

Parish Newsletter

OUR LADY OF RANSOM

8th December 2024

2nd Sunday of Advent (C)

Psalter Week 2



“So, whose side are you on?” a lady who had taught for 40 years, asked me. I was about to be interviewed for my first teaching post. “I can’t stand these changes in education” she proudly admitted, “are you on the side of the staff here who like these new-fangled changes, or on my side, we - who have proudly done the same thing for 40 years”? Suddenly the question arose as to whether I really want a job in this apparently divided school. Taking sides! Ugh! And I’ve barely begun! I failed the interview. Upset at one level, happy at another!

Is this lady a person of 40 years’ experience? Or 1 years’ experience repeated 40 times? The difference? 40 years authentic experience implies growth, change, development, maturing, deepening, risking, failing, learning. Yet, so many are resistant to all this. Resistant to change. Fear of failing. Lives becoming incredibly boring and repetitive. 1 years’ experience mechanically and lifelessly repeated over and over again. All for total predictability, control, managing, knowing, security.

Do we really want to grow in God’s love? If yes, then we need to take risks. Sometimes be prepared to fail – and learn. Mostly, be prepared to change. This is real faith. Watch John the Baptist, and so many others. See the real meaning of “repentance”. Change. The more we claim to be set in our ways, the more we resist change, so the more resistant we are to faith, resistant to Our Lord Himself.

How defended are we against change? What are we most resistant to in life? What or who are we most offended by? What repetitions give me security, predictability control? Some questions to ask ourselves giving clues as to where blockages exist to real faith. These will show what mountains need laying low, what valleys need filling in, as John reminds us today. Things that prevent clear access to Our Lord. Fill the valleys in, lower the mountains so our access to God is not blocked.

John the Baptist and Jesus call us to change. ‘Repentance’, not about forgiveness or some moral re-configuring of ourselves, but a preparedness for profound changes of mind-set. Changes of heart. Of attitude. Changes at deeper levels, allowing us to grow, mature, develop, learn – all the stuff of real faith.

Faith - leading to authentic love - how else can we really witness to Our Lord?

1st Reading: Baruch 5: 1-9

Psalms 126: 1-2b, 2c-3, 44-5, 6

2nd Reading: Philippians 1: 3-6, 8-11

Gospel Luke: 3: 1-6



MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday 7th December	St. Ambrose
5.30pm Mass	Alison Healy Costello RIP – Peter and Kath Hands
Sunday 8th December	2nd Sunday of Advent
8.00am Mass	Mick Cody RIP – Ann Coady
10.00am Mass	Parish Community and Prayer Board Intentions
Monday 9th December	The Immaculate Conception of Our Lady
9.30am Mass	Alison Healy Costello RIP – Pat and Mary Rickard
Tuesday 10th December	
9.30am Mass	The O' Brien Family (Ints) – Frances Wiley
Wednesday 11th December	
10.00am Mass	James Scully RIP (Anniv) – The Scully Family
Thursday 12th December	
9.30am Mass	Sharon Brosnan RIP – Mary Ahern
Friday 13th December	St. Lucy
9.30am Mass	David Childs and family (Ints) – Tom and Isobel Kennedy
Saturday 14th December	St. John of the Cross
5.30pm Mass	Annie Reidy RIP (Anniv) – Marie Venneear
Sunday 15th December	3rd Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday)
8.00am Mass	Collette O' Keefe (Ints)
10.00am Mass	Parish Community

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</p>
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The Sacrament of Reconciliation: 4.30pm – 5pm Saturday evenings (not in the confessional box) *Please be aware - Times and days of weekday Masses are subject to change.*

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



ANNIVERSARIES Kindly pray for all those whose anniversaries are at this time. Especially.....Antonio Reale, Betty Nicholls, Margaret Brooker, Maria Hunter and Katie Bundy.

May they rest in Peace. †

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

A copy of the newsletter is placed on the notice-board for quick reference. Please leave it attached to the notice-board for others to see. Thank you.

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confessions) will be available on Monday 16th December from 2pm-3pm; Tuesday 17th December from 10am-11am; and Monday 23rd December from 10am-11am. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed during these occasions. Please feel free to come and simply, quietly and reverently honour Our Lord in His Blessed Sacrament (even if you do not desire the Sacrament of Reconciliation on this occasion).

Holy Communion, when receiving, please consume the Sacred Host IMMEDIATELY. The Sacred Host should be consumed before receiving the Sacred Blood from the Chalice, if you do not receive from the Chalice, then consume the Sacred Host straight away in front of the Altar. Thank you.

Church Car Park: anyone who wishes to leave their car in the church car park overnight, or especially over several nights, must check with the Parish Office first. This is for reasons such as funeral guests having priority parking during funerals, other celebrations occurring requiring car park use, and possible ground and work maintenance being ongoing, as evidenced recently. Please respect this request. Thank you.

Parish Garden: if anyone has any good and constructive ideas for our garden, do please let us know. A few have already been expressed. Thank you.

Printed Parish Newsletters – Reminder: printed newsletters are left outside the Presbytery for those who have NO ACCESS to electronic newsletters. In good conscience, please honour this request. Thank you.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 2025

Parents whose children are in year three and above and who are considering First Communion for their children should attend a meeting at the church on Tuesday December 10th at 7.00pm.

The meeting with Father Paul is for parents only. It is not an enrolment session but is intended to convey some very important information and guidance. Numbers will be limited to a maximum of twenty four children this year.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults Programme (RCIA)

All are welcome to come along to our Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults programme and learn more about what it means to be a Catholic Christian. **We will meet again this Monday 9th December 2024 at 8pm in the Bethany Room.**

Perhaps you are completely new to Christianity, or maybe you left the Church as a teenager and now want to return to the Catholic faith. Alternatively, you may just want to informally ask questions to deepen your understanding. Whatever your circumstances, you are welcome to come along and learn more about what it means to be a Catholic Christian.

Please come along to find out more. You do not have to make any commitments at this point.

However, 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 Catholic Church at Easter in April 2025.

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.

Christmas Flowers: donations towards Christmas Flowers welcome in honour of a loved one who has died. Please hand them in to the presbytery clearly marked Christmas Flowers and for whom they are in memory of. Thank you.

Wednesday Coffee Morning

Coffee Morning will take place on Wednesday **11th December 2024** after the **10am Mass.**

If anyone is willing and able to volunteer to help once each month, please come along and make yourself known. We'd love to see you.

Coffee Morning: Sunday December 8th after the 10am

Mass in aid of the SVP



If you are interested in running a coffee morning after the Sunday 10am Mass, for a Charity of your choice, please inform the staff in the presbytery office. Thank you.

Repository: A very good selection of Christmas cards are now available.

Prices range from packs of 5 for £1 sold in aid of the SVP, to boxes of 18 for £4.25. Also Nativity Advent Calendars for £1.99. Other Christmas items are also available. Please visit us after the weekend Masses. Thank you.

Junior Legion of Mary.

The Junior Legion of Mary for our parish is moving from OLOR primary school to the Bethany Room at the church. This gives us the opportunity to open the Junior Legion to young people of all ages from aged 8 to 18.

The Junior Legion of Mary aims to help young people to grow in their faith. In following Our Lady and learning to see her as our mother, we never need to feel alone or feel afraid. As a result, young people grow in confidence and have the courage to do what is right. They also learn to see and serve Jesus in everyone they meet.

We are looking particularly to invite secondary school children to attend, especially those who used to come to Junior Legion when they attended OLOR Primary school. However, all children and teenagers aged 8 to 18 are welcome, regardless of which school they attend.

We will be meeting in the Bethany Room weekly on **Fridays at 5pm** for one hour. For further information please pick up a leaflet at the back of the Church or contact Isobel Kennedy Tel/Text: 07795 821705 or email: isobel@kennedykin.co.uk

APPEAL TO ASPIRING YOUNGER PARISHIONERS FROM THE JMG TRUST

Do you feel you would like to make a personal contribution towards the alleviation of poverty both locally and overseas? The "Trustees" are aiming to recruit like-minded individuals to take on the work of this locally based charity with assets of £1M. We are looking in particular for younger members preferably with some Financial or IT experience, (but not necessarily qualified) to fill some administrative roles connected mainly with the distribution of grants to the "poor and needy". If you feel that this vocational work may suit your Christian ethos, please apply to Christopher Johnson on 07783326732. We meet only twice a year to discuss Trust business matters.



