

# OUR LADY OF RANSOM

2<sup>nd</sup> October 2022 27th Sunday Year C Psalter Week 3



The baby was born seriously ill. The parents wanted an emergency baptism. I went. Walking over to where the baby lay with mum and dad, the nurse advised me that I would be seen as the devil himself, the parents would see me as the grim reaper, about to snatch their baby away. I've never been the devil! Frightening! Looking into the mother's eyes, I have never been so terrified by someone else's sheer terror. I baptised the little baby, barely a few hours old. Not a word was said by the parents. I wished the three of them well and peace, kissed the baby on the forehead and left. Two weeks later, I was called back, the baby was about to die. I anointed her, she died shortly afterwards. Again, barely a word from the parents. Again, with a little kiss on the baby's forehead, I wished them all well and peace. I wondered had I failed somewhere, yet they had asked me back. Something must be happening. Maybe any faith was simply the size of a mustard seed. Such suffering can so test our mustard-seed sized faith.

A year later, the presbytery door-bell rang. I didn't recognise who it was until I was told. It was the same couple, now smiling, bouncy, full of the joys of spring, having just given birth to a new child. The only person who was allowed to baptise this child was myself. They expressed their immense gratitude for what I had done the previous year, we laughed and joked together, and I baptised the baby as requested, a beautiful and joyful celebration. Wow! Relief! A faith increased?

We cannot know what direction or form our faith will take. Often our faith is increased through ghastly adversities. These ghastly occasions hollow us out and we feel forced to rely on something bigger than ourselves. Maybe, the tiny mustard seed of faith is enough to hold us. Suffering is often the only thing that will dethrone our control needs, our egocentricities - our logical and rational minds, to finally trust in the Lord's goodness, the Lord's control and power. It's said "no pain, no gain". Alternatively, the pain forces us to wither away into cold, callous, highly defensive and rigid people. Maybe the couple's pain had helped the mustard seed of their own faith increase?

'Increase our faith', the disciples ask. This is in the context of forgiveness that has just preceded this text. When someone does us wrong, our suffering can be immense, and forgiveness seems impossible. But as said above, pain can open the heart, which in turn, with compassionate help, can lead to eventual forgiveness. Healing. Often that can be how our faith increases as well. Or the pain can cause us to wither away through bitterness rage and anger. What other ways can our faith be increased?

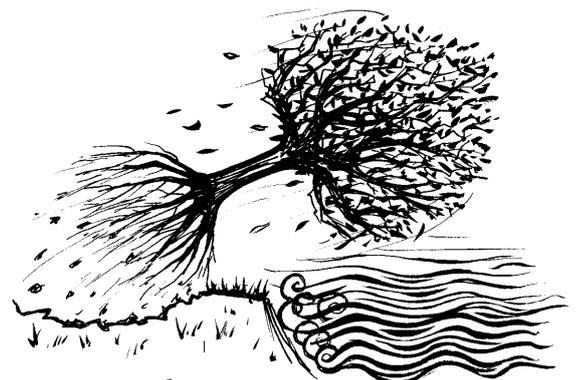
*God Bless, Fr. Paul*

First Reading: Habakkuk 1:2-3, 2:2-4

Psalm: Psalm 94(95):1-2, 6-9

Second Reading: 2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14

Gospel: Luke 17:5-10



*(Adapted for 10am Calling Mass on Sunday)*

<b>MASS INTENTIONS</b>	
<b>Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October</b>	<b>St Therese of the Child Jesus</b>
<b>5.30pm Mass</b>	Dennis Michael Fallon Ints
<b>Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> October</b>	<b>Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time</b>
<b>8.00am Mass</b>	Parish Community
<b>10.00am Mass</b>	Patricia Herlihy RIP
<b>Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October</b>	
<b>10am</b>	Eucharistic Service
<b>Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>St Francis of Assisi</b>
<b>No Mass</b>	
<b>Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> October</b>	
<b>10.00am</b>	Eucharistic Service
<b>Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October</b>	
<b>No Mass</b>	
<b>Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>Our Lady of the Rosary</b>
<b>10.00am</b>	Eucharistic Service
<b>Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>St Osyth</b>
<b>5.30pm Mass</b>	Deceased Members of The Hemming Family RIP
<b>Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time</b>
<b>8.00am Mass</b>	Alice Allso RIP
<b>10.00am Mass</b>	Parish Community

