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 THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)

Sunday, 15 November 2026

Spiritual Reflection



So, let's do the maths: a talent wasn't a coin but a unit of weight about 80lb or 36 kg, if you prefer your weights in metric. However, when used as a currency its weight was not assessed in gold but in silver, and one talent was worth something in the region of 6000 denarii. Since in the first century one denarius was a day's pay for a labourer in the Middle East, 6000 divided by 365 (the number of days in a year) would have been a little less than 16½ year's pay. So, the servant with 5 talents was given something in the region of £2million – the amount of money we are dealing with here is colossal! Imagine how Jesus' first hearers must have smiled when they heard this parable.

One of the interesting things about the parable, and not often understood, is that in the ancient world, believe it or not, the notion of making money wasn't heralded like it is today. People traded to survive, not to make a killing, and business (in the way we understand it today) was akin to prostitution and exploitation. Nevertheless, the Jewish people were known as shrewd business people and canny investors.

Now clearly, the parable isn't simply about the benefits of making a return on an investment versus burying our capital and not even making any interest. It's a parable after all: its meaning is deeper. The parable isn't simply about using our God-given natural talents to bless our friends and neighbours, for example – there is no reward (return) in that. NO, the talents or gifts are primarily spiritual gifts – the charisms, graces, blessings, and fruits of the Holy Spirit (which are worth more than gold).

We too eagerly (yes eagerly) desire the spiritual gifts, especially the gifts of prophecy. We are not to be ignorant about the spiritual gifts (like the servant who buried his talent). There are different kinds of gifts (talents) given by the Spirit: the message of wisdom or knowledge, the gift of healing, miraculous powers, discernment, or spirits, speaking in tongues and interpretation of tongues.

Dear Friends in Jesus Christ:

CATHEDRAL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR & GRAND DRAW
SATURDAY 5th DECEMBER 2026, 11.00am – 3.00pm



Our Parish Bazaar is only three weeks away. We are still desperately looking for all gifts and items for the Bazaar. A Bazaar is only successful through the generosity of the parishioners. A very big thanks you to those who have already donated gifts and items for the various stalls. At our recent committee meeting we discovered that we are very short of CHOCOLATES, (For Chocolate Tombola); BOTTLES, (For Bottle Tombola) TOILETRIES, FANCY GOODS, CHILDREN'S TOYS (PREFERABLY NEW). In a few weeks, we will ask for cakes and baked goods. These can be delivered on the day, or the day before. This year we are venturing to have a PLANT STALL, for those of you with Green Fingers, would you be able to offer some plants for this new stall? Your response over the past two years has been incredible. This is a real family day for the whole parish, and also a way of supporting the parish in a fun way. ON THE DAY, PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING CASH WITH YOU. 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, from 2.00pm and on *Saturday*, *5th December* at the Bazaar itself. Then afterwards in the grand clear up.

FATHER CHRISTMAS WILL BE MAKING A SPECIAL VISIT AT 12NOON, WITH MRS CLAUS. THEY WILL BE WITH US UNTIL 2.00PM.



GIFTS AND ITEMS FOR VARIOUS STALLS: 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 parishioner brought one bottle, we would achieve our goal. Toiletries are 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, a home baked cakes stall, jams & preserves and a chocolate tombola. Good quality toys and new toys. Small children's gifts for Santa's Grotto. NO CLOTHING (Except brand new).

PLEASE DONATE NOW!
You can drop off at Clergy House during the week.



CHRISTMAS GRAND DRAW PRIZES: We would like to request various Grand Draw prizes to be donated please, all brand-new items please: 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 & Other Prizes. **PLEASE DONATE NOW.**

AS YET ONLY SIX GRAND DRAW PRIZE DONATED.
(With thanks to those who have generously donated).

GRAND DRAW TICKETS: Please kindly return your completed stubs from the Grand Draw Tickets as soon as possible along with your money. Grand Draw will take place on *Saturday, 5th December at approximately 2.30pm*



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. To all our bakers, please ensure you itemise your ingredients in all your cakes, as some people suffer with various allergies. Thank you!

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!



