

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

Canon John J Harvey
Cathedral Dean

Father Matúš Meleg
Assistant Priest

Clergy House: 01277 265235

Deacon Paul Conrad: 01277 810321

Deacon Nicholas Holmes: 01277 373788

Deacon Joseph Manuel-Mokweyne:
deaconjosephmanuel-mokweyne@brcdt.org

Email: cathedral@brcdt.org

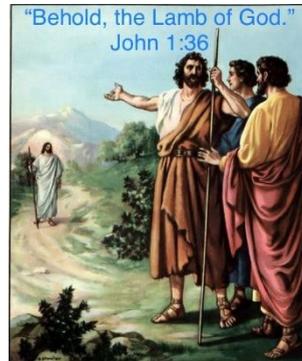
Website: www.brentwoodcathedral.org.uk

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)

Sunday, 18 January 2026

Spiritual Reflection:

At his baptism, Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit filled Jesus with the power to be 'a light to the nations.' Living his life in purity, truth, humility, love, faithfulness and obedience to his Father, Jesus reflected God's light into a sinful world, dispelling the darkness of sin, unbelief and ignorance: 'I have come as light into the world, that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness'. He brought us the light of faith and true knowledge so we could know the Father and do the Father's will.



The Spirit filled Jesus with the power to offer his life in sacrifice for the sins of the world in order that God's 'salvation may reach to the end of the earth'. That is why John said to Jesus, 'Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!' As God's Chosen One, faithful and obedient, Jesus baptises with the Holy Spirit so that the Spirit will give believers the power to be light to the world and to bring God's salvation to the ends of the earth. We are light to the world as we live our lives in

‘compassion, kindness, lowliness meekness and patience’. These virtues dispel the darkness around us just as a lamp placed on a stand ‘gives light to all in the house’. We bring God’s salvation to the ends of the earth as we seek to live righteous and holy lives, rejecting the temptations that assail us, repenting of the sins we have committed, ‘forbearing one another, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other’.

By being light to the nations and bringing God’s salvation to the ends of the earth. Jesus glorified his Father: ‘You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified’. Like Jesus, we give glory to the Father by being light to the world and pursuing righteousness and peace. Ask the Spirit to fill you with power so that you may be light to the world and bring God’s salvation - mercy, love, peace and forgiveness - to those around you.

Dear Friends in Jesus Christ,

This weekend we began our First Holy Communion Programme for 2026. The parents and children celebrated Holy Mass yesterday morning. I personally gave the parents their first talk, encouraging them to be fully involved with their child’s preparations for the Sacraments of Reconciliation the Holy Eucharist. At the 9.30am Mass today the parents and children will be formally enrolled in the Sacramental Programme, making their sacred promises to Almighty God. It is



absolutely imperative that all the children attend every session of the First Holy Communion Programme. As you can appreciate, we only have a limited amount of time with the children at each session. If your child is unable to attend through sickness please contact Fr John personally Tel No: 01277 265 235. They will have to make up the session at a later date. Also, the homework sessions will be emailed to parents. Please ensure you sit down at least once a week with your child, and share with them the homework, and talk to them about their First Holy Communion. The children will be prepared for First Reconciliation throughout Lent. Please ensure that you personally drop off and pick up your child when the session begins and ends. Thank you!

I would like to ask the whole parish community to pray for these children and their families over these next months of preparation. This is a very special moment in their young lives of faith, and we want them to have the best experience possible during these preparations. I thank our Catechists for their incredible commitment to the children during this preparation period.



RCIA PROGRAMME - JOURNEY OF FAITH: Continues ***Thursday, 22nd January 2026.*** Please do keep our twelve enquirers in your thoughts and prayers, especially as they make the very

important decision to be received into full communion with the Roman Catholic faith at Easter 2026. Theme: Eschatology - the Four Last Things - Death, Judgement, Hell & Heaven. Just a reminder to our Catechumens and Candidates that the forms need to be returned to Fr John as soon as possible. The Rite of Election, where all Catechumens and Candidates are presented to the Bishop, takes place on the ***First Sunday of Lent, 22nd February 2026 at 3.00pm.***

BAPTISMS: If there are parents wishing to have their children baptised at Brentwood Cathedral, could you kindly contact the Parish Office as soon as possible. For first time parents there is a Baptismal Preparation Programme run by Fr Matúš. Baptisms take place on Saturdays at 11.00am & 12Noon, and Sundays at 1.00pm.