***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.***

<p><b>PARISH PRIEST</b>            Father Paul Fox            50 London Hill, Rayleigh            Essex SS6 7HP  <b>01268 38.24.99</b>  <b>www.olorchurch.org</b>            email: <a href="mailto:rayleigh@dioceseofbrentwood.org">rayleigh@dioceseofbrentwood.org</a></p>	<p><b><u>Public Mass times:</u></b>  <b>Saturdays 5.30pm</b>  <b>Sundays 8am &amp; 10.00am</b>  <b>Mondays 7.15pm</b>  <b>Wednesdays 10.00am</b>  <b>Fridays 10.00am</b>  <i>Please be aware - Times and days of            weekday Masses are subject to change.</i></p>
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**Sacrament of Reconciliation: 4.30pm – 5pm Saturday evenings (not in the confessional box).**

**Our Parish is part of The Brentwood Diocesan Trust, Registered Charity Number 234092**



## ANNIVERSARIES †

Kindly pray for Patricia Herlihy, Marion Ryan (Platt), John Hedges, and Luke Molloy whose anniversaries occur about this time.

May they rest in peace.

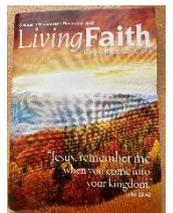
**Please see the collective Bishops' address regarding the Cost of Living Crisis at the end of this newsletter.**

## NEWSLETTER ITEMS:

Please ensure all items for the parish newsletter are submitted to the office by **11am on Thursdays** at the latest.

## Living Faith

New Living Faith Books for October/November/December, are available to purchase at the back of church.



## Kids' Bulletin

A children's version of the gospel is available weekly. This can be accessed on the following website: [www.thekidsbulletin.com](http://www.thekidsbulletin.com) and is aimed at primary school children. It can be downloaded and printed out.

## Children's Liturgy

No Children's liturgy at mass this Sunday due to it being the Calling Mass for First Holy Communion children.



## Sunday Coffee Mornings

If you are interested in hosting a Coffee Morning after 10am Sunday Masses to raise money for a charity of your choice, please contact the parish office by 11am on Thursdays.



**Coffee Morning after mass this weekend is being organised by the First Holy Communion Group.**

## First Holy Communion – Winter 2022:

Next children's session is at 5pm in the convent on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October.



**Baked with Love 2** will be taking place on **Sunday 9 October** after 10am Mass

Following the success of the first Baked with Love cake sale we will be holding a second one to raise funds for CAFOD's Harvest appeal for the World Food Crisis. CAFOD is asking people to bake goods to sell. It would be particularly good to have the children and young people baking for this (but anyone is welcome to bake!). If you will be able to bake something please text **Antonia Cevizli on 07817686272**. Thank you for your support.



## Enquirers' Evening

The next "Enquirers' Evening" for those considering or interested in a vocation to the priesthood is on Tuesday 4 October at St Edmund of Canterbury Church in Loughton. The speaker will be Mgr Gordon Read.

For further information please contact Fr Mark Swires [vocprom@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:vocprom@dioceseofbrentwood.org)



**The Parish Choir** has started up again after the summer break. We intend to sing at the 10am Sunday Mass twice a month (normally 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month) and have a **choir practice at 7.30pm** on the Thursday prior to the Sunday we are singing. Sopranos, Altos, Tenors and Basses all needed. No previous experience needed but it would be helpful. Why not come along and give it a try? The practice will be only an hour long and will be in the organ loft. Please consider joining us, as we are greatly depleted in number since the pandemic. Just contact Isobel Kennedy 01702 230578.

