

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

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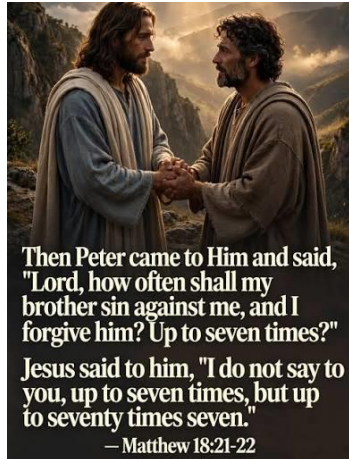
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THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A) Sunday, 13 September 2026

Spiritual Reflection:

Gordon Wilson lost his beloved daughter Marie in the Enniskillen bombing in November 1987. In a famous BBC interview, he recalled the last words between himself and his dying daughter: she held my hand tightly and gripped me as hard as she could. She said, "Daddy, I love you very much." Those were her exact words to me and those were her last words I ever heard her say. But I bear no ill will. I bear no grudge. Dirty sort of talk is never going to bring her back to life. She was a great wee lassie. She loved her profession. She was a pet. She's dead. She's in heaven and we shall meet again. I will pray for these men tonight and every night.' Gordon Wilson was an ordinary man, but one who displayed the extraordinary power of forgiveness.

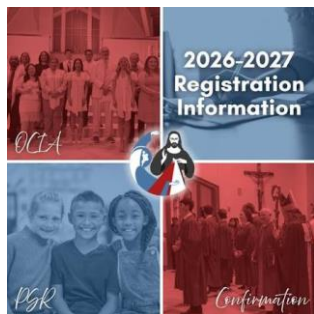


Gordon drew on his deep Christian faith to find it in his heart to forgive. The act of incredible forgiveness is inspiring but also overwhelming. While very few of us will be tested to the same extent, the reservoir of grace that Gordon drew upon is the same as the one we must draw on to forgive and let go of resentments, anger, and upset which can blight our lives. Pray and read the parable today. Read it slowly. Ponder every word. Ask yourself: how can I apply this parable to my life today?

One of the most striking things about the parable - and perhaps this is the part of our fallen condition - is the servant's lack of insight into the depth of his own debt. He is guilty of shallowness, superficiality, and blindness. This lack of self-awareness and self-knowledge means that he doesn't correlate the cancelling of his debt with the one now owed him. The master in the parable, who represents God the Father, says as much: 'Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant as I had on you?'

No one is saying forgiveness is easy: it isn't. No one is saying forgiveness isn't sometimes seemingly impossible: at times it feels like that. What today's parable teaches us is what we can only truly forgive when we grasp the extent to which we have been forgiven - for in being forgiven we can forgive.

Dear Friends in Jesus Christ,



With the beginning of the new academic year everything gets going once again in the life of the Parish. We are planning all the new Sacramental Programmes, First Holy Communion & Confirmation Programmes. The new Journey of Faith (RCIA) Programme commences this week. If you know of anyone who may be interested in joining the programme, please let them know about this. I have contacted all our Catholic Schools and included an advert in their respective newsletters. It would be truly wonderful to have a large number of enquirers this year. Please contact Fr John if you're interested. The first session is on *Thursday, 17th September* and is an Information Evening.

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank most sincerely all our Catechists who help with the teaching of the Sacramental Programmes, for the time and dedication they give throughout the

year. This is true dedication and our young people really benefit from the great faith sharing of each of our Catechists. Without them there would be no programmes!

Our Catholic Education, both through our Catholic schooling system, and the weekly Catechesis through our Celebration of Holy Mass on Sundays, is the bedrock of the whole life of the Catholic Faith. The more we know about our faith the more our commitment strengthens and becomes something much deeper. We are not only Catholic in name, but in fact, because our faith affects every aspect of our lives - our marriages, our families, our communities, our work and our recreation. To be Catholic is a life-long commitment, not something that we dip in and out of if it's convenient. To really know Jesus Christ is the greatest treasure we have been given.



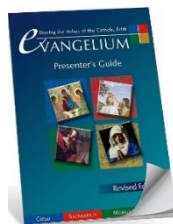
RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS: I am calling the whole parish to see if there are any parishioners who may be interested in learning more about the Roman Catholic faith, possibly with the view of receiving the Easter Sacraments next Easter 2027. The RCIA is a programme of systematic instruction 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. He will be only too happy to sit down and explain the whole RCIA programme and how it works. There are

many non-Catholic spouses who attend Mass on a regular basis with their families, would you consider joining the programme in September?

The Programme will commence with an information evening on Thursday, 17th September at 7.00pm at Clergy House. There is a workbook that we use called Evangelium which costs £10.00 you will also receive a programme of dates and the titles of each session throughout the programme. The sessions usually last for about an hour and a quarter. There will opportunity for questions. If it helps you, please bring along a note pad and pen.

