**THESE COMING WEEKS BEFORE CHRISTMAS** are a time of shopping, partying, eating and drinking. This is as it should be because these human, worldly ways of preparing to celebrate Christmas remind us that in Jesus, God took human flesh and that He really did experience our earthly existence. But Advent is also an opportunity for us to prepare spiritually – to prepare to celebrate Christ’s first coming into our world but also to prepare ourselves for that time when He will come again.

Advent is that sacred time when we learn to accept God’s gift, which is God himself, and to celebrate God’s offer that has been revealed to us in the birth of his Son, Jesus Christ. However, we are also looking to the future. We are people of expectation and hope. It’s so easy to get immersed in the busyness and demands of the present and forget the importance of having faith in the eternal future of God. We set our sights on the eternal.

St Cyril of Jerusalem reminds us of this double meaning of Advent:

*We do not preach only one coming of Christ, but a second as well, much more glorious than the first. The first coming was marked by patience; the second will bring the crown of divine kingdom.*

*At the first coming he was wrapped in swaddling clothes in a manger. At his second coming he will be clothed in light as in a garment. In the first coming he endured the cross, despising the shame; in the second coming he will be in glory, escorted by an army of angels.*

**EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT** will take place every Monday evening from 7.30 -8.30 p.m. Come and spend some time in quiet prayer before our Lord. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will also be available during this time.

**GIFT AID APPEAL** Please note that there will be a gift aid appeal at Holy Cross and at the Cathedral **this weekend**. The parish operates as a charity and is entirely dependent on the generosity of parishioners. Regular offertory giving and other donations provide for the needs of the parish. The day to day

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**SUNDAY MASS**
Holy Cross: 6.30 p.m. (Vigil)
Cathedral: 8.00 a.m., 9.30 a.m. (Family Mass), 11.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

**WEEKDAY MASS**
Cathedral: 9.15 a.m.

**THANK YOU** for the collection on the weekend of 23rd/24th November: £3,460.22 of which £2,437.70 was Gift Aided; also for the second collection for the BCYS (Youth Sunday) £656.74 of which £95.00 was Gift Aided. **Thank you for your continued generosity, for Gift Aiding your offerings and for your support of the parish.**

Please ensure that you are aware of the position of all the emergency FIRE EXIT doors in the Cathedral.
expenditure consists of the running costs of the Cathedral, Holy Cross, Clergy House and the Parish Office includes liturgical and pastoral expenditure as well as heating, lighting, cleaning, maintenance and insurance.

The Gift Aid Scheme plays a crucial role in the financing of the Parish by substantially supplementing the generosity of parishioners. Thus, currently, for every one pound given under the Gift Aid Scheme, the Parish is able to reclaim 25 pence from HMRC, at absolutely no cost or inconvenience to the donor. For more information go to the Brentwood cathedral website link https://cathedrallondon.org.uk/gift-aid-explained/

If you are not already a gift aid donor, but you are a tax payer, then please consider signing up. If you would like to talk to Lorna Green, the Gift Aid Organiser, then please call her on 01277 205923 or email at philandlorna@aol.com.

**COFFEE AFTER 9.30 a.m. MASS** this week will be hosted by the Love in Action Group; next week will be the turn of the Catenians. Why not come along and join us for a cuppa and a chat?

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Mark Upward and Hayley Scott who got married recently. May the Lord richly bless their marriage.

**SENIOR CITIZENS CHRISTMAS LUNCH** will take place on **Friday 6th December**. We will start with Mass at 12 noon followed by lunch. Please enter your name and contact number on the list in the Narthex or at the back of Holy Cross Church if you would like to join us. Please indicate if you require transport. Any queries please speak to Mo in the office.

**MILLENNIALS “THINKING FAITH” GROUP** is for anyone aged 18 – 40 who wants to reflect, pray and meet other Catholics in the parish. The next meeting will be this **Wednesday 11th December** in Clergy House at 7.30 p.m.