**The LEGION OF MARY** in our parish cordially invite all auxiliary members to the Bethany Room at 3pm on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> October to celebrate the birthday of Our Lady (feast day 8<sup>th</sup> Sept). You are welcome to bring along family and friends. Any parishioners interested in finding out more about the Legion most welcome. This social event will include Legion prayers & rosary, afternoon tea, plenty of time for chat and maybe some entertainment or food for thought. RSVP would be helpful but not essential. (I Kennedy 07795 821705)

**SHARING THE CHURCH'S STORY CONFERENCE** aims to bring people together for an experience of profound personal renewal and to be equipped for mission. With world-class speakers, including Bishop Robert Barron, panels, and moments of powerful prayer and worship, we are excited for what God will do through this event. The Conference takes place on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September in London, to find out more about this important conference and to book go to [www.sharingthechurchsstory.com](http://www.sharingthechurchsstory.com)

### **New Evangelisation Course**

Would you be interested in studying evangelisation - the theory and practice of how to share the Catholic faith with people who are not yet followers of Jesus? 10 hours of teaching is being offered by Sion Catholic Community for Evangelism, leading practitioners in this field since 1985. You can access the module by attending two in-person days at Brentwood, Essex, on Saturday 10 September and Saturday 12 November. Or you can access the same teaching through five Zoom sessions on Thursday evenings 3 November to 1 December inclusive. For more information go to [www.sioncommunity.org.uk/ccrs/](http://www.sioncommunity.org.uk/ccrs/)

### **STUDY DAY – ST CHARLES DE FOUCAULD**

Charles de Foucauld was one of ten new saints canonized by Pope Francis in May 2022. His journey in faith, preaching the Gospel to all with his life, ended with his death in his hermitage in the Sahara in 1916. Little Sister Kathleen McKee will lead a study day on 'St Charles de Foucauld – universal brother' on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October from 11.00 to 13.00 BST. You may attend this free event in person at Gidea Park Catholic Church – RM2 6DH – from 11 am (Coffee available at 10.30). Please book your place by email to [gideapark@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:gideapark@dioceseofbrentwood.org) The event is also live-streamed. Go to [www.whatgoodnews.org](http://www.whatgoodnews.org) on the day. No booking necessary. A recording will be made available after the event on [www.whatgoodnews.org](http://www.whatgoodnews.org)

### **St Thomas More Alumni Annual Dinner - Sat 8 October at 7.30pm**

The multi-re-scheduled St Thomas More Alumni Dinner will finally be taking place on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October after a number of false starts following the relaxation of rules after the pandemic. Open to all former pupils and staff, the evening will take place at the school in Kenilworth Gardens. Tickets cost £25. Visit [www.stmalumniuk.co.uk](http://www.stmalumniuk.co.uk) for full details.

**The relics of St Bernadette** will come to our diocese in October. This is a wonderful opportunity to pray with the woman to whom Our Lady chose to appear in Lourdes. Here are the timetable details:

**BRENTWOOD CATHEDRAL**

**Sunday 16 October**

11 am: Relics of St Bernadette arrive.  
11.30 am: Holy Mass, celebrated by Bishop Alan.  
6.30 pm: Holy Mass, led by the Youth Service.  
9 pm: Cathedral closes.

**Monday 17 October**

6 am: Cathedral opens.  
9.15 am: Holy Mass  
12 noon: Relics of St Bernadette leave.

**OUR LADY OF LOURDES, WANSTEAD**

**Tuesday 18 October**

10 am: Relics of St Bernadette arrive.  
11 am - 3 pm: Time reserved for pre-booked school groups.  
7.30 pm: Holy Mass, celebrated by Bishop Alan  
12 midnight: Church closes.

Wednesday 19 October

6 am: Church opens.  
9 am: Relics of St Bernadette depart.

You are welcome to come to pray before the relics outside reserved times for schools. If possible, book your visit through the national website: [stbernadette.org.uk](http://stbernadette.org.uk)  
Whether you book or not, you may have to queue.

**BCYS Youth Mass**

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October, Brentwood cathedral

Starting from 6pm for pizza, we are then delighted to be joined by Fr Paschal Uche and others to share their vocations stories and answer any of your questions, before we begin Youth Mass at 7:30pm where Fr Paschal will also be preaching.

Open to all those in years 9 and above, no booking necessary.

**BCYS Youth Gather**

22nd - 23rd October, Mersea Island

Guest speakers Barry and Margaret Mizen will be sharing the incredible story of how they chose to forgive the man who killed their son Jimmy the day after his 16<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

The SVP will also be leading a workshop, and there will be the chance to try a brilliant range of activities from climbing, high ropes, archery and so much more!