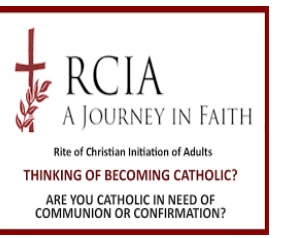
PRIMARY SCHOOL APPLICATIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 2027: If your child is eligible for Primary School Application for September 2027, you will soon receive a notification form the Essex Education Office in Chelmsford. You will have to make your application to the Essex County to secure this place for your child. 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 of 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.**

PLEASE NOTE: All applications for St Helen's Infant School should be made directly to the school; and the County Form (Essex) should be completed online by the *15th January 2027* to secure a place for your child for September 2027. For Infant School applications, you do not need to see Fr John.

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: **Do we have a structural engineer in the parish? If so, is there any possibility that you could offer some advice on a project we need to undertake please? Please contact Fr John directly at Clergy House, Tel No: 01277 265 235 He would greatly appreciate any help you may be able to offer. Thank You!**

THE RCIA PROGRAMME CONTINUES: Next *Thursday, 19th November at 7.00pm in Clergy House*. Theme: The Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. 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.





NEW BOILER AND HEATING SYSTEM FOR THE CATEHDRAL: At the recent inspection and service of the boiler & heating system for the Cathedral, I was informed by the engineer that the boiler usually has a lifespan of 25 years. Ours is now 36 years old. The engineer stated that we need to seriously start thinking about a new system for the Cathedral, and to look at various options. As you can appreciate to replace a new heating system is costly enough at a domestic setting, I cannot imagine what it is going to cost for the Cathedral. I would like to set up a working party to begin the process of investigating all options, also to establish some kind of fund-raising committee to assist with the future finance of a new industrial heating system. Obviously, this year we are all being squeezed by the oil situation and rising costs of fuel and gas, caused by the War between Iran & the USA. Any heating engineers out there? Please contact Fr John, Tel No: 01277 265 235. With grateful thanks





SACRAMENTS OF CONFIRMATION & FIRST HOLY COMMUNION: To all candidates for the Sacraments of Confirmation & First Holy Communion Programmes. The deadline for Registration has just passed. If you have not submitted your Registration Forms, could you kindly do so immediately, and the various registrations fees £150 for Confirmation which covers the Retreat at Walsingham House. £40 for First Holy Communion, which includes the purchase of the I BELONG book, and various other expenses throughout the programme. If you want to pay by Money Transfer, kindly contact the Parish Office at Clergy House, Theresa will give you all the Bank Details you need for

the transfers. If you want to pay by Cash or Cheque, could you kindly drop it off in an envelope clearly marked with the Child's Name and which programme. Thank You!

First Meeting for Confirmation Candidates will take place on *Sunday, 15th November* at *4.00pm in the Cathedral*, then retreating to the Parish Hall. The Confirmation Retreat will take place on the weekend of *Friday, 27th – Sunday, 29th November* at Abbotswick, our Diocesan Youth Centre.



<u>NOVEMBER – THE MONTH OF HOLY SOULS:</u> When we remember our deceased loved ones, relatives, friends & benefactors at each Holy Mass. At the end of each weekday Mass, we will pray a decade of the Holy Rosary for the repose of all our Holy Souls. If there are any families who have lost a deceased loved one during the past year and would like their names inscribed in our Book of the Dead; there is a list in the Narthex, please add your deceased loved one's name, and at the end of November the names will be added to the book.

<u>WE NEED AN ADDITIONAL DBS OFFICER IN THE CATHEDRAL PARISH:</u> Jane Davenport is our Parish DBS officer on behalf of the Brentwood Diocese. She is desperately in need of an additional officer. If you are able and willing to offer your services, please kindly speak to one of the Priests, or to Jane herself. Computer skills are essential.

<u>REQUIESCANT IN PACE:</u> In your mercy, please pray for the Repose of the Souls of Monsignor Bill Nix, former Dean of Bentwood Cathedral, who passed away recently, aged 86. His Requiem Mass will take place at Brentwood Cathedral at *12.15pm on Friday, 20th November*. His body will be brought into the Cathedral on *Thursday evening, 19th November at 5.00pm*.

Also, Sister Agatha Carey, from St Joseph's Convent, Brentwood. Many will remember Sr Agatha as she taught at St. Helen's School for many years. She entered the Novitiate here in Brentwood over 70 years ago. She passed away peacefully, after suffering greatly with Cancer of the Eyes. Her Requiem Mass will be celebrated at Brentwood Cathedral on *Friday, 27th November at 11.00am* with her body being received into The Cathedral at *4.30pm* the day before.