**ALL ARE WELCOME** On **Thursday 19th December** between 1.00 and 3.00 p.m. Why not join us in the Parish Hall for a pre-Christmas drink, mince pies and cake. Relax, chat and meet friends, old and new. **ALL ARE WELCOME** from parents/carers with babies to those who in retirement, parishioner or not. Feel free to bring a guest. It won’t cost you a penny. If you have any questions or would like to be involved please email cathedralallarewelcome@gmail.com or call 07941 471503.

**PARISH WELCOME SUPPER** This will be held on the evening of **Friday 7th February 2020** at 7.00 p.m. to welcome all newcomers who have joined our Parish in the last 18 months. Come and join the clergy and representatives of our many Parish groups for an informal supper to get to know more fellow parishioners. The supper will be in the parish Hall and is being organised by the Parish Pastoral Council. If you are new to the Parish, or know someone who is, and interested in coming to this free event, please put your name and contact details in the sign-up sheet in the Narthex and Holy Cross by **24th January**.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE Parish And Community Events TEAM** for the wonderful Advent Celebration Party last Sunday; thank you to everyone who worked so hard and gave up their time so generously to ensure a wonderful parish family celebration. Thank you also to everyone who supported the afternoon. On top of that, around £785 was raised for our chosen charity, Caritas Anchor House https://www.caritasanchorhouse.org.uk

Why not get involved in next year’s social events by getting involved with our PACE group? It’s a wonderful way to meet new people, support the parish and make a difference to those most in need. Contact Fr Martin if you are interested.

**SLEEPY BISCUITS BAKE OFF**….. It’s that time of year again and we are once again looking for your help! It’s a parish tradition that we give all the children a ‘sleepy biscuit’ when they leave the Cathedral at the end of the 5.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. Family Masses on Christmas Eve and again, we are looking for volunteers to bake, say 25-50 biscuits each, for Christmas Eve (we need approximately 550 altogether!). If you would like to help please put your details on the list in the narthex or at the back of the Church or contact Sam Wait at samjwait@gmail.com or speak to Mo in Clergy House.

**REPOSITORY** Christmas Cards and a variety of seasonal goods will now be on sale in the Repository after Masses each Sunday.

**CHRISTMAS CARDS** Please send religious Christmas cards/e-cards and use religious stamps. Robins and coaches in the snow are lovely, but a religious image will help to remind people that this is a Christian festival celebrating the birth of Jesus, the Son of God.

**WALK WITH ME BOOKLETS** are now available for purchase. These provide day-to-day reflections that will help you remember the real meaning of this sacred time of preparation for Christmas. Price £1 each. Please place money in wall safe marked ‘Publications/Booklets’.

**WALK WITH ME ADVENT CALENDARS** available for children. Every day you will be asked to do something and prepare for Christmas. Price 20p each.

**WORLD GIFTS** Wondering what to buy someone who has everything? Want to buy a present that really will make a difference? Look at the World Gifts catalogue in the Cathedral narthex and at the back of Holy Cross church.
AM I A RESPONSIBLE CONSUMER? Please remember in the run-up to Christmas to look out for Fairtrade goods when you are out and about shopping. Fairtrade chocolates are now widely available and there are also many other Fairtrade goods that you can buy so keep your eyes peeled for the Fairtrade logo or visit the Fairtrade website (www.fairtrade.org.uk). Fairtrade is about better prices, decent working conditions and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers so please do what you can to shop responsibly and support Fairtrade.

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK: Please pray for all our sick and housebound parishioners and friends, including: Bridget Barron, Phil Carr, David, Patricia Decup, Julian Goode, Concetta Hall, Ann Hurcombe, Wong Su Hwa, Jess, Brian Kelleher, Veronica Kelleher, Lawrence, Tony Maule, Dennis Menezes, Kath Murnane, Michael Murphy, Harry Newman, Barney O'Driscoll, Siobhan O'Leary, Steven Poole, Anne Rowe, Helena Rowe, Robin Shenton, David Spring, Tim, TCT, Louisa Whiteman, and all our sick in Marillac, Maccalls, Brentwood Community, The Beeches, Queens, Nuffield and Hartswood Hospitals and St Francis Hospice.

THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK is available to anyone who is gravely ill or about to have an operation. If you would like to receive this sacrament then please speak to a member of the clergy or ring the office on 265235.

SICK AND HOUSEBOUND PARISHIONERS If you know anyone who is unable to come to Mass but would still like to receive Holy Communion in their home, please contact Clergy House so we can add them to our Sick visits list.

MOTHERS PRAYERS are held fortnightly; our next meeting will be on Wednesday 11th December at 10.00 a.m. in Clergy House. All are welcome; please come along and join us.

CATHOLIC NEWSPAPERS Please be aware that if you wish to continue receiving the Universe or Catholic Times after January 2020, there will be a requirement for you to sign up for this on a quarterly basis; this new system has been implemented by the newspaper provider and is unfortunately is out of our control. Any queries, please speak to Mo in the office.

CALLING ALL KNITTERS! This year we are ahead of ourselves in so far as we have already taken 345 knitted items to Broomfield Hospital Premature Baby Unit and have received a thank you letter in reply. I would like to request all toiletries donated be given to the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal as they are in need of these items; I am also requesting new or nearly new towels for the Homeless Shower Days. Thank you to those of you who have supported these causes throughout the year as we are aware that they are in constant need of these items, not just at Christmas. If you have items that you would like to be collected, please contact Adele on 01277 232948. Thank you.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE TIMES

Wednesday 18th December:
Advent Reconciliation Service in the Cathedral 7.30 p.m.
Prepare for Christmas by receiving the mercy and forgiveness of God

Sunday 22nd December:
Nine Lessons and Carols 4.00 p.m. in the Cathedral
A beautiful and uplifting service in word and music

Tuesday 24th December - Christmas Eve:
Children are welcome to wear nativity costumes to our Christmas Masses
5.00 p.m. "Family" Mass of Christmas
7.00 p.m. Mass of Christmas with "Flash mob" choir
Music rehearsal at 6.30 p.m. Please bring your instruments and singing voices!
9.30 p.m. Sung Carols
10.00 p.m. First Mass of Christmas with the Cathedral choir.
Main celebrant: Bishop Alan Williams sm

Wednesday 25th December - Christmas Day
8.00 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral
9.30 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral
10.30 a.m. Mass at Holy Cross Church, Warley
11.30 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral with the Cathedral choir.
Main celebrant: Bishop Alan Williams sm
Please note there is not an evening Mass on Christmas Day.

Christmas offerings are your personal gift to the Cathedral priests

CATHEDRAL PARISH HALLS and ST PETER’S HALL BOOKINGS: Please email Dawn Cockerton at patrickdawn8@aol.com or phone her on 07756 765567.

BRENTWOOD CATHEDRAL CAR PARK A number of people including local residents have complained to Fr Martin about the reckless way that some people
are parking on a Sunday. It appears that a parishioner even decided to park on the pavement outside the Cathedral!

Please park responsibly and with real respect for others who use the car park.

Please do not park so that the entrances of the Cathedral are blocked. There must be clear access to the Cathedral building in the case of an emergency evacuation of the Cathedral or the emergency services needing to access the Cathedral.

Please consider leaving your car at home or using one of the nearby car parks. If you do bring your car to the Cathedral, please park considerately and responsibly.

GENERAL NEWS

LUNCHTIME MUSIC RECITAL Please join us for a Lunchtime Trumpet/Organ Recital to be given by Ellie Lovegrove and Richard Moore on Wednesday 4th December at 1.00 p.m. in the Cathedral. All are welcome.

