ASH WEDNESDAY is on 17th February; this is a day of fasting and abstinence. It marks the beginning of the holy season of Lent.

Even now, says the LORD, return to me with your whole heart, with fasting, and weeping, and mourning; Rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the LORD, your God. For gracious and merciful is he, slow to anger, rich in kindness, and relenting in punishment. Joel 2:1-2

Masses with sprinkling of ashes will be celebrated at 9.15 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. All present safety protocols will apply.
PLEASE PRAY for the repose of the souls of Margaret Arthur, Barry Kurn, Frank Daly, Henry Duffy, Frank Slade, Patricia Slade and Kenneth Weatherill who died recently.

Please also join Cardinal Vincent Nichols in praying for all those who have died from Covid-19 www.cbcew.org.uk/uk-records-100000-covid-deaths/

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

**DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES** - a second collection will be taken this Sunday to support the Shrine in Lourdes, which is suffering financially because of the pandemic restrictions. The annual pilgrimage in July has been cancelled for this year. However, some form of alternative experience of Lourdes in the diocese is being planned. Further details will follow.

**LENT PARISH FOODBANK COLLECTION** We will be holding our parish Lent collection for the Brentwood Foodbank on the weekend of **27th/28th February**.

In order to maintain social distance, we will arrange for a collection point to be in the car park at each Mass; a representative will be there with their boot open so donations can be placed directly in the car and will then be delivered straight to the collection centre.

There will also be a collection box in the narthex for those who prefer to donate money instead; please make cheques payable to ‘Brentwood Foodbank’.

Please remember those who are most in need. Your generosity will help make a real difference to those struggling and hurting in these challenging times.

**GREEN GUARDIANS INITIATIVE - LAPTOP APPEAL** You may have seen that schools are urgently seeking laptops for students who do not have access to computers at home. If you have a laptop in working order that you no longer need, the Cathedral’s Green Guardians group would be happy to pick it up and donate to a local school. If you are able to donate a machine, please make sure to empty all of your personal information by returning your laptop to factory setting and please ensure that you include a charger with it. For further information or to donate a device, please email: greenbrentwoodcathedral@gmail.com.

**MASS INTENTIONS AND ANNIVERSARIES** can be found at 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.

**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 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/

Marriage Preparation
www.cathedralbrentwood.org/marriage/

Please see Cathedral website and social media for updates.

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.

More information at www.cathedralbrentwood.org/donations/

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

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 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 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 NEWS

LIVESTREAM MASS FOR THE FEAST OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES, World day of Prayer for the Sick, Thursday 11th February 7.00 p.m. This Mass, from St Edward the Confessor Romford, will be celebrated especially for those who would have been due to travel with HCPT and Diocesan pilgrimages this year. At a time of pandemic, the graces and prayers of Lourdes seem especially important, and all are welcome online. Music, from young musicians of the Brentwood Catholic Youth Service, will include songs and hymns familiar from Lourdes. YouTube link: https://youtu.be/2Rl1GCArdQM

LENTEN TALKS Bishop John Arnold is the first speaker in a weekly series of talks focused on the Catholic response to Climate Change. He is speaking on Thursday 18th February 7.30 – 8.30 p.m. and the talks continue via Zoom on Thursdays in Lent. To register please email jane@catholicclimatemovement.global and for more information about this area of Catholic life and faith have a look at www.catholicclimatemovement.global.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE. Marriage is not just a relationship but a vocation and a means of holiness. Please pray for married couples, those preparing for marriage (especially those who have had to defer weddings), and those who have been widowed especially in the past year. In the run up to St Valentine’s Day the Brentwood Marriage and Family Life Facebook page (BrentwoodMandFL) will include interviews with couples from around the diocese. If you are experiencing difficulties in your marriage or would like to deepen your understanding of this vocation and each other, a number of organisations are able to help remotely during the lockdown, such as Retrouvaille, Marriage Care and Smart Loving. Search for these organisations online. Retrouvaille is running its first virtual weekend for couples in difficulty this month, 25th - 28th February (0788 729 6983 / 0797 338 0443 / retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com).

VACANCY St Peter’s Catholic Primary School, Billericay are seeking to appoint a highly motivated and inspiring SENCO to join our team, with a passion for working with vulnerable children to ensure they receive the education they deserve. You will be able to bring an innovative and creative approach to supporting the strategic direction and development of SEN provision across our school, whilst effectively managing and developing the progress and achievement of our SEND pupils. You will be a strong practitioner with a degree and a teaching qualification. Ideally, you will hold the National SENCO qualification. More information
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, David Spring, Tim, TCT, Louisa Whiteman, and all our sick in Marillac, Mascalls, Brentwood Community, The Beeches, Queens, Nuffield and Hartswood Hospitals and St Francis Hospice.


HOLY CROSS ANNIVERSARIES: Please remember the following, whose anniversaries occur at this time: Jane Campbell, Ernest Lacey, Winifred Mession, Gladys Davidson, Michael Tacey, Jerry Moran, James Stack, Maud Whaley, Edith Wild, Edward Woods, William Horge, Charles Wild, Ivy Timmins, Pam Penton, Sister Philomena DC, Bridget McLaughlin, Albert Buckle and Mary Redmond.

Follow Brentwood Cathedral