

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

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)

Sunday, 25 January 2026

Spiritual Reflection:

To fulfil the words of the prophet Isaiah, Jesus began his public ministry in Galilee. One of the ironies of the situation - or was it a tragedy? - was that the chief priests and Pharisees familiar with the Scriptures, were so stubborn, blind and resistant, saying: 'Are you from Galilee, too? Look into it, you will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee.'

Jesus' initial preaching began in the same way as the ministry of John the Baptist, with a simple proclamation about the need for conversion

and change: 'Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is close at hand.' The notion or idea of repentance is one that doesn't sit very comfortable with us today. That's because we have lost a sense of sin and consequently have also lost a sense of the need to repent and turn back to God. We strive for a different vocabulary of faith to replace concepts like sin, repentance, contrition and conversion. The problem is that this exercise is rather futile because the Scriptures and the teachings of the Church speak to the human condition and the human condition is fallen.



**THE LORD IS MY LIGHT
AND MY SALVATION**



The Greek word *metanoia* means to change one's mind or change direction. The Holy Spirit works in us to convict us of sin and lead us towards repentance; in other words, to change our minds and think differently. The Holy Spirit is the mind-changer, but more importantly the heart-changer. Repentance in this sense isn't difficult because the Holy Spirit leads us to see

how destructive and dark ways of thinking harm us and undermine our wellbeing and happiness.

God created us with the gift of free will. This is why repentance is so vital. God will assist us with grace but respects our free will and ability to choose and decide about whether to sin or not to sin, to turn back to God or to remain in our rebellion. Once we repent, once we turn back to God, once we take the first step, we open ourselves up to the healing mercy of God. Repentance will always be the key that unlocks the door to the royal road, the highway of holiness, the way of the Spirit.

Dear Friends in Jesus Christ,

It's now a year since the Mercy Sisters arrived at St Joseph's Convent (formerly the Grange) in the Cathedral Parish. I celebrated Holy Mass with the sisters on Wednesday to mark this occasion. To have religious communities in the parish is a real grace and blessing. Many of you have got to know some of the sisters, and they have found a wonderful welcome in the community. To have a wonderful powerhouse of prayer at the Convent of Mercy through the presence of these 21 sisters is of great benefit to the whole parish family. As you know many of the sisters were involved with Catholic Education and Nursing throughout the whole of their working lives. Some of the sisters worked out of the Missions for many years. The Mercy Sisters are no strangers to Brentwood Parish, and some of the sisters entered Religious Life here in Brentwood, when the Convent was next door to Clergy House, (now the Cathedral Offices & the Song School); in that respect it's a real 'coming home.' We wish the Sisters every happiness and joy on this first anniversary, and long may they be with us.



REQUIESCAT IN PACE: In your mercy, please pray for the repose of the soul of Monsignor David Manson, former Dean & Parish Priest of Brentwood Cathedral. Sadly, Fr David passed away suddenly just before Christmas 18th December from heart failure. The Diocese was very shocked to hear this sad news. Fr David was at the reception of Bishop Thomas McMahon's



body into the Cathedral the previous Monday and many of us spoke to him. Bishop Alan went to Braintree Parish the following Sunday to share the news with the parishioners. There will be a Special Vigil Mass at Braintree Parish for the parishioners at **6.00pm on Tuesday, 27th January 2026**, celebrated by Bishop Alan, and Fr David's body will be brought to the Cathedral on **Wednesday, 28th January 2026**

for the 11.00am Requiem Mass. Monsignor Paul McPartland, Fr David's oldest friend will preach the homily. Fr. David's Obituary is published on the Parish Website.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2026:

I would like to express my thanks to the parents and children for their presence at the Rite of Enrolment for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist. This is such a special time in these children's lives, as they prepare for this next stage of their faith journey. I commend these 50 children and their families to your prayers over these next months. After speaking with the parents, I was able to attend the two separate groups in our parish halls. I've managed to talk to some of the children already, who really love their new workbook 'I Belong'. My gratitude always goes to our Catechists who give of their time freely to help our children each year. The children's next session will take place on **Saturday, 7th February 9.30am - 11.00am**. Parents, please ensure that your drop off/pick up your child personally.



