning architecture.



**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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*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                                                                       |
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