The cost is just £55 for the weekend, with coach travel and all meals included.

This event is for anyone in years 9-13, and you can book NOW at [www.bcys.net/events](http://www.bcys.net/events)

**The Universe – Catholic Paper:**

The Universe Catholic Weekly is thrilled to announce that we have launched our new online newspaper with the full support of our first subscriber, Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

Order your Digital 4 weeks FREE trial supply by calling Michelle on 0743 661 7650 or email: [michelle.jones@universecatholicweekly.co.uk](mailto:michelle.jones@universecatholicweekly.co.uk)

## **The Ten Million**

On 23 September 2022, at 11:41am, thousands of people across the UK stopped for a minute of silence to commemorate the ten million lives that have been lost to abortion across Great Britain since the Abortion Act was introduced in 1967.

Right To Life UK have released a short two-minute video called *The Ten Million*, which attempts to illustrate what the UK has lost through the death of these millions of people. They are encouraging people to share the video with friends and family who may find it of interest: [www.righttolife.org.uk/thetenmillion](http://www.righttolife.org.uk/thetenmillion)

## **Upcoming Local Baby Loss Support Service**

Saying Goodbye, (part of the Mariposa Trust) are returning to Chelmsford in October with a Baby loss remembrance and support service (part of a Nationwide chain of events). We are delighted to be able to return to a full program of events following the effects of Covid-19. The Mariposa Trust's core objective is to support people who have lost babies at any stage of pregnancy, at birth, or in infancy. It was founded in 2012, by Zoe and Andy Clark-Coates, who saw a critical lack of support for people like them, who had gone through baby loss. With over 258,000 babies being lost yearly in the UK alone, the charity needed to be able to offer not only a comprehensive package of befriending and support but also national baby loss remembrance services (called Saying Goodbye Services), for people to join together and remember the children they had lost. 6 years on, over 130 services have taken place at Cathedrals and Minsters across the UK, US, and France, and 2022 will see 20 services across England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> October at 6.30 pm, in Chelmsford Cathedral we will be hosting one of our Saying Goodbye Services.

So who is the service for?

Anyone who has either personally lost a baby at any stage of pregnancy, at birth, or in early years, or who has been affected by family members or friends' loss. Whether the loss was recent or 80 years ago, everyone is welcome to attend. We have also extended the services, and gladly welcome anyone who is grieving the fact that they haven't had children. This may be due to circumstance, infertility, or for other reasons - but all are welcome. Babies and children are also invited to come with their families, as the Saying Goodbye service is truly a family event for all.

We know that as 1 in 4 women suffer miscarriage and baby loss, you will have contact with a significant number of people who have either personally suffered baby loss, or who have a partner or family member that has, so we wanted to ask if you would help us in promoting the service.

To read more on the charity, please see the Saying Goodbye website, which you can find at: [www.sayinggoodbye.org](http://www.sayinggoodbye.org)

## **St Thomas More High School Open Days**

St. Thomas More High School - Open Days, Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022 by appointment. Telephone 01702 344933- for parents who have a son due to transfer to secondary school in September 2023 - come and see the school during a normal school day, meet the staff and pupils.

Parents of boys who wish to apply to St. Thomas More School for a place in September 2023 should complete the Local Education Authority single application form (SAF) and fill in the supplementary information form (SIF) that can be collected from the school or downloaded from the website:- [www.st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk](http://www.st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk)

### **New Hall School Sixth Form Open Evening:** Tuesday 11 October, 6.30-8.30pm

For both events, please book online at [newhallschool.co.uk](http://newhallschool.co.uk)

New Hall is a Catholic independent School in Boreham, near Chelmsford, offering a distinctive education to girls and boys aged 1-18. Day, flexible boarding and full boarding options are available.

### **Brentwood Ursuline Open Evenings**

The Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School will be holding Open Evenings for prospective Year 7 and Sixth Form students with their parents who wish to consider entry to the school in September 2023. For prospective Year 7 students the Open Evening will be on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022 from 6.30pm – 9.00pm. The Headteacher will give a talk at 6.30pm and 7.30pm. For Sixth Form students, the Open Evening will be on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 from 6.30pm – 8.30pm. There will be a Headteacher talk at 6.30pm.

