

Parish Newsletter

OUR LADY OF RANSOM

10th December 2023 Advent 2B - Psalter Week 2



“Dear God”, prayed the little boy, “how long is a million years? God replied, “for me, a million years is the same as one second”. “Cool”, said the boy, “so, in the same way, is a million pounds the same as a penny?”, he questioned with growing anticipation. “Yes”, God replied, “for me, a penny is no different to a million pounds. “OK God, can I have a penny please”. And God replied, “wait a second!”

Love it! St. Peter reminds us that God will wait for “a thousand years”, which for God is like a day, in order to save everyone, God waits patiently for the very last person to freely choose His love. For us, that can seem a desperately, unthinkable long time, we cannot comprehend this “infinite” patience of God that just goes on and on and on... But for God, it may well be just a day, a second. So he can wait. Do we, can we, possibly believe in this mystery?

If the above is true, as St. Peter says, we should be doing our best to live “saintly and holy lives” - now. Why would we not want to? Because we know how loving and forgiving our God truly is - now. But then, obstacles do get in the way.

To our logical heads all this doesn’t make sense. But with hearts open to God’s eternal mystery it begins to resonate. We can still want to think of God as finite, limited, as that’s the only way we can think....

But God is infinite and waits. Waits for us to clear those obstacles that come between us and Him so the path is as smooth as possible. It makes life so much happier. This is John the Baptist’s message as he quotes Isaiah. Valleys filled in and mountains laid low. Mountains and valleys can be greed, the ambitions, the egocentricities, the desires for anything that promotes only ourselves, the needs to be seen, heard, to be the centre of attention. These needs can be as large as mountains and as deep as valleys. And we are called to let go, a letting go of these needs and others, is “filling in the valleys” and “laying low the mountains”. John, like all the great saints, (just as our church should be), always points beyond themselves. It is knowing and experiencing we are part of something much greater than ourselves that enables the mountains and valleys to be levelled to make our path easier. All that largely comes with silent contemplative prayer where we can re-focus.

God waits, patiently, infinitely. Are there blockages obstructing our paths to him? Can we get them cleared away? What must we do for clearance to begin?

First Reading: Isaiah 63:16-17, 64:1, 3-8

Psalms: 79:2-3, 16, 18-19

Second Reading 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Gospel: Mark 13:33-37



MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday 9th December	
5.30pm Mass	Parish Community
Sunday 10th December 2nd Sunday of Advent B	
8.00am Mass 10.00am Mass	Ben Hooper RIP – Kay O’ Connor Bozena Owczarek RIP - The Krolikowski Family
Monday 11th December	
9.30am Mass	Eucharistic Service
Tuesday 12th December	
9.30am Mass	Eucharistic Service
Wednesday 13th December St. Lucy	
10.00am Mass	Eucharistic Service
Thursday 14th December St. John of the Cross	
9.30am Mass	Eucharistic Service
Friday 15th December	
9.30am Mass	Eucharistic Service
Saturday 16th December	
5.30pm Mass	Bridget and Luke Kavanagh RIP (A) – Shelagh Mesher
Sunday 17th December 3rd Sunday of Advent B	
8.00am Mass 10.00am Mass	Parish Community Mile and Kath Geeson – Maria Francke and Family

All 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>PARISH PRIEST Father Paul Fox 50 London Hill, Rayleigh Essex SS6 7HP 01268 38.24.99 www.olorchurch.org email: rayleigh@brcdt.org</p>	<p>Public Mass times: Saturdays 5.30pm Sundays 8am & 10.00am Mondays & Tuesdays 9.30am Wednesdays 10.00am Thursdays & Fridays 9.30am <i>Please be aware - Times and days of weekday Masses are subject to change.</i></p>
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The 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 2340



ANNIVERSARIES Kindly pray for Margaret Brooker, Anne Donaghy, Daphne Gooch, Bernie Hunter, Katie Bundy, Joan Denny, Dorothy Whitty, Jane Tuner and Elspeth O' Sullivan whose anniversaries are at this time. **May they rest in Peace.**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confessions) will be also available on Tuesday December 19th (twice) from 10am to 11.30 am and 6.30pm to 7.30pm; and Thursday December 21st from 10am to 11.30am.

.....THINKING ABOUT THE CATHOLIC FAITH? ...

Is something in you telling you to go deeper? Or find out? Perhaps you are, or maybe you know someone who is doing just that. Or maybe stopped coming to Church, and is wondering about returning. We are looking for depth. Or, you yourself might wish to informally ask questions, so deepen your understanding and faith. Whatever your circumstances, you are welcome to come along to our Parish RCIA programme and learn more about what it means to be a Catholic Christian.