IRREGULAR MARRIAGES: An Irregular Marriage is one that has taken place outside of the Catholic Church without dispensation. For example: Marriages in hotels, and secular 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 at Clergy House: Tel No: 01277 265 235.

PARISH REPOSITORY: This is our little religious shop on the Narthex of the Cathedral. We have a selection of religious goods and cards for all occasions. Prayer Books, Children's Books, rosaries, statues, medals,

holy pictures. Also we are able to order in anything you request, either speak to Margaret Walker, or one of the Repository helpers on duty at the various masses each week.



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 fund-raising 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 Monday, 2nd

February, and the Special Annual Crib Collection will take place next weekend 31st January/1st February. Thanking you all in anticipation.

RCIA PROGRAMME - JOURNEY OF

FAITH: Continues *Thursday, 29th*

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,***

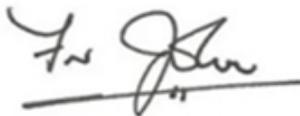
22nd February 2026 at 3.00pm.



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 & 12.00Noon,

and Sundays at 1.00pm.

May God bless you all.



COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS will be hosted by the family of Breda Bower, who invite you to join them for tea, coffee, cake to celebrate Breda's milestone birthday. All are welcome! Next week will be the turn of The Friday Lunches Club. Please do join us!

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. It's 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.

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 - 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.

SICK & HOUSEBOUND PARISHIONERS: If there are any sick of 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.

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

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.

ST HELEN'S CATHOLIC INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL: NURSERY OPENING

Our infant school is actively seeking support from the local community to resource its new nursery, ready for its opening in September 2026. The school now has an Amazon Wishlist which is solely dedicated to resourcing the nursery. If you would like to show your support to the exciting addition to our infant school and parish community, the link to the list is: https://www.amazon.co.uk/registries/gl/owner-view/CE4GY31VU4JM?ref_=gr_universal_landing_ggr

ST HELEN'S CATHOLIC INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL: NURSERY APPLICATIONS 2026-27

The nursery admission round is now open for parents of children to apply for a nursery place for the academic year that starts in September 2026. The application form is available on the school website and applications must be made directly to the school. The closing date for applications is: *Friday, 20th March 2026.*

VACANCY: PARISH ADMINISTRATOR - OUR LADY IMMACULATE, HOLY NAME & ST. AUGUSTINE, CHELMSFORD

A vacancy has arisen for a Parish Administrator, with financial experience, to provide support to the Parish Office. The role will be based at Rochester House, New London Road, Chelmsford, CM2 0DT and will be full time - 35 hours per week, Monday to Friday. The salary is £14.50 per hour.

The full job description is available on our website www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/diocese/working-for-us

The closing date for applications is *Monday, 26th January 2026*

Please send any queries or CVs by email to office@chelmsfordcatholic.co.uk or by post to The Presbytery, Beardsley Drive, Springfield, CM1 6GQ.

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. The post will be part-time working 10 hours per week - (10-12pm Monday- Friday). The salary is £13.85 per hour

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

Please send any queries or CVs to 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**
Please send any queries or CVs by email 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 - 9am-3pm 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**. Please send any queries CVs by email to hr@brcdt.org

VACANCY: EXAM INVIGILATOR - SHENFIELD HIGH SCHOOL is looking for flexible, reliable people to join our Exam Invigilation Team and support students during exams. The role offers flexible hours at peak times throughout the academic year and is a great way to give back to your local school. No experience required – full training provided.

For more information about the role, please visit www.shenfield.essex.sch.uk/about-us/vacancies alternatively please contact e.kirk@shenfield.essex.sch.uk

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
			

Brentwood Diocesan Trust – Registered Charity No. 234092