THE CAMPION SCHOOL SIXTH FORM OPEN EVENING for parents and students seeking admission to the Sixth Form of the School in September 2020 to take place in the School Hall at 6.30 p.m. on Wednesday 4th December 2019. The Headmaster will speak at 6.30 p.m. regarding admissions to the sixth form. This will be followed by an opportunity to meet with teachers and to view the classrooms and sixth form facilities.

UPPER ROOM PRAYER GROUP The Upper Room Prayer Group will next meet on Thursday 12th December in the Upper Room of the Cathedral from 8.00 – 9.15 p.m. A time of prayer, praise, reflection and intercession. For details please call Chris 07974 702771 or Gabrielle 07817 515207.

ADVENT TALKS SERIES: How to defend your faith without raising your voice. Most of us have been challenged at some point to speak about or defend our faith. This could have been whilst in the pub, on a chat with our friends or even with other people who go to church. At times, it can be difficult to find the correct words or courage to speak out. To help with this, we will be hosting a series of talks taking place over five Wednesdays during Advent concluding on 18th December at 7.00 p.m. There is no charge; for full details and to register, please visit: https://www.sttheresastansted.org/events.

SUMMER LOURDES 2020 with the Brentwood Catholic Youth Service. Open to anyone currently in school year 10-13. We travel on Saturday 25th July, return Saturday 1st August. Cost £600 includes return coach travel, hotel accommodation, insurance and all meals in Lourdes. This amazing experience comes just once a year – full details are at https://bcys.net/events/summer-lourdes-2020-pilgrimage/. Applications close on January 10th 2020; places will be allocated on 14th January and no deposit is required until then. Bursary support is available for those in financial hardship.

MEDJUGORJE IRISH CENTRE PILGRIMAGES April to October 2020: 7 Night Stay and Airport Shuttle service from Dubrovnik or Split for €266 per person sharing. Book any flight - any time and we provide guaranteed airport shuttle service. Call us for further info and book the dates that suit you. Tel. 020 3239 8662 or email reservations@med-irishcentre.com.

VACANCY Sacred Heart of Mary Girls’ School are seeking to appoint an enthusiastic and highly effective Examinations and Data Manager for the school. Candidates must be willing to work flexibly and have excellent oral and written communication skills. Applications are invited from those with experience of managing and processing data using the SIMS database in a school environment. Completed application form (available on the school website), letters of application and the names and addresses of two referees should be sent to the Headteacher at the School by email. Closing date: Monday 2 December. For further details about the school and an application form please refer to the website www.sacredheartofmary.net.

VACANCY Becket Keys Church of England School are seeking a full time Site Assistant. We are looking for a professional and well-organised team player to support the school in providing a safe, secure and well-maintained site, as part of a friendly and welcoming team. Prior experience is preferable, but not essential. For more information about this vacancy, please visit our website: www.becketkeys.org and look under the vacancies tab.

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SERVICE TIMES, MASS INTENTIONS and PARISH DIARY

Saturday 30th November through to Sunday 8th December 2019

Saturday 30 November
ST ANDREW, Ap, Patron of Scotland
9.15 a.m. Cathedral Johanna McMahon R.I.P.
11.00 – 12 Noon Cathedral Sacrament of Reconciliation
12 Noon Cathedral “Sing with Bob Chilcott” workshop followed by Concert
6.30 p.m. Holy Cross Eileen Horan R.I.P.
Sunday 1 December
8.00 a.m. Cathedral John O’Donnell R.I.P.
9.30 a.m. Cathedral Anthony O’Sullivan R.I.P.
10.00 a.m. Marillac Intentions of Ellen Gibbons
11.30 a.m. Cathedral Caroline Ann Coppin
4.00 p.m. Cathedral Inauguration of Advent Service
6.30 p.m. Cathedral People of the Parish

Monday 2 December
9.15 a.m. Cathedral Intentions of Dorothy and Joseph Briffa
1.40 p.m. Cathedral BUCHS Rehearsal
7.00 p.m. Cathedral BUCHS Christmas Concert

