 ***Parish Newsletter***

**OUR LADY OF RANSOM**

**3rd December 2023 Advent 1B - Psalter Week 1**

Visiting a poor country, Sr. Ann burst into tears as she watched children (and animals) scavenging at a rubbish dump. Sobbing, she felt a hand on her shoulder and heard a little voice telling her not to cry, that God is good. She looked round to see a poor street-child in rags, with one leg, leaning on a make- shift crutch....

Sr. Ann discerned a beauty and an ugliness so interwoven together.

It’s easy to sense God in the spectacular sunset or the breath-taking mountain ranges. But what about when things are more convoluted and mixed? We are all a mixture of that which is wonderful, and that which is something less than wonderful. Hence Our Lord’s call to *stay awake, be alert,* *attentive, alive, awake* (the A words). All healthy religions will be urging that truth – stay awake! So we don’t miss out on God’s beauty and truth around us – in other people, in the world and in ourselves. Jesus so wants us and the world to see the beautiful, the good and the true – **now**, even when, often, it’s can be interwoven with ugliness. That takes discernment and wisdom.

If this discernment and wisdom could happen on a big scale, maybe then, the poor would be fed, and real justice, truth and peace could happen for all those who are underprivileged.

So we are called to be alive, aware, awake, attentive and alert to God’s goodness and beauty around us – NOW. How much time is there to lose? For so many towards the end of their lives it appears to be too late. They look back on their lives with a wistful “if only…” mentality. Hindsight becomes easy. But during their lives, they were focussed on other things – never really seeing God’s presence around them.

What we focus on determines what we miss. If we are not careful, many things can determine us missing out on the good, the beautiful and the true.

Are we so wrapped up in our own thoughts, worries and cares? Can we let go from time to time so as to really behold God’s beauty and truth around us?

**C:\Users\Parish Office\Desktop\SIGNS, SYMBOLS & SAINTS\LITCOMB\01\AA_01G1.TIF**That “letting go” is a form of silent, contemplative prayer. With this practise, we can re-focus and so find contentment.

God’s presence is “hidden in plain sight” as many scholars would say. For those who are prepared to discern the subtleties and nuances of things, they will find great contentment, they will be alive and awake to God’s presence all around us. How prepared are we? He’s there….

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

**Psalm: 79:2-3, 16, 18-19**

**Second Reading 1 Corinthians 1:3-9**

**Gospel: Mark 13:33-37**

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|  | **MASS INTENTIONS** |
| **Saturday 2nd December**  **September** |  |
| **5.30pm Mass** | The Packer Family (Ints) - Mary and Barrie Mason |
| **Sunday 3rd December** | **1st Sunday of Advent B** |
| **8.00am Mass**  **10.00am Mass** | Parish Community  Hilary Barry RIP – SVP Conference |
| **Monday 4th December** |  |
| **9.30am Mass** | Penny Stiles RIP – Sarah Findlay |
| **Tuesday 5th  December** |  |
| **9.30am Mass** | Hilary Barry RIP – Sally McNamara |
| **Wednesday 6th December** |  |
| **10.00am Mass** | James Scully RIP – The Scully Family |
| **Thursday 7th December** |  |
| **9.30am Mass** | Mike Healy RIP – Maria Francke and Family |
| **Friday 8th December** |  |
| **9.30am Mass** | Hilary Barry RIP – Pat and Mary Rickard |
| **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 |

All Church Services are now Live Streamed. To take part please go to [***https://stream.seccomgroup.com/channel/olor***](https://stream.seccomgroup.com/channel/olor)

Masses can be watched “live” or later as a recording

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| **PARISH PRIEST**  Father Paul Fox  50 London Hill, Rayleigh  Essex SS6 7HP  ***01268 38.24.99***  **www.olorchurch.org**  email: [**rayleigh@brcdt.org**](mailto:rayleigh@brcdt.org) | **Public Mass times:**  **Saturdays 5.30pm**  **Sundays 8am & 10.00am**  **Mondays & Tuesdays 9.30am**  **Wednesdays 10.00am**  **Thursdays & Fridays 9.30am**  *Please be aware - Times and days of weekday Masses are subject to change.* |

**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 Grace Lawless, Pauline Heard, Bob Hall, Antonio Reale and Betty Nicholl whose anniversaries are at this time. **May they rest in Peace.**

**……………….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](mailto:rayleigh@brcdt.org)

**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.

**The second retiring collection this weekend after all Masses is to support the work of Sr. Joachim working in remotest 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 6th December after the 10am morning Mass. The Coffee morning will need to finish at 11.30am.**

**C:\Users\Parish Office\Desktop\Instant Art 2\A0585.TIFSunday 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.

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**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 it …………thank 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**

If anyone would be willing to look after the repository before and after Mass on Saturday evenings it would be very much appreciated. Please contact Fr Paul or telephone Kath on mobile 07815 126574 or home 01702 200295….and..

**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**

**APF/Missio Red Box**

All the contributions to Missio via the Red Box have to be accounted for in readiness for the Year End report due next month. If you have a Red Box and you think it needs emptying and the monies banked, please get in touch with your local Missio Promoter **OR** feel free to bring your box to church and hand it in to one of the Ushers and it will be dealt with in good time.

The deadline is **30th November** for the boxes to be handed in.

Thank you for your continuing support for Missio.

**Sharing God’s Love:**

We all have a part to play in mission!

Ten years ago, **Pope Benedict XVI** told the crowds in Hyde Park:

‘**Each of us has a mission. Each of us is called to change the world**’.

That is as true today as it was 10 years ago and it will still be true tomorrow. The Missio family helps Churches too poor or too young to support themselves, and you play a major part in that.

On behalf of Missio,

Thank you for your prayers and your generous contributions during World Mission Sunday and throughout the year.

Thank you for being part of the Missio family.

Local Missio Secretary - Our Lady of Ransom Parish



**On sale Now.**

**Glasses for Ghana**

Thank you so much to everyone who donated glasses for me to take out to Ghana. The glasses were left at several central locations so they can be distributed amongst the communities who have little or no access to eye care and vision testing. They were very gratefully received. I was volunteering for a project called Let's Read Ghana that supports in over 70 rural schools in the Upper East Region.

**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](mailto: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](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=http%3a%2f%2fwww.harpsouthend.org.uk&c=E,1,OcltNPQ-3vYc4rZSLnmG-D1d1np49P5vScwW0JK-zuc58XZf4RiUpg5biy4NkHaVupD1zV6A2HO-s_VYm4GKiMHQqMfkkTDozlwdMZo7lLp8&typo=1).
* 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](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.harpsouthend.org.uk%2fvolunteer-vacancies&c=E,1,Yk3c6HkFWgzm3CIvUrl-Oi_fJtRo06MBw5QVRwNe_ZGZ4MAhv3xgxjQ2ONsVAEfKhHijyPKbpjY6tb7zmMYpxwQ6Cfao95tsz8D0mkALWRc,&typo=1) 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

**Office Clerk- Cathedral House**

**To provide effective and efficient support in relation to administration requirements at Cathedral House.**

**Hours: 21 hours per week 09.00 until 17.00 (Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays). Start Date: December /January 2024**

**Salary- £13 per hour**

**Apply by sending a CV and covering letter (no longer than A4)** [**hr@brcdt.org**](mailto:hr@brcdt.org)**. Closing date for applications is 5th December 2023**

**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](mailto: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 [issycording@brcdt.org](mailto:issycording@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
* **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

**Interim Co-ordinator for the Parish Centre**

The role of Interim Parish Centre Co-ordinator is essential to help the smooth beginning and running of the new facilities, for the first year of operation.

**Hours: 7 hours per week. (Including some unsociable hours)**

(Note: There is potential for the number of hours to grow during the year).

Start Date: January 2024

Salary- £11.95 per hour

Apply by sending a CV and covering letter (no longer than A4) to  [frdominic@brcdt.org](mailto:frdominic@brcdt.org)

Closing date for applications is noon on 8th December 2023

**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/](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fsioncommunity.org.uk%2fadults%2f&c=E,1,Derx_pbnfqBGihn0B2UIJ966gW-E8ersASYkvb9dK_hWot49wHO7AahrwckAXnEC-GJK6JwissIGYAroLBV6BE7dDZ6bf6dBwrqFxm_UIxFOLQ,,&typo=1) or email [allegra.mutanda@gmail.com](mailto: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://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2f5xgf8.r.a.d.sendibm1.com%2fmk%2fcl%2ff%2fsh%2fSMK1E8tHeGLdaZclzAIfmNcqxXoh%2f4XGjoSqVyXsp&c=E,1,cruRjeHlUlVzEINJu0GCC0ZkRTzE-2JjTgW8oJ1NSJhuZ_xSSY8zbNK71Tpc3DQcZ1uLe0uL1i_uQ98voi6sn36lT4WWIJ09qDc3g6882ofK7uT-nI9kjgw,&typo=1) or for more details: [friendsoftheholyland.org.uk/christmas-concert-2023](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2f5xgf8.r.a.d.sendibm1.com%2fmk%2fcl%2ff%2fsh%2fSMK1E8tHeGSV2iRjAKS9sCvavqOx%2fJmyVBd32KQtN&c=E,1,DTfmHVxMih-bRREgZ3-H0BuU8ltypUYMf1KUtefvQ562Y8H4PgZD3QLo3WKsJHyOq6uspVmtc6TfKBvoTMQ67iLRG_EHxbi0uWhMYlpML7ynefgd&typo=1). Show your support for those caught in the horror of hostilities this Christmas.

