

OUR LADY OF RANSOM

The Baptism of the Lord - Year C
Psalter Week 1 – 8th /9th January 2022



An elderly man collapses. He is whisked off to hospital. A nurse, following enquiries, finds out his son is a soldier in the army. She manages to find and call him. Later he arrives. Tenderly, the nurse informs the man that his son has arrived. Sedated, the elderly man slowly reaches out his hand. The two hands are clasped for several hours, the son uses his other hand to periodically mop the old man's brow and keep him comfortable. Later the man dies. The son asked the nurse "who was he"? "But...but...isn't he your father?" "No" said the boy, "but he was dying and desperately needed a son, so I stayed".

The father needed a son. And the boy became a true son, even if just a few hours. In the same way, God wants us to experience us being his children, *for we are*, not just for a few hours, but forever. Do we recognise this truth? Sin happens because we do not recognise this, *not really*. Jesus knew this absolutely as we see today, and so is ready to lead the rest of humanity in that truth - we are all children of God. Once we begin to recognise that, yes, I really am a beloved son, a beloved daughter of the Lord – we start to recognise everyone else is. No exceptions. And true compassion begins. Please follow that logic, it really can help.

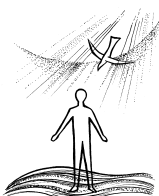
So Jesus as Son identifies with the rest of humanity – his baptism marks the beginning of this descent. Entering the murky waters of the Jordan, he flags up his entry into the murky state of humanity – and from there, redeems it. Not breaking the bruised reed, but healing, reconciling, nurturing back to life – not being up on a pedestal looking down – but by being deeply a part of our condition and calls us to follow him. Which is exactly what Christmas celebrates. Little happens when Jesus is only on a pedestal.

When big disasters happen, the media talks of "thousands dead". Mind numbing statistics. Do we really relate to suffering - by numbers? Or by intellect? No. But by the human personal story of love and loss. That is the story, our story, and God enters it himself. Not intellectual, not abstract. Surely our faith is more challenged by the death of our own child than by thousands of strangers. It's personal. God becomes personal in Jesus, so he can redeem us. No academic arguments help. Only faith – following Jesus' faith - that reminds us we all are, absolutely and no exceptions, His beloved children. Can we *really* absorb that truth.

God Bless, Fr. Paul

All Masses and Church Services are now Live Streamed.

**To take part please go to <https://stream.seccomgroup.com/channel/olor>
Masses can be watched "live" or later as a recording.**



TODAY'S READINGS:

Isaiah 40: 1-5. 9-11
Psalm 103
Titus 2: 11-14; 3: 4-7
Luke 3:15-16. 21-22

This week Fr Paul will say Mass for the following intentions:-

MASS INTENTIONS	
Saturday 8th Jan.	
5.30pm Mass	Parish Community Ints
Sunday 9th The Baptism of the Lord	
8am Mass	Kathleen McKeague RIP (Gumley & Smith families)
9.30am Mass	Mike Geeson RIP (Nicola Geeson)
Monday 10th	
Requiem Mass 12.15pm	Walenty Krolikowski RIP
Tuesday 11th	
	Fr Denis O'Rourke RIP (Mary & Barrie Mason)
Wednesday 12th	
10am Mass	Annie Gray RIP (Anniv) (Gray family)
Thursday 13th	
	John & Madge Murphy (Rita Gurney)
Friday 14th	
10am Mass	Goddard & Johnstone families RIP (Patricia Holohan)
Saturday 15th	
5.30pm Mass	Mike Healy (Ints) (Rita Gurney)
Sunday 16th Jan. 2nd Sunday of the Year	
8am Mass	Parish Community Ints
9.30am Mass	Hilary Barry (Ints) (Legion of Mary)

<p>PARISH PRIEST Father Paul Fox 50 London Hill, Rayleigh Essex SS6 7HP 01268 382 499 www.olorchurch.org email: rayleigh@dioceseofbrentwood.org</p>	<p><u>Public Mass times:</u> Saturdays 5.30pm Sundays 8am & 9.30am Wednesdays 10.00am Fridays 10.00am <i>Please be aware - Times and days of Masses are subject to change.</i></p>
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Our Parish is part of The Brentwood Diocesan Trust, Registered Charity Number 234092

Please see suggestions for questions regarding Parish Listening and synod towards the end of this week's newsletter.

Please hand in your responses to Fr Paul by 16th January 2022.