Please note that there are no on-site parking facilities available.

### **St Bernard's High School Year 6 Open Mornings**

St Bernard's High School are offering an opportunity for Year 6 parents/carers to visit the school during a normal teaching day on the following dates between 9.30am and 11.00am:

Monday 3 October

Wednesday 5 October

Thursday 6 October

The visits will be done by appointment only so time slots can be booked via our main reception on 01702 343583.

### **Open Day St. Mary's Hare Park Independent Catholic School & Nursery**

We would be delighted to welcome you and your family to our Open Morning on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2022 from 9am to 12pm. Staff and pupils will be on hand to speak with you directly and show you first-hand why our school is such a special place, where pupils grow in confidence and independence, and learn skills which prepare them for a future life and love of learning. To truly understand why children and their parents love our school, we warmly invite you to come and pay us a visit and see how we nurture, engage and inspire every child. Please visit our website: <https://www.stmarysharepark.co.uk/> to register your interest, or alternatively just turn up on the day. We look forward to meeting you.

### **OLOR Theatre Club Pantomime**

The Our Lady of Ransom Theatre Club have been organising groups outings for the Nationally Acclaimed Christmas Pantomimes at the Towngate Theatre Basildon for over ten years. Every year a very large group from our school and church attend and you are warmly invited to join us this year for 'The Panto Adventures of Peter Pan' on Saturday 26th November 1pm. Over 200 stall and stall circle seats are reserved! Tickets are £20 pp and suitable for ages 3 upwards. Payment can be made in part/full for your ease. Please email

[olortheatreclub@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:olortheatreclub@hotmail.co.uk) / text 07757138345 to book. Thank you so much, Clare Mason, Lorna Warren and Katherine.



### **Stallholders needed for Christmas Craft & Gift Fair**

The Brentwood Catholic Children's Society are seeking stallholders for their Christmas Craft and Gift Fair being held at The Mill Hall Arts & Events Centre, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh SS6 7ED on Sunday 6th November from 10.30-4pm. Pitches are **£30**. For further information please contact Damian: [ddillon@bccs.org.uk](mailto:ddillon@bccs.org.uk) /07912 308000

## **ST BENEDICT'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE, COLCHESTER - VACANCIES**

**Head of Humanities and Teacher in charge of R.E.** - St Benedict's Catholic College is seeking to recruit a talented and dynamic Head of Humanities, teacher in charge of RE to lead our visionary and high achieving faculty. The successful candidate will be an RE specialist, with a proven track record of inspiring and leading both people and curriculum developments. Salary – Upper Pay Scale (£38,691 - £41,605) plus TLR 1c (£12,115) Pay Award Pending. If you would like to know more about the college and the humanities department, please email Mrs Miriam Davies, Assistant Principal at [m.davis@stbenedicts.essex.sch.uk](mailto:m.davis@stbenedicts.essex.sch.uk)

**Lay Chaplain** - We are looking to appoint a practising Catholic, who as Chaplain will further develop and enhance the spiritual, liturgical and prayer life of the college. The pay band for the role is Scale 7 (scp 19 to 24), which is £25,927 to £29,174. (Pay Award, back dated to April 2022 pending).

Applications for both roles will only be accepted on the college application form (which can be downloaded from our website <https://www.stbenedicts.essex.sch.uk/> ) and should be emailed to Mr Chris Brown, Business Manager at [c.brown@stbenedicts.essex.sch.uk](mailto:c.brown@stbenedicts.essex.sch.uk) CVs will not be accepted.

Deadline for both roles: 12:00 noon on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2022

### **SENCo - St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Canvey Island**

Required from January 2023. Pay scale: MPS / UPS + SEN Part-Time.

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Canvey Island are seeking to appoint an enthusiastic and experienced teacher to join our staff team and lead provision for SEN within our school.

We offer access to professional development: previous experience of a SENCo is not essential.

Deadline for applications: 12:00 noon on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2022. We warmly welcome and encourage applicants to visit our school. Please contact the school office on telephone 01268 683903 or email [admin@stjosephsrc.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stjosephsrc.essex.sch.uk) to arrange or if you require further information.

