



MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS



Saturday 25TH January 2025 – THE CONVERSION OF ST PAUL, Ap

9.00am Morning Mass
 9.30am Holy Rosary
 10.00am Confessions
 6.00pm Vigil Mass

People of the Parish

Sheila Reynolds Intentions

Sunday 26TH January 2025 – THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C) (Sunday of the Word of God)

9.00am Mass
 11.00am Mass
 5.00pm Holy Hour

Bill Cook RIP
Jeffrey Bench RIP

Tuesday 28TH January 2025 – St Thomas Aquinas, Pr D

7.00pm Novena to St. Antony
 7.30pm Evening Mass

People of the Parish

Wednesday 29TH January 2025 – Feria

9.00am Morning Mass
 9.30am Holy Rosary
 10am – 5pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

People of the Parish

Thursday 30TH January 2025 – Feria

9.00am Morning Mass
 9.30am Holy Rosary
 10am – 4pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Ceferina and Artemio Hernandez RIP

Friday 31ST January 2025 – St John Bosco, Pr

9.00am Morning Mass
 9.30am Holy Rosary
 10am – 5pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

People of the Parish

Saturday 01ST February 2025 – Feria

9.00am Morning Mass
 9.30am Holy Rosary
 10.00am Confessions
 6.00pm Vigil Mass

People of the Parish

Patrick Kevin Gallagher RIP

Sunday 02ND February 2025 – THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

9.00am Mass
 11.00am Mass
 5.00pm Holy Hour

John Mongan RIP



OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL

Parish Priest: Fr Britto Belevendran



61 London Road, Wickford, Essex SS12 0AW ~ Tel 01268 733219

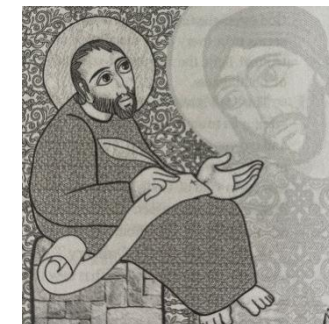
Website: www.wickfordcatholic.com ~ Email: wickford@brcdt.org

Hall Bookings: email: wickfordcatholicalls@gmail.com / Tel: 01268 733219

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (C) Sunday of the Word of God 26TH January 2025

Many organizations have a mission statement that succinctly defines their purpose. Today's gospel recounts Jesus's declaration of his own "mission statement" in his hometown synagogue. Jesus begins by saying that the power of the Holy Spirit is upon him. The Spirit is God's mission statement to the world, since prior to Jesus's coming, God's love in mission is first revealed by the Spirit's activity in creation. We can only know the "inside" mystery of God through the "outside" manifestation of the action and presence of the holy in the world and in human experience.

Scripture scholar Stephen Bevans has elaborated a missionary theology of the Spirit, naming it "God Inside Out". Today's gospel says that this Spirit now rests upon Jesus, who makes humanly visible and tangible the inner heart of God, who desires healing, wholeness, and jubilee justice. Luke says that "the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently" at Jesus when he read from the prophet Isaiah. Could they see "God inside out" as he interpreted the Scripture passage as fulfilled in their hearing?



Similarly, in the first reading, Nehemiah stresses that all the people listened attentively as Ezra read forth the law and interpreted it for them. For our ancestors in the faith, it was through the law that the Spirit made known the inner heart of God. Nehemiah says that "all the people were weeping as they heard the words of the law." He urges them not to be sad or weep but does not explain what caused their weeping. Were they tears of joy to have returned home from exile in Babylon to their homeland, with their own temple being rebuilt and their own customs restored? Were they tears of grief over all that had been lost in the intervening years: those who had died or who had not returned them, the land despoiled, the temple in shambles? Maybe they were tears of repentance. Or they were tears of gratitude for the gift of the law from a God whose words of undeserved love and mercy rained down upon them from the mouth of Ezra? Perhaps the tears were all for the above. When God reveals outwardly the bounteous heart of divine love, our first response is often to be overwhelmed to the point of tears.

It is easy to imagine that as Jesus announced his embodiment of this divine mission there may have been a similar reaction, as those who felt exiled in body or spirit heard a new promise of restoration and release, a new time of jubilation.

