Last week, Bishop John Sherrington issued this statement which I encourage you to read:

Role of our churches during current lockdown - Diocese of Westminster (rcdow.org.uk)

We all recognise the gravity of the situation at present: the high infection rate, the number of people who are sick and in hospital, the terrible death toll and the pressures on our frontline workers, especially those working in our hospitals. We lift them to the Lord in prayer.

At the same time, such a health crisis demands a calm and considered response. The Cathedral's response has always been to seek and follow the guidance of those in authority, that is, the Government and the Bishops, who have the best available information and scientific advice with which to inform their decision making.

I would like to thank everyone involved in making the Cathedral as safe as reasonably possible for those who freely choose to attend Mass or come for private prayer. I would also like to acknowledge all those people who respectfully comply with our protocols and exhibit a real care for others. No one has raised issues of serious concern about the measures that we have put in place, in fact, I have only received praise for them and sincere thanks for the opportunities made possible for those people who wish to come to Mass or to pray.

We must continue to act with the utmost diligence in order to ensure that the Cathedral to be as safe as possible. We must apply with great rigour all the protocols that we have in place and respect them.

At this time, people must freely choose whether to come to the Cathedral or not. The vast majority of people have chosen not to attend Mass. Their decisions are to be respected. Instead, many of them have chosen to make a spiritual communion by watching widely available live streamed Masses.
Thanks to the efforts of so many, I continue to believe that the Cathedral is as safe an environment as any in Brentwood and beyond. There are few places that have such clear and orderly protocols in place. At this time, the Government and the Church authorities also believe that those places of public worship following all the guidelines are of low risk. Of course, this view may change due to circumstances or new evidence, but until it does, I plan to keep Brentwood Cathedral open as a beacon of hope and a sanctuary of prayer for those who wish to shelter in God’s presence.

In this hour of darkness and weariness, we place our hope in the Lord. He is our strength and our shield. He is the light that the darkness cannot overcome.

May his protecting hand be over you, your families and friends in these coming weeks.

Fr Martin

**LATEST GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE REGARDING COMMUNAL WORSHIP AND LIFE EVENTS**

You are allowed to leave home to attend or visit a place of worship for communal worship, or for a funeral or an event related to a death. You may also attend a burial ground or a remembrance garden, or to attend a wedding ceremony.

You must follow the guidance on the safe use of places of worship and you must not mingle with anyone outside of your household or support bubble when attending a place of worship.

Weddings, funerals and religious, belief-based or commemorative events linked to someone’s death are all subject to limits on the numbers that can attend, and weddings and civil ceremonies may only take place in exceptional circumstances.

Thus, the celebration of Mass can continue however:

If you are feverish or unwell DO NOT attend the Cathedral.

Please hand sanitise upon entering and leaving the Cathedral.

Always wear a face covering. It must cover both your mouth and nose at all times, except for the consumption of Holy Communion.

Your temperature may be checked on arrival.

Please social distance at all times when in the Cathedral.

Please use the Government Track & Trace system using the QR code on display in the Cathedral or on our website.

At the end of Mass, in order to avoid any slight congestion at the exits, you will be ushered out a row at a time and directed to an exit. Please cooperate with the ushers and leave in an orderly fashion, social distancing at all times.

Please do not gather outside the Cathedral for a chat with friends, but go directly home. Stay safe and keep others safe.

Thank you for your continued understanding and cooperation at this time.

---

**GENERAL PARISH NEWS**

**PLEASE PRAY** for the repose of the soul of Stanley Smith and Sarah Tacey who died recently.

*May they rest in the peace of Christ and rise again in glory.*

**MASS INTENTIONS AND ANNIVERSARIES** can be found at [mass-intentions (cathedralbrentwood.org)](http://mass-intentions (cathedralbrentwood.org)). All intentions will be said by our Priests in private celebration of Mass during the lockdown period.

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION** Fr Gary and Fr Martin are hearing confessions but, at this time, only for people who are dying and those with very grave mortal sin. Otherwise, we are
encouraging people to wait until these present restrictions are relaxed and the infection rate lowers.

Fr Martin and Fr Gary both feel well and neither have shown any symptoms. However that does not mean that we can be completely sure that they are virus free. At the same time, if one of them contracts the Covid-19, both will have to isolate and the Cathedral will have to close with a knock on effect for funerals, etc. So they are also trying to keep their contacts to a minimum at this time and are following all the protocols when they do meet with people.

However, if you feel you really need to go confession please ring the office on 01277 265235 to arrange a meeting.

