

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: 07812 455060

Deacon Nicholas Holmes: 01277 373788

Deacon Joseph Manuel-Mokwenye:
deaconjosephmanuel-mokwenye@brcdt.org

Email: cathedral@brcdt.org

Website: www.brentwoodcathedral.org.uk

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A) Sunday, 4 October 2026

Spiritual Reflection:



Jesus taught love of enemies. He taught what he himself had to practice many times, particularly in relation to his dealings with the chief priests and Pharisees. The Parable of the Tenants addresses their rejection of him and alludes very much to the image of Israel

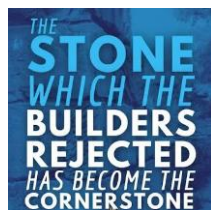
as the vineyard found in the Old Testament.

At one level the parable isn't difficult to decipher. The owner of the vineyard is God; the tenant farmers represent the chief priests and Pharisees; the servants are the prophets of Israel, many of whom were rejected and mistreated appallingly; the son represents Jesus, whom the owner sends in the mistaken belief that 'They will respect my son' - but even he is murdered by the tenant farmers. The owner finally leases his vineyard to others 'who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time.'

Making a direct reference to Psalm 118, Jesus identifies himself as the stone rejected by the builders. The Christian community for which Matthew wrote this Gospel would have found in this parable some light

in understanding the destruction of the temple and the razing of Jerusalem by the Romans in AD70. It is important to decipher the parable at this level because Jesus spoke it into a historical reality.

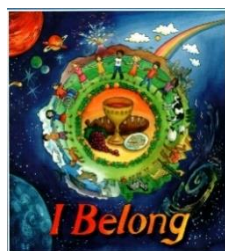
However, as always with the Scriptures, there are many layers of meaning to uncover. The parable also brings to light the ever-present danger of clericalism and legalism which shuts away from the life of God and makes us harsh, cold and unyielding to others. It isn't just the clergy who fall prey to clericalism: we all can. The remedy or antidote is learning to be attentive to what God is saying to us, in the Scriptures, in our prayer and in the inner sanctuary of our conscience.



One of the hallmarks that we are living by the spirit of the Pharisees is our inability to listen to the other side. St Augustine said: 'Hear the other side.' In other words, be open to what God is doing in the lives of those around us. The Holy Spirit works within us to create the spirit of meekness, which is openness to what God is doing in our midst - in other people's lives but also in the world around us.

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Dear Friends in Jesus Christ:



#### **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 2026), 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 this coming **Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> October at 7.00pm in the Cathedral**. We will need a copy of your child's Baptismal Certificate. It is imperative that you attend this especially important meeting.

#### **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 continue to 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. Applications for Secondary School (Year 7) places opened on the 12<sup>th</sup> September and must be submitted to Essex County by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2026. Fr John will be available on the *Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> October between the hours of 4.00pm - 7.00pm* for the Signing of Forms.

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.

Primary School Applications begin after the Secondary ones are completed. Please watch this space for details.



PARISH CHRISTMAS BAZAAR: *Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2026, 11.00am to 3.00pm.* Now we are in the month of October, parishioners can start donating items. It would be wonderful to have as many parishioners as possible involved in this Great Christmas Social event. Obviously, a great deal of preparation and hard work goes into such an event. Once

again, my thanks to all who came to the Bazaar Meeting recently. In last week's Newsletter, I put a great deal of information with regard the donation of gifts and items for the Bazaar. From next week onwards there will be Bazaar Boxes in the Narthex of the Cathedral to receive your gifts for the Bazaar. The success of the Bazaar is wholly dependent on your generosity.

