

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

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## SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (A)

Sunday, 10 May 2026

### Spiritual Reflection:

Parental love is a fierce kind of love. Every parent wants the best for their children and will move heaven and earth for them. If a child is thirsty, a parent will get them a drink and not a toy to play with. Or if a child is hungry, a parent will get some food and not a book to read. Using the same analogy Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit: 'Which of you fathers, if your child asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?' God is our Father and the greatest gift we have received is the Holy Spirit.



The question is, though: are we a people of the Holy Spirit? Does the Holy Spirit feature in the way that we think and act? Do we rely on, trust and turn to the Holy Spirit during our day? Next time you face a challenge, a really difficult situation; observe who you turn to first -

yourself or the Holy Spirit? And there as Shakespeare might say, is 'the rub'. Because the Spirit was given not simply to be with us when we are in a tight spot, struggling or in desperate need - the Spirit was given so that we would walk with God in fellowship and communion.



We are in fellowship with the Spirit in a unique way when we read or hear the word of God in the Sacred Scriptures, because the Bible is the Holy-Spirit inspired Word. We encounter the Holy Spirit in the liturgy of the Church and especially when we celebrate the Eucharist. The Spirit is with us when we pray and when we strive to live not in our own strength but in his power. We are people of the Holy Spirit and it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that we proclaim Jesus as Lord. The Holy Spirit is our Advocate, our Counsellor and our Friend.

*'The Holy Spirit longs to find the gates of our heart, so that he may enter in and dwell there, and sanctify it; and he goes round about to all the gates to see where he may enter.'* (Ephraim the Syrian).

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Dear Friends in Jesus Christ,

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CELEBRATIONS:**

This weekend the first two groups of children from our parish made their First Holy Communion. We congratulate them and their families. The First Holy Communion Mass is always very special for every child, and I'm sure we all remember our own celebration. But as I shared with the children and families, this is hopefully the first of many communions in their lives of faith. I encourage all parents to bring your children to Holy Mass weekly, which is in fulfilment of the commandment to "keep the sabbath day holy." This is our one weekly obligation as Roman Catholics. The Holy Mass is the 'source' and summit' of the Christian life.



I would like to express my sincere and grateful thanks to our Catechists, who have worked so hard with the children over the past several months preparing them for the Sacraments of Reconciliation

and the Holy Eucharist. This is no mean task, and the catechists give of their time freely. If there are any parents who feel that they could help in becoming Catechists, please see Fr John or Victoria Campling.



Thank You to our  
Catechists &  
Volunteers

The final group of children will celebrate First Holy Communion next *Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> May at 11.00am*. The Rehearsal for this will take place on *Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> at 6.00pm*. Please keep all the children in your prayers.



THE GOING FORTH MASS will take place on the Feast of Corpus Christi, *Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> June at 9.30am*. The Feast of the Most Holy Body & Blood of Jesus Christ celebrates the eternal gift of the Eucharist that Jesus left to the Apostles and the Church at the Last Supper. Through the Miracle of the Mass Jesus Christ comes to us, and He gives himself to us Sacramentally. This Mass is for all the children who have made their First Holy Communion this year.

THE SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD - Thursday, 14 May 2026: Is a Holy Day of Obligation, and has the same status as a Sunday. There will be various masses in the Cathedral - *9.15am, 1.10pm & 7.30pm*. There will also be a Mass celebrated at St Helen's School for Infants and Juniors; parents are also very welcome to this Mass.

