

# OUR LADY OF RANSOM

18<sup>th</sup> January 2026 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the Year Psalter Week 2



His packet of crisps; wanting to share some with me made me feel very special. Because teenager Robert was deaf, dumb, he had the mental age of two (according to the doctors) and subsequently went blind. (I have mentioned him before). His small, yet for me, wonderful acts of generosity made me feel special. He did other things which would leave a lump in the throat too. A spiritual maturity that seemed to defy his mental and physical limitations.

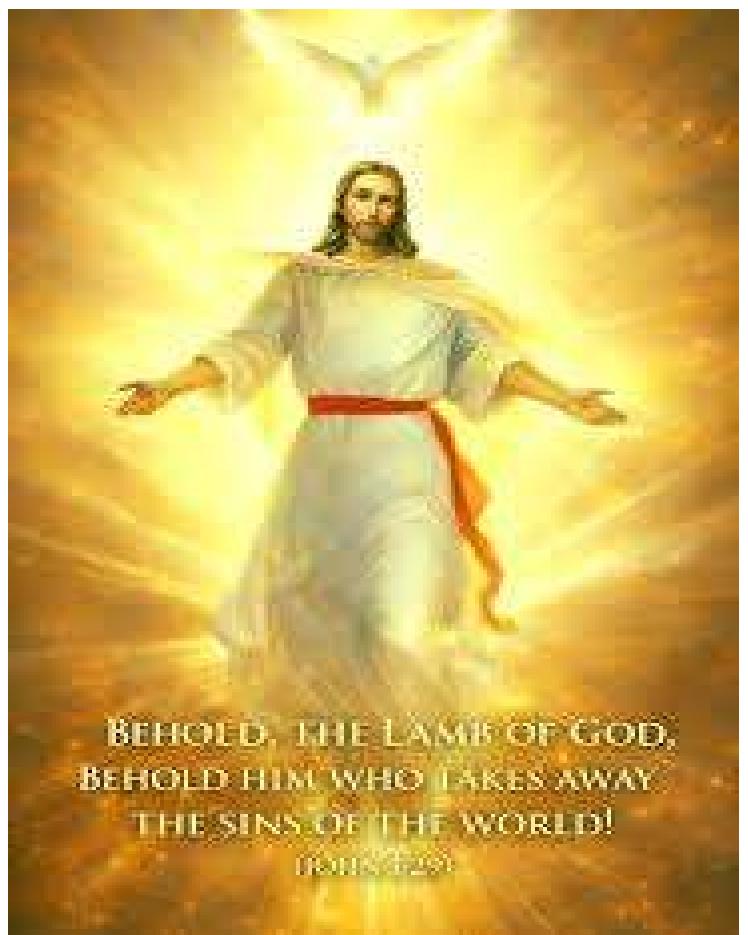
For me, Robert's generosity was extra lovely given his circumstances. Whether it's Robert, or a great Saint, these people make us feel special, chosen. They simply 'know' they themselves are special, (maybe a pre-conscious knowing, as in Robert's case), now they communicate that specialness to us; to let us know we too are God's special and chosen ones.

When God "chooses" people, it is not because he likes them more, or thinks they are better or more worthy than anyone else. Definitely not. He chooses them because they are more receptive to his love and they can then communicate that love to everyone else. Whether, and how much, we are receptive is up to us. As the "chosen race", the Jewish people had that very same responsibility. It's all about how receptive we are.

The basic rule is that you can only facilitate transformation in others to the degree you have been yourself transformed in God's love. You can only lead people as far as you yourself have gone. So, we need to know and experience strongly that we are special, deeply loved in order to communicate that love to others, to pass it on. Hence the need for Saints and/or chosen people. If we do not appreciate this truth, then our faith becomes exclusionary, we assume superior positions against those who are apparently not special, not chosen or worthy, all of which are contrary to Jesus and St. Paul's teachings on being totally inclusive.

