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:

Please treat as gift aid donation, all qualifying gifts of money made from the date of this declaration. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that, if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations, it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

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Donate without Giftaid-it

If you are unable to donate with Giftaid-it then please use the codes below.

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Brentwood Diocesan Trust – Registered Charity No. 234092

"A voice cries in the wilderness; Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight."
THE THRESHOLDS OF HOPE QUESTION: What are the distinctive insights of Catholic Social Teaching? takes place by Zoom today Sunday, 5th December 4.00 - 5.00 p.m. The input and discussion will be led by Fr Dominic Howard, Episcopal Vicar for Youth Ministry and Pastoral Care. To join this meeting go to Events at www.thresholdsofhope.co.uk.

THE YOUNG ADULTS "MILLENNIALS" GROUP will next meet in Clergy House at 7.00 p.m. on Thursday 16th December. This is an opportunity for 19 - 40-year-olds to meet other Catholics, reflect on the Sunday readings and pray together. All welcome.

CHRISTMAS BRENTWOOD FOOD BANK COLLECTION This weekend, 4th/5th December we will be holding a food bank collection and so welcome any non-perishable foods such as tinned meats, jars of sauce, cereals as well as toiletries and cleaning products; seasonal items would be particularly welcome at this time.

As with past collections, a parishioner will be in the car park collecting donations. Please be as generous as you are able; thank you for your continued support.

PLEASE PRAY for the repose of the souls of Stella Buggle, Ellen “Pat” McCarthy and Francis Flynn who died recently. Funeral details are as follows:

- Stella’s Requiem Mass - Wednesday 8th December, 10.30 a.m.
- Pat’s Requiem Mass - Monday 13th December, 10.30 a.m.
- Francis’ Requiem Mass - Thursday 23rd December, 10.30 a.m.

The funeral of Fr Gary’s father takes place on the 10th December. Please continue to keep Fr Gary and all his family in your prayers at this time.

May all who have died know the Lord’s goodness in the land of the living.

RESTORE A RAINFOREST - ADVENT APPEAL - Inspired by the personal stories heard at COP26, this Advent we are thinking of the most vulnerable who are affected by climate change and would like Brentwood Cathedral to raise £719 to Restore a Rainforest. If you would like to make a donation you can do so online by the Just Giving website (search Green Guardians Brentwood Cathedral). This is one of CAFOD many World Gifts which make a fantastic festive present for others. Thank you for your support.

ARE YOU ABLE TO HELP? If you are available to help with serving mince pies and mulled wine after the Nine Lessons and Carols Service on the afternoon of Sunday 19th December, please call Roisin for more information on 07805 120310.

Thank you.

COFFEE AFTER 9.30 MASS will be hosted by the HCPT Group 8 team on Sunday 12th December. Please do come along and join us.

If you would be interested in hosting a coffee morning, email Claire at cathedralcoffeerota@yahoo.com

PLEASE NOTE the parish office opening hours are Monday to Thursday (8.30 a.m. - 3.30 p.m.).

HOLY HOUR OF PRAYER on Monday evenings. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will begin at 6.30 p.m. and finish with Benediction at 7.30 p.m. This is an opportunity to come and spend some private time in the peaceful presence of the Lord.

SATURDAY VIGIL MASS at 6.30 p.m. takes place in the Cathedral.

SUNDAY MASSES in the Cathedral are at the normal times of 8.00 a.m. / 9.30 a.m. / 11.30 a.m. & 6.30 p.m.