### **SPUC one day conferences: Campaigning against abortion coercion**

A recent BBC poll revealed that 15% of British women have experienced pressure or coercion to have an abortion that they did not want.

This is a shocking reality that the pro-abortion narrative seeks to suppress - but we can no longer allow this to happen.

It is vital to understand the reasons why women have abortions - including the horrific phenomenon of abortion coercion that SPUC is now highlighting - so that we can campaign for protections for vulnerable women and their children.

This year, SPUC is hosting three national conferences in cities across the United Kingdom – (the nearest one is London) highlighting the pressing issue of abortion coercion.

The details are:

London

Saturday 22 October 2022

Location: Broadway House, Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NQ

Cost £35/£25 concessions



**Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> September is the Feast Day of St. Vincent de Paul.** The

SVP Society around the world makes a special effort to promote its work in helping those in need by holding an “Awareness Month” annually during September. The Covid pandemic may be in retreat, but it is still a threat to some, so the SVP Rayleigh Conference will limit its “Awareness Month 2022”

activity to publishing its annual report to Parishioners. Please find the report below.

For more information about the Society please visit <https://www.svp.org.uk>

## SVP Conference Report 2021-2022



### Our Conference

Our Lady of Ransom Rayleigh Conference was started in 1932 and has been active ever since, undertaking a range of work in the Parish, Hockley and Rochford. We undertake this work within and outside the Catholic community.

We currently have 8 active members, 5 men and 3 women, plus 3 auxiliary (non-visiting) members. Members attend the fortnightly meetings and undertake to visit those in need and to offer help and friendship without discrimination. New members are always welcome.

### Number of People Helped/Visited/Contacted

- Families, including single parent 11
- Elderly 375
- People in Residential/Nursing Homes 61
- Sick and Mobility-impaired 14
- Others 2

We also provided clothing, furniture, food, 50 cash grants, help with shopping, repairs and home clearance, transport including to/from Mass on 187 occasions. Hopeworx food bank again received our full support. 98 food parcels were obtained and delivered, mainly to families.

### Highlights of the Year

Since the Pandemic we have not been able to hold our usual summer and post-Christmas Parties. We hope to reinstate a party in 2023. Small gifts have been given to our beneficiaries at Easter and Christmas.

### Our Income and Expenditure

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>£</u>
Members Donations	196	Assistance to Families	3,019
Non-Members Donations	4,784	Other Needy	1,033
Church Collections	648	Mass Stipends	120
		St Vincent’s Crisis Centre Support	266
		SVP Support	491
		Twinning (Overseas Projects, India)	320
		Administration Expenses	32
		Food Purchases	473
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>5,628</b>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>5,754</b>

Your Local SVP contact is:

NAME: **Mr Colin Griffin**

TEL: **01268 772322**

Thank you very much to those who have generously supported us throughout the year. Our grateful appreciation is also extended to the members of the Jeanne Marie Gunn Trust, our major sponsor in caring for those in need.

*“Catechesis is the echo of the word of God”*

– Pope Francis

**Saturday 5th November 2022, 10am – 3pm**

**Diocese of Brentwood Catechist Training and Resources Day**

\* \* \*

Keynote Speaker:

**DAVID WELLS “At Your Side – The joy of a shoulder to shoulder relationship with the uncertain and confused”**

As Catechists we walk, Christ on one side, our neighbour on the other. In this way we are both accompanied and accompanier.

This way of journeying is how Pope Francis sees us and our role as Catechists.

You won't come away with more to do, but you might come away with a fresh way of seeing and doing the things you do already.

\* \* \*

Alongside David, we have some workshops being led by the SVP, Catholic Voices and more!

\* \* \*

This training and resources day is open to all First Holy Communion and Confirmation Catechists, as well as those who look after the children's liturgy in the Diocese of Brentwood. It will be an opportunity to hear about fresh resources, as well as receiving input to assist you in your First Holy Communion and Confirmation programmes.

**We would particularly like to welcome any young catechists or young people in your parish (16+) who may be interested in working as or with catechists, and wish to develop their faith further post-confirmation.**

\* \* \*

**RESERVE YOUR PLACE NOW!!!**

**Reply to this email to book your place, or visit [www.bcys.net/events/catechistday2022/](http://www.bcys.net/events/catechistday2022/) for more information.**

## **The Bishops address the Cost of Living Crisis.**

The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales are acutely aware of the impact of the cost of living crisis up and down the country. It is having a devastating effect on families, pushing many deeper into poverty and leading many others to struggle with day-to-day living costs.