*“The Ascension of Jesus into heaven,” Pope Francis said, “acquaints us with this deeply consoling reality on our journey; Christ, true God and true man, our humanity was taken to God. Christ opened the path to us. If we entrust our life to him if we let ourselves be guided by him, we are certain to be in the safe hands of Our Saviour.”*



*This is why Pope Benedict XVI wrote; it would be a mistake to interpret the Ascension as “the temporary absence of Christ from the world.” Rather, “we go to heaven to the extent that we go to Jesus Christ and enter into him.” Heaven is a person: “Jesus himself is what we call ‘heaven’”*

ADULT CONFIRMATION GROUP: For those already preparing to receive Adult Confirmation in May. Our next session will take place on

Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> May at 7.00pm in Clergy House. Theme: Final Preparations for Confirmation

# CONFIRMATION 2026

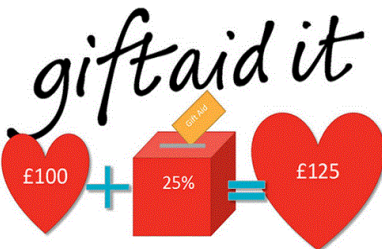
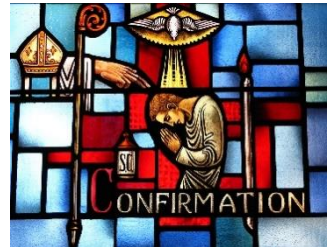
CONFIRMATION PROGRAMME: As the Solemnity of Pentecost approaches, I commend to your prayers all our Confirmandi. This is a powerfully significant moment in their Journey of Faith. Rehearsal & Celebration of the

Sacrament of Reconciliation will take place on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> May at 6.30pm. It is customary before any big event in the life of faith that we celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. I encourage all our Confirmandi to avail yourselves of the Sacrament.

The Sacrament of Confirmation will be conferred by Bishop Alan on *Pentecost Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at the 11.30am Mass.* Please keep all our Confirmandi in your prayers over these next weeks in the final preparations for the celebration of the Sacrament.

## 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. I am hoping to begin an Adult Confirmation Programme 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.



## GIFT AID ENVELOPES & THE NEW TAX YEAR:

For those parishioners who use the Gift Aid Envelopes, the outstanding envelope boxes are still available in the Narthex. Please try to collect them as soon as possible as the new Tax Year has begun. We can claim back 25 pence in the pound of your

contribution. 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 feels the pinch. But you are also aware 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. With grateful thanks. Fr John.

**FORTHCOMING MARRIAGES 2026:** This is a call to all who are preparing for Marriage this year 2026, whether here at the Cathedral or abroad. Could I ask you all to ensure that your documentation is completed at least two months before the wedding, especially for those marrying abroad. All documents need to be returned to Fr John or Fr Matúš so that they can be processed expeditiously. Please ensure that Marriage Preparation Course is completed through Marriage Care; new Baptismal Certificates no older than six months have been obtained; Statutory Declarations of Freedom have been signed by a Notary. The Chancery is always closed during the month of August, so it is imperative that all documentation is received prior to then. Thank you!



**PARISH REPOSITORY:** There are some beautiful religious cards available in the card stand in the Narthex for all occasions. Also, there are a variety of new religious items, statues, rosaries, holy pictures, and medals; New Sunday Missals for those who wish to follow the readings at Holy Mass. As the First Holy Communion & Confirmation season rapidly approaches, there are a variety of

First Holy Communion & Confirmation cards available in the card stand in the Narthex. There will be a variety of repository goods available at the rehearsals this week. It's always nice to receive a religious item at First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR THE REPOSE OF THE SOUL OF ANNE ANDERSON** whose Requiem will be held in The Cathedral on *Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> May at 11.00am*

Also, for Michael Sexton who died last Wednesday morning. Michael was a parishioner for many years before moving to Kent.

LUNCHTIME MUSIC RECITAL Please join us on *Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> May* at *1.00pm* for a piano recital, given by Bridget Yee.

THE NEXT CHAPTER OF CANONS MASS will take place in the Cathedral on *Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> May at 10.30am*. All are very welcome to attend. Please note, this Mass will be in place of the 9.15am morning Mass.

COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS TODAY: will be hosted by Pace. Next week will be the turn of The Spanish Speaker Community. All are welcome, so please do join us.