**CHRISTMAS GRAND DRAW PRIZES:** We would like to request various Grand Draw Prizes to be donated please, all brand-new items please: A 50-inch Flat-Screen Colour Television, Wii, X-BOX, Ipods, 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, Various Gift Cards, Fitbit Watch, Beats Headphones, Fortnum & Mason Hamper, Large Christmas Cake. **Would there be any parishioners who would be willing to donate some Money Grand Draw Prizes? £200, 100, & £50. Or just make a Money Offering to the Bazaar?**



**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. A Bazaar is not a Jumble Sale, so we do ask for new or nearly new items please. 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. (These can be dropped at Clergy House). If every person brought one bottle we would achieve our goal. Toiletries are always popular. Children's NEW cuddly toys with labels, which are in good condition. Fancy goods; and good Bric-a Brac. Various Gift Cards. On the day there will be refreshments, 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.



Sr Martina from St Joseph's Convent, would be truly grateful for donations of wool, so the Sisters can continue knitting their various gifts for the Bazaar. You can drop wool off at Clergy House or St Joseph's Convent.

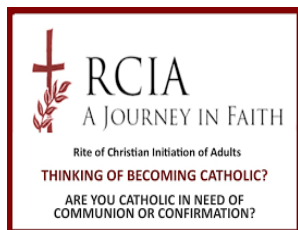
**You can start donating now; please drop off at Clergy House during the week.**

**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.

**CONFIRMATION PROGRAMME:** If you have signed up for the Confirmation Programme this year, you are expected to attend weekly Mass. This is not optional; we have noticed that for some, the weekly Mass Registration Card is very sporadic in attendance and signing, and for some there are several weeks missing. This is an extremely serious concern. If you are not willing to commit to one hour a week for Holy Mass, please think seriously about preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation. It can always be postponed to a later date; there is no fixed age for Confirmation.

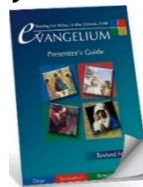


The return of the Registration Form, Retreat Registration, and the Questionnaire, plus the £150 for the Residential Retreat at Abbotswick, *Friday 27<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November*. Monies should have been returned with the Registration Forms. Your Mass Registration Card was effective from Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> 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 4pm in the Parish Hall*.

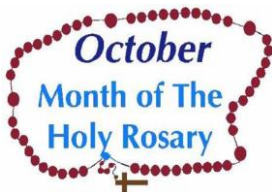


**THE RCIA PROGRAMME CONTINUES:** Next *Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> October at 7.00pm in Clergy House*. **Theme: Restoration of Friendship with God.** Please keep our 12 enquirers in your prayers over the next few months as they slowly and gradually come to an understanding of the Roman Catholic Faith. 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.



There is a workbook that we use called Evangelium costing £10.00. You will also receive a programme of dates and the titles of each session. The sessions usually last for about an hour and a quarter and there will be an opportunity for questions. If it helps you, please bring along a notepad and pen.



**OCTOBER - THE MONTH OF THE HOLY ROSARY:** As we have just entered the month of the Holy Rosary. I would like to advocate that all families pray at least a decade of the Holy Rosary together each day. If you don't know the prayer of the rosary there are many

websites that can teach you. It has been such a powerful prayer for centuries since St. Dominic gave it to the Church. The incredibly famous Fr Peyton said "The family that prays together stays together." Parents: this is your opportunity to teach your children. In this secular age, the last thing we want happening, is to lose all our Catholic Spirituality and Sacramentals. There are many different rosaries for sale in the Parish Repository.

#### **EUGENE O'RIORDAN - SANTIAGO DI COMPOSTELA -**

Eugene is now more than halfway through the 530 miles. Thousands of people walk the Camino each year from all over Europe, arriving in Santiago di Compostela the Shrine of St James the Apostle. They walk for all sorts of reasons, but it is very much a Pilgrimage - a journey of faith and discovery. Prior to leaving, Eugene very kindly offered to walk for the Intentions of the Parish, and the ongoing work that we have begun in the parish cemetery. *(Picture - Cathedral of Santiago di Compostela)*



As you know, many of the trees in the front part of cemetery are diseased with Sooty Bark. We must still remove some more trees and the next visit by the arborist is 9<sup>th</sup> October. Once the trees have been removed, and the stumps ground down, we can think about planting new trees. My sincere thanks to all those parishioners who have made promises to sponsor the new trees. We will plant well established trees, rather than saplings.



