

OUR LADY OF RANSOM

23rd August 2026 Twenty-First Sunday of the Year (A) Psalter Week 1



Sinking in quicksand, the man screamed for help. A philosopher walked past and developed a theory about sinking and fear. Another person walked past and thought that this was the man's own fault, and that this should be a lesson for everyone. Still sinking with the man crying for help, another person walked past and thought the sinking man would be happy later in heaven. Another walked past and thought he would be reincarnated in a higher form. Then Jesus walked by, reached out and pulled the man out.

One difference between Jesus and other religions and philosophies is that Jesus gets stuck in. Gets stuck into the social and political problems of the day – and pays a price. Many other religions have beautiful ways and philosophies, but the founder doesn't necessarily become deeply emmeshed into the problems of the day – and pay a price with his own life. Jesus uses his own life and body and willingly pays that grim price. Paid through the cross. How many other founders of world religions die a broken, wounded, naked, bleeding, barbaric and gruesome death on a cross. Or something equivalent? You couldn't make it up! It seems so absurd - it must be true.

So, Jesus becomes a form of Hero. This is why we have crucifixes in our homes, and around our bodies – as Jesus saves the man in the quicksand, so he is saving us, if, of course, we are a people of real faith. Not superstition. That is the real power of the cross to save. That Jesus the Christ is totally with us and saving us from all the nonsenses in life, nonsenses that we construct ourselves, and other stupidities that are simply there. When we look at other world contributions, we see Jesus' teaching and action far surpasses all the greatest world philosophers.

Jesus painted no pictures, yet the greatest artists received their illumination from Him. He wrote no poetry, yet the greatest poets were inspired by him. He composed no music, yet the greatest classical music reached their highest perfection - all in His honour. Who is this Jesus for us? Many looked for a warrior, He came as Peace – they missed Him. Many looked for a king, he came as Servant – they missed Him. They looked for political liberation, yet He died on a Roman cross as a prisoner of both church and state – they missed Him. They looked for someone to fit in with their own ideas so they could feel "right" – He was the idea-breaker - they missed Him. So many continue to miss Him. Must we miss Him too? As in the Gospel today, Jesus challenges each of us: "who do you say I am?"



1st Reading: Isaiah 22: 15, 19-23

Psalm 138: 1-2a, 2bc, 3, 6, 8bc

2nd Reading: Romans 11: 33-36

Gospel: Matthew 16: 13-20

MASS INTENTIONS	
Saturday 22nd August	
5.30pm Mass	Bridget Smith (Ints) – Debbie Smith
Sunday 23rd August	
8.00am Mass	Parish Community
10.00am Mass	Mary Rickard RIP – Norah Parker
Monday 24th August	St. Bartholomew
9.30am Mass	John, Norah and Nick Ryan RIP – Judy and Keith Hoskins
Tuesday 25th August	
9.30am Mass	Mike Healy RIP – Rita Gurney
Wednesday 26th August	
10.00am Mass	Mary Rickard RIP – Mary Rickards
Thursday 27th August	St. Monica
9.30am Mass	Paul Gurney RIP – Rita Gurney
Friday 28th August	St. Augustine of Canterbury
9.30am Mass	The Williams Family and Betty Curran RIP
Saturday 29th August	The Passion of John the Baptist
5.30pm Mass	Michael Strawson RIP – Zoe Booker
Sunday 30th August	
8.00am Mass	Mary Rickard RIP – Mary and Bill Holmes
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

PARISH PRIEST Father Paul Fox 50 London Hill, Rayleigh Essex SS6 7HP 01268 38.24.99 www.olorchurch.org email: rayleigh@brcdt.org	<u>Public Mass times:</u> Saturdays 5.30pm Sundays 8am & 10.00am Mondays & Tuesdays 9.30am Wednesdays 10.00am Thursdays & Fridays 9.30am
--	--

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: Michael O'Shea, Mildred Lyden, William Eyre, Christine Sugrue, Gordon Senior and Lilianna De Cristofano. **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 full newsletter is 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 Holy Communion, please consume the sacred Host **immediately**. Please do so before receiving the Precious Blood from the Chalice. If you do not receive from the Chalice, 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.