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

CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP will meet again on *Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> May* from *7.00pm - 8.00pm*. Everyone is welcome so please do feel free to join us for prayer and praise.

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 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, 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.

**MARANATHA!** Come Lord Jesus! All are warmly invited to an evening of prayer, praise and worship, including Mass and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at the Catholic Church of St Thomas of Canterbury, Grays RM17 6SR on Friday, 15 May 2026, led by Fr. Paschal Uche. The time is from 7:00pm to 9:00pm, with refreshments afterwards.

**PILGRIMAGE TO KNOCK SHRINE & CO. MAYO LED BY BISHOP ALAN WILLIAMS** Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2026 to Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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](mailto:lourdes@brcdt.org).

**CAR PARK** Could I please ask anyone who uses the car park to be considerate of all users. In recent weeks, parking, particularly for Sunday morning Masses, has been very difficult to manage with drivers parking where they shouldn't and blocking essential access points. We

must always ensure there is clear access for emergency vehicles. If you are able to park elsewhere and walk, you might consider leaving the spaces within the car park for those who need them the most. Also, the Council Car Park at Brentwood Town Hall is free on Sundays.

**DIOCESAN WALSINGHAM PILGRIMAGE - SATURDAY, 23RD MAY**  
Representatives from the BCYS will be joining the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham, and we would like to invite other young people to join and assist with the liturgy. please contact [gabriellaskinner@brcdt.org](mailto:gabriellaskinner@brcdt.org) if you are interested.

**A DAY WITH MARY PILGRIMAGES 2026**

Pilgrimage to Italy (*Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> to Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> September 2026*).  
Further information is available at <https://www adaywithmary.org/>  
*Closing date 23 June 2026.*

**GARDEN VOLUNTEERS FOR WALSINGHAM HOUSE AT ABBOTSWICK:**

Walsingham House at Abbotswick is set in 14 acres of land which require a lot of care. There is an amazing team of grounds volunteers who help every Tuesday to maintain the gardens and keep everything thriving. It would be wonderful to extend the team, so if you have some free time on a Tuesday, whether it's an hour or two or a whole day and would like to get involved please contact [clairebailey@brcdt.org](mailto:clairebailey@brcdt.org) or just come along on a Tuesday morning and get involved!

**BRENTWOOD URSULINE - MUSICAL APTITUDE ASSESSMENTS FOR MUSIC SCHOLARSHIPS & PLACES - YEAR 7 ADMISSION SEPTEMBER 2027** Is

offering 17 of the Year 7 places for admission in September 2027, on the basis of musical aptitude.

Parents wishing to apply should submit the appropriate form (available to download from the website [www.brentwoodursuline.co.uk](http://www.brentwoodursuline.co.uk) or direct from the school). Completed forms must be sent to the school by Friday, 17th July 2026. For further information, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

**WORLD YOUTH DAY 2027 (SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA)** - Be part of something extraordinary at World Youth Day 2027 in Seoul, South Korea. Travel with the Brentwood Catholic Youth Service to join hundreds of thousands of young Catholics from around the world, gathered with Pope Leo for this global celebration of faith. Open to those currently in Year 13 and above. Details and applications: [www.bcys.net/events/wyd27](http://www.bcys.net/events/wyd27)

**DEPUTY HEADTEACHER - ST HELEN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL,  
WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA**

Required for September 2026. *Further details available from Diocese of Brentwood website ([www.dioceseofbrentwood.net](http://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net)). Deadline for applications: 9:00 am, Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026.*





**CAMPION SCHOOL OPEN EVENING - YEAR 5 STUDENTS** - The Campion School would like to warmly invite parents/carers and year 5 boys to our Open Evening on *Thursday, 25th June from 4.30 pm to 7 pm.*

The Headteacher's talk will be at 4.30 pm and repeated at 6.30 pm. Please visit our school website for more details [www.thecampionschool.org.uk](http://www.thecampionschool.org.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
			

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