If any parishioners would like to donate towards the Tree Project in the Cemetery, Eugene would be grateful for your sponsorship. 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/eugene-oriordan?utm\\_medium=CF&utm\\_source=CL](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/eugene-oriordan?utm_medium=CF&utm_source=CL)

**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 & 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.

PRISONER'S SUNDAY is on *Sunday, 11 October* and there will be a second collection after all Masses that weekend (10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> October).

CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP will meet again on *Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> October from 7.00pm - 8.00pm*. Everyone is welcome so please do feel free to join us for prayer and praise.

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.

COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS TODAY: will be hosted by CAFOD. Next week will be the turn of PACE. 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.

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 (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.

## GENERAL NEWS

BCYS ROOTED 2026 - YEARS 7-9 / YEARS 10-13 - Saturday 24th October for years 7-9 / Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October for years 10-13: A brand-new day of faith, friendship and adventure at Walsingham House for young people. With inspiring talks, workshops, outdoor activities, team challenges, prayer and Mass, it's a great opportunity to meet other young Catholics and grow in faith. For more information, and to apply, please visit [www.bcys.net/events](http://www.bcys.net/events)

CAMPION SCHOOL SIXTH FORM OPEN EVENING at 4.30pm on *Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> October*, with Headteacher's talk at 4.30pm & 6.00pm.

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.

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Thursday, 5 <sup>th</sup> & Tuesday, 10 <sup>th</sup> November    | 9.15am |
| Wednesday, 18 <sup>th</sup> and Monday, 23 <sup>rd</sup> November | 2.00pm |

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

KNIGHTS OF ST. COLUMBA ANNUAL LECTURE on *Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> October at 8.00pm*, Chelmsford Knights of St. Columba will be presenting their Annual Lecture on the topic "Why Youth Ministry". The speaker will be Claire Bailey, Diocese of Brentwood's Director of

Youth Ministry, who will talk about Christian Youth Work, how it is undertaken and what it aims to achieve. It will interest anyone working with young people, volunteers or professionals, in schools, parishes or youth services, but also anyone involved with Religious Education or pastoral care. However, anyone with an interest in the future of the Church's young generation will learn a great deal from Claire's talk.

The talk will be at St. Augustine's Church, Springfield, CM1 6GQ

CAMPION SCHOOL QUIZ NIGHT on *Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:pachair@thecampionschool.org.uk).

### VACANCIES

- WALSINGHAM HOUSE MANAGER - Based at Walsingham House, with travel to retreat locations and BCYS events, as needed. 35hrs per week (incl. significant evening and weekend work). Salary- £30 - 32K depending on prior experience (ideally this is a "live in" role, with a one-bedroom flat provided, however it is not essential). The closing date for applications is *Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2026*.

More information is available on the BCYS website ([www.bcys.net/news/vacancies/](http://www.bcys.net/news/vacancies/)).

- URSULINE PREPARATORY SCHOOL TEACHING ASSISTANT - The successful candidate will be expected to support the class teacher and children within the class. Experience working with SEN children would be an advantage. Required for January 2027. Salary will be dependent on knowledge and experience.

Applications with CV to Mrs. Wilson, Headteacher by post or e-mail ([secretary1@UrsulinePrepwarley.co.uk](mailto:secretary1@UrsulinePrepwarley.co.uk))

Closing date for application is *Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2026*

- URSULINE PREPARTORY SCHOOL BURSAR - The successful candidate will have strong financial and commercial acumen, be able to implement robust and operational controls whilst providing exceptional support services.

To request a full application pack, please contact [bursar@ursulineprepwarley.co.uk](mailto:bursar@ursulineprepwarley.co.uk). Closing date for applications is *Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2026* with anticipated start date of *Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2026*.

**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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