WEDNESDAY COFFEE MORNINGS will resume on **January 12th**, COVID restrictions permitting.



PLEASE SAVE YOUR USED STAMPS....

Please save your used stamps and leave them in the container in the Porch. These are being collected for the MS charity. Thank you in advance, Ruth Fitzgerald.

THRESHOLDS OF HOPE QUESTIONS: *What is the point of canon law...*

will be given by Fr Gary Dench, assistant priest at Brentwood Cathedral on Sundays 9th and 16th January 4-5pm.

To join this Zoom meeting simply forward a contact email to adultformationvicariate@dioceseofbrentwood.org.

For more information go to www.thresholdsofhope.co.uk

GIDEA PARK STUDY DAY: THE EVOLUTION OF THE MASS

On **Saturday 15th January 2022** Professor John Morrill will lead a Study Day on 'The Evolution of the Mass', tracing the development of the Eucharistic liturgy from the earliest centuries to the present day. He will explore in particular the teaching of Trent and Vatican II, and the latest papal instructions on the celebration of Mass.

To access this **free live stream event** simply go to www.whatgoodnews.org

The event begins at 11.00 GMT and ends by 13.30. No prior registration is needed. To be added to our mailing list simply follow the instructions on the home page of the website.

BE PART OF THE WALSINGHAM HOUSE TEAM 2022/23:

If you are 18+ and looking for an exciting gap year opportunity, then a year on the Walsingham House Team could be for you. Spend a year as a volunteer in a thriving young Catholic Community, working with thousands of young people from Essex and East London. We are looking for inspiring individuals who want to share their faith with other young people and are also looking to learn new skills, grow deeper in their own faith and enjoy a challenge.

For more information please contact Joseph Beattie, manager of Walsingham House, by emailing josephbeattie@dioceseofbrentwood.org or calling 01277 373959. There is more information about our work on our website (www.bcys.net) and social media @Brentwoodcys

BISHOP'S CERTIFICATE IN CATECHESIS AND YOUTH MINISTRY:

The Bishop's Certificate is designed to be an entry level qualification to help in the ongoing formation of adults involved in sacramental preparation or youth ministry in the Diocese of Brentwood. It includes both the development of practical skills & the deepening of theological knowledge. The course is online and taught through engaging, short videos with expert interviews. The course will begin on the evening of **24th February**, with an introduction and welcome evening, held at Walsingham House at Abbotswick. For more information please see our website: <https://bcys.net/bishops-cert/> or email your expression of interest to bishopscertificate@dioceseofbrentwood.org by Monday 22nd February.

† † PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS...

John Enever (Maura Houchin's son-in-law) who died recently. Please keep Madeleine, Anthony and the family in your prayers. † †

MANY THANKS FOR ALL THE MASS INTENTIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Please note: At present we have a large number of outstanding Mass Intentions, which takes us **to early February 2022.**



PLEASE PRAY

For all the sick members in our Parish and all our relatives and friends.

† ANNIVERSARIES †

Kindly pray for Cassie Thompson, Patrick Flaherty, Michael Mitchell, Shelagh Duroure, Mafalda Golledge, Annie Gray and Aurora Bonham. May they rest in peace.

MASS AND SYMPATHY CARDS... can be obtained at the repository shop and the presbytery. Please contact Fr. Paul to arrange a convenient time to come, choose, collect and pay for the cards if the shop is closed.



MY DAY BY DAY

Booklets for January and February are available priced £1 each.



2022 Brentwood Diocesan Directories
Now available from the
Porch or Presbytery –
£2.80 each



LIVING FAITH (Jan – March)

Popular booklet with a thought for every day for the next three months.

Limited number available in the porch....

Voluntary donations for the booklets welcome.

THE DIOCESAN LOURDES PILGRIMAGE IN 2022, led by Bishop Alan, will take place from Sunday 24 – Friday 29 July in Lourdes. Costs have not yet been confirmed.

This will be the first time in three years that the diocese has returned to Lourdes. Brochures for the pilgrimage, which will include costs, will be available soon. If you would like further information now, please contact Cathy O'Connor, the Administrative Director: cathy@dioceseofbrentwood.org or 07813 710070.

BCYS SUMMER LOURDES PILGRIMAGE 2022: 23rd – 30th JULY 2022.

