

# OUR LADY OF RANSOM

7<sup>th</sup> December 2025

Advent 2 A

Psalter Week 2



Peculiar diet. Weird dress sense. He calls a spade a spade. He is not a company man. He does not fit in. Probably, no self-respecting Christian denomination today would allow him in. He is not afraid. He doesn't care who he upsets – especially authority and establishment - welcome John the Baptist.

John comes from a wealthy class. His father was a chief priest. So, he must have been wealthy. John would have been steeped in the Jewish religion and tradition, especially with his father, Zechariah, being a chief priest. There is virtually nothing John would have not known about his Jewish religion. So why is John like this? Possibly, from within his own religion, he sees so much oppression and nonsense. Also, because he has had a genuine experience of the divine. We only need one experience of the absolute, the divine, in our lives and everything becomes relativized around this central experience. We can then find it hard to deal with others whose lives seem centered on a kind of wishy-washy mediocre sense of reality. These prophets so much want everyone to have similar divine experience so as we understand ourselves.

Such prophets stand on the edges of tradition, system, society or religion, inside just enough to say, 'I am one of you', but not seduced by the ego desires of power, status, promotions, pay-offs and rewards – all coming from the centre, the seat of power. Both inside and outside at the same time. It's a narrow road. Jesus later refers to this narrow road saying that few have the spiritual maturity to walk it. To be totally loyal, yet utterly and positively critical at the same time. Real prophecy. We see John being a truly great prophet.

He lives in the desert presumably so as not to be seduced by the power games of the system coming from the seat of power at the centre. Maybe he felt if he returned to this centre, he might be tempted back to his old wealthy ways. No thank you! From the edges, his message is clear. If you call yourself a Christian and say you know God, then produce the results. Results happen because we let go of ego nonsense. Anyone can say 'I'm Catholic' or 'Christian'. John rages against this hypocrisy, people calling themselves Godly, Christian etc, and yet are so seduced by power, status and pay-offs. John urges us rather to show some fruit.

How is our life-style different to non-Christians? Has this shown itself to be true over recent years? If not, could that be why our Christianity is under threat? People are wise to these double-standards. Too much talking and not enough walking (lifestyle). Is John, right? And what about us? Are we so seduced by power, privilege and status at work, or in our groups, in life generally? Can we let go of some of these ego desires? Can we be utterly loyal and yet critical without compromise? Today, our Christianity is under threat. What fruits is our Christianity producing as different to those who claim to have no faith? That is surely, in part, the litmus of how genuine our faith is.

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Isaiah 11: 1-10**

**Psalms: 72: 1-2. 7-8. 12-13. 17**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Romans 15: 4-9**

**Gospel: Matthew 3: 1-12**



<b>MASS INTENTIONS</b>	
<b>Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>
<b>5.30pm Mass</b>	The Price and Gatlin Families and Irene Bishop (Ints)
<b>Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December</b>	
<b>8.00am Mass</b>	Parish Community
<b>10.00am Mass</b>	Deceased members of the Knights of St. Columba RIP
<b>Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>The Immaculate Conception</b>
<b>8.30am Mass</b>	Fr. Emile Nkumu RIP
<b>Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December</b>	
<b>9.30am Mass</b>	Fr. Noel Doyle RIP
<b>Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December</b>	
<b>10.00am Mass</b>	James Scully RIP (Anniversary) – The Scully Family
<b>Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December</b>	
<b>9.30am Mass</b>	Fr. Jim Lynch RIP
<b>Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December</b>	
<b>9.30am Mass</b>	Michael Carey RIP – Tom and Isobel Kennedy
<b>Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>St. Lucy</b>
<b>5.30pm Mass</b>	Theresa Steward RIP (Anniversary) – Gemma Copestick
<b>Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday)</b>
<b>8.00am Mass</b>	Bishop Thomas McMahon RIP
<b>10.00am Mass</b>	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><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: <b>rayleigh@brcdt.org</b></p>	<p><b><u>Public Mass times:</u></b>  <b>Saturdays 5.30pm</b>  <b>Sundays 8am &amp; 10.00am</b>  <b>Mondays &amp; Tuesdays 9.30am</b>  <b>Wednesdays 10.00am</b>  <b>Thursdays &amp; Fridays 9.30am</b></p>
---	--