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.

Do you have the need of a Wheelchair/ Mobility Aid?

Over a period of time, a collection of Wheelchairs, Strollers, Walkers and other mobility aids have gathered in the Presbytery garage.

If you or a family member have the need for any of the above items, please contact Fr. Paul for more information.

Tel: 01268 382499

These can be very expensive items and there is no cost involved whatsoever.

They will be fully sanitised and delivered to wherever they are required in the area. Thank you.

Homeless Shelter

We have been asked if we would be able to put a team of volunteers together to run a homeless shelter this coming winter. The shelter is likely to run from December through to the end of March 2025. The shelter will be central and not at the Sacred Heart Church. If you would like to volunteer, please contact the Parish office by email in the first instance to record your interest.

southend@brcdt.org

As more information becomes available, we will of course share. Thank you.

Thank you for your help. God bless, Liam Rand

Catholic Parish of The Sacred Heart, Southend-on-Sea and St John Fisher, Prittlewell The Presbytery, 418 Southchurch Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2QB Telephone (44) 01702 465720

PARISH CHOIR

Do you like to sing? You would be most welcome to join us in the Parish Choir. Just come up to the choir loft after 10am Mass on a Sunday when we are singing. We only sing twice a month, so the commitment is not great. We hold a choir practice on most Thursdays too at 7.30pm for an hour or so. For more details contact Isobel Kennedy (07795 821705).

VACANCY AT ST BERNARD'S HIGH SCHOOL

SCHOOL CHAPLAIN

Part-time, three days a week, term time only, 8.30am – 4.30pm

Salary Scale 9 to 19 - £25,119 - £29,777 (actual salary £13,095 - £15,523)

Are you a practising Catholic with a passion for working with children?

We are looking to appoint a School Chaplain to support the Catholic Life and Collective Worship of our school community. You will need to be proactive and be able to work independently, with excellent time management and organisational skills, arranging events such as whole school masses, form masses, charity fundraisers, retreats. Experience in education or youth ministry would be an advantage.

The Chaplain must be a practising Roman Catholic and should have relevant experience or qualification (e.g. Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies). You will be someone who is skilled in dealing with a wide range of people, and be compassionate, personable and discreet.

Walsingham House Team 25/26: applications are now open for the volunteer retreat team at Walsingham House. If you are in Yr13 or finishing university and enjoy working with young people then a year on the retreat team could be the perfect next step. Live and work as part of a young Catholic Christian community, sharing your faith and helping to run retreats for the young people of Brentwood diocese. For

more information then please see the website: www.bcys.net/whabbotswick/be-on-team/ or email clairebailey@brcdt.org

Christmas Eve Family Mass-

Adult volunteers needed to assist with helping the Christmas Eve Family Mass preparation. Please consider helping others to organise this lovely celebration, which has been an important part of Christmas to so many of our families over the years. Please consider sharing some of the responsibility, perhaps with your friends. If you may be able to help, please message Nicola 07801 888787. Thank you.

Christmas Eve Family Mass (6 pm)- Nativity tableau

All children who would like to join in our nativity tableau, for the Gospel at our Christmas Eve Family Mass, please come and put your name down and find a costume from our parish supply, on one of the first 2 dates below! All are welcome! We will then have 2 practices/ run throughs for all involved on the two Sundays before Christmas Eve.

8th December- sign up and costume allocation (church, after 10am mass)

15th and 22nd December- practices for all involved (church, after 10 am mass)

Look forward to seeing you- thank you!

READINGS FOR THE SEASON OF ADVENT: Fr Adrian Graffy, parish priest of Gidea Park and member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, has prepared reflections on all the Mass readings for the Season of Advent. To access these go to www.whatgoodnews.org and click on 'Scripture Readings' and then 'Advent Readings'.

A Christmas message from the staff and trustees of Brentwood Catholic Children's Society: We would like to wish everyone across Brentwood Diocese a very happy and blessed Christmas. As we come to the end of our 40th anniversary year, we would like to thank everyone who has supported our work by making a donation at one of the parish crib scenes across the Diocese over the years. This steadfast support has allowed us to give hope to thousands of children, young people and families by offering them the specialist care they need. Thank you all.