Mondays at 8pm in the Bethany Room

If you are not part of the Catholic Tradition, and you decide during the programme you would like to commit yourself to the Catholic Faith, you may be received into the Church at Easter next year. Of course, practising Catholics who want to ask questions are more than welcome. **If you are interested in joining the programme, please contact Fr. Paul for more details.**(01268 382499 or rayleigh@brcdt.org)

Please Note: newsletters arriving by email, the website and some printed ones next week will arrive about 24 hours later than normal.

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

Special Collection Gift Aid Envelopes:

For those making their regular donation online/by bank transfer, and would like the Gift Aid envelopes for special collections only, they will be available to collect from the church porch.

Sr. Joachim Appeal. The Knights of St Columba wish parishioners to know that thanks to their generosity just over £400.00 was raised for the work of Sr. Joachim in remote Ethiopia.

Mass Intentions. For information, all requested Mass intentions will be for February onwards, as all Masses between now and February have intentions allocated to them. Thank you for your ongoing generosity.

Wednesday Coffee Mornings – the next one will be on the 13th December after the 10am morning Mass.

Sunday Coffee Morning

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.



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



OLOR Lourdes Pilgrimage 2024 – Monday 10th to Friday 14th June 2024

Bookings are now being accepted for next year's Lourdes pilgrimage. Flights will be from Stansted Airport using Ryanair scheduled services. Accommodation will be provided by Hotel Stella on a full-board basis for 4 nights. The cost is £560 per person, based on 2 or more sharing a room. A single room supplement of £120 applies. Due to Ryanair's flight booking policy the cost shown is subject to change. Recommended optional insurance cover can be arranged through the operators, Tangney Tours, at a cost of £41 per person.

Those still considering joining the pilgrimage or would like to know more, please contact Colin Griffin, Tel. 01268 772322, Mob. 07841 013606 or email colingriffin@outlook.com.

Children's Liturgy.

We would like to invite any adults who may have thought of getting involved in Children's Liturgy – either as assistant or leader – to have a chat with any of the team. You may like to come along and see what we do. To continue running 2 groups weekly, which is so beneficial for our lovely parish children and families, we do need a few more people to fill some slots on our rota. Perhaps you may be able to help us out one session a month?

Please think about itthank you.

Children's Liturgy Dates to Christmas

3rd and 10th December


Christmas Eve Family Mass- come and join in our nativity tableau for the Gospel at the family mass, on Christmas Eve at 6pm!


We have plenty of costumes, all shapes and sizes and there is room for everyone. No one is too little, and we hope some of our older children will be able to guide the younger ones, having been part of this before. If your child would like to join in, please make a note of the dates below:

Sunday 3rd December – after 10 am mass - come along and sign up to get a part/costume

Sunday 17th December – after 10 am mass – practice for Christmas Eve

Any adults who may be able to assist, and see what is involved, to help to continue this tradition for years to come, would be welcome!

REPOSITORY. 

Christmas stock is on display. If you have any particular requests please let us know in good time for an order to be placed. There is a catalogue from which you are welcome to choose - however supply will depend on remaining stock availability the closer we get to Christmas. As always we shall do our best to help. 

In Aid of Missio As all the contributions to Missio are now in, I will be preparing the Year End report for Fr Paul to sign off next week before posting to Missio Head Office.

It remains for me to say ‘Thank You’ on behalf of Missio for your continued help and support for the Pope’s Charity.

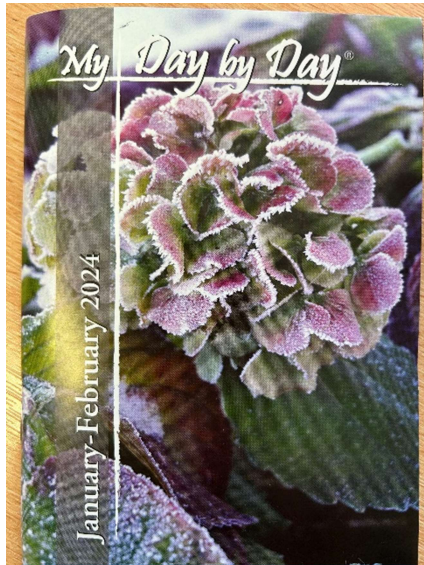
It goes without saying that it has been another difficult year in terms of the cost of living rise but, nevertheless, our parishioners have continued to support Missio and we should achieve another excellent result this year too.

Christmas is like candy; it slowly melts in your mouth, sweetening every taste bud, making you wish it could last forever.

May the Good Lord Bless you and your family this Christmas and wish you all a splendid New Year too.

With lots of Love and God’s Blessings,

Angela and Jovito



On sale Now.