**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, Alice Nicholls, Margaret Brooker and Maria Hunter.

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

**Copies of the newsletter are placed on the noticeboard inside the church porch, and parts of the newsletter inside the noticeboard outside the church. Please leave these as they are so as others may see them for quick reference. Thank you.**

***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 parking. 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.**

**Mass on Monday morning, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, will be at 8.30am.**

**Please note: following a large number of requests, the Christmas Eve Family Mass will now be at 5pm; and the Vigil Mass at 8pm. There will be NO Midnight Mass.**

**Pope John Paul 11 Hall Bookings -**

**Please contact Paul Roseman on 07470 691902 for any Hall Booking requests, thank you.**

**Wheelchairs and Strollers:** Do you have any unwanted or no longer needed? Or any walking aids? Until recently we had a supply for people to take and use as needed. They are now all taken. If you have any that you are happy to donate, please let us know by calling the Parish Office. Thank you.

*Also, a four-wheeled electric Mobility Scooter is looking for a good home. Please contact the Parish Office. Thank you.*

### **Wednesday Coffee Morning**

The next Coffee Morning will be on Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> December after the 10.00am Mass.

If you wish to help about once each month, we very much need you, so come along and make yourself known. We'd love to see you

### **Sunday Coffee Morning -**

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

Coffee morning on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December is being hosted by the RCIA Group.



**Repository.** Christmas is on the way. Advent Calendars are on sale. Boxes of 18 cards- £4.25. Packs of 12 and 10 cards respectively, plus single cards are available. All very reasonable prices. Also, cards and gift items for Confirmation.

### **Children's Liturgy**

Children's Liturgy at 10am mass, for children aged 3 years old to school year 6)

There are 2 groups - preschool to school year 2, and school years 3-6).

Parents are welcome to settle the youngest children coming for the first few times, aiming towards them coming independently.

Children do not need to bring anything to the session- any materials needed will be provided. (If your child has special needs, please make leaders aware beforehand - we welcome everyone!)

**Christmas Eve Family Mass-**we are looking for adult volunteers to assist with organising costumes and practice. If you enjoy participating in the Christmas Eve family mass, please consider volunteering (ahead) to join a small group and help share a little of the preparation! Everyone is busy at that time of year, so the more it

can be shared the better for everybody! Please message 07801 888787 if you can help a little or have any questions! Thank you!

### **Christmas Eve Family Mass- 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 a last practice/run throughs for all involved on the

### **21st December- practice for all involved** ( church, after 10 am mass)

Look forward to seeing you - thank you!

### **FLOWERS TO DECORATE THE CHURCH AT CHRISTMAS**

We would be grateful to receive donations for flowers to decorate the Church at Christmas. You may wish to donate in memory of a loved one. Envelopes are available in the porch. Please write your name and your dedication on the envelope, enclose the donation and post through the presbytery letterbox. Thank you.

**From Fr. Damien of the Marist Fathers:** I wish to hereby acknowledge having received the cheque of £637.57 you sent after the appeal I made in your parish on the weekend of 18th-19th October 2025. I am grateful to you and the whole parish community of Rayleigh for the generous donations to support the missionary work of Marist Fathers in the world. My time with your community was memorable and I appreciated the fraternal hospitality and the spirit of the dynamic Christian community. Thank you.

**Schoolchildren's education is being affected** because parents can't afford hygiene products and are too embarrassed to send their children to school. Some children are also experiencing similar embarrassment because they ARE being sent to school but in unwashed uniform.

Please consider donating these items, washing powder/liquid or feminine hygiene items to the Food Bank collection in the porch of our church. Thank you.