PARISH FINANCES: First and foremost, I would like to thank all our parishioners who contribute on a weekly basis for the upkeep of this Cathedral Parish. This is probably one of the biggest parishes in the Diocese of Brentwood. It is not only our parish, but also the Mother Church of the Diocese. Therefore, it has a two-fold function in the

Diocese. All the major diocesan events take place here at the Cathedral. As you can appreciate, the upkeep of the Cathedral and parish halls is wholly dependent on your weekly offerings. During the winter months November to April, there is a heavy drain on resources because of the various utilities, heating, lighting & water; and as you will know from your own domestic bills these are rising all the time. Thankfully, this year with our wonderful bazaar result, this helps us to defray the utilities costs. But additional works throughout the parish, substantially affects our weekly income. At present we are in the process of repairs to the ceiling and outside roof over the old part of the Cathedral. As a grade 2 star listed building, we have had to follow all the necessary legal requirements for works to be completed. In the Parish cemetery, you may have noticed work has been done on some of the trees. Unfortunately, there are several trees by the railings on the Ingrave Road, which are diseased, and

we are seeking professional advice about their removal. There have been serious issues with the gas boilers in the parish halls. Above the hall we had to have the roof repaired recently, as there were significant leaks. There were potholes in both of our car parks, which have now been repaired. The list goes on and on. All these expenses come from your weekly gift offertory to the parish. Please take into consideration all these things when making your weekly offering.

CATHEDRAL TOILET FACILITIES: SENSITIVE ISSUE:- Leading up to Christmas, we had to call out the plumber on three separate occasions because the disabled & ladies' facilities were blocked. The call out charges were extremely expensive, (£360.00) and could have been avoided if baby wipes, nappies and other things were not put down the toilets. Please only flush toilet tissue. Please may I ask all parishioners to be sensitive to everyone else using the facilities. Thank you!

YOUR CRIB OFFERINGS: All your donations at the Crib will go towards the work of the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society. This is one of the main forms of fundraising for the BCCS. The Society usually sees about 5,000 clients every year from our diocese. Much of this work is done throughout Catholic Schools. The Crib will remain up until the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord 2nd February, and the Special Annual Crib Collection will take place on the weekend 31st January/1st February thanking you all in anticipation.



SICK & HOUSEBOUND PARISHIONERS: If there are any sick or housebound parishioners that would like a visit from one of the priests please contact Clergy House Tel No: 01277 265 235. We can also arrange for Holy Communion to be brought to your homes on a regular basis.

May God bless you all.

HENRY NOWAK REQUIEM will take place in The Cathedral at **11.00am on Friday, 23rd January.**

COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS will be hosted by the Parents of the Confirmation Group. Next week, the family of Breda Bower invite you join them for tea, coffee, cake to celebrate Breda's milestone birthday. All are welcome!

THE FRIDAY FRIENDSHIP LUNCH Every Friday all are welcome to come along to the parish hall (**12 noon - 2.00 p.m.**) for a soup lunch, cakes and drinks and most importantly, friendly faces and an opportunity to meet up with others.

250 CLUB - RENEWALS ARE DUE NOW and new members are very welcome to join. This is an easy way to help raise funds for the Parish halls and every month a member of the club wins a prize! For those paying by ongoing standing order either monthly or annually, no action is required. If you pay in one annual instalment by cash, cheque or bank transfer, this will be due by **Sunday, 15th February 2026** please. If I have your email address, I will be sending a renewal form by this method. Alternatively, forms are available from the Narthex, by email or I can arrange to post one to you. New and renewal forms, along with payment, can be returned to Clergy House for my attention. Should you receive an email in error, please advise me so that I can remove you from the mailing list. Please also contact me if you are unsure how to make your payment or have any other queries. Thank you for your continued support. Pat Austin - email pat@familyaustin.co.uk or message/call 07733 103588.

Congratulations to our August and September winners - Angela James and Eddie Wadsworth, who each win £50.00.

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.

THE HOLY HOUR of prayer and adoration before the Blessed Sacrament takes place on a **Monday evening from 6.30 - 7.30pm.** and will be preceded by the ***ROSARY for Ukraine and peace in our world at 6.10 p.m.***

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 8.00pm.** 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 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 01277 265 235.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION is available in the Cathedral on Saturdays from 10.00 - 11.00am. Confessions in Italian are also offered.