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. Our Programme will be starting on **Monday 14th September 2026 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 2027.

Pope John Paul 2nd Hall Bookings –

For any Hall Booking requests, please contact the Parish Office by phone or email, Tuesday to Thursday, between 9.30 and 1pm. 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 in September. 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.

Please note there will be no Wednesday coffee mornings during August as the ladies who regularly bake and serve tea and coffee, (for which we are so grateful) are taking a well-earned break.

We look forward to seeing you again in September.



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.



KNIGHTS OF ST COLUMBA PARISH SOCIAL EVENTS

Coffee Mornings will be held on the last Sunday of every month.

Saturday 3rd October Knights' Open Evening, with guest speaker Sr Joachim.

Knight's "Summer Celebration" on 12th September to commemorate 75 yrs of service in the parish. This event is open to all parishioners.

Place --- Pope John Paul Hall.

Time ---- 7.00pm

Entrance -- £10.00 per person.

Food - will be a cold buffet

Bring your own drinks

Dress code --Smart casual.

There will be a DJ and the customary raffle.

It would be useful to know numbers attending. Please contact Christopher Johnson 07783 326732 or Tom Kennedy 07831 238837 before 5th Sept. Thank you.

ORGANISTS, PIANISTS. We are really blessed to have a proper pipe organ in Our Lady of Ransom Church. But there are few parishioners who can play it. Let me know if you are one of the few. Also, if you are

having piano lessons and can read music, even to a quite elementary level (AB Grade 4 perhaps) I would be pleased if you would contact me. I can give you some lessons (free of charge) and help you to learn to play the organ. Isobel Kennedy 07795 821705

CHILDREN'S CHOIR Children's Choir is starting on Thursday 3rd September at 6.30pm in the organ loft.

The idea will be to join in the singing with the main choir at Sunday 10am Mass. Please contact Isobel Kennedy on 07795 821705 for further information.

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.

MARRIAGE SUPPORT: From relationships that are 'Just in a Rut', needing some refreshment or more serious issues - If you are open to try again – Retrouvaille could be the solution. We have helped thousands of couples get their relationship back on track as they rediscovered hope and trust in the marriage. To find out more: www.retrouvaille.org.uk +44 797 338 0443

MISSIO RED BOXES

Summer Mission Today magazines are available at the back of church and being delivered where possible.

If your red box needs emptying, please contact Katherine Abel 0790 6844 284 or warren_katherine@hotmail.com, alternatively leave in the sacristy/presbytery to be collected.

Due to bank closures, it is unfortunately increasingly difficult to bank cash and cheque donations. Please see details in the back of the Mission Today magazine for ways *would 'Think outside the box'* if you would like to donate.

Donations can be made by Direct Debit, or Bank Transfer Account Name: Missio Sort Code: 16-00-16 Account Number: 10824230 Reference: RB + your postcode. You can also give directly on their website, or via phone or text.

Thank you for your continued 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

Could you take part in **Ride & Stride's 75th anniversary** year to raise money to help your own church and others? The Friends of Essex Churches Trust strive to raise money to award grants to preserve and improve Christian places of worship of all denominations in Essex, Southend, Thurrock, Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Newham, Redbridge and Waltham Forest.

Open to all from keen cyclists, hikers, families with young children, teenagers, the elderly and more, the event takes place on Saturday 12th September 2026 9am-5pm and is an opportunity to visit some of England's most rare and unusual places of worship. Half of any money you raise through sponsorship is returned to your church, and half goes into the main fund. And if you don't walk or ride, there are many other ideas for fundraising on this website: www.friendsofsexchurches.org.uk/ride-stride

Our Lady of Ransom Catholic Church – Altar Servers

Are you looking for a meaningful way to serve your church and grow in faith?

We warmly invite **people of all ages – children and adults** – to join **St Stephen's Guild of Altar Servers**.

Everyone has a part to play in the Mass, but altar servers have a special role – to serve, assist, and support the priest and deacon, especially around the altar. It's a meaningful and active way to take part in worship while helping the whole congregation to pray.

- ✦ Open to new members
- ✦ Full training provided
- ✦ A rewarding and respected role in the parish

If you're interested, we'd love to hear from you!