Paul uses a vivid metaphor to describe the way the Christian community continues the mission of being "God inside out". The spirit, as love in mission, creates unity and harmony within the very diverse body, where the many parts are all unique, precious, and equally important. The mission is especially focused on attending to those members who are the most vulnerable. As within the divine being, so within the united community of believers: every joy felt by one is shared by all, and every suffering is borne by all.

If you wish to make an offering online, this QR code can be scanned using the camera on your phone, directly to the Parish bank account, for your offering to be transferred each time. Please note Gift Aid cannot be used when donating through the QR Codes.



PARISH NEWS

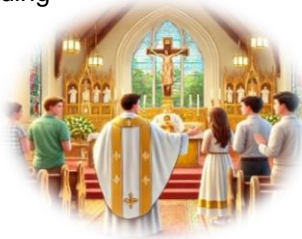
THANK YOU TO FR. LESLIE KNIGHT & FR. JOSEPH MUKATT

We are grateful to Fr. Leslie Knight and Fr. Joseph Mukatt for their kindness and generosity in celebrating Mass for us while Fr. Britto has been away. Let us keep them in our prayers as a sign of our appreciation for their ministry and dedication to our parish.

CONFIRMATION GROUP WELCOME MASS

This **Sunday, 26th January, at the 11am Mass**, we will be holding a Confirmation Group Welcome Mass.

During this special celebration, Fr. Britto will officially present our Confirmation candidates to the parish community and offer a blessing to mark the beginning of their journey towards receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. Please keep these young people in your prayers as they prepare to deepen their faith and commitment to Christ.



CUPPA, CAKE AND CHAT

Our first Cuppa, Cake and Chat of the year will be on **Tuesday 28th January at 10am**. Please come and enjoy a cuppa and a natter whilst eating a cake or two. All are welcome.

SPECIAL ALTAR SERVERS MASS

On **Sunday 02nd February**, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, we will be holding a special mass for our altar servers at the **11am mass**. Many have been serving for a year or over and will be presented with their medals. It will be a mass celebrating their service to the parish community.

This will be followed with a celebration lunch together at a local pizza restaurant after mass at 12:30pm - venue tbc.

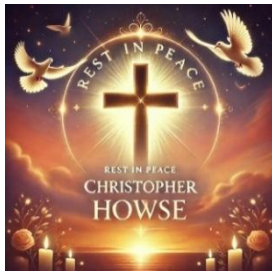
Please email amandapelham@rocketmail.com to advise if you will be able to attend both the mass and meal. Amanda will be emailing all the servers with more detail.

CRIB OFFERINGS – SECOND COLLECTION

There will be a second collection during Mass on **Sunday, 02nd February**, for the Crib Offerings. All donations will go towards supporting the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society, which provides essential care and assistance to children and families in need. Your generosity will help bring hope and support to those who need it most. Thank you for your kindness and continued support.

CHRISTOPHER HOWSE – REQUIEM MASS

We are saddened to announce the passing of Christopher Howse. His Requiem Mass will take place on **Thursday 06th February at 10.30am** here at OLOGC followed by a service at Basildon Crematorium at 12.00pm. Please keep Christopher and his family in your prayers during this difficult time. May he rest in Peace.



THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING PAX CHRISTI

A big thank-you to everyone who contributed to the Pax Christi collection last Sunday, your generosity will go a long way in supporting their mission of promoting peace, justice, and reconciliation around the world.

May we continue to pray for peace and justice in our world.

STANDING ORDERS

It would be really helpful for the Parish cash counters if you could possibly set up a standing order to make your weekly Mass Offerings. This can be set up very easily if you use online banking or forms can be found in the porch which then need to be sent to your bank.

For your easy reference the Parish bank account details are:

Account Name: Catholic Church Wickford Our Lady of Good Counsel

Sort Code: 40-13-22

Account No: 71026216

Reference: (your surname then Weekly Offering)

THE REPOSITORY

The repository has a lovely selection of items for sale including cards, candles & children's books. The shop is open after all the weekend masses, & some weekday masses, & by appointment. Please contact Kathleen (761195), & Sheila (767064), for details. Both Cash & Card payments are available. Please come & visit us. We will be delighted to see you!

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

As a reminder, the Parish Office is open during the following hours:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday: 10.00am – 3.00pm.