**HARP-** We are very short of items that we give to people who use our services. Here is the list:

Sleeping bags; Hand warmer; Foil blanket, take away cups; Ladies small underwear

Men's boxers small and medium; Leggings; Socks; Deodorants.

If you can help, please do let us know, we are happy to come and collect the items or you can donate to the Bradbury Centre 103-107 York Road, Southend-On-Sea, SS1 2DL.

Thank you for all your support.

### **Gift Aid**

It is important that we have the current address for anyone who has joined the parish Gift Aid scheme. If you have moved since you signed up to Gift Aid, please email your new address to Sandra Cowdrey, our Gift Aid Organizer, at [olorgiftaid@hotmail.com](mailto:olorgiftaid@hotmail.com)

**St. Vincent's Centre Southend...** is holding an Afternoon Tea at the Roslin Beach Hotel on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December at 1.30pm. Tickets are £37.50 and booking is essential. Please email [NesperM@svp.org.uk](mailto:NesperM@svp.org.uk) to reserve your place. Various events are also held to raise funds to help those in need. Afternoon teas, dinners, plus other events. Interested?

Please visit: [Nesperm@svp.org.uk](mailto:Nesperm@svp.org.uk) **07549128877** or **01702 592980**. Thank you.

### **Missio Red Boxes**

If you have a Missio Red Box at home, it is now time for collection. If your box is normally collected by one of our promoters, they will be in touch with you soon, but if your box hasn't been collected for some time, please let me know - we have fewer promoters than previously, but I will make sure to arrange collection.

You can also bring your boxes to hand to me (usually 5.30 pm Mass) or leave in the Sacristy or back of the church for my attention. Any queries, please contact me - Katherine Abel 0790 6844 284 email [warren\\_katherine@hotmail.com](mailto:warren_katherine@hotmail.com)

Thank you for your ongoing and generous support to the important work of Missio. God Bless.

The Divine Mercy Apostolate, London is holding a Divine Mercy Advent Reflection on Saturday 20 December from 1 pm - 4:30 pm at St Mary Mother of God, 213 Hornchurch Road, Hornchurch, Essex RM12 4TF The Retreat will include teachings on the Message of Mercy, Stations of the Cross, Holy Mass, Hour of Mercy with Adoration and Benediction and Veneration of the Image of Merciful Jesus. All Welcome. Please call millie on 07957594646 for more information.

The Helpers of God's Precious Infants Rosary Pro-Life procession and Vigil is on **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December**, Fr. Francesco CFR, will celebrate The Holy Sacrifice of The Mass at Trinity Catholic High School, Sidney Road, Woodford Green, IG8 0TB, at 10.00am, followed by Exposition of The Blessed Sacrament, Procession to our vigil site (150+ meters from abortion centre) and then return for Benediction followed by refreshments.

Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus! You are warmly welcomed to an evening of praise and worship, including mass and adoration. Save the dates:

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> of January and Friday 13<sup>th</sup> of February 2026. Time: 7:00pm to 9:00pm, including refreshments after.

Venue: The Blessed Sacrament Church, 116 Melbourne Avenue, CM12DU, Chelmsford. Bring your friends!

Organised by the CDSC ( Charismatic Diocesan Service of Communion ).

**Headteacher vacancy at Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Benfleet**, Essex, required for April 2026 – Due to the current headteacher taking the decision to retire from the post, an exciting opportunity has arisen for an inspirational, ambitious and innovative Headteacher to join the team at Holy Family Catholic Primary School. Further information and application documents can be found on the following websites – [HFCPS Website - Job Vacancies](#) and [Vacancies – Assisi Catholic Trust](#).



The Governing Body of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Canvey Island, is looking for new Foundation Governors in this exciting time of improvement and change in the life of their school. If you are interested, please contact the Chair of Governors, Joanna, on: [jfleming@stjosephscanvey.net](mailto:jfleming@stjosephscanvey.net).