Applications are **now open** for our summer pilgrimage to Lourdes for those in Years 11-13, with those of school leaver age (18+) invited to join us as young leaders. This is one of our most popular events and after a 2 year gap we are excited to be returning next year. The week is spent travelling alongside the main Diocesan pilgrimage as we assist the elderly and infirm with going to Masses and services, as well as visiting shops and cafes within the town. For those travelling with the BCYS the week will also include a retreat, reconciliation service, as well as social events and a party. Please see www.bcys.net/events/sl22/ for more information including visas, vaccinations and how to apply.

PUBLIC MASSES

If you are strict about social-distancing, the pews on the right hand side (as we face the altar) are largely reserved for those who wish to do so.

Face Coverings – please continue wearing a face covering as a mark of respect for one another's health and protection.

Please **do not come** if you have symptoms, sniffles, sneezes, coughs, immunity issues etc. Use common sense and **think of others**.

Social Distance should be maintained as much as possible – again – out of mutual respect.

Please continue to follow only the directions of the Stewards.

Holy Communion only to be received on the hand for added protection.

The church will continue to be both cleansed and sanitised regularly

Wash your hands, cover your face, make space.



OFFERTORY CONTRIBUTIONS

Thanks to all who continue to support our parish financially.

DONATIONS USING QR CODES

To avoid having too much cash lying around, it is now possible to make donations in Church using your mobile phone and QR codes.

There are notices in the porch for contributions to the parish



ONLINE DONATIONS

To make a donation online go to <https://stream.seccomgroup.com/donations/olor>

GIFT AID / ENVELOPES. If you are a taxpayer and donate to the parish online, it's worth a reminder that we could get **an extra 25%** on your donations if you sign up to the Gift Aid scheme.

Please contact Sandra our Gift Aid Co-ordinator

(olorgiftaid@hotmail.com / 01268 772998) if you have any questions. Thank you.



OUR LADY OF RANSOM

Questions for Use in Parish Listening, Sharing and Reflection



The following are suggestions on how to pose these questions in simple and engaging ways (<https://rcaos.org.uk/synod>).

Each diocese, parish, or group should not aim to cover all the questions but should discern and focus on those aspects of synodality most pertinent to its context.

Participants are encouraged to share with honesty and openness about their real-life experiences, and to reflect on what the Holy Spirit might be revealing in what they share with one another. Frameworks for sharing can be found in the Facilitating Local Spiritual Conversations document.

This Synod poses the following fundamental question:

A synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, 'journeys together.' How is this 'journeying together' happening today in your local Church? What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our 'journeying together'? (PD 26)

By growing together in communion, the people of God deepen their participation in the life of the Church and so become more effective missionary disciples in the world. Read all of the questions. The questions in **bold** are the main ones we suggest you explore but you may wish to focus on the three thematic areas using the other questions offered here.

Communion

The Church is Catholic because she is sent to all, in order to gather the entire human family from every nation and culture, under the Lordship of Christ and in the unity of his Spirit.

- 1. What are the ways in which your parish most successfully brings people together?**
2. In which areas of parish life (liturgical, charitable, social etc.) does your parish feel and act as one?
3. In which areas of parish life (liturgical, charitable, social etc.) are you able to discern the presence and movement of the Holy Spirit?
4. How is the Holy Eucharist the main focal point for your parish?
5. Is the parish the sole focus for Communion in your area?
- 6. Christ is present as the head united to his body (Ephesians 1:22-23) in our parishes and communities. How is this reflected in your parish/community life? Are there other reasons that you gather together?**
7. In what ways can you help to build up communion effectively and authentically in the coming months and years?
8. How do you relate to members of the Church who have drifted away from practice?
9. How does your parish relate to other parishes nearby and the diocese as a whole?

Participation

Participation is based on the fact that all the faithful are qualified and called to serve each other through the gifts they have all received from the Holy Spirit. The authority of pastors is a specific gift of the Spirit of Christ the Head for the building up of the entire Body.

- 1. Reflecting on 16 months of the pandemic, how has participation in your parish been affected? Were these issues there before?**
2. How can participation be strengthened moving forward into the future?
3. What are the means by which different voices can be heard in your parish (particularly those on the periphery of parish life)?
4. Which groups and individuals are least included in your parish?
5. How can you broaden the way you include people whilst keeping always true to the Gospel and our core Christian identity?
6. How do you currently participate, personally, in the life of the Church? How much responsibility do you have as an individual?
- 7. How can we better enable full participation and co-responsibility in the life of the Church at the parish and diocesan levels?**
8. How does your parish effectively identify and use the gifts of its people?
9. How do families and young people effectively participate in the life of your parish? What do you do to support them?