VACANCY AT ST BERNARD'S HIGH SCHOOL

LEARNING MENTOR

Hours: Full-time, 37 hours per week (8.00am – 4.00pm), term time only
Scale 7 – 12 (£25,584 - £27,711 / pro rata actual salary £21,933- £23,757)
Closing Date: 16 December 2024, 9.00am
Interviews: Morning of 18 December 2024
Start date: 6 January 2025

We are looking for a positive, enthusiastic and approachable professional to work alongside our Learning Mentor Team supporting identified students.

You will be joining a successful, friendly and supportive department within a high-performing school, supporting students from Years 7 – Y13. You will need to be able to work flexibly and provide support, motivation and guidance to help students overcome barriers to their learning.

If you are interested in applying for this role, please complete the Support Staff Application Form found on our website (www.stbernardswestcliff.org.uk under About Us/Vacancies) and email it to recruitment@stbernards.southend.sch.uk.

Class Teacher - Key Stage 1

MPR/UPR ~ Full time ~ Required September 2025

Our Lady of Ransom Catholic School is looking to appoint an enthusiastic and

highly-motivated class teacher to join our friendly and dedicated team.

The successful candidate will need to be a strong practitioner committed to achieving high standards of pupils' learning and capable of teaching imaginatively.

They will be willing to be involved in all aspects of school life.

The post would suit an experienced teacher who is either a practising Catholic or willing to support the strong Catholic ethos of our school.

The Governing Body is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The appointment is subject to satisfactory references, medical and enhanced DBS checks.

Visits to the school are welcomed and encouraged.

For more details please contact Mr. Parascandolo (Head Teacher)

via the school office (01268 785741)

For an application form please visit the school website www.olorcps.net

Closing date: Thursday 16th January 2025 (4pm)

Interview date: w/c 20th January 2025

We reserve the right to call for interview and appoint prior to the closing date.

Brentwood Cathedral Advent Service:

Sunday 22nd December, 4 p.m.....Nine Lessons & Carols

St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Romford

Headteacher Required from September 2025

The school is magnificent, and they are looking for an inspiring leader with great attention to standards of teaching and learning, wonderful pastoral care for the children, and all wrapped in a strong Catholic ethos which infuses every aspect of school life.

All the details are on the Diocesan website: https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/2024-12-09_1200_St-Peters-Primary-School-Romford_Headteacher_Job-Advert.pdf

Visits are warmly encouraged, and the deadline for applications is **9th December**.



DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD

Foundation Governor Vacancies

Vacancies for Foundation Governors have arisen at a number of Catholic schools across the Diocese and expressions of interests are being sought from practising committed Catholics for the ministry.

The term of office is for four years from the date of appointment.

Foundation Governors are personally appointed by the Bishop to Diocesan schools to represent his interests and those of the Catholic community as a whole.

Our schools would benefit from people with a range of skills and experiences including Finance, Education, Special Needs, Legal and Administration.

Anyone interested in the role and mission of Foundation Governor should not be put off by a lack of experience. Appropriate training is available during the period of service.

If you are interested in becoming Foundation Governor please email your expression of interest to governanceappointments@brcdt.org.

Thank you.

Brentwood Diocesan Directories 2025 now available. Prices on the front cover.

Flower arrangements for Christmas

Donations for flowers to decorate the Church at Christmas would be most welcome. Please post in an envelope marked “flowers” through the Presbytery letterbox. If anyone has experience of flower arranging please think about coming along to help. Contact Veronica on 07748 8471149 for more details.

Can you volunteer at the St John Bosco Children’s Camp next summer? Applications are now open for anyone aged 17+ to volunteer for a week at the end of July 2025. From helping in the kitchen to running sports and other activities, your skills will mean that 100 children have a wonderful holiday. For most of the children, it is their only summer holiday. The Camp is a special work of Caritas Brentwood. More information - including training date and DBS requirements, along with volunteering FAQs - can all be found at www.boscocamp.co.uk. Applications for children to come to Camp will open in the spring.

HARP. Every year with the help of fantastic generous donations, HARP provide a small chocolate selection box to each of our residents and rough sleepers.

This year our amazing fundraiser Lisa went on to pastures new supporting YMCA, Lisa was the one who organised all of this in previous years, this year it will be me 😊

Can you support me with this. That would be fabulous.