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK and housebound parishioners and friends, including: Sylvia Allum, Merle Anderson, Suzie Anderson, Alistair Bailey, Yvonne Ball, Hermine Bayley, Heidi Brenke, 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, Brian Hodgkins, 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, Liam O'Herlihy, Steven Poole, Margaret Ross, Geraldine Sheehan, Robin Shenton, David Spring, Mary Stretch, Tim, TCT, Siobhan Vaughan, Michael Wilson, Kalcho Yankov and all our sick.

ST. HELEN'S INFANT SCHOOL PROSPECTIVE NURSERY PARENTS 2026-2027 (3 - 4 YEAR OLDS) - There will be tours of the school for prospective parents (Nursery 2026) on ***Wednesday, 28th*** and ***Thursday, 29th January at 9.30am***. Please contact the school office on 01277 215 626 to book a slot or by email at admin@st-helens-inf.essex.sch.uk

TOUR OF THE RELICS OF ST. GERARD MAJELLA 2026 Later this month our diocese will host the relics of St Gerard Majella at four locations (please see poster in the Narthex):-

Monday, 19 th January	Holy Trinity, Basildon
Wednesday, 21 st January	Ss James & Helen, Colchester
Thursday, 22 nd January	Our Lady of the Rosary & St. Patrick, Walthamstow
Friday, 23 rd January	St. Anthony, Forest Gate

This is the start of a tour of England and Wales to mark his 300th anniversary. Come along and bring your intentions to this popular Saint.

RESPONDING TO HOMELESSNESS You are invited to join Caritas Brentwood at our upcoming 'Responding to Homelessness' event on ***Saturday, 24th January 2026 (10am-12:30pm)***. The event will be hosted by St Francis of Assisi Catholic Parish in Stratford. It will offer practical support, shared insights and meaningful discussions with local organisations, including Your Place Anchor House, Rainham Foodbank and the Basildon Night Shelter, who are all working on the frontline of

homelessness. For more information and to register for free, go to: www.caritasbrentwood.org/events"

LOURDES WITH OUR DIOCESE: Join Bishop Alan and pilgrims from across our diocese in Lourdes next summer: *Friday 17th - Friday, 24th July 2026*. Booking details will be available shortly.

ST JOHN BOSCO CHILDREN'S CAMP - an amazing volunteer opportunity for this summer. If you are in school year 12 or student age (or any age over 17!) you are very welcome to apply at www.boscocamp.co.uk. The application process includes references and a DBS check, which we can help with, as well as a training and support before and during Camp. The Camp provides over 100 children a week with a summer holiday - for many their only holiday. As a volunteer you use your skills in assisting with different sporting and fun activities, as well as the practical aspects of camp life. **Volunteer for Saturday, 25th July - Saturday, 1st August or Saturday, 1st - Saturday, 8th August.** The Camp is a special work of Caritas Diocese of Brentwood, and also seeks financial donations - all information on the website.

VACANCY: HEADTEACHER - HOLY FAMILY PRIMARY SCHOOL, BENFLEET
Deadline for applications: *9:00am, on Wednesday, 28th January 2026*

VACANCY: PARISH ADMINISTRATOR- OUR LADY OF COMPASSION- UPTON PARK A vacancy has arisen for a Parish Administrator to work alongside our experienced Parish Administrator, to provide administrative support services to the Parish Office and a welcoming, appropriate service to those attending the parish office. The post will be part-time working 10 hours per week - (10-12pm Monday- Friday). The salary is £13.85 per hour

Closing date for applications is *12pm on Saturday, 31st January 2026*

If you have any queries or if you would like to apply, please send your CV by email to uptonpark@brcdt.org

VACANCY: PARISH FINANCE ADMINISTRATOR- SOUTHEND A vacancy has arisen for a Parish Finance Administrator. All applicants should have good administrative and finance skills, although training will be given. The post will be part-time working 6 hours per week - (working pattern tbc) and the salary is £12.60 per hour.

The closing date for applications is *Monday, 9th February 2026*

If you have any queries or if you would like to apply, please send your CV to southend@brcdt.org

VACANCY: EDUCATION SUPPORT ADMINISTRATOR - CATHEDRAL HOUSE

A vacancy has arisen to provide administrative and general departmental support to School Advisors across the Education Department of the Diocese. The post will be 22 hours per week - 4 days per week working from 9.00am - 3.00pm with half an hour for lunch. Term time only. Salary £14.50 per hour

The closing date for applications is ***5.00pm on Monday, 16th February 2026***. If you have any queries or would like to apply, please send your CV by email to hr@brcdt.org

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:



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