WEEKDAY MASSES Monday to Friday at 9.15 a.m.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION is available on Saturdays in the Cathedral from 10.00 - 11.00 a.m.
DETAILS OF PARISH ANNIVERSARIES AND SICK LIST can be found on the narthex noticeboard and at www.cathedralbrentwood.org/news/news-latest.pdf

THE NEW DIOCESAN DIRECTORY 2022 is now available for purchase from the parish office - £2.80 per copy.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES AND MASSES

Sunday 19th December

4.00 p.m. - Nine Lessons and Carols Service
Presider: Bishop Alan Williams
with the Cathedral choir

Friday 24th December - Christmas Eve

Morning Mass at 9.15 a.m.
Christmas Masses at 5.00 p.m., 7.00 p.m. and 10.00 p.m.
Christmas carols at 9.30 p.m. led by the Cathedral choir

Saturday 25th December - Christmas Day

Masses at 8.00 a.m., 9.30 a.m. and 11.30 a.m.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE WILL BE NO EVENING MASS

Offerings are your personal gift to the priests of the parish

Sunday 26th December - The Holy Family

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

At this moment there is no proposal to have a booking system for the Christmas Masses. People will be free to come to any Mass they choose but all people will need to be seated and wear face masks/coverings. Once the Cathedral has reached capacity, we will not be able to admit more people. Please arrive in good time to ensure a seat.

Christmas offerings are your personal gift to the priests

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION Congratulations to our young people who received the Sacrament of Confirmation. We are now reviewing options for how to proceed with this year’s potential candidates. If you are presently in year 12 or equivalent and are interested in learning more about your faith and/or feel ready to take this next step then please register your interest with Fr Martin and Fr Gary. You can do this by sending an emailing to cathedralbrentwood@gmail.com. The only information we need at this stage is your name and which year you are in, and your parents’ contact details. Please do this before 19th December. Full registration information will be sent out once we receive these details.

WE HAVE NOW RESUMED passing the collection bag around the Cathedral. The evidence suggests that there is a very small risk of contracting Covid by touch; also, the majority of people are now vaccinated and this provides significant protection to themselves and others. Everyone is still asked to hand sanitise as they enter and leave the Cathedral.

However, if you are able to do so, we would encourage you to give BY STANDING ORDER. Once set up, you do not have to think or worry about your offering when you come to Mass. It is also a huge help to us as it is now impossible to bank cash in Brentwood and we are having to take it to Billericay.

If you are a taxpayer, please gift aid your offering. For more information go to www.cathedralbrentwood.org/gift-aid-explained/ Thank you for your continued generosity.

HONOURING SUNDAY: BISHOP’S STATEMENT:

The Eucharist, source and summit

The Eucharist is the source and summit of our spiritual and pastoral life. Many people have said to us that they have appreciated the noble simplicity of the Mass at this time, which has allowed the mystery and majesty of our Lord’s sacrificial love to shine through.
The central appeal of the Mass, its beauty and its transcendence, raises our minds and hearts to God in an unambiguous and compelling manner. Our Lord Jesus invites us to receive anew the gift of Sunday as the preeminent day, the day of the Resurrection, when the Church gathers to celebrate the Eucharist. Here we stand together before our heavenly Father, offering our thanksgiving and prayer, through our Saviour in the Holy Spirit. Here we receive Christ in his Word. Here we are nourished by Christ in his precious Body and Blood. This is our primary joy, for which there is no substitute, and from which we draw our strength.

The Gift of the Sunday Eucharist

The Sunday Eucharist is a gift; as God’s holy people we are called to praise and thank God in the most sublime way possible. When the Church speaks of the Sunday obligation, it reminds us that attending Mass is a personal response to the selfless offering of Christ’s love.

We now encourage all Catholics to look again at the patterns which they have formed in recent months with regard to going to Mass on Sundays. This would include consideration and reflection about what we might do on Sundays, such as sports or shopping, or other leisure and social activities. This review, and the decisions which arise from it, fall to every Catholic and we trust this will be done with honesty, motivated by a real love for the Lord whom we encounter in the Mass.