St. Paul knows he is an Apostle of God, called to facilitate everyone becoming Saints (our second reading). He wants to let everyone know their specialness in God's eyes. We are all chosen, special, worthy, but how much do we experience that for ourselves? How receptive are we?

That is the key. Often, we need the 'Roberts' of the world, those who 'simply know' - they then communicate that wonderful truth to us. And we in turn pass it on to others... we simply want to, and can't resist passing that specialness on to others.



**1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Isaiah 49: 3, 5-6**

**Psalm: 40: 2, 4ab. 7-8a. 8b-9. 10**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: 1 Corinthians 1: 1-13**

**Gospel: John 1: 29-34**

## MASS INTENTIONS

<b>Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>St. Antony</b>
<b>5.30pm Mass</b>	Carol Nash RIP – Pat and Mary Rickard
<b>Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the Year (Peace Sunday)</b>
<b>8.00am Mass</b>	Len Wiley RIP – Eithne and Una
<b>10.00am Mass</b>	Parish Community
<b>Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January</b>	
<b>9.30am Mass</b>	Doris Warrington RIP
<b>Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January</b>	
<b>9.30am Mass</b>	The Williams Family and Betty Curran RIP
<b>Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January</b>	<b>St. Agnes</b>
<b>10.00am Mass</b>	Ellen and Robert King RIP
<b>Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January</b>	
<b>9.30am Mass</b>	The Hemming Family RIP
<b>Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January</b>	
<b>9.30am Mass</b>	Alice Allso RIP
<b>Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>St. Frances de Sales</b>
<b>5.30pm Mass</b>	Parish Community
<b>Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Year (Sunday of the Word of God)</b>
<b>8.00am Mass</b>	Des Houchin RIP (Anniversary)
<b>10.00am Mass</b>	Mary Rickards (Ints) – The Williams 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

<b>PARISH PRIEST</b> Father Paul Fox 50 London Hill, Rayleigh Essex SS6 7HP <b>01268 38.24.99</b> <a href="http://www.olorchurch.org">www.olorchurch.org</a> email: <a href="mailto:rayleigh@brcdt.org">rayleigh@brcdt.org</a>	<b>Public Mass times:</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>
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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 2



**ANNIVERSARIES** Kindly pray for all those whose anniversaries are at this time.  
Especially..... Ethel Reid and Jackie Lawson. **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.**

**Pope John Paul 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.**

## Wednesday Coffee Morning

**The next Wednesday Coffee morning will be on the 21<sup>st</sup> January 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 18<sup>th</sup> will be hosted by the RCIA group.**



## 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!**

**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.

**+ A thank you message from The Holy Land Group** - Christian greetings and the Peace of our Lord be with you always.

We would love to thank you by allowing our group to come to your church and sell the olive wood religious articles, the result of which was very beneficial and rewarding for our needy Christian families. **which raised £2124.00**

Your help is a great support for us, and for our Christian families in the Holy Land.

We don't have enough words to thank you all but we make sure that you are always in our prayers. If anyone has missed the carvings display, You can place an order online directly from them at [www.tbng.co.uk](http://www.tbng.co.uk)

God bless you all

Love and blessings from The Holy Land Group +

### **Legion of Mary**

*The Legion of Mary meets every Tuesday at 7pm in the Bethany Room. We visit sick and housebound parishioners, the lapsed and those unable to attend church regularly. Our mission is to support the spiritual needs of individuals through personal contact and encourage them to participate in the sacraments and the community life of the Church. We are looking for new members who have a devotion to Our Lady and are willing to volunteer two hours each week for this purpose. Alternatively, as an Auxiliary member you could support us spiritually through prayer and daily devotion to Our Lady. To find out more, please contact Shirley Tel: 07900 396256. If you know anyone who would appreciate a visit from the Legion of Mary, please get in contact.*

**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.

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### **Retrouvaille helps marriages. It can bring hope and healing to relationships.**

Next date: 12th February 2026.