We know from news reports and from our pastoral experience, as well as from the experience of Catholic charities, that it is not an exaggeration to say that some families are having to choose between “heating and eating”. This situation will not improve soon, and it will almost certainly worsen as winter approaches.

The Lord hears the cry of the poor! (Psalm 34) And the Church must respond, as best she can, to that cry at every level.

## **The political and economic context and response**

The roots of the situation we face are complex and there are no easy solutions. There are both long-term and short-term causes of the current crisis including:

- The extraordinary rise in the cost of energy.
- The very high cost of housing in this country and its effects on rents.
- Rising food prices.
- The longer-term effects of the pandemic.
- An ageing population leading to higher taxes whilst public services appear to deteriorate.
- The weakening of the institution of the family which leads to greater financial needs and financial fragility in many households.

There are also secondary effects of the crisis. Stress and increased poverty will lead to a worsening of mental health. Shortages of labour in health and social care are severely affecting the delivery of these services. And there has been an increase in industrial unrest. In addition, family members are having to increase their working hours and, therefore, may not be able to care for their children or for elderly parents themselves. This puts still further pressure on social services. At the very least, increased working hours leads to greater strain on family life.

It is not within the competence of the bishops to comment on the technical detail of how to resolve or ease these problems, and we accept that many of them involve difficult trade-offs. Peace and the security of the country must be a priority, and the situation in Ukraine has inevitably had an impact on many elements of the cost of living. In addition, challenges such as climate change have to be faced, and there are legitimate debates about how to balance the need for more housing with environmental concerns. We are pleased that there are many Catholics in public life who are engaging with other people of goodwill in trying to produce long-term solutions to these political and economic challenges.

However, Catholic Social Teaching tells us that, when there is urgent and dire need, justice requires that this is addressed as a priority. In this regard, we urge government to:

- Ensure the timely uprating of welfare benefits, especially those for the elderly and for families with children.
- Remove the two-child cap on universal credit payments or, at the very least, suspend it pending a review of its impact.
- Consider reform of the tax system so that it better recognises family, child-rearing and other caring responsibilities.
- Ensure that priority is given, in tax and welfare policy, to protecting the most vulnerable.

As the new government assesses its future priorities, we ask that it:

- Considers how the principle of subsidiarity can be applied to our centralised system of welfare and public services to make delivery more effective and more efficient. This principle has long been part of Catholic social teaching and was raised by Pope Benedict in his encyclical letter, *Caritas in Veritate*: “[By applying the principle of subsidiarity] with the active participation of private individuals and civil society...it is actually possible to improve social services and welfare programmes, and at the same time to save resources”. (60)
- Recognises the work that faith and other civil society groups were able to do during the pandemic to ameliorate suffering and ensure that their role is fully recognised in government policy initiatives to relieve the cost-of-living crisis.
- Recognises the long-term nature of many of the problems that are causing the cost-of-living crisis and devote itself to the promotion of the common good and inter-generational solidarity above factionalism and party interest. As the Church Council, Vatican II, taught: “Political parties, for their part, must promote those things which in their judgement are required for the common good; it is never allowable to give their interests priority over the common good.” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 75).

We also recognise the responsibilities of employers at this time. Businesses, especially the owners of small businesses and the self-employed, may themselves be struggling with increased costs. Nevertheless, Catholic social teaching demands that, if an enterprise can afford it, it should pay a living wage to its staff. We also ask employers and managers to be aware of the stress that their staff may be under and respond with compassion and understanding.

## **Love, charity and social action**

Promoting justice, relieving poverty and building the kingdom of God on earth is the responsibility of all individuals and institutions in society. Therefore, we must all do what we can to respond to the current crisis.