Our target is 500 selection boxes, I have added a picture below of the type of selection box we are looking for, although it does not need to be Cadbury



Thank you and I look forward to reaching our target with your generosity 😊

**Stevie 'Chocoholic' Hickman (she/her)
Volunteer Coordinator – HARP (Southend’s Homeless
Charity)**

Usual Working Hours: Monday - Friday 8am - 4pm

Central Office : 104-106 The High Street, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 1JN

Email: stevie.hickman@harp-southend.org.uk

Mobile: 07969 727 046



The Divine Mercy Apostolate, London is holding a Divine Mercy Retreat at All Saints Church 531 Kenton Road Kenton London HA3 0UL on the corner of Claremont Avenue; 600 yards west of Kingsbury Circus/Kingsbury Tfl Station, via Bus 183

on Saturday 14 December 2024 from 1 pm to 4:30 pm. The Retreat will include teachings on the Message of Divine Mercy, Holy Mass, Holy Rosary, Hour of Mercy with Adoration and Benediction and Veneration of the Image of Merciful Jesus. For more info call millie on 07957594646 . No need to register for retreat

The Knights of St Columba wish to thank all parishioners who gave so generously towards the work of Sr Joachim. A total of £1,260.00 was presented to Helen Cooper, Sr. Joachim's mother, and the money has been banked. Thanks especially to those who supported the Quiz night and the Lotto night.

We are hoping to hold more social events with a view to bringing the parish community together.



DONATIONS NEEDED

We are in desperate need of the following items:

Toiletries

Deodorant (Men's & Women's)

Shower gel

Shampoo/Conditioner

Sanitary Pads (All sizes)

Toothpaste

Toothbrushes



Clothing

Sleeping bags

Tracksuit bottoms (All sizes)

Jumpers (All sizes)

Underwear and socks (All sizes)

Trainers (All sizes)

Warm Coats (All sizes)



Unit 9, Victoria Business Park, Short Street, SS2 5BY

01702 592980 southendsupport@svp.org.uk



❄️ WINTER VOLUNTEER SHOUT-OUT ❄️

At St Vincent's Centre, we are the Door of Hope. Your involvement can help us open that door and shine a light on the lives of those in need. Let's work together to clear a path and turn frowns into smiles.

We are urgently seeking **VOLUNTEERS** especially **DRIVERS**. Can you spare an hour or more a week?

How You Can Help: Other Roles:

Food Pickup & Delivery

Furniture Pickup & Delivery

Event Support

And More.

For more details, contact: lilyd@svp.org.uk

St Vincent's Centre

Unit 9, Victoria Business Park,

Short Street, SS2 5BY

01702 592980



Photo: DEC/Arrete/Abdallah Alsayed

*Name changed to protect identity

Aaliyah* sits on the remains of a damaged building with her daughter in their neighbourhood in southern Gaza, in October 2024.

Registered charity number 1150384. Company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales number 03487398

Middle East Humanitarian Appeal

£10
gives displaced families
emergency water

£120
gets emergency shelter
to three households

Millions are fleeing airstrikes in Lebanon and Gaza. CAFOD and our Church partners are already there, responding.

*Please pray and please give.
Every gift is needed.*

Scan here



GIVE TODAY
cafod.org.uk/give

or call **0808 58 588 85**



CHRISTMAS HAMPER APPEAL 2024



HELP US KEEP THE DOOR OF HOPE OPEN

THIS CHRISTMAS WE WILL BE SUPPORTING MANY FAMILIES WITH HAMPERS TO HELP THEM. THESE ARE THE ITEMS WE NEED TO CREATE A HAMPER FOR A FAMILY IN NEED.

- Pasta
- Chocolate spread or jar of jam
- Packet of cream crackers
- Packet of sweets/ biscuits
- UHT milk
- Jar instant coffee
- Bottle of ketchup
- Cereal
- Mince pies
- Christmas crackers
- Tins of Custard
- Jar/packet instant hot chocolate
- Jar Pasta sauce
- Gravy granules
- £10 voucher - Tesco, Sainsbury's or Lidl

LAST DONATIONS 19TH DECEMBER

UNIT 9 VICTORIA BUSINESS PARK, SOUTHEND SS2 5BY

CHARITY NO :1053992

www.svp.org.uk/st-vincent-southend