**JANUARY TIMETABLE**

**Saturday:** No Morning Mass or individual prayer
Vigil Mass: 6.30 p.m.

**Sunday:** Masses at 8.00 a.m., 9.30 a.m.,
11.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

**Monday:** Morning Mass at 9.15 a.m.
Individual Prayer 10.00 a.m. – 2.00 p.m.

**Tuesday:** Individual Prayer 10.00 a.m. – 2.00 p.m.

**Wednesday:** Morning Mass at 9.15 a.m.
Individual Prayer 10.00 a.m. – 2.00 p.m.

**Thursday:** Individual Prayer 10.00 a.m. – 2.00 p.m.

**Friday:** Morning Mass at 9.15 a.m.
Individual Prayer 10.00 a.m. – 2.00 p.m.

**THE PARISH OFFICE** During this present lockdown, Mo, the parish secretary, will be working from home. Therefore, please only come to the parish office if it is a very urgent matter; otherwise, we would ask at this time that you email, write or phone instead. Emails will be dealt with as swiftly as possible during this time.

**2021 SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMMES** Please visit the Cathedral website (cathedral-brentwood.org) where you will find important new information about the plans for our 2021 programmes for the following:

- **First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion**
  www.cathedralbrentwood.org/fhc-2021/

- **Journey in Faith course for adults**
  www.cathedralbrentwood.org/rcia-2021-course/

- **Baptismal Preparation**
  www.cathedralbrentwood.org/baptism-2021/

Information about Marriage Preparation to follow. Please see Cathedral website and social media for updates.

**READERS AND EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS** Thank you to all those who are able to cover. You all should have received by email the new rotas for January to March 2021.

It is important that you ensure you put your date/s in the diary as there is only one Reader or Eucharistic Minister per Mass. Please arrive at least 5 minutes early to inform the Ushers that you are present. Ann 01277 231593/messina21@btinternet.com.

**THE CRITICAL STATE OF PARISH FINANCES** We are very aware of the financial uncertainty that some parishioners are facing during this difficult time of COVID-19. Sadly, as a parish we are also experiencing a very significant gap in our finances which is of serious concern. Unlike other businesses and institutions, there is no financial help for parishes. We depend entirely on the
generosity of parishioners to cover running costs and the activities of the parish.

If you are not attending Mass at this time, we do ask you to think seriously about what you give and how you might best do so.

A contactless payment machine has been installed in the Cathedral narthex for donations. The machine is very easy to use and allows you to support the work of the Cathedral at this time by online giving.

To use: please hand sanitise and touch screen to begin.

Contributions to assist the Cathedral can be made online via the Brentwood Diocesan website:

www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/donations/?parish=brentwood

If you prefer, you can make a payment directly into the parish bank account using online banking. You will need to set up the Brentwood Cathedral Parish as a payee on your online banking app or internet page. The Parish Bank details are as follows:

HSBC PLC, High Street, Brentwood, Essex

Account Name: Brentwood Cathedral

Sort Code: 40-13-22 Account Number: 30217492

If you use this method, please put your Surname and Initial as a reference. If you are part of our Gift Aid scheme, then please also add your Gift Aid number (GA); e.g. SmithJ GA 999

By entering this reference our Gift Aid Organiser will be able to make sure that your donation is increased in line with the Gift Aid regulations. If you don’t pay tax you can still set up a standing order or pay via online methods.

www.cathedralbrentwood.org/donations/

Thank you in advance for your generosity and any support that you can provide the Cathedral parish at this time.

GENERAL NEWS

SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD: ONLINE CONFERENCE can be followed via www.c-b-f.org/streaming or YouTube and Facebook at the Catholic Biblical Federation. Fr Adrian Graffy, English representative at the Catholic Biblical Federation, explained: ‘In the rich but fragmented European continent we aim to come together around the Word of God. In the post-pandemic world, it will be important to derive from the Scriptures guidelines in our relationships with God, with brothers and sisters throughout the continent and beyond, and in our protection of the planet. Pope Francis’ institution of the Sunday of the Word of God is welcome and timely, and this is an excellent way to prepare for the day.’

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY 2021 Christian Friends of Israel have been preparing an online Youtube event which looks very exciting - including film, music, art and poetry - as we remember and learn. ‘Light In The Darkness’ will premiere on Sunday 24th January 2021 from 7.00 – 8.30 p.m. Please see www.youtube.com/cfiuk (please log in ahead of time). Visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hbhNRBEzNh0 for a 2 minute promotional video.

