

OUR LADY OF RANSOM

15th March 2026 4th Sunday of Lent Psalter Week 4



Sitting at the back of a crowded bus, Suzy was on her way home from work. Suddenly SS storm troopers stopped the bus and began examining the identification papers of the passengers. It was Nazi Germany. Some passengers were annoyed, others were terrified. Hearts were beating fast. Jews were being told to get off the bus and into a truck around the corner. Trembling and panicking, Suzy watched from her back seat as the soldiers systematically worked their way down the aisle. Tears streamed down her face. The man next to her compassionately asked why she was frightened. “I don’t have papers” she said. “I am a Jew. They’ll take me away”. The compassionate man exploded with disgust, cursing and screaming at her. “You stupid pathetic woman”, he roared. “You make me sick”. The SS men asked what the problem was. “Stupid woman”, he shouted angrily. “Yet again, ‘my wife’ here has forgotten her papers, I’m fed up with her, she’s always doing this”! The soldiers laughed and moved on. Suzy never knew this man’s name, never saw him again. But he saved her life.

Jesus is at it again. Last week, the Samaritan woman, now, the blind man. Breaking at least 2 (if not more) rules to heal someone for eternal life (spittle and Sabbath). The purists (Pharisees) cannot cope with all this. Amazingly, most of this Gospel is concerned with these purists’ inability to cope with the miracle – shouldn’t there be great joy! As these purists grow more blind, so the man grows in insight, becoming a budding theologian! Like the Samaritan woman last week, his insight into Jesus develops – perceiving Jesus from man, to prophet, to Christ, to Son of God.

Many people, just like these purist Pharisees, or the Nazis, want their own prejudices confirmed before they will listen. *They know!!* In fact, they know nothing, as Jesus stresses at the end of the reading (blindness). Sadly, so many people who are like this don’t even realise they are like it. That is very disturbing. The more we think we know, the more ignorant (blind) we are – and it becomes embarrassing and possibly, extremely dangerous for all concerned. Think extremists. Again - “know-it-alls!” Like the man above, and the blind man in the Gospel, it takes a wise act of courage to outsmart the evils of prejudice found in know-it-alls. How open is our heart, or do we think we know? Is lent encouraging us to check ourselves out?

Miracles. As Jesus does for these people, so he does for us. But like these people, it requires an openness of heart, not a “*thinking we know*” – thinking we know closes the heart, nor needing our prejudices confirmed before we listen, this all closes the heart. The blind man was open; the Pharisees were closed. Where do we stand?

1st Reading: 1 Samuel 16: 1b, 6-7,10-13a

Psalm: 23: 1-3a. 3b-4. 5.6

2nd Reading Ephesians 5: 8-14

Gospel: John 9: 1-41



MASS INTENTIONS	
Saturday 14th March	
5.30pm Mass	Chris Graham RIP (Anniversary) – Melanie Graham
Sunday 15th March	4th Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday)
8.00am Mass	Isaac Varghese THG – Lixy Cyril
10.00am Mass	Parish Community
Monday 16th March	
9.30am Mass	Mgr. Michael Corley RIP (Anniversary)
Tuesday 17th March	
9.30am Mass	Jean Lowry RIP (Anniversary) – Frank Lowry
Wednesday 18th March	
10.00am Mass	Sr. Dominic Kennedy RIP
Thursday 19th March	
9.30am Mass	Fr. John Gordon RIP (Anniversary)
Friday 20th March	
9.30am Mass	Anthony Hall RIP – Mary Butterworth
Saturday 21st March	
5.30pm Mass	Andy Rickard RIP (Anniversary) – Pat and Mary Rickard
Sunday 22nd March	5th Sunday of Lent
8.00am Mass	Parish Community
10.00am Mass	Maria and Gerardo Schiavi RIP (Anniversary) – The Schiavi 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><u>Public Mass times:</u> 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 234



ANNIVERSARIES Kindly pray for all those whose anniversaries are at this time.
Especially Jean Lowry and Andrew Rickard. **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.

5.30pm Mass: Members of our RCIA programme who are being fully received into the church at Easter will be observing their 2nd (of 3) scrutinies at the 5.30pm Mass this Saturday March 14th.

Also, some members will be doing the same at the 9.30am Mass on Tuesday morning (March 17th).

The above will be happening next weekend, but at the 8am Sunday Mass. The same with the following dates, March 17th and March 24th (Tuesdays). Please keep our candidates in your prayers. Thank you.

Easter Raffle. The Knights of St. Columba are selling raffle tickets after all Masses over the next weekends; the raffle will be drawn on Easter Sunday during the coffee morning after the 10am Mass.

Stations of the Cross during Lent: Sundays 12.30pm.



Pope John Paul 2nd 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. We have a small supply of aids currently. 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 18th March 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.