☎ Contact **Fr Paul** Parish Priest at church

☎ Or **Debbie Smith** MC on 07359 919785



Come and be part of something special – join St Stephen's Guild today!

Funding Grants for Crises and Funerals.

Crisis grants help parish communities to support local individuals or families facing extreme hardship or crisis.

Crisis grant applications need to be made or supported by the local Catholic parish and the Caritas team. [Parishes can download further information and the application form here.](#)

Caritas Westminster can offer grants to help specifically with funeral costs in cases of hardship. Funeral grants can contribute up to £1,500 towards funeral costs. This grant is provided by a third party who wishes to remain anonymous and given through a local Catholic parish in the Diocese of Westminster. [Parishes can download further information and the application form here.](#)

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.

BCCS invites you to join them on an exclusive, personal tour of Ingatestone Hall, conducted by the Petre family, offering unbeatable insight of the past and present of his Grade I listed building and gardens, followed by a hot drink and homemade biscuit on Thursday 3rd September, 11:00-15:30. The event was over-subscribed last year so get your tickets fast - entry is £25 per person - book online today: [//www.bccs.org.uk/get-involved/events-campaigns/](http://www.bccs.org.uk/get-involved/events-campaigns/)

Please note, due to the age of the building, there is no disabled access to the upper floor, and some of the lower floor and grounds are uneven and thus not suitable for those who have **From CATHOLIC TEACHING IN THE WORLD OF AI**

Magnifica Humanitas . Pope Leo has recently published *Magnifica Humanitas*, an encyclical letter on 'safeguarding the human person in the time of artificial intelligence'. It puts 'artificial intelligence' in the context of Catholic Social Teaching. The Holy Father writes: 'In the era of artificial intelligence, when human dignity is threatened by new forms of dehumanization, ours is the pressing duty to remain profoundly human.' Fr Hugh MacKenzie, chaplain at Westminster Cathedral, is an expert on AI. He will be giving a presentation on the topic on Saturday 26th September 2026 at the Catholic Church of Christ the Eternal High Priest in Gidea Park, beginning at 11 am. The event is in-person but is also available live-stream from www.whatgoodnews.org The talk will be of particular interest to our young people, with their IT competence.



St Vincent's

a place of help, hope and opportunity

Help us help others

WE NEED YOU!

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED

Help us collect. Help us feed. Help us **change lives.**

Every day, we collect surplus food from our amazing partners to provide around 50 lunches and 95 dinners daily to those who need it most.

Without our volunteer drivers, none of this would be possible.



OUR REGULAR COLLECTIONS



WAITROSE SOUTHEND

- Sunday 5pm
- Tuesday 8pm
- Wednesday 8pm
- Tesco Extra Thursday 8pm



M&S FOOD

- Tuesday 7.30pm
- Wednesday 7.30pm
- Thursday 7.30pm
- Friday 7.30pm
- Saturday 7.30pm
- Sunday 5pm



LIDL WOODGRANGE

- Monday - Friday 8am

KFC & PARTNERS



KFC HIGH STREET

- Monday 10am



KFC HIGH STREET & GREYHOUND

- Wednesday 10am



KFC HIGH STREET + GREYHOUND + LEIGH PROGRESS ROAD

- Friday 10am



HUNGRY CUPBOARD COLLECTIONS

We collect food from local schools to restock our food bank.

- Monday or Friday 10am - 1pm (Using our Luton van)
- Tuesday 10am - 1pm Furniture delivery (Using our Luton van)
- Tue, Wed or Fri 10am - 3pm Furniture delivery (Using our Luton van)



THE HIGH ST SVP MARKET STALL

Every Thursday 9am - 4pm

- ✓ People to set up
- ✓ People to sell (2 hour slots)
- ✓ People to pack up



WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

Every hour you give helps us feed, support and bring hope to our community.

Thank you!



CAN YOU HELP ON A REGULAR BASIS?

If you can spare a little time, we would love to hear from you.



GET IN TOUCH TODAY!

NesperM@svp.org.uk



01702 592980



www.svpsouthend.org.uk



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



THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF OUR MISSION. **TOGETHER, WE CAN CHANGE LIVES.**