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

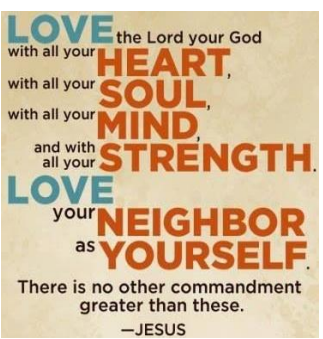
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THE THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)

Sunday, 25 October 2026

Spiritual Reflection:



In Jesus' day, it was customary for rabbis to be challenged to compress the Torah into a short, pithy, and memorable aphorism. For example, the famous Pharisee Hillel summarised the law like this: 'What you hate for yourself, do not do to your neighbour. This is the whole law; the rest is commentary. Go and learn.' For his part, Jesus compressed two verses from the Hebrew Scriptures to summarise the Torah – the first from Deuteronomy, on loving God, and the second from Leviticus on love of neighbour. His saying, referred to in today's Gospel as the Greatest Commandment or Golden Rule, captured the essence of the Christian life. Although we call it the Greatest Commandment, it is made up of two commandments.

Christian faith cannot be reduced to simply loving God because in loving God we must love our neighbour. Christian faith cannot be reduced to loving our neighbour without first loving God. So, both are inexorably linked, and we could say that the very Mission of the Church, its raison d'être, is to encourage us to be faithful in doing both.

St. Thomas Aquinas was one of the outstanding theologians of the Catholic Church, the author of many theological and philosophical tomes. He was canonised in 1323 and officially declared a Doctor of the Church in 1567. However not many people know that he once had an experience of God's love that so overwhelmed and even crushed him that he never wrote another thing. In fact, he looked back on what he had written about God as 'straw' compared to the moment of having received a taste of God's love.

Indeed, many centuries before St. Thomas Aquinas, another Doctor of the Church, St. Augustine wrote this: 'To fall in love with God is the greatest of all romances; to seek him, the greatest adventure; to find him the greatest human achievement.' Our vocation invites us to discover this love, to seek it out, to mine for it in the Scriptures, to plumb its depths and ultimately to rest in its security. Rooted then in this love, the love of God, we discover the strength to love not only our neighbour but also our enemies.

'Let us love our enemies, bless those who curse us, pray for those who persecute us. For love will conquer and endure for all eternity. And happy are those who live and die in God's love.' (Franz Jägerstätter).

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Dear Friends in Christ,

CATHEDRAL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR & GRAND DRAW
SATURDAY 5TH DECEMBER 2026 - 11.00am – 3.00pm



Each week from now on we are going to advertise our Parish Christmas Bazaar. I personally appeal to your generosity, especially with regards to GRAND DRAW PRIZES. If you're able to donate one or more of the Prizes this would be helpful. We have just obtained a Lottery License enabling us to sell books of Grand Draw Tickets. These will be handed out about the second week of November. Of course, we need all sorts of other gifts and items for the bazaar and the various stalls, so anything you think may sell would be welcomed. New and nearly new items are good. No clothes please! Apart from new baby clothes. A bazaar is not a Jumble Sale, so please think carefully about what you're donating. Thanking you all in anticipation of your generosity. My experience of Bazaars is that they are truly, wonderful social occasions for the whole parish community.
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Lots of parishioners can get involved. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex of the Cathedral if you can help in any way the day before *Friday, 4th December* in setting up, and *Saturday 5th December* at the Bazaar itself, and afterwards in the grand clear up. The next Bazaar Committee Meeting will be on Friday, 6th November at 7.30pm.



CHRISTMAS GRAND DRAW PRIZES: We would like to request various Grand Draw Prizes to be donated please, all brand-new items please: A Flat-Screen Colour Television, Wii, XBOX, IPods, Air Fryer. Any other new electrical goods. Various Christmas Hampers, Crate of Wine, Restaurant Vouchers, Theatre Vouchers, Hotel Vouchers, National Trust Membership, or Spa Vouchers, Crystal Glass Sets, M&S Vouchers for Christmas, Fitbit Watch, Beats Headphones, Fortnum & Mason or M&S Hampers, Large Christmas Cake. Bottle of Champagne and other prizes. PLEASE DONATE NOW. Would there be any parishioners who would be willing to donate some Money Grand Draw Prizes £200, 100, & £50. This can also be Gift Aided if we have your GA Number.



GIFTS AND ITEMS FOR VARIOUS STALLS: The success of any Bazaar is wholly dependent on the generosity of the whole parish community. We would like to appeal to the parish for various gift items for the Bazaar this year. One of the most successful stalls at a Bazaar is the 'BOTTLE STALL' – I would appeal to the parish for about 250 bottles of wine and spirits. If every person brought one bottle we would achieve our goal. Toiletries are also always popular. Children's toys & NEW cuddly toys, which are in good condition. Fancy goods; and good Bric-a Brac. Knitted goods, various Gift Cards, On the day there will be refreshments and a home baked cakes stall, jams & preserves. Various Sweets and chocolates, Christmas chocolate stockings, candy canes. Good quality toys and new toys. Small children's gifts for Santa's Grotto. NO CLOTHING THANK YOU!

You can start donating now;
please drop off at Clergy House during the week.



SPECIAL NOTE TO BAKERS: If anyone is good at making Christmas Cakes, please put on your baking hats. Last year there was a demand for Christmas Cakes, and we ran out very quickly. This could be your contribution to the Bazaar. Also, homemade cakes to be delivered the day before, or on the day of the Bazaar, please.

MATCHED GIVING: COULD WE MAKE A SPECIAL APPEAL FOR MATCHED GIVING? Can anyone help with Matched Giving from your firm or bank? Many companies do employ a Matched Giving facility; all you need to do is ask your place of employment; this truly would be of great benefit to us. If you work at the bazaar on a particular stall, whatever is raised is often matched by the company or bank. Please investigate it!



NOVEMBER - THE MONTH OF SOULS: The Month of Holy Souls is rapidly approaching. The Catholic Church has always remembered our deceased loved ones in a very special way throughout the Month of Holy Souls. ALL SOULS DAY THIS YEAR FALLS ON *Monday*, *2nd November*. On *Sunday*, *1st November* we will celebrate the SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS. If we have all lost loved ones throughout our lives, whether it be Parents, Grandparents, Relatives or friends, this will be our opportunity to remember them in this special way. In your Parish Newsletter last weekend there was a November Deceased List Envelope, if parishioners would like to complete a list of deceased loved ones, and return the envelope to Clergy House, along with your Mass Donation by *Monday*, *2nd November*. All the names of our deceased loved ones will be placed on the Altar throughout the whole month of November, and Holy Mass will be offered daily for all of them. At the end of each of the weekday masses a decade of the rosary with prayers for the deceased will be recited. Holy Masses on ALL SOULS DAY 9.15am, 1.10pm, 7.30pm.



PRIMARY SCHOOL APPLICATIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 2027: If your child is eligible for Primary School Application for September 2027, you will soon receive a notification form the Essex Education Office in Chelmsford. You will have to make your application to the Essex County to secure this place for your child. Hand in hand with that, you will need a Certificate of Catholic Practice (CCP) signed by your Parish Priest, stating that you are a practicing Roman Catholic who attends Church weekly with your child. A strict interpretation of this requirement is in place. If your child attends St Helen's Infant School already and you live outside the Brentwood Cathedral Parish, you need your Parish Priest to sign the CCP form attesting to your practice: Fr John will be signing CCP Forms on *Wednesday*, *17th November 2026* between *4.00pm – 7.00pm*. This will take place in the Sacristy by the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. At this meeting the Certificate of Catholic

Practice will only be signed by Fr John for those who are practicing Catholics (Weekly attendance at Holy Mass). This means your child's attendance as well. If you are not a regular practicing Catholic, please follow the instructions below:

a) **Fr John will know those families who have been practicing their faith by coming to Sunday Mass. These families will receive a Certificate of Catholic Practice**
b) **If you have not been practicing your faith, or have only just returned to church, please do not approach Fr John for a Certificate of Catholic Practice as he will not be able to provide you with this document, instead apply directly to the Catholic School of your choice.**
c) **If you are applying for a non-Catholic school that requires evidence of religious practice and you have been practicing your faith, please simply apply directly to the non-Catholic School of your choice.**
d) **Please note that Fr John will not supply additional references or documentation to parents who may go to appeal for a place at a non-Catholic school.**

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2026-2027: I would like to thank all the parents who attended the Parents' Information evening recently. This is truly and exciting time in your child's life as they will begin their preparations for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist. Fr John spelt our clearly the requirements for the next several months of preparation for the children. If you have not yet completed the enrolment process, please use the QR CODE attached, it will automatically take you into the application process; baptismal certificate upload, & payment methods for the programme (cash, cheque or BACS). If you follow the instructions, it should only take a few minutes to complete. Also, the children will need to pick up their Weekly Attendance Registration Forms from the Narthex of the Cathedral. These need to be completed weekly by one of the Priests or Deacons. If you're not attending weekly, please kindly see one of the priests. This Sacramental Programme makes no sense whatsoever if it is not backed up by the fulfilment of your Sunday Obligation at Mass, and it's not fair on your child.

PARENTS PLEASE KINDLY MAKE YOUR PAYMENTS FOR THE PROGRAMME (£40.00) BY *SATURDAY, 31ST OCTOBER 2026*. (This covers the purchase of their Book I BELONG, and various resources and snacks throughout the programme).

Once again, I would like to thank our Catechists, especially our new Catechists, who have kindly volunteered this year to help with the Sacramental Programme. They give of their own free time and share the gift of faith with our children.



THE RCIA PROGRAMME CONTINUES: Next *Thursday, 29th October at 7.00pm in Clergy House*. Theme: What is the Church? Foundations of the Church. Weekly attendance at Holy Mass is imperative for the RCIA Programme to make sense. Please keep our enquirers in your prayers over the next several months as they slowly and gradually come to an understanding of the Roman Catholic Faith. This is truly an incredibly special moment in all their lives, as their 'Journey of Faith' invites them to enter even more deeply into the Mystery and Wonder of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Saviour. We can never take our own faith journey for granted, it is a gift from Almighty God, and every day we can wonder at the beauty and magnitude of this special relationship.

<u>WELCOME HOME:</u> This weekend we welcome home Eugene O'Riordan, who walked the 500 miles of the Camino Pilgrimage to Santiago di Compostela in Spain. Congratulations go to Eugene on this incredible feat. He has very kindly offered sponsorship for our Cemetery Project of removing diseased trees, and the planting of new ones. It's still not too late to donate to this worthy cause. You can donate to his JustGiving page by clicking here.
https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/eugene-oriordan?utm_medium=CF&utm_source=EM
Thank you for your support!

Scan to donate

"I have completed my Challenge to walk to the Camino de Santiago. If you have supported my challenge, I want to say a heartfelt 'Thank you.' I will be back in the Cathedral on 24th October, hopefully to share some of my experiences with you. Thank you again."
God Bless. Eugene O'Riordan.

<u>NEW CTS SUNDAY MISSAL</u> Is now available for purchase from the Parish Office at a price of £10.00 each. The Missals run from the First Sunday of Advent 2026 to Christ the King 2027

<u>PILGRIMS OF HOPE PRAYER GROUP:</u> 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.

COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS TODAY: will be hosted by the St. Helen's Ladies Group. Next week will be the turn of the Altar Servers. All are welcome - Please do join us!

THE FRIDAY FRIENDSHIP LUNCH Every *Friday from 12.00 Noon – 2.00pm in the parish hall*. Join us for sandwiches, cakes and drinks and most importantly, friendly faces and an opportunity to meet up with others.

The lunches are run by volunteers and we could use some help, please. If you can spare an hour or two on a Friday, every now and then, please email breda.bower@btinternet.com.

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.

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.

DELIVERING MEALS FOR THE HOMELESS **A team from our parish, cook for the homeless on a regular basis. The meals are collected and taken to a venue in Basildon for 6.00pm. We are desperately short of people who can deliver. If you drive and are available some nights between 5.00pm-6.30pm (probably only a couple of evenings a month), would you be interested in helping out? Please contact Deirdre Smith (deirdre_s@btinternet.com) if you can help in any way. Thank you.**

MISSIO RED BOXES **Thank you those who have already returned their Red Box. If you still have a box at home, please bring it in for counting by the end of November. Thank you.**

BRENTWOOD URSULINE 6TH FORM OPEN EVENING **Will be held on *Thursday, 5th November from 6.30pm – 8.30pm*, with Headteacher's talk at 6.30pm.**

GENERAL NEWS

ST. JOSEPH THE WORKER CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, HUTTON
RECEPTION 2027 PARENT TOURS **Prospective parents are warmly invited to visit and see the school in action, and find out more about Reception 2027.**

Thursday, 5th & Tuesday, 10th November	**9.15am**
Wednesday, 18th and Monday, 23rd November	**2.00pm**

Please call the school office on 01277 227 282 to book a place.

SACRED HEART OF MARY 6TH FORM OPEN EVENING **Join us at Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School 6th Form Open Evening on *Thursday, 12 November 2026, from 6-8pm*. Discover the exciting opportunities available, explore our courses and facilities, and find out what makes our Sixth Form a fantastic place to learn, grow and plan for the future. We look forward to welcoming prospective students and their families!**

CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING AT THE CAMPION SCHOOL. We have 50 spaces for Christmas wreath making on Saturday, 28th November, from 6pm to 8pm. A welcome drink will be provided and you can bring your own bottle too. The price is £45 per person. We also have a limited number of spaces left for our session on Friday, 20th November. Please email Nuala Doherty at pachair@thecampionschool.org.uk for more information or to reserve a place.

170TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR HISTORY OF ST EDWARD THE CONFESSOR CATHOLIC CHURCH, ROMFORD. This new booklet is full of facts and insights about one of the oldest parish churches in the Diocese. The

cost is £7 including postage. If you would like a copy, please email romford@brcdt.org

PA TO THE PARISH PRIEST- OUR LADY OF LOURDES- WANSTEAD

The role is to provide administrative support to the Parish Priest by implementing and maintaining office systems, processes and procedures and delivering a welcoming, appropriate service to those making enquiries or attending the parish office. All applicants should have good administrative, social and technical skills.

The post will be part-time working 30 hours per week – (working pattern tbc). The salary is £15.45 per hour

The closing date for applications is *Tuesday, 10th November 2026* and suitable applicants will be invited to attend an interview on *Wednesday,18th November*.

If you have any queries or if you would like to apply, please send your CV to wanstead@brcdt.org

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