SICK FRIENDS AND RELATIVES –

Please pray for Jayne & Danny Balaam, Beniamina Bilewycz, Arthur Brittain, Mary Caruana, Theresa Eldred, Patricia Gammell, Johnny Gee, Celine Guckian, Sharon Guckian, Gabrielle & Ralphie Langridge, Margaret Livesey, John Maguire, Bridget Mahoney, Carmella Micella, Elizabeth Mooney, Cecile Narbeth, Olivia Nazareth, Margaret O'Doherty, Joy Orrock, Carmelo Piazza, Maureen Price, Conchita Prime, Carol Rushbrook, John Sheridan, Gerry Smyth, Maria Weedon, Elizabeth Arnold, Jane Williams, Gomez, Patricia McEvoy, Maureen Sullivan, Susan Freeman, Jane Davenport, Nathalie Ah-key, Amparo Thorogood, George O'Boyle, Pat McEvoy, Ann Parkinson, Nelly Prada, Michael Fitzgerald, May and Chris Carey, Doreen Green, Conrad Gomes, Peter Turner, Sr. Sior Cosgrave Una, Clairin Molloy, Celine Wells, Patricia Graves and Keith Bottjer, Robert Turner, Patricia Price, George Ross, Frank Daniels, Geoff Ebdon, Peter Griggs, Joan Fitzgerald, Sandra Fitzgerald, Clifford Foxwell, Pat Kent.

Anniversaries We pray for Frida Peckham, Maureen Ludlow, Josephine Bonnici, Thomas Jocelyn, Jeffrey Bench, Fr Arthur Perrot Field, Frank Leonard Brindle, Norman Pearson, Henry Eugene Benning, Mary De Gerden-Ferry, Elizabeth Hofmann, Pietro Fabrizio, Kathleen Bernatovitch, Thomas McClone, Fr. Jack Clifford, Daniel Dennis Foley, Herbert James Mortiboy, Harold Smith, Josephine Barnes, Eladio Calleja, Robert Peile, Margaret Dell, Harold Orrock, Fr. Joseph Burns, John Mongan.

DIOCESAN NEWS

JUBILEE 2025 – PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY

The jubilee year 2025 is inviting us to visit a holy place and obtain plenary indulgence by entering through the holy door. The parish of OUR LADY AND ALL SAINTS is arranging a pilgrimage to Italy visiting the holy places along with some tourist attractions. We will visit THE VATICAN, ROME, ASSISI, PADUA, VENICE & PISA. DATE: 30TH AUGUST–4TH SEPTEMBER 2025 (6 DAYS). Superior 4* Hotel Accommodation. Adults and children over 9 years: £775; Children (2-9 years): £730. Single room supplement £220. For more details and to book your place, email: frsabupariyadan@brcdt.org.

WORD ON FIRE UK BIBLE CONFERENCE | FEBRUARY 2025

If you want to gain a deeper appreciation of the Bible and the Catholic faith, come and join Bishop Robert Barron and thousands of other Catholics from across the UK for the national conference *Evangelisation & Culture: The Bible*. Tickets are available for the Friday and Saturday or just a day pass for the Saturday.

Date: **Friday 21st - Saturday 22nd February 2025**

Location: Excel Centre, East London

Speakers Include: Bishop Robert Barron, N.T. Wright, Professor Tracey Rowland, Archbishop John Wilson and more.

For more information and to register, please visit: wordonfire.org/the-bible-event.

HOLY WEEK PILGRIMAGE

Holy Week Escorted Tour to Westport, Knock & Co Mayo, 13th April 2025. £849.00 pps. Price includes flight, 10kg hold luggage, 4 nights in 4* Castlecourt Hotel, Westport with Dinner, Bed & Breakfast. Lunch on three days. All entertainment, excursions and transport included. Visit Knock, Galway City, Kylemore Abbey, Croagh Patrick, Live outdoor Passion Play at Ballintubber Abbey, Quiet Man Museum. Single

supplement on Enquiry. Contact 01268 762 278 or 07740 175557 or email knockpilgrimages@gmail.com.

BRENTWOOD CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S SOCIETY (BCCS)

has a number of Gold Bond Charity places for runners in the LONDON MARATHON taking place on Sunday 27th April 2025. If you are an experienced runner or someone who would value the opportunity to participate in this renowned event, please contact Damian Dillon for further details on 07912 308000 / ddillon@bccs.org.uk. The closing date for completed applications is Friday 26th September and please note that there is a minimum sponsorship requirement of £1800 (excluding Gift Aid). If you have been lucky enough to secure your own running place through the ballot, BCCS would invite you to join them and run to support children's mental health. The London Marathon is a unique opportunity to raise much needed funds for the Diocesan Children's Society and perhaps achieve a lifetime ambition at the same time.

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

UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE CHRISTIAN HERITAGE CENTRE

The Search for Truth: Edith Stein, 14 – 16 March 2025

Fr Matthew Blake, OCD will offer a weekend exploring the life and teachings of Edith Stein, or St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, and her indomitable search for truth that led her to the Catholic faith.

For more information and to book: <https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/the-search-for-truth-edith-stein/>

Men's Spiritual Exercises, 30 March – 4 April 2025

A 5-day version of the Ignatian Exercises offered specifically for men (whether lay or ordained), this retreat will be preached by the Benedictine Monks of St Joseph's Abbey, Flavigny (France). Founded in 1988, this community has retained its charism of a specific apostolate to men with a shortened version of the Ignatian Exercises. One-to-one direction will be offered alongside the talks. Priests are welcome to attend and concelebrate or celebrate their own Mass.

For more information and to book: <https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/mens-spiritual-exercises/>

The Fatherhood of the Priest clergy retreat, 28 April – 2 May 2025

We are delighted to announce that Fr Jose Granados, Superior General of the Disciples of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and Vice-President emeritus of the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies in Marriage and Family Life, will preach our spring clergy retreat. Fr Granados will address two, intertwined questions that are at the heart of priestly identity: masculinity and spiritual paternity. As a widely respected sacramental theologian, a consultant to multiple Vatican dicasteries, author of numerous articles and volumes, as well as an experienced pastor and formator, this is a unique opportunity to engage with a theme of fundamental importance to priesthood.

For more information and to book: <https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/the-fatherhood-of-the-priest/>

1. Programmes:

BISHOP'S CERTIFICATE IN CATECHESIS AND YOUTH MINISTRY

is an online course is designed to be an entry level qualification to help in the ongoing formation of adults involved in sacramental preparation (First Holy Communion and/or Confirmation) or youth ministry in the Diocese of Brentwood. It includes both the development of practical skills & the deepening of theological knowledge. For more information or to register your interest please email clairebailey@brcdt.org or see the website <https://bcys.net/bishops-cert/>

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING AND THE ELECTION

An edited recording of the talks given recently at Christ the Eternal High Priest Catholic Church, Gidea Park, by Raymond Friel, CEO of Caritas Social Action Network, is now available to view. Simply go to the homepage of www.whatgoodnews.org and click on the link.

2. Appeals:

Community of Our Lady of Walsingham - House Appeal

In honour of the **Presentation of the Lord on 2nd February** - the World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life - could you help a new, growing, religious community? The Community of Our Lady of Walsingham seeks donations to establish a mission house in Walsingham where they can expand their work of spiritual accompaniment, hospitality and supporting young people to grow in faith. The community will pray for all benefactors and are grateful for donations of any amount which can be made at www.walsinghamcommunity.org/maryshouseappeal

Web: www.walsinghamcommunity.org. Tel 01362 692574

CAFOD ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CRISIS APPEAL

Donate to CAFOD's Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal at cafod.org.uk/ipc or call 0303 303 3030 to support those affected and get funds to local trusted experts in Gaza and southern Israel who have been working alongside communities helping those most in need. Your donation will help support aid workers providing urgent humanitarian aid including food, water, and emergency shelter to those in need. Thank you for your prayers.

3. Job adverts:

Brentwood Catholic Children's Society (BCCS)

is looking to recruit a Communications and Fundraising Administrator to provide effective administrative and communications support to the Marketing and Fundraising Team. The post requires someone who can manage a high degree of responsibility and who is confident working independently and creatively. Candidates must have excellent organisational skills and be proficient at managing their time and priorities effectively. The role is based at their head office in Billericay High Street and ideally would be a full time position (37 hours per week) although some flexibility may be available for the right candidate. Full details can be found in the Job Description on the BCCS website: <https://www.bccs.org.uk/who-we-are/work-us/> If you think you have the skills needed for the role and

would welcome an informal chat, please contact BCCS Head of Voluntary Income Julie Abbott by email jabbott@bccs.org.uk or phone 07912 277413. Otherwise, please apply directly to her with your CV and covering letter before 31st January 2025.