Bishop's Certificate in Catechesis and Youth Ministry is an online course is designed to be an entry level qualification to help in the ongoing formation of adults involved in sacramental preparation (First Holy Communion and/or Confirmation) or youth ministry in the Diocese of Brentwood. It includes both the development of practical skills & the deepening of theological knowledge. For more information or to register your interest please email clairebailey@brcdt.org or see the website <https://bcys.net/bishops-cert/>

A Message from HARP: Our sincere thanks on behalf of HARP this year particularly over Harvest where we collected thousands of items to feed people living in our in our services. This included over 1000 tins of baked beans and 1500 cans of soup. This amazing support means we saved significantly on our 'food shop' and allows us to direct funds raised into providing the vital support that people need to overcome homelessness for good.

As we approach the cold months ahead we wanted to let you know that HARP is opening a winter shelter for people who are currently rough sleeping.

The shelter will be managed by HARP staff and volunteers and will open from 7pm every evening and close at 8.30am with people using the shelter then being encouraged to visit HARP's Bradbury Centre during the day for breakfasts, hot showers and to access other services as normal. We are working in partnership with the council on this initiative.

How can you get involved?

- We are in need of a range of items including gifts to give visitors over Christmas, but critically we need pillows, duvets, single sheets and winter clothes (medium sizes). Items can be second hand but must be clean and ready to use.
- Donate money – if you are holding a collection over Christmas we would welcome any donations so that we are able to continue to support people

after the shelter has closed. To donate to our winter appeal click here – www.harpsouthend.org.uk.

- Volunteers – If anyone in your church is willing to volunteer we need people between 7 pm and midnight (or 11 pm) every night. [Click here](#) to find out more about what is involved.
- Spread the word, we could not do what we do without your support

Thank you once again for your ongoing support and any support you are able to give to this vital service this winter. Do please get in touch if you have a sizeable donation as I can arrange for a collection.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy new year

Sahara Desert Retreat in Morocco, 26 February – 11 March 2024

Including a day visiting Marrakesh and 9 full days in the Desert. With Fr Arnaud and Deacon Vladimir from St Antony's in Forest Gate. Designed for young adults, open to all adults able to hike 4 - 6 hours a day for 9 full days in the desert. £952 (plus flight). www.desert-retreat.com or phone Catherine at 07807 348223

Brentwood Youth: Walsingham House

Walsingham House volunteer team: applications for the Walsingham House at Abbotswick volunteer retreat team are now open. If you are aged between 18-23 and are considering a gap year then please consider the Walsingham House Team. The volunteer team work with around 5000 young people from across the diocese running retreats for Yr5-Yr13 students. For more information please see our website:

<https://bcys.net/whabbotswick/be-on-team/> or email clairebailey@brcdt.org

Walsingham House available for day groups: Walsingham House at Abbotswick is a beautiful setting for days of reflection, retreats or meetings. They are open to accept bookings for day groups on Wednesdays – Saturdays. For more information or to make a booking please email the Hospitality Manager, Issy, at issycordova@brcdt.org

BCYS YOUTH MASS

- YOUTH MASS takes place on the first Thursday of **every** month at Brentwood Cathedral, beginning with pizza & refreshments in the Parish Hall from 6pm, an hour of input, workshops, youth led prayer and formation from different organisations each month, and Youth Mass celebrated in the Cathedral at 7:30pm. Absolutely everyone is welcome, please bring instruments, and sing, serve or read if you wish! No need to book
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- **BCYS SUMMER LOURDES YOUTH PILGRIMAGE – July 2024 (exact dates TBC)**
 - **Bookings are now open online for the Brentwood Catholic Youth Service pilgrimage to Lourdes in July.**

The week is spent serving the main Diocesan pilgrimage, assisting the elderly and infirm, alongside times of retreat, reconciliation, visiting the baths, taking part in the beautiful Processions, an afternoon in the mountains, party and social nights - all with other young Catholics from around our Diocese.

The pilgrimage is open to all those in school year 10 – 13, with all those of school leaver age (18+) invited to join us as young leaders (subject to attending a training weekend). All details and applications can be found on the website www.bcys.net/events/sl

Silent Weekend Retreat 'Be Still My Soul'. Fri 8th - Sun 10th December 2023.

Organised by Allegra Mutanda. Venue: Sion Community, Brentwood. Our theme focuses on the need to learn the 'art' of being still and at rest in the midst of a busy and noisy society.

