

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-Mokwenye:
deaconjosephmanuel-mokwenye@brcdt.org

Email: cathedral@brcdt.org

Website: www.brentwoodcathedral.org.uk

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER (A)

Sunday, 12 April 2026

Spiritual Reflection:

Some may not believe in God, but God believes in them. Unbelief is common these days, but it's different from doubt. Thomas knew all about doubt. This isn't a bad thing, though, because God gave us minds to think and reason. Faith is truly a gift, intended to work together in harmony with reason.



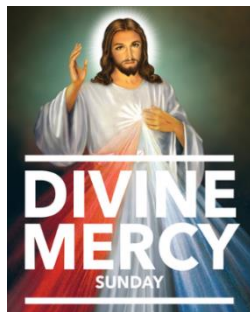
(Picture: The Incredulity of Thomas - Caravaggio)

The Lord appeared to Thomas to lead him from unbelief to faith: 'Do not be faithless but believing'. Through seeing the Risen Lord, Thomas came to a profound faith, and his confession of faith should be on the lips of every believer: 'My Lord and my God'. However, faith is often tested and tried, and we struggle with doubts. We doubt that God loves us. We doubt that he has a plan for our lives and will take care of us. We doubt that he can change certain areas of our lives, especially those with which we have struggled for years.

We, like Thomas, need Jesus to lead us from doubt to faith, from unbelief to belief. Paul wrote, 'So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes from the preaching of Christ'. We tend to understand a text of Scriptures like this to mean that the Gospel should be preached by a bishop, priest or deacon, but we must first learn to preach the Gospel to ourselves. We must learn, if you like, to be the bearer of the Good News to ourselves and to the situations and challenges we face. We need to let the Gospel enter us and change us.

Dear Friends in Jesus Christ:

TODAY IS DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY: The whole life of Jesus Christ was that of mercy. He never sat in judgement of anyone, and in the scriptures we constantly see and witness the infinite mercy of God shown through his Son. Even from the cross he prayed for those who crucified Him. When you really enter into the spirituality of mercy, you begin to understand completely the infinite mercy of God. Jesus Christ is the revelation of God's loving mercy, and as Christians we are trying to emulate Christ in our lives of faith. This is the daily challenge of faith, and yet when we look to the lives of the Saints, they understood what the Lord was about, and lived this life of mercy totally and completely. Once again, let us all try to practice this beautiful virtue of mercy in our lives of faith!



THANK YOU: On behalf of Fr Matúš and myself, we would like to thank you most sincerely for your Easter Card greetings, also for a few Easter Eggs. Grateful thanks for your Easter Offering this year, which makes up a part of our annual salary. You are very kind and thoughtful, and it is much appreciated.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE FOR YOUR EASTER OFFERTORY: This is your personal gift to Fr John & Fr Matúš and goes to make up a major part of their annual salary.



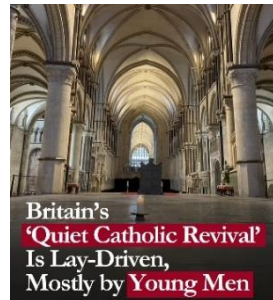
ELECTRONIC EASTER OFFERING: This year envelopes will be available for you to make your Easter Offering, which, as you know, is an opportunity in every Catholic Church for parishioners to make an Easter gift to your Parish Priest. You can also make your Easter Offering electronically.

You just need to transfer the money to the parish account with the reference 'Easter Offering'; please also quote your Gift Aid Number. The details of the bank account are:
Sort Code: 40-13-22
Account Number: 30217492 (EASTER OFFERING + GIFT Aid No)
Account Name: Brentwood Cathedral.

It's been truly wonderful to receive all the feedback over Holy Week and Easter. It certainly was a power-packed week; so much hard work goes into the celebrations of the sacred liturgies. Of course, the music always enhances the beauty of each Service and Mass. My thanks to our two choirs the 9.30am led by Art, and the 11.30am by our Music Director, Andrew. I truly appreciate everything that you contributed to our Holy Week & Easter this year 2026. Grateful thanks to the MC & Altar Servers, Readers & Eucharistic Ministers, Ushers, our team of Flower Ladies, (I'm sure you agree the Cathedral looked an absolute picture).

Once again, sincere congratulations to our five newly baptised adults and our seven newly received into full communion with the Church. The high point of Holy Week is always the Easter Vigil. It is truly wonderful to welcome new members into our parish family. We hope you will be extremely happy in this parish community. Personally, one of the greatest joys of my priesthood is giving the weekly instruction through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

A QUIET CATHOLIC REVIVAL: There is an incredible amount of interest being shown by young people in the Catholic Faith. This is not just unique to the UK but seems to be happening all over the world. People are looking for real meaning in their lives. Many seem to be discontented with what the world has to offer and are discovering that the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ is truly life-giving. People like Bishop Robert Barron & Fr Mike Schmitz, have most definitely contributed to the great interest in the Catholic Faith, their podcasts and teaching on the Catholic Faith are inspiring many young people to really take seriously the life of faith. Personally, I truly believe there is a genuine search for God in people's lives.