#### **THE PALMER CATHOLIC ACADEMY**

Aldborough Road South, Seven Kings, Ilford, IG3 8EU

Calling all Canon Palmer Catholic School Alumni to come to our 65th Anniversary on Friday 9th January 2026 at 2pm. Visit our website at [www.tpc.academy](http://www.tpc.academy) for further details and to register an interest for future events.

**St. Peter's Catholic Primary School, Billericay** are seeking to appoint an Administration Assistant to join our School Office team.

For more information about the position and to apply, please visit:-

<https://www.essexschoolsjobs.co.uk/Vacancies/Details.aspx?VacancyId=115226>

Closing date is Midday on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

Visits to the school are welcomed and can be arranged by contacting the school office by phone 01277 653770 or email on [admin@st-peters-pri.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-peters-pri.essex.sch.uk)

#### **Volunteer Request from OLOR Primary School**

As we develop our sensory garden there are a few jobs that we need specialist skills for. Would anyone be willing to give up a few hours to help lay some paving slabs underneath our pergola. We have the slabs already and can purchase any sand or cement etc that is required. If you can assist us, please contact the school office on 01268 785741. Thank you.

**Walsingham House Team 26/27:** applications are now open for the Walsingham House Team 26/27. Being on the team is a wonderful opportunity to work with young people from across the diocese, live in community and to share and deepen our faith. Applications are open to those aged 18-23 (current Yr13 and above). For more information including the application form please see the website <https://bcys.net/whabbotswick/be-on-team/> or email [michaelkearns@brcdt.org](mailto:michaelkearns@brcdt.org). Applications close on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

#### **Education Support Administrator- Cathedral House**

A vacancy has arisen to provide administrative and general departmental support to School Advisors across the Education Department of the Diocese.

The post will be part-time, working 22 hours per week – 4 days per week working from 9 am until 3 pm with half an hour for lunch. **Term time only**

Location- Cathedral House- please note this is an office-based role.

Salary £14.50 per hour

The closing date for applications is 5pm on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026 and we will then invite suitable applicants to interview.

If you have any queries or if you would like to apply, please send your CV by email to [hr@brcdt.org](mailto:hr@brcdt.org)

**The Governors of St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Hornchurch,** are seeking to appoint an inspirational and dedicated Head Teacher from April 2026. Closing date: Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 5pm / Interview Date: Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026. Enquiries can be made by email to [admin@stmcp.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stmcp.sch.uk), or phone 01708 448430.

#### **Headteacher - St Peter's Primary School, Romford**




Deadline for applications: 12:00 (noon), Tuesday 6th January 2026

Starting date April 2026

[Headteacher - Holy Family Primary School, Benfleet](#)

Deadline for applications: 09:00, Wednesday 28th January 2026

Starting date September 2026 or earlier



Got pipes? We've got pews!

## Choir Needs You (Yes, You!)

We rehearse most Thursdays at 7:30 pm for about an hour ,  
just enough time to feel holy and hit a high note.

We sing hymns and heavenly hits by Mozart, Bach, Bruckner, Mendelssohn, Esquivel, and more.

We only sing twice a month, so your social life is safe.

Basses, tenors, and altos :we're especially after you.

Sopranos, we love you too, but you're not an endangered species.

**CONTACT THE BATON DIVA:**  
**ISOBEL KENNEDY**  
07795 821705

# ST BERNARD'S HIGH SCHOOL

Milton Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, SS0 7JS



DECEMBER  
**12TH**  
5-8PM

WITH  
A SPECIAL  
VISIT FROM  
*Father  
Christmas!*

## Christmas FAIR

COME AND JOIN US FOR

**MUSIC ♦ SHOPPING ♦ FOOD**





# CHRISTMAS BAZAAR



**SATURDAY  
6TH  
DECEMBER  
12PM - 4PM**



**OUR LADY OF  
RANSOM  
CATHOLIC  
SCHOOL**



LITTLE WHEATLEY CHASE, RAYLEIGH, ESSEX S56 9EH