Advert for a Secondary School Link Adviser Opportunity

The Diocese of Brentwood is seeking to appoint a Secondary School Link Adviser who is a practising Catholic, to support the Diocesan Board of Education and its family of schools. This is likely to be a part-time post of either 3 or 4 days a week, however, consideration will also be given to applicants who are seeking a full-time opportunity. The Secondary Link Adviser will report to the Diocesan Director of Education and Deputy Director.

It is expected that applicants will have an established and successful track record as a head teacher, a senior leader in a secondary school or have recent, relevant advisory/consultancy experience. Applicants must be able to demonstrate school improvement experience and the ability to build and maintain effective relationships with a wide range of stakeholders.

Further details and an application form can be obtained by emailing:

victoriabarnes@dioceseofbrentwood.org

Salary range: from £51,000 to £60,000 (FTE) Term time plus 5 days, depending on experience. A full enhanced DBS Disclosure will be required for this position.

The closing date for applications is midday on Tuesday 25th February 2025 and Interviews will be held on Tuesday 4th March 2025.

Start Date: Ideally from 1st September 2025 depending on current contractual arrangements.



This week's Article:



Pope to Hilton Foundation: ‘Church needs religious women to serve the poor’

Addressing the Board of the U.S.-based Conrad Hilton Foundation Pope Francis praises their tireless work for the poor and for supporting the empowerment of religious women in the Church.

By Lisa Zengarini

Pope Francis on Wednesday warmly commended the Hilton Foundation for its ongoing work serving the poor and the disadvantaged and their significant contribution to empowering women religious, helping the Church overcome its patriarchal mindset.

Improving the lives of disadvantaged people

Established in 1944 by the famous hotelier Conrad Hilton, the foundation focuses on improving the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable people worldwide through grants, partnerships, and advocacy.

The foundation addresses issues such as homelessness, addiction, education, early childhood development, migration, and global health and provides support for communities affected by natural disasters and other crises.

It also supports the empowerment of Catholic Sisters around the globe, strengthening the impact of women religious through education and other initiatives. Among them is the Sisters Project Initiative promoted in collaboration with Vatican Dicastery for Communication.

Compassion is sharing the suffering of the poor

Greeting the Board of the Foundation before his General Audience, the Pope praised their “passionate and compassionate” commitment to promoting the human dignity of those most in need in a world where poverty and exclusion continue to rise.

He compared their work to the Good Samaritan's parable, reminding them that the only acceptable reason to look down on someone is to help them stand up and urging them to keep this principle at the heart of their mission. The Pope also encouraged the members of the Foundation not to forget the essence of “compassion” as a shared human experience: “Compassion,” he said, “is not throwing a coin into the hands of the other without looking him in the eye, but getting close and suffering with him”.

Empowering women religious through formation

A significant part of the speech focused on the Foundation's support for women religious, through the formation of younger sisters and the care of the elderly nuns, a cause deeply valued by Conrad Hilton. Recalling the Foundation's collaboration with Vatican offices to enhance the professionalism and outreach of nuns, the Pope highlighted the urgent need for the Church to invest in the education and training of nuns for their vital mission.

Women religious are called to serve the poor, not to be servants

He pointed to the fact that in the past the Church allocated far less resources for the formation of Sisters compared to clergy, based on the false perception of women and nuns as "second class" citizens. "Yet the need for Sisters to pursue continuing education and training is urgent" as "their work at the borders, in the peripheries and among the poor, requires training and competence," the Pope remarked, commending the Foundation for helping to bring the Church out of this patriarchal and clerical mindset.

"The mission of Sisters is to serve the least among us. It is not to be servants to anyone. This must stop, and you as a Foundation are helping to bring the Church out of this mindset."

Changing the clerical and patriarchal mindset in the Church

At the same time, however, Pope Francis noted some progress towards the inclusion of women in decision-making positions including in the Vatican,

where several women have been appointed to leadership roles. He recalled among others his recent appointment of a nun as Prefect of the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, and the soon to be appointment of another nun as head of Governorate of the Vatican City State.

"Thank God the nuns are ahead and know how to do better than men. It is so... because they have that ability to do things, women, and nuns."

Compassion, closeness and tenderness

Concluding Pope Francis thanked the Hilton Foundation's for its "tireless service" and expressed his dream of a world "where the discarded, the excluded, the marginalized can be the agents of much-needed change in society", insisting on the need compassion, closeness, tenderness, the three attributes of God.