[www.retrouvaille.org.uk](http://www.retrouvaille.org.uk) Tel: 07887 296983

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### **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)

### **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.

**St John Bosco Children's Camp – an amazing volunteer opportunity for this summer.** If you are in school year 12 or student age (or any age over 17!) you are very welcome to apply at [www.boscocamp.co.uk](http://www.boscocamp.co.uk). The application process includes references and a DBS check, which we can help with, as well as a training and support before and during Camp. The Camp provides over 100 children a week with a summer holiday – for many their only holiday. As a volunteer you use your skills in assisting with different sporting and fun activities, as well as the practical aspects of camp life. **Volunteer for 25<sup>th</sup> July – 1<sup>st</sup> August or 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> August.** The Camp is a special work of Caritas Diocese of Brentwood, and also seeks financial donations – all information on the website.

*Sunday 25th January marks World Leprosy Day, which aims to raise awareness of a disease that many people think no longer exists. Each year, 200,000 people are diagnosed with leprosy and there are millions more who are living with the damaging consequences of delayed leprosy treatment because of the stigma that still surrounds the disease. St Francis Leprosy Guild (SFLG), which is the UK's only Catholic leprosy charity, has been caring for people with leprosy for 130 years. Our aim is to find and treat people with leprosy before they develop disabilities. Please consider supporting this vital work and keep people affected by leprosy in your prayers. [www.stfrancisleprosy.org](http://www.stfrancisleprosy.org).*

Following the success of Flame 2025, we are delighted to be preparing for **Flame 2027** — a fantastic event for young people in Years 10–13 (ages 15–18).

Flame brings together inspiring speakers, award-winning musicians and Catholic organisations, and concludes with Adoration led by the Bishops of England and Wales, offering young people a powerful experience of the Church.

You can find all information regarding this event on the attached letter.

If you wish to bring a group from your Parish or partnership, please request your earlybird tickets here:  
<https://forms.office.com/e/KTevSZwGQH>

### **Bereavement Group Westcliff RC Church, Our Lady and Saint Helen**

**2nd Saturday of the month, 10.00 AM to 12.00PM,  
at the parish's small hall.**

**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.

### **Parish Finance Administrator- Southend**

A vacancy has arisen for a Parish Finance Administrator.

All applicants should have good administrative and finance skills, although training will be given.

The post will be part-time working 6 hours per week – (working pattern tbc).

The salary is £12.60 per hour

The closing date for applications is 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026 and suitable applicants will be invited to attend an interview. If you have any queries or if you would like to apply, please send your CV to [southend@brcdt.org](mailto:southend@brcdt.org)

### **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 CANONNESSES OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE INVITE YOU TO A TALK AT NEW HALL SCHOOL:**

#### **Becoming Beacons of Hope in a crazy, confusing world – Rev Dr Liam Hayes**

In a world engulfed by crises and confusion, that sow the seeds of division and despair, let us listen anew to the wisdom and young voices of hope that awaken us to the horizon of another possible world.

*Join us for a participative exploration of hope in our world today.*

New Hall School (CM3 3HS), 7.30 pm, Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026

Refreshments will be served from 7pm

**All are welcome.**

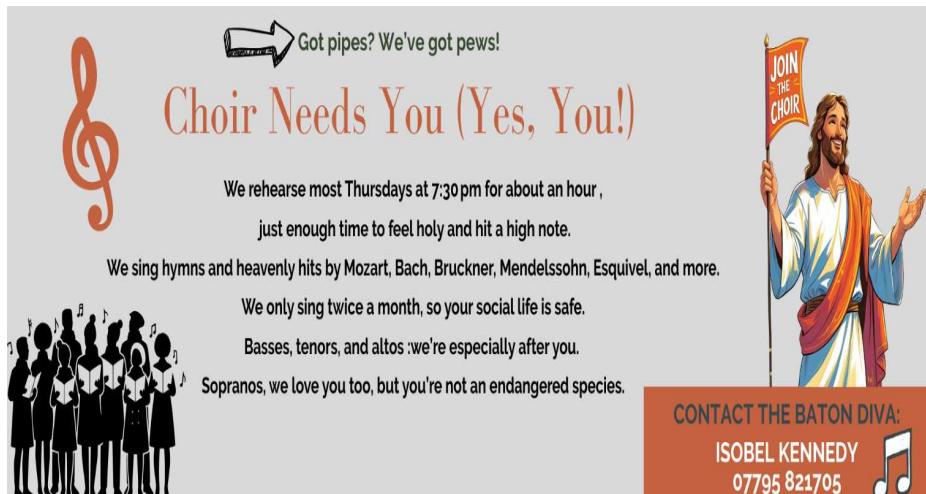
For more details and to book your place please see the link via our home page [www.canonesses.co.uk](http://www.canonesses.co.uk)