Guest speaker: Grace Nowakowska, full-time lay missionary member of Sion

Community. This silent weekend retreat during Advent offers us the opportunity to spend time with the Lord in quiet prayer and reflection. 40-HOURS of CONTINUOUS Adoration, spiritual guidance & prayer ministry included. For more information or to book, visit <https://sioncommunity.org.uk/adults/> or email allegra.mutanda@gmail.com

Friends of the Holy Land are hosting a Christmas concert at Our Lady of Victories Church, Kensington on Thursday 14th December to raise funds for Christians in the Holy Land. Featuring the London Welsh Male Voice Choir with renowned soloists Margaret Keys and Anthony Stuart Lloyd and compere Mal Pope.

Join us for a Holy Land-themed buffet from 6pm (£50) or concert-only ticket to start at 7:30pm (£30).

Buy tickets through [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com) or for more

details: friendsoftheholylan.org.uk/christmas-concert-2023. Show your support for those caught in the horror of hostilities this Christmas.

Vocations.

Is God calling you to be a Priest?

There is a monthly vocations group to help those who would like to find out more about a possible vocation to the priesthood.

There will be a talk, a time of prayer and some food.

The sessions take place at Brentwood Cathedral of St Mary & St Helen,
Ingrave Road, Brentwood, CM15 8AT



Tuesday 6th Feb

Tuesday 5th Mar

Tuesday 9th Apr

Tuesday 7th May

Tuesday 4th June

If you would like to join us or to find out more please get in touch with the Vocations Promoter, Fr Mark Swires:
vocprom@dioceseofbrentwood.org
www.brentwoodvocations.org



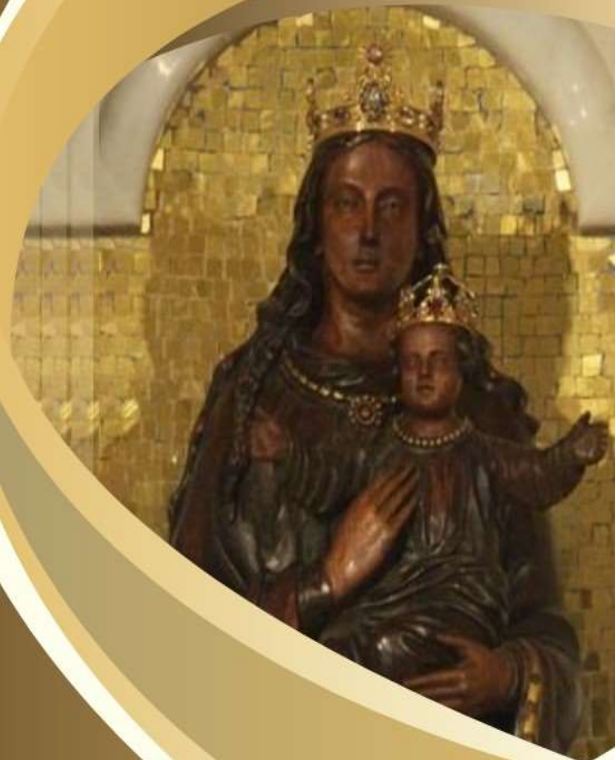
CALLED TO BE A PRIEST???

VOCATIONS PILGRIMAGE

To the Shrine of
Our Lady Of Willesden

SATURDAY 23RD OF
DECEMBER

CONTACT FR MARK
SWIRES
VOCAPROM@BRCDT.ORG





Retrouvaille: A Programme for Couples Struggling in their Marriages

Help Your Marriage – Do you feel alone? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Do you argue ... or have you just stopped talking to each other? Does talking about it only make it worse? Retrouvaille is a programme to support couples who have difficulties in their marriage. It brings a positive focus, new hope and helps nourish and grow your marriage. Tens of thousands of couples headed for divorce have successfully saved their marriages by attending and using the tools provided. The programme helps spouses uncover or re-awaken the love, trust and commitment that originally brought them together. It helps them through difficult times whether they are disillusioned or in deep misery. There is no group therapy or group work. For confidential information about 'Retrouvaille' or to register for the next programme commencing with a Virtual weekend on 8 - 11 February 2024 or a Face to Face weekend in Welwyn Garden City on 14-16 June 2024, call or text 07887 296983 or 07973 380443 or email retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com - or visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk

Retrouvaille – Do you need in your marriage? Retrouvaille has helped many couples find new hope, nourishment and growth in their marriages. If you want to uncover or reawaken the love, trust and commitment that brought you together and work through difficult times in your marriage contact Retrouvaille confidential for more information about our 2024 programmes. There is no group therapy or group work. Our next programme commences with a Virtual weekend on 8 - 11 February 2024 or there is a Face to Face weekend in Welwyn Garden City on 14-16 June 2024. Call or text 07887 296983 or 07973 380443, email retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com - or visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk