MESSAGE TO PARENTS OF FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CHILDREN

Dear Parents

I trust that this finds you and your families in good health and that you have managed to enjoy a break over the Summer before the return to school and work.

Many of you will be aware that during this past year the Cathedral has been open for prayer and the celebration of Mass during all those times when Covid restrictions permitted. People continued to pray, to listen to God’s living word and to receive Christ’s Body and Blood, the bread of eternal life. These are the essential hallmarks of our lives as Catholics and the more we do them, the deeper our relationship with Christ becomes as His grace changes us. This is why the practice of our faith is so important to Catholics.

Yet these months of lockdowns and restrictions have provided an opportunity for all of us to reflect on how we did things before the pandemic and how we might act in the future. Some things in our lives will return to how they were, other things will change and there will be those things that we will leave behind.

This time of reflection has also happened in the life of our parish and one area where changes will take place is around sacramental preparation for Holy Communion and Reconciliation. I hope that these changes will help parents, their children and the whole parish family to deepen our relationship with Christ. At the same time, parents will be encouraged to become the first and best teachers of their children by what they say and, above all, do as they practice and witness of their Catholic faith. They will be asked to have greater responsibility for this.

I am delighted that you want your child to receive Christ’s forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and to receive His Body and Blood in the celebration of the Eucharist. At the same time, I am aware that each one of you will have different reasons for wanting your children to receive these sacraments.
Therefore, from September:

i) There will be no Mass registration cards. As a Catholic parent, you have requested for your child to receive these holy sacraments. We will encourage and support all families in their relationship with Christ but it is the spiritual duty of parents to come to Mass with their children if they truly desire that relationship.

ii) Your child will be expected to attend all the sessions of the First Holy Communion programme beginning in January 2022. If they do not or cannot attend all the sessions for some reason, they will be asked to join the next programme.

iii) At the First Holy Communion Masses, numbers of people who can attend from each family will be limited in order to make these celebrations more prayerful, intimate, and focussed on the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. We will confirm exactly what that number will be nearer the time.

In order to support those families who are practicing their faith and those families who wish to return to the practice of their faith there will be a meeting from 10.00 – 11.00 a.m. on Saturday 18th September in the parish hall for interested parents. There is no obligation to attend this meeting.

On Wednesday 24th November from 7.00 – 8.00 p.m. there will be a registration meeting. Please make a note of this date. It is very important that all parents attend this meeting.

As we enter these coming months, my prayers are for you, your children and the whole parish family that as we come together again, we may “act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God”

God bless you and your children,

Fr Martin
TABERNACLE UPDATE. Due to an unexpected delay, these works have still not been completed however, we hope they will be finished by the end of this week and hopefully we will then be in a position to reopen the Cathedral for private prayer again as soon as possible.

WEEKDAY MASSES are celebrated every weekday, Monday - Friday at 9.15 a.m. However, please note there will be no Saturday morning Mass at the present time.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION will now be available every Saturday in the Cathedral from 10.00 - 11.00 a.m.

PLEASE PRAY for the repose of the soul of Dr Tracy Tai who died recently. May all who have died know the Lord’s goodness in the land of the living.

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CATHEDRAL TIMETABLE

**Saturday:** No morning Mass today
Sacrament of Reconciliation 10.00 – 11.00 a.m.
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.

**Tuesday:** No morning Mass today

**Wednesday:** Morning Mass at 9.15 a.m.

**Thursday:** Morning Mass at 9.15 a.m.

**Friday:** Morning Mass at 9.15 a.m.

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION - CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

APPLICATIONS. If you are going to apply for a primary or secondary Catholic school with your child starting in September 2022, please note that:

a) There will not be a Sunday Mass registration card. Fr Martin will know those families who have been practising their faith by coming to Sunday Mass. These families will receive a Certificate of Catholic Practice.

b) If you have not been practising your faith, please do not approach Fr Martin for a Certificate of Catholic Practice as he will not be able to provide you with this document. Instead, apply directly to the Catholic school of your choice.

c) If you plan to send your daughter or son to the Brentwood Ursuline High School, please note that you do not require a Certificate of Catholic Practice.

d) If you are applying for a non-Catholic school that requires evidence of religious practice and you have been practising your faith, please come to see Fr Martin.

e) If you are applying for a non-Catholic school that requires evidence of religious practice and you have not been practising your faith, please do not approach Fr Martin. Instead, apply directly to the non-Catholic school of your choice.

f) Please note that Fr Martin will not supply additional references or documentation to parents who may go to appeal for a place at a non-Catholic school.

Fr Martin will be available only at the following times in Clergy House to see parents who are known to him and who are practising their faith by attending Mass every Sunday. There is no need to make an appointment:

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SECONDARY SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

Wednesday 27th October - 4.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

PRIMARY SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

Wednesday 1st December- 4.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

Please ensure you make a note of these dates in your diaries.
HOLY CROSS CHURCH has been closed for the whole of the pandemic and remains closed. As a parish, we have been able to celebrate the Saturday evening Vigil Mass in the Cathedral because its size allows for social distancing and more people to attend Mass; it can also be well ventilated, has multiple entrances and exits and has all the necessary risk assessments.

As we edge out of the pandemic, we will review the situation with Holy Cross church in late September when schools have opened and we approach the winter months. It is important that we try and ensure the well-being of the whole community and that as many people as possible feel able and comfortable returning to the celebration Mass.

QR CODES and CONTACTLESS GIVING A new online donation system has been set up so that parishioners and visitors are now able to donate by using a QR code directly to the Parish; donations can be made either with or without gift aid using the QR codes below or by scanning those displayed around the Cathedral:

SINCERE THANKS to those parishioners who have so generously given a donation towards the costs of the works to ensure the security of the Tabernacle.

REFERENCES FOR WORK AND OTHER POSITIONS: Fr Martin has many requests for references which he is happy to write for people that he knows. However, it is not helpful to mention to him in passing that you have given his name as a referee or for him to receive unexpected reference requests. Therefore, before you give his name as a referee, please make an appointment to meet with Fr Martin to discuss the position you are applying for and the nature of the reference required.

LISTEN to Fr Martin’s video reflection. Search “Fr Martin Boland” on youtube channel. Please like and subscribe to follow future videos.

BAPTISMS Please be aware that we have now reached full capacity for celebrating Baptisms this year and are unfortunately unable to offer any further dates for the remainder of 2021. If you would like to enquire about Baptism for your child, please contact the Parish Office no sooner than early January 2022; by
this time, we will be in a position to give parents the details of the Baptism Preparation Programme which will need to be completed prior to you being invited to book a date for the Baptism.

Any new information regarding Baptism will be announced at Mass and also through the website and newsletter.

MAKING YOUR DONATION BY STANDING ORDER If you can, please support the Cathedral by giving by standing order and, if you are a taxpayer, please gift aid your offering. For information go to https://cathedralbrentwood.org/gift-aid-explained/

Thank you for your continued generosity.

NEW GIFT AID BOXES are available for collection from the narthex of the Cathedral - please do remember to pick yours up and take it home with you. If you do not use the envelopes, we cannot claim the Gift Aid! The boxes are arranged in alphabetical order so please ensure that you sanitise your hands first and avoid touching other boxes when you are collecting yours. Thank you.

PARISH FINANCES 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.

GENERAL NEWS

CAFOD APPEAL Cafod is responding to significant crises across the world this week. We are working with local Church organisations in Haiti to deliver emergency aid to people affected by the catastrophic earthquake and tropical storm. In the tragic situation in Afghanistan, we are working to ensure the safety of our local partners and their communities. We are supporting local aid workers to deliver urgent food and water supplies to hundreds of thousands of people facing extreme hunger in Tigray in Ethiopia, South Sudan and north-east Nigeria. You can read more about how we can all express solidarity with our sisters and brothers affected by these emergencies on the CAFOD website: https://cafod.org.uk/News/Emergencies-news. Your compassion, generosity and prayers have helped us to stand together and enable us to continue to support communities in these difficult times. Thank you.

BRAND NEW BCYS YOUTH MASS to be celebrated on Thursday 2nd September at 7.30 p.m. in Brentwood Cathedral. Taking place on the first THURSDAY of the month at Brentwood Cathedral, the BCYS are delighted to welcome young people back to Youth Masses which will be bigger and better than ever! The evening will start with a celebration in the Parish Hall at 6.00 p.m., where we will provide food and drink as we know many will come straight from school or work, followed by Youth Mass in the Cathedral at 7.30 p.m. We always welcome new people, old
friends, school and confirmation groups so please do come along! For more information, please visit www.bcys.net/events/september-youth-mass/ or email info@bcys.net

BCYS AUTUMN YOUTH GATHER The BCYS invite all young people from school year 9 and above to join us at Walsingham House at Abbotswick for a one-day event on Saturday 23rd October, with outdoor activities and inflatables and 2 fantastic speakers - John Pridmore will speak about his conversion from a life of organised crime in the East End of London, to teach us that we are all capable of changing our futures and Leila Bousbaa will inspire and educate us on the Catholic response to climate change. We are asking £20 for the day and you can book online NOW at https://bcys.net/events/youth-gather-2021/

CATECHIST TRAINING AND RESOURCES DAY  - Saturday 6th November, Sacred Heart of Mary School, Upminster. This training and resources day is open to all First Holy Communion and Confirmation Catechists, as well as those who look after the children’s liturgy in the Diocese of Brentwood.

It will be an opportunity to hear about fresh resources, as well as receiving input to assist you in your First Holy Communion and Confirmation programmes. There will be keynote speakers and updates from the BCYS in the morning, with a variety of inspiring and exciting workshops for you to choose from in the afternoon. We would particularly like to welcome any young catechists or young people in your parish (16+) who may be interested in working as or with catechists, and wish to develop their faith further post-confirmation.

VACANCY Ursuline Sisters, Brentwood are seeking a Care Supervisor for 16 hours per week (over 3 days) to job share with our current Supervisor. Our Care team provide care for 6 resident Sisters. Applicants should have nursing qualifications and previous experience of caring for the elderly. Driving licence essential. Please telephone 01277 260156 for an application form.

SEASON OF CREATION STUDY DAYS During the 2021 Season of Creation, from 1st September to the feast of St Francis on 4th October, thousands of Christians on six continents will unite to pray and take action in defence of our common home www.seasonofcreation.org From the parish of Gidea Park we have organised two study days - on Saturday 4th September and Saturday 2nd October from 11.00 to 12.30 BST - to explore the teaching of Pope Francis on ‘care for our common home’ (Laudato si’), and the promotion of global solidarity (Fratelli Tutti). These study days, ‘The Cry of Creation’ and ‘The Cry of the Poor’ will be given by Fr Ashley Beck, associate professor at St Mary’s University, Twickenham. For access to these free live stream events go to www.whatgoodnews.org No registration needed. Talks will be available subsequently on the same website. Please spread the word on social media.

THE GOSPEL OF MARK On most Sundays of 2021 we shall be reading from the Gospel according to Mark. In two new video presentations Fr Adrian Graffy, parish priest and member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, demonstrates the skill with which Mark put his gospel together, and how Mark’s material was used by later evangelists. The talks are accessible free of charge from the home page of www.whatgoodnews.org and also on the page entitled ‘Faith Talks’.

THE MARCH FOR LIFE will take place on Saturday 4th September 2021. A number of indoor events for children, teens and adults will take place from 10.00 a.m. until 1.00 p.m. in The Emmanuel Centre, 9-23 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 3DW. The March to Parliament Square, will start outside The Emmanuel Centre at 1.30 p.m. There will be a number of Pro-Life speakers at Parliament Square, including Bishop John Keenan who will travel all the way from Scotland to attend this very important event. For more details see: www.MarchForLife.co.uk

NATIONAL MASS FOR ALTAR SERVERS This year’s National Mass for Altar Servers will be held at St Mary & St John’s Church in Wolverhampton on Saturday 25th September at 12 noon. This is in line with Cardinal Vincent Nichols request that the National
Mass should be held in another part of the country every other year alternating with London.

If MCs and Senior / Altar Servers would like to attend this event, please email John McCormack on johnmccormack528@gmail.com by 1st September. John will need to know how many Altar Servers (€ families) will be attending, so that accurate numbers can be established and communicated back to St Mary & St John’s Church. This is very important due to current COVID restrictions.

ANNUAL DIOCESAN MASS FOR ALTAR SERVERS Archconfraternity of St Stephen, invites all Altar Servers to the annual Diocesan Mass for Altar Servers at Westminster Cathedral on Saturday 2nd October 2021 at 2.30 p.m. The principal celebrant will be Rt. Rev. Nicholas Hudson, Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster. Servers from beyond the Westminster Diocese are welcome to this Mass if they can’t attend the National Mass on 25th September in Wolverhampton. If MCs and Senior / Altar Servers would like to attend this event, please email johnmccormack528@gmail.com by 18th September 2021. We will need to know how many Altar Servers (€ families) will be attending from your Parish, so that accurate numbers can be established.

LIVING LAUDATO SI’ – Online Retreat – 15th - 18th October 2021. Open to all, this retreat will help personal prayer and reflection, and parish action, on the critical issue of care for God’s creation. Bishop Alan will open the retreat, which will be led by expert speakers. For more information see poster at the back of church or email laudatosi@dioceseofbrentwood.org

DIOCESAN SCHOOL VACANCIES Details of current vacancies can be found on the Diocesan website at this link: https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/education/vacancies/school-vacancies/

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK and housebound parishioners and friends, including: Hermine Bayley, Madeleine Bevan, Phil Carr, David, Patricia Decup, Eileen Driscoll, Fr Stewart Foster, Julian Goode, Concetta Hall, David Hill, Ann Hurcombe, Wong Su Hwa, Jess, Brian Kelleher, Veronica Kelleher, Ginevra Lambourne, Lawrence, Tony Maule, Mary McCarthy, Carmel Micallef, Kath Murnane, Harry Newman, Barney O’Driscoll, Joe O’Herlihy, Steven Poole, Anne Rowe, Eileen Rossiter, Helena Rowe, Geraldine Sheehan, 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.


HOLY CROSS ANNIVERSARIES: Please remember the following, whose anniversaries occur at this time: Jean Courage, Tadeusz Antczak, Arthur Wood, Sydney Gosling, Winifred Hawser, Canon John Walsh, Norah Costello, Jessica West, Marjorie Raven, John Brien, Edward Houghton, Sir Geoffrey Nightingale, Mary Towler, Daniel Kelly, Agnes Galcious, Edmond Horgan, William Coles, Eddie Connor and Chris Williams.

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