Mission

The People of God are on pilgrimage through history towards the heavenly homeland. Each one of the baptised is to be honoured with the same dignity as children of God and appointed to the same mission, the proclamation of the Good News and the building of the Kingdom of God.

1. Given what you see of the Church (words and actions), in the parish and beyond, what would you say is the Church's mission?
2. How might we find a shared understanding of mission in the different parishes and Catholic institutions in the Diocese of Brentwood?
- 3. Are we looking in or are we looking out, as a parish community? Can we do both effectively?**
4. From a missionary perspective, how would you characterise both the local situation and local needs in your parish and community?
5. How is your parish set up for evangelisation? How does your parish reach out to the broader community with the Good News?
6. Where is the Holy Spirit calling you to mission and service today?
7. In what ways do you already intentionally and actively seek to share the Good News of Jesus Christ?
- 8. How does the life of the parish, in terms of catechesis, adult formation, liturgy etc. aid in the formation of parishioners as missionary disciples?**
9. How can the call to holiness and the call to mission be reflected in different aspects of parish life?

Please hand in your responses to Fr Paul by 16th January 2022.

Terms from the Synod documents

Discernment

The Synodal Process entails a discernment process. In this process, we listen to each other in order to discern what God is saying to all of us. This kind of discernment is not only a one-time event, but ultimately a way of life, grounded in Christ, following the lead of the Holy Spirit, living for the greater glory of God. Communal discernment helps to build flourishing and resilient communities for the mission of the Church today. Discernment is a grace from God, but it requires our human involvement in simple ways: praying, reflection, paying attention to one's inner disposition, listening and talking to one another in an authentic, meaningful, and welcoming way. Discernment in this spiritual key plants seeds that can bear the fruits of fraternity, healing, communion, mission, and more. God comes to lead and inspire us as we seek to discern His will.

Communion

Synodality is a living expression of the Catholicity of the Church as communion. In the Church, Christ is present as the Head united to His Body (Ephesians 1,22-23) in such a way that she receives from Him the fullness of the means of salvation. The Church is Catholic also because she is sent to all, in order to gather the entire human family in the richness of the plurality of cultural forms, under the Lordship of Christ and in the unity of His Spirit. The synodal path expresses and promotes her Catholicity in two ways: it shows the dynamic way in which the fullness of faith is shared by all members of the People of God and it assists in handing it on to all people and all peoples. (ITC, Syn., no. 58)

Participation

A synodal Church is a Church of participation and co-responsibility. In exercising synodality she is called to give expression to the participation of all, according to each one's calling, with the authority conferred by Christ on the College of Bishops headed by the Pope. Participation is based on the fact that all the faithful are qualified and called to serve each other through the gifts they have all received from the Holy Spirit. The authority of Pastors is a specific gift of the Spirit of Christ the Head for the building up of the entire Body, not a delegated and representative function of the people. (ITC, Syn., no. 67)

In the synodal Church the whole community, in the free and rich diversity of its members, is called together to pray, listen, analyse, dialogue, discern and offer advice on taking pastoral decisions which correspond as closely as possible to God's will. So, in coming to formulate their own decisions, Pastors must listen carefully to the views and experiences of the faithful. Canon law stipulates that, in certain cases, they must act only after having sought and obtained the various opinions according to juridically established procedures [82]. (ICT, Syn., no. 68) At the same time, the path of synodality requires much wider participation than only that which is required by the law.

Mission

The Church is missionary because that was the way of Christ. We are told in the Bible that 'God so loved the world that he sent his only Son' (John 3:16). Jesus was sent into the world to reveal God's love. In turn, Jesus said to his apostles, 'As the Father has sent me, so I send you' (John 20:21). 'You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8). The mission of Jesus to proclaim the Kingdom of God to all people has been handed onto the Church and individual believers, guided by the Holy Spirit. The dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* sets out a vision of the nature and mission of the Church as communion, with the theological presuppositions of a suitable re-launch of synodality: the mystical and sacramental conception of the Church; her nature as People of God on pilgrimage through history towards the heavenly homeland, in which all her members are by virtue of baptism honoured with the same dignity as children of God and appointed to the same mission; the doctrine of sacramentality of the episcopate and collegiality in hierarchical communion with the Bishop of Rome. (ITC, Syn., no. 40)

The full document explaining terms can be found on the General Secretariat for Synod of Bishops site: <https://www.synod.va/en.htm>