Pope Francis, quoting St. Thomas Aquinas, has said that “the poor person, when loved, is esteemed as of great value”. There is an unbreakable bond between love of God and love of neighbour. Pope Benedict XVI, in an encyclical letter, *Deus Caritas Est* (God is Love) commented that “the Church’s deepest nature is expressed in her three-fold responsibility: of proclaiming the word of God, celebrating the sacraments and exercising the ministry of charity. These duties presuppose each other and are inseparable” (25). He also wrote about how the pagans were struck by the loving

concern of the early Christians for those in greatest need. He specifically described how Justin Martyr († c. 155), in speaking of the Christians' celebration of Sunday, mentions their charitable activity. The Christians of the early Church made offerings in accordance with their means and those offerings were used to support orphans, widows, the sick and those who for other reasons found themselves in need. (*Deus Caritas Est*, 22).

The work of local parishes, the agencies of the Church in England and Wales, and Catholic charities continue this tradition. Throughout the current crisis, the Bishops of England and Wales will ensure that Catholic charities do all they can to address the urgent needs they face. We acknowledge the excellent work within parishes that supports those in need in their local communities. We ask parishes to continue to do everything possible at this time and to consider innovative ways of providing further material help and pastoral support. We also urge all Catholics to give whatever time and financial resources they can to charitable endeavours that support those who are affected by the current crisis. We applaud the work of Catholic schools that have long been supportive of, and responsive to, children in families who might be struggling financially or in other ways and encourage them in this work.

We should never forget the spiritual needs of the poor and their special gifts. As Pope Francis wrote in *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel): "The great majority of the poor have a special openness to the faith; they need God and we must not fail to offer them his friendship, his blessing, his word, the celebration of the sacraments and a journey of growth and maturity in the faith." (200) Our parish communities must always be open to those suffering from hardship who will be in particular need of companionship and spiritual support at this time.

Finally, we offer our prayers for all those who are suffering from the cost of living crisis. We also offer our prayers for Her Majesty's government that it will govern with wisdom, justice and humility and find ways, both long term and short term, to alleviate this crisis which is having a devastating effect on so many people.

St. Thomas More, pray for our servants in public life

St. Francis of Assisi, pray for the poor

St. Elizabeth of Hungary, pray for the homeless

## Mental Health First Aid Course

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November 8.30am – 4.30pm **and continued on**

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November 10am – 5pm

In the Bethany Room.

To learn more book onto an Adult MHFA Two Day course, please contact Fr

Paul at the parish office on 01268 38 24 99 or

[rayleigh@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:rayleigh@dioceseofbrentwood.org)

Cost £60.00 for the two day course (elsewhere this course would cost significantly more). Please book no later than Friday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

Thank you.



### What is Mental Health First Aid?

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is an internationally recognised training course which teaches people how to spot the signs and symptoms of mental ill health and provide help on a first aid basis.

MHFA England training won't teach you to be a therapist, but just like physical first aid, it will teach you to listen, reassure and respond, even in a crisis.

Adult MHFA England courses are for everyone aged 16 upwards. Every MHFA England course is delivered by a quality assured Instructor Member who has attended our Instructor Training programme accredited by the Royal Society for Public Health, and is trained to keep people safe and supported while they learn.

### What will I learn?

Learning takes place through a mix of group activities, presentations and discussions. What you learn will depend on the length of course you attend:

#### Two Day - Mental Health First Aiders

A practical skills and awareness course designed to give you:

- A deeper understanding of mental health and the factors that can affect people's wellbeing, including your own
- Practical skills to spot the triggers and signs of mental health issues
- Confidence to step in, reassure and support a person in distress
- Enhanced interpersonal skills such as non-judgemental listening
- Knowledge to help someone recover their health by guiding them to appropriate support

### How will attending an MHFA England course help?

Research and evaluation shows that taking part in an MHFA England course:

- Raises awareness and mental health literacy
- Reduces stigma around mental ill health
- Boosts knowledge and confidence in dealing with mental health issues
- Promotes early intervention which enables recovery

### To learn more or book onto an Adult MHFA Two Day course:

Mike Thakoordin  
e: [mikethakoordin@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mikethakoordin@yahoo.co.uk)  
m: 07745 026539

### Other Adult MHFA England courses

In addition to the Adult MHFA Two Day course, we also offer shorter training options including a one day MHFA Champions course and a half day Mental Health Aware course. To learn more about training options, visit [mhfaengland.org](http://mhfaengland.org).