May Fr Bill & Sr Agatha Rest in Peace and Rise in glory.

INVITATION TO A MASS OF THANKSGIVING, CELEBRATED BY BISHOP TIMOTHY All parishioners from across the diocese are warmly invited to attend a Mass of Thanksgiving, celebrated by Bishop Timothy Menezes following his appointment as Bishop of the Diocese of Brentwood. Join us as we gather in prayer and thanksgiving to welcome our new Bishop and seek God's blessing upon his ministry. All are welcome.

Masses will be celebrated in three locations:

Tuesday, 8th Dec: 11:00 am – Cathedral Church of St Mary & St Helen, Ingrave Road, Brentwood CM15 8AT
Tuesday, 8th Dec: 7:30 pm – St Antony of Padua Church, St Antony's Road, Forest Gate, London E7 9QB
Wed 9th Dec: 7:00 pm - St James the Less and St Helen Church, Priory Street, Colchester CO1 2QB

CHAPTER OF CANONS MASS will take place in the Cathedral Church of St Mary & St Helen, Brentwood on *Monday, 14th December at 10.30am* Celebrated by Bishop Timothy Menezes. All are very welcome.

COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS TODAY: will be hosted by the Scouts. Next week will be the turn of the Catenians. All are welcome - Please do join us!

THE FRIDAY FRIENDSHIP LUNCH There will not be any Friday Friendship Lunches on Friday, 20th or 27th November, as the Parish Halls will be in use for Monsignor Nix' and Sister Agatha's funerals.

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, Franklin Daniel and all our sick.

GENERAL NEWS

FOODBANK COLLECTION – Please consider making a contribution to the parish food bank collection that will be taking place on the weekend of *28th/29th November*. All the donations go to the Brentwood Food Bank to help local people in need. Donations of non-perishable items such as tinned meat/vegetables/fruit as well as dried goods, toiletries and treats for Christmas will be gratefully received.

ST HELEN'S CATHOLIC INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL: PROSPECTIVE RECEPTION PARENTS 2027-28 There will be tours of the school for prospective parents (Reception 2027) from *Wednesday, 25th – Friday, 27th November, at 9.30am.*

Also, there will be tours of the school for prospective parents (Nursery 2026) on *Wednesday, 27th & Thursday, 28thJanuary at 9.30am.*

Please contact the school office to book a slot for either group: admin@st-helens-inf.essex.sch.uk.

BCCS CHARITY CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON - Join us for a delicious two-course meal, exclusively hosted in the beautiful Grade II listed Georgian House. *Friday, 4th December - 12:30-15:30* at The Lawn, Rochford, SS4 1PL. £38.50 per person. Book now: //www.bccs.org.uk/christmas/christmas-luncheon/ Any questions contact Julie: jabbott@bccs.org.uk or on 07912 277 413.

THE CAMPION SCHOOL SENIOR CITIZENS' PARTY will be held at the school on *Sunday, 13th December between 12.30 p.m. - 5.00 p.m.* Places are limited to 15 per parish, but if you would be interested in attending, contact Clergy House by *Wednesday, 25th November* at the latest.

VACANCY – SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS CO-ORDINATOR - ST JOSEPH THE WORKER CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Scale: depending on experience. Contract: Part-Time (2 days) and Permanent. Closing date: *Wednesday, 18th November 2026 at 12pm*
Interviews: *Thursday, 26th November 2026*
Details can be found on the school website: https://www.st-josephworker.essex.sch.uk/recruitment-1

Please email the school office admin@st-josephworker.essex.sch.uk or call 01277 227282 for more information or to arrange a visit.

VACANCY – LEARNING SUPORT ASSISTANT - ST. PETER'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, BILLERICAY are seeking an enthusiastic and motivated Learning Support Assistant to join their team. This is a permanent, part-time role – Please see Essex Schools website for more information.
//www.essexschoolsjobs.co.uk/Vacancies/Details.aspx?VacancyId=123153

Visits to the school are welcomed and can be arranged by contacting the school office. Closing date is midday on *Friday, 20th November*

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
			