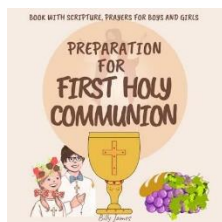
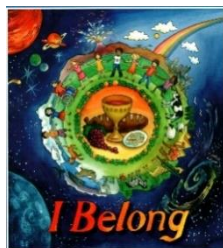


CATHEDRAL PARISH BAZAAR: Saturday 5th December 11.00am - 3.00pm Forward planning is extremely important. I have set a date for a Bazaar Committee Meeting for Friday, 18th September 2026 at 7.30pm in the Small Hall. We had a truly wonderful and

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 do 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. A Parents' Information Evening will take place on Tuesday, 6th October at 7.00pm in the Cathedral. We will need a copy of your child's Baptismal Certificate.



URGENT APPEAL FOR SOME NEW CATECHISTS:

Victoria Campling has kindly offered to help in passing on the baton with the training of some new Catechists and giving them all the information necessary to run a programme. MEETING FOR NEW CATECHISTS IS ON WEDNESDAY 16th SEPTEMBER AT CLERGY HOUSE. I appeal to the whole Parish

Community for some new volunteers to come forward and become

Catechists for this Programme. The more the merrier, and it will really assist the programme and the numbers of children we have. It is extremely rewarding helping the children grow in their faith. It does not matter if you have never taught Catechism before, if you are willing to share your faith with our little ones, this is the best form of Catechesis. Whether you are a teacher, a nurse, an IT expert, a member of the police force; mums and dads I appeal especially to you. If we don't have Catechists, then unfortunately we don't have a programme to run. Please do think about this request; this is a truly wonderful way of serving the parish community. My philosophy as a priest has always been: "If everyone does a little, a lot gets done." If you are willing and interested, please contact Fr John directly at Clergy House, he will be only too willing to give you any information you need in deciding, Telephone No - 01277 265235 or email Frjohnharvey@brcdt.org.

ANY MORE VOLUNTEERS FOR THIS IMPORTANT MINISTRY?

PARISH CONFIRMATION PROGRAMME: As Fr Matus & 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 27th - Sunday 29th November. Monies should have been returned with the Registration Forms. Your Mass Registration Card was effective from Sunday 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, 15th November at 4.00pm* in the Parish Hall.



APPLICATIONS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES 2027:

At this time of the year parents are seeking school places for their children, whether it be for Reception, entry for Junior or Secondary School places. It is a really important time for choices, but also as Roman Catholics it is about our commitment in faith. Every Priest will tell you the same story each year, how in September the numbers swell in the congregation when it's time for School Applications, and

then diminish once a form has been signed by the Parish Priest. Personally, I have always tried to give people the benefit of doubt and have encouraged our parents to continue in the practice of their faith

and fulfil that promise made on the day of their child's baptism. It always comes back to personal integrity and honesty before God. For example, if a parent states they are a weekly mass goer, and in fact, do not attend Mass, what kind of moral example is that to a child; all it shows the child is that you can lie to get what you want. Personally, I wouldn't like that to be the example that I set before my child, if I had children. As stated, honesty, truthfulness and integrity are the order of the day. Secondary School (Year 7) Applications open on *12th September* and must be submitted to Essex County by *31st October 2026*. Primary School Applications begin after the Secondary ones are completed. Please watch this space for details.

CONGRATULATIONS: To Stephen Tate & Philippa Nicholson who were married at the Cathedral on *Friday, 11th September*. We wish Stephen & Philippa an long and happy married life as they embark on their journey of married love. Ad multos annos!

MARRIAGES FOR 2027: If there are any parishioners who are planning of getting married in 2027, could they kindly notify Clergy House as soon as possible. For marriages taking place at the Cathedral, we need six-months' notice, and for marriage abroad nine months' notice, this is to ensure all the paperwork and marriage preparation can take place. For more information, please contact Clergy House Tel No: 01277 265235

IRREGULAR MARRIAGES: An Irregular Marriage is one that has taken place outside of the Roman Catholic Faith e.g. A Marriage in a Non-Catholic Church without dispensation; a marriage in a secular venue, a marriage in Las Vegas or on a beach, a marriage in

a Register Office. By virtue of your Catholic baptism, any marriage that takes place outside of the Catholic Faith is only recognised by the Civil Authorities and not by the Catholic Church. The Church has the means to rectify this irregular situation, which is called **CONVALIDATION**. The couple will need to see the priest privately and complete all the relevant documentation ensuring the freedom for marriage. The Convalidation is a Private Ceremony where the couple will exchange their Consent and Marriage Vows before God and the Church, thus validating their marriage. This is a strictly private and confidential service that the Church offers to rectify an irregular marriage. If you would like to know more about this, please contact one of the priests at Clergy House Tel No: 01277 265235.



LUNCHTIME RECITAL We look forward to welcoming Trinity Church to The Cathedral at *1.00pm on Friday, 18th September*, when they will give a Lunchtime Music Recital. All are welcome, so please do join us.

THE NEXT CHAPTER OF CANONS MASS will take place in the Cathedral on *Monday, 14th September at 10.30am*. All are very welcome to attend. This will be followed by the blessing of Bishop Thomas' headstone, by Bishop Alan. Please note, that there will not be a 9.15am morning Mass that day.

RESUIESCAT IN PACE: Please pray for the repose of the souls of Sheila Murphy whose funeral service will be held at Bentley Crematorium at 1.30pm on *Tuesday, 15th September*. Also, Elizabeth Thomas whose funeral Mass will take place in The Cathedral at *12.15pm on Thursday, 17th September*.



STATUE OF ST HELEN CO-PATRON OF THE CATHEDRAL PARISH: I would seriously like to invest in a statue of St Helen for the Cathedral. Could I ask for your comments, and whether we would be able to get sponsorship to have a statue custom made for the Cathedral? Obviously, this would be very much a parish project, and it would be wonderful to have an additional statue in the Cathedral.

EDUCATION SUNDAY This Sunday is Education Sunday and there will be a second collection at all Masses this weekend.

COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS TODAY: will be hosted by the Brownies. Next week will be the turn of the Spanish Speaker Community. All are welcome. Please do join us!

MISSIO RED BOXES Thank you those who returned their Red Box for counting. You will find your box on the shelf in the narthex. There are also plenty of spare boxes for anyone who would like to take one. If you still have a box at home, please bring it in for counting. Thanks

THE FRIDAY FRIENDSHIP LUNCH Every *Friday from 18th September* all are welcome to come along to the parish hall (12noon - 2.00p.m.) for sandwiches, cakes and drinks and most importantly, friendly faces and an opportunity to meet up with others.

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? The group pray *every Monday evening at 8.00pm*. Prayers and reflections are shared on WhatsApp with each person praying privately wherever they are. If you'd like to join the 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

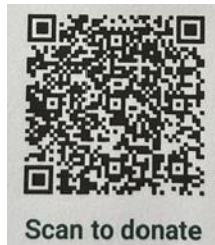
PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK and housebound parishioners and friends, including: Sylvia Allum, Merle Anderson, Suzie Anderson, Alistair Bailey, Yvonne Ball, Hermine Bayley, Heidi Brenke, Eda Bright, Roisin Cassels, Esmeralda Chester, Keith Chester, Dermot Dalton, David, Iris Davis, Patricia Decup, Sheila 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.

BRENTWOOD URSULINE CONVENT HIGH SCHOOL: YEAR 7 OPEN EVENING
Prospective students and their families are invited to join us for our Year 7 Open Evening. Come through our doors, meet our community and discover all that a Brentwood Ursuline education could offer your daughter.

Thursday, 24th September 6.30pm - 9.00pm with Headteacher's talks at 6.30pm & 7.30pm. Alternatively, *Thursday, 1st & Friday, 2nd October 9.10am - 11.00am* (by appointment only)

EUGENE O' O'RIORDAN - SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELLA On 1st September, Eugene and his son's father-in-law, Kevin set off to travel to St. Jean pied de Port to complete the Santiago de Compostella. It's their intention to walk to Compostella, 790km, and then on to Cape Finisterre, a further 93km, to the coast. This was originally intended

as a Pilgrimage/walk of remembrance for family members/friends no longer with us, but after a conversation with Canon John, it's an opportunity to raise some funds to support the felling of the diseased trees in the Cathedral cemetery, and to plant new ones to replace them. A donation box has been placed in the Cathedral for parishioners who would like to make a donation. Alternatively, please donate via the Justgiving link or QR code.



https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/eugeneoriordan?utm_medium=CF&utm_source=CL

SCHOOL GOVERNORS - Today marks Education Sunday, a time when we celebrate and pray for the brilliant work of our Catholic schools. These schools rely heavily on good governance, and on this special day we are asking if you, or anyone you know, may be able to support our schools by becoming a foundation governor. There will be leaflets available at the back of the church or please contact sandramoss@brcdt.org, if you would like to have a conversation about becoming a school governor.

GENERAL NEWS

ST. MARGARET'S, CANNING TOWN - 150TH ANNIVERSARY MASS The parish of St Margaret's Canning Town, wish to invite any former parishioners to the 150th Anniversary Mass to be celebrated in the grounds of St Helen's School, Falcon Street, E13 entrance at 12.00 Noon on *Saturday, 26th September*. Seating is limited so if you would like to sit, we would advise bring a chair.

CAMPION SCHOOL QUIZ NIGHT on *Friday, 9th October*. Doors open 7.00pm and quiz starts at 7.30pm. Teams of 10 (max). £5 per person, BYO drinks and nibbles. For details of how to pay and to register your team, email pachair@thecampionschool.org.uk.

GRAYS - 140th ANNIVERSARY - Next month, St. Thomas' Church and school will be celebrating 140 years of serving the community, and everyone is invited to join the Mass, celebrated by Bishop Alan on the *Saturday, 10th October at 5:00pm*.

In addition, if anyone has any images or memories that they would like to share, please do send them to the parish.

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