

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

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THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)

Sunday, 2 August 2026

Spiritual Reflection:

In today's Gospel (Matthew 14:13-21), Jesus withdraws to a quiet place after hearing of the death of John the Baptist. Yet, when He sees the crowds waiting for Him, His heart is moved with compassion. Rather than turning them away, He heals the sick and feeds the hungry. Compassion is never interrupted by inconvenience; it is the very heart of Christ.

The miracle of the loaves and fishes also reminds us that God asks us to offer what little we have. Five loaves and two fish seem hopelessly inadequate before such a great need. Yet placed into the hands of Jesus they become more than enough. Our time, our kindness, our prayers, and our small acts of generosity may seem insignificant, but Christ can multiply them beyond anything we imagine.



Finally, after everyone has eaten their fill, twelve baskets are left over. God's grace is never merely sufficient—it is abundant. The Eucharist is the greatest fulfilment of this miracle, where Christ

continues to feed His people with the Bread of Life. As we receive Him today, may we trust that He can satisfy the deepest hunger of every human heart and make us instruments of His generous love for others.

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Dear Friends in Christ,

The month of August is always very quiet with many people away on holidays. I wish everyone safe travels, a good rest, and to come back refreshed. The Parish Mass schedule continues as normal, regular weekday Mass - Monday to Saturday at 9.15am, and Sunday Masses - Saturday Vigil at 6.30pm, Sundays 8.00am, 9.30am, 11.30am & 6.30pm



The month of August is dedicated to the Immaculate Heart. Since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Catholic piety has assigned entire months to special devotions. The month of August is traditionally dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The physical heart of Mary is venerated (and not adored as the Sacred Heart of Jesus is) because it is united to her person and is the seat of her love (especially for her divine Son), virtue, and inner life. Such devotion is an incentive to a similar love and virtue.

**SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY:** This year as the 15<sup>th</sup> August falls on a Saturday, the Feast will be transferred to *Sunday*,

*16<sup>th</sup> August* with all the regular Sunday Masses

**RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS -**

**JOURNEY OF FAITH PROGRAMME:** Will

commence at the beginning of September. If anyone is interested in learning more about the Roman Catholic Faith, possibly with the

intention of being received into full communion with the faith at the Easter Vigil next year 2027, please contact Fr John (Tel No: 01277 265235). He will be only too willing to explain the whole process to you. I know there are many spouses who attend Mass on a regular basis, who may not necessarily be Roman Catholic. Please consider joining our programme. The RCIA Programme will commence of *Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> September at 7.00pm at Clergy House.*



RCIA

A JOURNEY IN FAITH

**WORLD APOSTOLATE OF FATIMA:** On *Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> September* the Diocese of Brentwood will host the Visitation of the National Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima and the relics of Saints Jacinta &



Francisco. This will be a Day of Prayer & Devotions, with the opportunity for the veneration of the relics. Bishop Alan accompanied by Priests of the Diocese will concelebrate Holy Mass, this will be followed by the Consecration Prayer of the Diocese to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by Bishop Alan.

As this is a Day of Prayer, we ask all those participating to bring a packed lunch, teas and coffees will be available in the Parish Hall.

Following lunch, there will be a Holy Hour with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, with recitation of the Chaplet of Adoration and Reparation. Communal Recitation and reflection on the Joyful Mysteries of the Holy Rosary. The Divine Mercy Chaplet will be prayed, and then a Docu-film and Talk in the Parish Hall on "Fatima Message for the World." Finally, the Enrolment and Investiture of the Brown Scapular will be facilitated in the Parish Hall. I encourage our parishioners to participate in this wonderful and unique day of prayer here at the Cathedral.

**CATHEDRAL PARISH BAZAAR: SATURDAY, 5<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 11.00am - 3.00pm**

I know this is only the middle of the summer, but forward planning is extremely important. I have set a date for a Bazaar Committee Meeting for *Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2026 at 7.30pm in the Small Hall*. We had a truly wonderful and successful Bazaar last year - a real family occasion for the whole parish community. If you're going away on holiday, and thinking about bringing a bottle or two back, please consider the Bazaar. Thank you! All are welcome to join us at this meeting, especially if you would like to help with the Bazaar this year.



**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2026-2027:**

Once again we begin to prepare for the next First Holy Communion Programme. If your child is eligible to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist (Year 4 as of September 2025), please seriously think about this next step in their spiritual formation. The prerequisites are that you are practicing Roman Catholics attending weekly Sunday Mass, and that you live in the Cathedral Parish. Parents' Information Evening will take place on *Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> October at 7.00pm in the Cathedral*.

**PARISH CONFIRMATION PROGRAMME:** Fr Matus and the Catechists have had the initial meeting with the prospective candidates and all the information has been distributed. The return of the Registration Form, Retreat Registration and the Questionnaire, plus the £150 for the Residential Retreat at Abbotswick, Friday 27<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November. Monies should have been returned with the Registration Forms. Your Mass Registration Card was effective from *Sunday, 5 July*, and should be signed by one of the priests or deacons weekly. Weekly practice of the faith is compulsory not optional. The first formal Session will be on *Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> November at 4.00pm in the Parish Hall.*



**PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS,** Maureen Duane, a familiar face at Friday Lunches, who is very ill in Queens Hospital.

**COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS TODAY:** No coffee after 9.30am Mass this week, as the Hall is being painted. Next week will be the turn of Missio. All are welcome, so please do join us!

**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.

**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, please give your details to the parish secretary.

**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

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, Maureen Duane, 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.

MISSIO If you have not yet returned your Missio box, could you please do so before the end of August, either to the Narthex or Clergy House. Thank you. Replacement boxes are available for collection from the Narthex.

## GENERAL NEWS

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, UPMINSTER - HEADTEACHER Required from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2027. Further information and an application pack are available from the school website: <https://st-josephs-upminster.net>. Closing date: 5pm on Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September. Interviews (provisionally) on Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> September.

STOP ASSISTED SUICIDE BEING LEGALISED - Assisted suicide campaigners have sadly brought back the Leadbeater Bill. This can be stopped if MPs vote down the Bill on 11 September.

Right To Life UK has launched an EasyAction tool to help you email your MP to ask them to vote NO to assisted suicide in the vote in the House of Commons on 11 September. Please take 30 seconds to email your MP today to ask them to vote NO to assisted suicide: <https://righttolife.org.uk/Sept11vote>

BCCS - EXCLUSIVE AND PERSONAL TOUR OF INGATESTONE HALL The tour is conducted by the Petre family, offering unbeatable insight of the past and present of this Grade I listed building and gardens. Followed by a hot drink and homemade biscuit. Thursday, 3rd September, 11.00am - 3.30pm. The event was over-subscribed last year so get your tickets fast - entry is £25 per person - book online today: <http://www.bccs.org.uk/get-involved/events-campaigns/>. Please note, due to the age of the building, there is no disabled access to the upper floor, and some of the lower floor and grounds are uneven and so not suitable for those with mobility issues.

**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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