Tuesday 3 December
St Francis Xavier, Pr
9.15 a.m. Cathedral John O’Donnell R.I.P.
11.00 a.m. Cathedral Funeral Service for the late Peter Hillson R.I.P.
6.00 p.m. Cathedral Oakfields Montessori School Carol Concert

Wednesday 4 December
9.15 a.m. Cathedral Kathleen Ward R.I.P.
1.00 p.m. Cathedral Lunchtime Recital
6.30 p.m. Cathedral Choral Vespers
8.00 p.m. Cathedral Youth Mass

Thursday 5 December
9.15 a.m. Cathedral Intentions of Sheila Rainsford
10.30 a.m. Cathedral New Hall School Rehearsal
5.30 p.m. Grange Intentions of the Ursuline Community
(In Thanksgiving)
7.30 p.m. Cathedral New Hall School Christmas Concert

Friday 6 December
9.15 a.m. Cathedral Tom Carr R.I.P.
12 Noon Cathedral Senior Citizens Mass
1.00 p.m. Halls Senior Citizen’s Christmas Lunch
6.15 p.m. Cathedral Choral Vespers

Saturday 7 December
St Ambrose, Bp
9.15 a.m. Cathedral Terry Sculley R.I.P.
11.00 – 12 Noon Cathedral Sacrament of Reconciliation
6.30 p.m. Holy Cross Kathleen Theresa West (F)

Sunday 8 December
8.00 a.m. Cathedral John Buggle R.I.P.
9.30 a.m. Cathedral People of the Parish
10.00 a.m. Marillac Sean Clarke R.I.P.
11.30 a.m. Cathedral Peter Kelly R.I.P.
4.00 p.m. Cathedral Hospice ‘Light Up a Life’ Service
6.30 p.m. Cathedral Ron Howard R.I.P.

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ANNIVERSARIES
BRENTWOOD CATHEDRAL and HOLY CROSS
Saturday 30th November through to Sunday 8th December 2019

CATHEDRAL ANNIVERSARIES: Please remember the following, whose anniversaries occur at this time: Mrs N McMahon, Rosina Kairis, William Purdy, Stephen Delee, Doris Tweed, Julia March, June Musto, John Avis, Terrence Vaughan, Caroline Coppin, George Mills, Ely Hayes, Elizabeth O’Regan, Patrick Redmond, Peter Ball, Edward Lambert, Cornelius Cullivan, Alfred Walsh, Rita Smith, Julia Brooking, Grace Milane, Luisa Caperoe, Mary Harrington, Anna Wong, Agnes Payne, Robert Francis, John O’Donnell, Mary Slater, Mary Bamber, Monica David-Poynter, William Magorrian, Anne Morton, Pauline Court, Joseph Kwiatek, Eileen Lingard, Sister Mary Clare Joseph, Julie Ryan, James Uniack, Charles Maling, Lillian Southon, Edmund O’Regan, Aidan Calaghan, Ann Quinn, John McCann, John Sharpe, Germaine Hollingsworth, Mary Mooney, Stephen Brown, Tom Carr, Ellen Mary Tetford, James Edward McDonough, Geoffrey Butterwick, Mary Cody, Frederick Garrett, Kevin O’Donnell, Thomas McKenna, Daphne Burton, Michael Daly, Geoffrey Hall and Patricia Bishop.

HOLY CROSS ANNIVERSARIES: Please remember the following, whose anniversaries occur at this time: Brendan Daly, Eileen Horan, Elsie McElligott, David Bexley, Joseph Lewis, Alfred Hegarty, Michael Whelan, Michael John Small, Peter Henry Jaccottet, George Salmon, Vera Fleming, Fr. Michael Healey, Ada Macnamara, Lawrence Cretella, John Cross, Thomas Daly and Abina Bere.