Headteacher - Holy Family Primary School, Benfleet

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

Headteacher - St Francis Primary School, Braintree

Deadline for applications: 23:59 Sunday 1st February 2026



BCCS are hosting a Shrove Tuesday Afternoon Tea in the beautiful ballroom at the exclusive Roslin Beach Hotel, Southend-on-Sea on Tuesday 17th February 2026.

Tickets are available now at £35 per person for a luxurious selection of sandwiches, pastries and delicacies, scones and speciality teas or coffee.

Read more about this event on our webpage  
or scan the QR code to book  
<https://www.bccs.org.uk/get-involved/events/>

We look forward to seeing you there!



*Book Now*



# TOUR OF THE RELICS OF ST GERARD MAJELLA 2026

## DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD



### JANUARY

MONDAY 19<sup>TH</sup>: BASILDON,  
HOLY TRINITY

WEDNESDAY 21ST: COLCHESTER,  
STS JAMES & HELEN

THURSDAY 22<sup>ND</sup>: WALTHAMSTOW,  
OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY  
& ST PATRICK

FRIDAY 23<sup>RD</sup>: FOREST GATE,  
ST ANTHONY



REDEMPTORISTS OF THE LONDON PROVINCE  
[WWW.REDEMPTORISTS.CO.UK](http://WWW.REDEMPTORISTS.CO.UK)

6PM: CHURCH OPEN FOR PERSONAL PRAYER WITH THE RELICS  
(CONFESIONS AVAILABLE)

7PM MASS FOLLOWED BY BLESSINGS WITH THE RELIC

@stgerard300

## 300 YEARS OF ST GERARD MAJELLA

1726 - 2026

JOIN US FOR A TOUR OF THE RELICS OF ST GERARD AROUND  
ENGLAND AND WALES AS WE CELEBRATE HIS 300<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

### WHO IS ST GERARD MAJELLA?

Gerard Majella was born in April 1726 in the town of Muro Lucano in Southern Italy. He came from a poor family, and had to work from an early age after the death of his father.

Inspired by a Redemptorist parish mission, he ran away from home at 23 to join the order as a Lay Brother.

Brother Gerard worked variously as a tailor, cook, sacristan, gardener, and carpenter in Redemptorist monasteries, and always maintained a disciplined prayer life.

Perhaps remembering his own poor background, Gerard always had a heart for those in need. He was generous to those who came begging at the monastery door, and often visited the needy to provide material and spiritual care.

He became particularly associated with couples looking to have children, and expectant mothers, thanks to several miraculous occurrences. This has continued after his death, and he is popularly invoked as "The Mother's Saint".

He died at only 29 from tuberculosis, and was immediately hailed as a saint by the ordinary people. He was Beatified in 1893 and Canonised in 1904. To celebrate his 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Redemptorists of the London Province are bringing his relics to every diocese in England and Wales.

MAY ST GERARD MAJELLA PRAY FOR ALL YOUR NEEDS

**St. Gerard Majella** "Later this month our diocese will host the relics of **St Gerard Majella** at four locations (see poster for details). This is the start of a tour of England and Wales to mark his 300th anniversary. Come along and bring your intentions to this popular Saint."