Our Lady of Ransom Parish Pilgrimage to Knock & Co. Mayo Ireland

Monday 6th July to Friday 10th July 2026

You are very welcome to join Fr. Paul and fellow pilgrims on our five-day Parish Pilgrimage to Knock & County Mayo. July is fast approaching, so please consider joining us. As well as spending three days in Knock, we will also be visiting Ballintubber Abbey, Kylemore Abbey, Croagh Patrick, and the Fr. Peyton Centre (with lunch provided). We will be staying at the Castlecourt Hotel in Westport, although a 45-minute drive from Knock, provides a four-course dinner each night, a bar and evening entertainment. Flights are from Stanstead Airport with an early morning outbound flight and early evening return. Price £899 per person based on two people sharing. Package includes flight with 10kg check-in luggage; four nights dinner, bed & breakfast; all entertainment, excursions and guided tours. For further information and to register your interest, please contact: Shirley Hegewald email: shirley.hegewald16@gmail.com mobile: 07900 396256.

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

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.

Women's World Day of Prayer. The Rayleigh churches World Day of Prayer team would like to thank OLOR parish for helping to make the 6th March such a success.

Thanks go to Fr Paul for his welcome, to all the ladies who baked (many compliments received), to the team who served over sixty people with refreshments and to the Greeters who gave all the visitors such a warm welcome. Thanks also to all who joined the service from OLOR parish community.

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

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

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

NATIONAL MARRIAGE WEEK: Please pray for all those living out the vocation to marriage and couples preparing to marry. Support is available for those who need it, and your parish priest can point you in the right direction. If you are celebrating a significant anniversary this year, please let your parish know so that you can be invited to the Mass of Thanksgiving in the Cathedral on Saturday 11th July.

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.**

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. 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 25th July – 1st August or 1st – 8th August.** The Camp is a special work of Caritas Diocese of Brentwood, and also seeks financial donations – all information on the website.

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>

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. Applications close on Friday 16th January 2026.

**Lenten talk at Brentwood Cathedral at 7.30pm: Wednesday 18th March:
Rev Msgr John Armitage: The uniqueness of Catholicism for British Society.**

“St Joseph's Catholic Primary School & Nursery, Canvey Island, will be celebrating 70 years of their wonderful school – please join them on Friday 20th March for a community open evening from 3:30pm - 7:00pm. All welcome! Pop-up museum, café, and tours around the school. 1 entry suggested donation.”

Primary Vacancies

Click on vacancy to take you to the advert

[Class Teacher – St Antony's Catholic Primary School, Woodford Green](#)

Deadline for applications: 12:00 noon Thursday 19th March 2026

[Deputy Headteacher – Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School, Chelmsford](#)

Deadline for applications: 12:00 noon Friday 20th March 20

[Headteacher – St Francis Catholic Primary School, Braintree](#)

Deadline for applications: 23:59 Sunday 15th March 2026

[Deputy Headteacher – St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Tilbury](#)

Deadline for application: 12:00 noon Friday 10th April 2026

Commissioned. Calling men of all ages and states of life: book your place at 'Commissioned', the National Men's Pro-life Conference, on April 18th at Birmingham Christian College. Through compelling talks on fatherhood, marriage, post-abortion healing, spiritual warfare and sexual responsibility learn to live out your vocation with humility, courage and integrity. For more info including speakers or to book your place go to <https://www.marchforlife.co.uk/commissioned-pro-life-mens-conference/> or contact info@marchforlife.co.uk

[SVP Southend £1 for 40 days Campaign JustGiving Link](#)

As we enter the season of Lent, we are writing to ask for your support for a simple but powerful act of charity in aid of SVP Southend.

This Lent, we are inviting parishioners to give £1 a day for 40 days. This small daily sacrifice will help to fund emergency shelter, food provision and pathways to independence for people in need in our local community. With every blessing,

Nesper Maregedze

Deputy Centre Manager

Nesperm@svp.org.uk

07549128877

01702 592980

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



St Vincent
de Paul Society

England and Wales

Turning Concern into Action

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

Lennox Productions presents

An Amateur production by arrangement with The Really Useful Group Ltd

JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT

Lyrics by
Tim Rice

Music by
Andrew Lloyd Webber

in aid of  **Lennox
Children's
Cancer Fund**

Towngate Theatre, Basildon

St. Martins Square · SS14 1DL

Wednesday 10th June to Saturday 13th June 2026 at 7.30pm
(Friday performances at 5.00pm and 8.00pm, Saturday Matinee 3.00pm)

Tickets £17-£26.50 Concessions and family tickets available



**Towngate
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Box office: 01268 205300 Book online: www.towngatetheatre.co.uk

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This production is being staged in aid of **Lennox Children's Cancer Fund**, a local national charity that supports children with cancer and their families. So coming along isn't just a lovely night out, it's also helping an amazing cause