AUSTEN IVEREIGH LIVESTREAM EVENT On Saturday 30th January from 11.00 a.m. until 12.30 p.m., Dr Austen Ivereigh will speak about the book he recently co-authored with Pope Francis. ‘Let us Dream’ presents the Pope’s vision for the post-pandemic future. How should we move forward from the multiple coronavirus crises? Please go to www.ssppilford.org.uk and click on live stream remote services. Questions for Austen may be emailed in advance to adriangraffy@dioceseofbrentwood.org.

REDISCOVER YOUR MARRIAGE - Retrouvaille offers the chance to rediscover yourself, your spouse and a loving relationship in your
marriage. Tens of thousands of couples headed for divorce have successfully saved their marriages by attending and using the tools provided. The programme helps spouses uncover or reawaken the love, trust and commitment that originally brought them together. It has saved many hurting marriages, even bringing reconciliation to couples that have already separated or divorced. There is no group therapy or group work. Sixteen couples attended our last weekend (six of whom were in the process of divorce) and almost all of the couples are still attending the follow up sessions. The feedback from the weekend was very positive and there are advantages in being able to attend the weekend from your own home. For confidential information about ‘Retrouvaille’ or to register for the next programme commencing with a Virtual weekend on 25th - 28th February 2021, call or text 07887 296983 or 07973 380443 - or email retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com or for more information, visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk.

THE DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES 2021 is planned for Sunday 25th - Friday 30th July. However, because of Covid-19 it is not possible to know yet whether a pilgrimage will be practical or in what form. Therefore, any decisions and announcements regarding the Diocesan Pilgrimage, and our young people intending to travel with the BCYS, will be made in January. Until then, do keep the dates for the pilgrimage in your diaries.

VACANCY St Elizabeth’s Centre in Much Hadham, Hertfordshire are looking to recruit a Lay Chaplain to play a pivotal role, ensuring the Catholic identity of the centre is celebrated and developed. To apply and to find out more information about St Elizabeth’s, please visit: www.stelizabeths.org.uk or telephone 01279 844524 for an informal discussion regarding the role.

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK and housebound parishioners and friends, including: Bridget Barron, Hermine Bayley, Madeleine Bevan, Phil Carr, Matthew Conrad, David, Patricia Decup, Fr Stewart Foster, Julian Goode, Concetta Hall, David Hill, Ann Hurcombe, Wong Su Hwa, Jess, Brian Kelleher, Veronica Kelleher, Lawrence, Tony Maule, Kath Murnane, Stephanie Murray, Harry Newman, Barney O’Driscoll, Siobhan O’Leary, Steven Poole, Anne Rowe, Helena Rowe, Geraldine Sheehan, Robin Shenton, Stanley Smith, David Spring, Tim, TCT, Louisa Whiteman, and all our sick in Marillac, Mascalls, Brentwood Community, The Beeches, Queens, Nuffield and Hartwood Hospitals and St Francis Hospice.

CATHEDRAL ANNIVERSARIES: Please remember the following, whose anniversaries occur at this time: George Porter, Dennis Mulcahy, James Rochford, Edna Rose, Mary Eleanor Hazell, Thomas King, Hill Sinclair, Phyllis Partridge, Jane Hoey, Mary Kiely, Edith Clarke, Barbara Taylor, Kevin McQuillan, James Quinn, Herbert Crowder, Valentine Crowther, Anne Seager, Ernest Benson, Mary Coakley, May Glen, Dora Foster, Mgr David Donnelly, Sr Mary Stephen, Eva Wheeker, Michael Dinyer, Ramon Porta, Winifred Hopkins, Elvet Hopkins, Dora Foster, Bishop Ward, Michael Ryan, Gerald Murray, Kathleen Sharpe, James Cole, John O’Brien, Gladys Polack, Helen Clark, Ellen Murphy, Olive Myers, Maisie Ramsay, Wiliam Gutch, Christina Whiting, Bishop Doubleday, John Tynan, Patrick Wood, James Doyle, James Murray, Peter Gutch, Patricia Keenan, Marjorie Vaughan, Katherine O’Sullivan, Annie Masters, Ruby Dunster, Catherine Fowler, Darrell Kramp, Pat Gower, Henryk Czerwinski and Anthony Philo.

HOLY CROSS ANNIVERSARIES: Please remember the following, whose anniversaries occur at this time: Nora Shale, Gerald Leo Brady, Mary Brophy, Caroline Amstad, Bernard Donnelly, Josephine Capps, Michael Lynch, Winifred Havers, Mrs. Duane, Richard Siren, Mabel Watchman, Canon Arthur Holmes, Theresa Day, Teresa Keenan, Kitty Dines and Gladys Donovan.

Follow Brentwood Cathedral