Here in the parish over the past months there have been several enquiries about the RCIA programme. These have come from all different ages, but there is a genuine desire to know God. What a blessing at this year's Easter Vigil, baptising five Catechumens and

receiving seven Candidates into full Communion with the Church. It's always a great joy to welcome new members.

This is an invitation to the whole parish community; if you know of anyone who may be interested in the Catholic faith, please encourage them to come and have a talk with Fr John who runs the RCIA programme. Never be frightened or ashamed to talk about the faith, in this way you are truly being heralds of the Gospel message, a simple invitation to join you for Mass on the weekend, could be a real turning point in a person's life, never underestimate what the Lord can do in and through you!

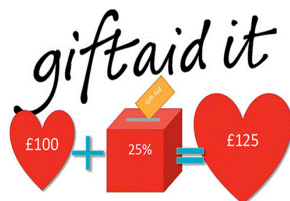


RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS: As we have just completed this year's RCIA programme, I am calling the whole parish once again to see if there are any parishioners who may be interested in learning more about the Roman Catholic faith,

possibly with the view of receiving the Easter Sacraments next Easter 2027. 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 21st 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's always good to sit down personally and explain to all enquirers how the programme works. The new programme will commence in September.

GIFT AID ENVELOPES & THE NEW TAX YEAR 2026/27: For those parishioners who use the Gift Aid envelopes, the boxes are available in the Narthex. Please try to collect them as soon as possible as the new Tax Year has just begun. As you can appreciate, your weekly



contribution supports the Cathedral Parish. A plant this size of Cathedral, Halls & Clergy House (as well as the Warley site, which we must still maintain), is extremely costly. Every home has experienced increased costs to domestic bills, and with the increase of gas, electric & water bills, everyone is feeling the pinch. But you are also aware that the Church has always lived off the charity of the faithful people of God. I thank you all most sincerely for your ongoing support. Please continue to be generous in your weekly offering to God & the Church. If there are any parishioners who are Taxpayers and would like to join the Parish Gift Aid Scheme, please consult the Parish Website for details, or speak to Amy & Michael Edwards, our Parish Gift Aid Scheme organisers. With grateful thanks. Fr John.



CONFIRMATION PROGRAMME FOR ADULTS

2026/2027: For whatever reason, sometimes young people do not always complete a Confirmation Programme during their adolescent and teenage years but often return to the practice of the faith as adults. I have had several requests for an Adult Confirmation Programme and I am hoping to

begin this later in the year. Could I make a request to the whole parish community to see if there is any more interest in the programme and receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation? Fr Matúš runs the Teenage Programme.

THE NEXT TWO ADULT CONFIRMATION SESSIONS: For those already preparing for Adult Confirmation; will take place on *Thursday, 16 & Thursday, 30 April at 7.00pm* in Clergy House.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME: The children for First Holy Communion this year will meet for their final session on *Saturday, 18th May 2026 at 9.30am* in the Parish Hall. It is imperative that all the children be present at this final meeting. Sadly, a large number were absent from the last meeting. (If you did miss the last meeting and if you haven't done so already, kindly contact Tara to find out the chapters and pages that need to be covered before the final meeting). Please consult your original timetable for all dates of meeting.



First Holy Communion Celebrations will take place on:
Saturday, 9th May at 11.00am - Rehearsal Wednesday, 6th May at 6.00pm

Saturday, 16th May at 11.00am - Rehearsal Wednesday, 13th May, 6.00pm.

Please keep all the children and their families in your prayers at this very important time of final preparation to receive Jesus in Holy Communion.

CONFIRMATION PROGRAMME - The final session of this year's Confirmation Programme takes place next **Sunday, 19 April at 4.00pm** in the Parish Hall.



PARISH REPOSITORY: There are many Religious Cards: First Holy Communion, Confirmation, Memoriam Cards, Birthday & Feast Day Cards, and many more. Statues, Easter gifts, children's books, rosaries, medals, prayers books, and lots of First Holy Communion gifts. Margaret Walker who oversees the Repository is also willing to order anything you want. Just speak to her after the 9.30am Mass. There are several girls' First Holy Communion dresses in the Upper Room above the Cathedral. If anyone is interested, please let us know.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CHILDREN'S LITURGY GROUP TEAM - The Children's Liturgy group would be pleased to welcome new team members to join the rota to help lead the Liturgy for the children at the 9.30am Mass. No advance preparation is required, as each week's liturgy is prepared by the team leader. Team members play a key role in keeping the children safe, leading by example and encouraging them to take an active part in the group. This voluntary role requires an enhanced DBS check. If you would like to know more, please contact Jane Davenport, via Clergy House.

COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS TODAY: will be hosted by the Catenians. Next week will be the turn of St. Helen's Ladies Group. All are welcome, so please do join us.

GARDEN TIDY UP: THIS WEEKEND - SUNDAY, 12ST APRIL. The Love in Action are holding a litter pick in the Cathedral grounds and the surrounding area this Sunday after the 09:30 mass. Everyone is welcome. Meet outside the parish hall. Equipment will be provided but if you have suitable gloves, please do bring them with you.

MISSIO RED BOX 2025 - In 2025 our parish raised £2,856.54 through the Red Boxes and donations to MISSIO and the Mill Hill Missionaries. THANK YOU. This represents an increase of 8.75% over 2024. Please return your boxes to Clergy House for counting. Thank you.

MUSIC RECITAL - On *Wednesday, 15 April* at 4.00pm (instead of our usual time of 1.00pm), we are delighted to welcome for the first time, the Durham University Chamber Choir, who will be performing Herbert Howells REQUIEM. Conducted by Cameron Davies. Admission is free and there will be a retiring collection.

THE FRIDAY FRIENDSHIP SOUP LUNCHESES: Every Friday from 17th April. All are welcome to come along to the parish hall (12 noon - 2.00 p.m.) for sandwiches, cakes and drinks and most importantly, friendly faces and an opportunity to meet up with others.

MASS TIMES in the Cathedral:

SATURDAY VIGIL MASS at 6.30pm

SUNDAY: 8.00am / 9.30am / 11.30am & 6.30pm

WEEKDAY MASSES Monday to Friday at 9.15am

SATURDAY: 9.15am

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 details to the parish secretary.

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.

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, 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.

PILGRIMAGE TO KNOCK SHRINE & CO. MAYO LED BY BISHOP ALAN WILLIAMS - *Monday, 15th June 2026 to Friday, 19th June 2026*. 4 nights in Knock House Hotel, with Dinner, Bed & Breakfast. Visit Kylemore Abbey, Croagh Patrick, Ballintubber Abbey, Fr. Peyton Centre. Price of £799.00 per person. The package includes: Return flight from London Stansted, 10kg check in bag, 4 nights Dinner, B&B in Knock House Hotel, all entertainment, excursions and guided tours. Assistance from Knock Pilgrimages representative. Single room supplement £250.00. Maximum 3. Contact: Patricia on 01268 762 278 or 07740 175 557 or at knockpilgrimages@gmail.com

LOURDES WITH OUR DIOCESE: Would you like to join our bishop and parishioners and clergy from around the diocese on our annual pilgrimage to Lourdes this summer? The dates are *Friday, 17th - Friday, 24th July*. Please visit <https://tangney-tours.com/brentwood> for further information and to book, or contact Deirdre Pembroke, lourdes@brcdt.org.

EARLY YEARS PRACTITIONER - ST HELEN'S CATHOLIC INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL: We are seeking to appoint an enthusiastic and well-motivated person to join our staff in September 2026 to work in our new School-Based Nursery. 8.15am - 3.10pm (term-time only). Please contact the school office for further information and an application pack: office@st-helens-inf.essex.sch.uk Deadline: *Friday, 24th April 2026*

MARANATHA! The next session will take place in the parish of St. Thomas of Canterbury, 16 East Thurrock Road, Grays, RM17 6SR on *Thursday, 16th April at 7pm*. Led by Fr. Paschal Uche. Join us for a joyful evening of praise and worship, followed by Mass and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Everyone is welcome. There will be refreshments afterwards.

MASS FOR MIGRANTS - You are warmly invited to join the Dioceses of Brentwood, Southwark, and Westminster for the 20th annual Mass for Migrants on Bank Holiday *Monday, 4 May 2026*, at St Antony of Padua Catholic Church. The celebration will begin at 12.00 pm with a procession of banners.

This year, the Mass is hosted by the Diocese of Brentwood. Celebrated for the Feast of St Joseph the Worker, the Mass is prepared by the Caritas and Ethnic Chaplaincies of the three dioceses and gives thanks for the contributions made to faith, life and work in the UK by all those who have come from other countries to make their home here.

The preacher will be Archbishop Richard Moth, and the celebrant will be Bishop Alan Williams, SM.

ST JOHN BOSCO CHILDREN'S CAMP, SUMMER 2026. Applications are now open for children currently in school year 5 - 7 (i.e. aged 9-12 in August 2026) to spend a week at camp. 25th July - 1st August or 1st - 8th August. Activities include archery, fishing, AquaPark visit, football, kayaking and much more. The camp is especially for children who may not otherwise have a summer holiday. Suggested donation £200, but full bursaries are available. All application details are at <https://boscocamp.co.uk>. Places are likely to go quickly - early applications are encouraged.

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