The Sunday Mass is the very heartbeat of the Church and of our personal life of faith. We gather on the “first day of the week,” and devote ourselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2:42). The Eucharist sustains us and spurs us on, renewing our gratitude and our hope. When we say “Amen” to Christ in receiving his Body and Blood, we express the love of God which is deep within us, and at the end of Mass, when we are sent forth, we express our love for our neighbour, especially those in need. These two dimensions reveal the full meaning of our faith. We are gathered together and sent out, we pray and are fed, we worship and we adore; these are intrinsic to our lives as those baptised into Christ.

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 more information go to https://cathedralbrentwood.org/gift-aid-explained/ Thank you for your continued generosity.

PREPARATION FOR FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 2020-21. Due to the disruption of the pandemic, this year’s preparation is for children who are in Year 4 and above from September 2021. Please note that this preparation programme is now full. Only those parents who have already completed and returned a registration form will be able to join the 2020-21 programme.

The details to register your child (Year 4 and above in September 2022) for the 2022/23 programme will be released next year. We hope that the children being a year older will allow them to benefit more fully from this spiritual preparation and that supported by their parents that they will also be more familiar with the prayers and celebration of Mass.

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.

NUMBERS OF PEOPLE AT A BAPTISM. How many people can attend a baptism at Brentwood Cathedral? It is now possible for
any number of people to attend a baptism. However, the baptisms that took place when Covid restrictions only allowed small numbers of people to attend proved to be intimate, prayerful, and focussed on Christ into whose death and resurrection we are baptised.

The parents who experienced the baptism of their child during that time have commented on how this allowed them to appreciate the spiritual meaning of the sacrament and that it was also less stressful.

Many couples are now deciding to have godparents and immediate family at the Church for the baptism of their child and then inviting other friends and acquaintances to join them for any celebration afterwards.

**GENERAL NEWS**

**ST HELEN'S CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL RECEPTION ADMISSIONS 2022-23:** Parents of prospective Reception children 2022 now need to make an application for a place at the Infant School: www.essex.gov.uk/admissions. The statutory national closing date for applications is 15th January 2022. Please submit the Supplementary Information Form directly to the school. If you have any queries, please contact the school office: 01277 215626. The national closing date for applications is 15 January 2022.

“**ALTERNATIVE GIFTS**” **THIS CHRISTMAS.** St Mother Teresa of Calcutta said, “It is Christmas every time you let God love others through you.” As part of Advent, we naturally reflect on our Christmas giving. Many charities now offer inventive and wonderful ways to support their work, as a gift to others - you can buy goats or bees, help preserve sections of rainforest, and much more. To help in your search for such gifts our Diocesan Caritas has brought a range of charity details all together on one page, and you will find it at: https://www.caritasbrentwood.org/christmas/

**THE PASSAGE,** a Catholic charity working with homeless people is raising funds through the Big Give a matched giving scheme; every £1 donated online between 12.00 noon on Tuesday 30th November and 12.00 noon on Tuesday 7th December makes £2, and £2.25 if you are a taxpayer through Gift Aid. At a time when The Passage’s finances are stretched and they are helping more homeless people please consider supporting this charity through the link https://bit.ly/PassageBG2021

**BIBLE STUDIES ON THE ADVENT SUNDAY GOSPELS** Mauro Iannicelli will break-open the forthcoming Advent Sunday Gospels with in-depth teaching and stimulating questions. As a result, you will experience Sunday Mass in a new way! Wednesdays: 8th/15th/22nd December (7-8.00 p.m. UK Time). Free of Charge, LIVE sessions on YouTube. Information and Registration: https://comeandsee.org/advent

**WORLD YOUTH SERVICE (BCYS) AND WALSFINGHAM HOUSE** at Abbotswick offer retreats, pilgrimages and many other events for many thousands of young people every year; most of the work is led by volunteers, trained as young leaders in the Church. The BCYS also supports our catechists and school lay chaplains. Next week a speaker will tell us more about the BCYS and there will be a collection for their vital work, or you can donate online at www.bcys.net/donate.

**BCYS ADVENT RETREAT,** 10th-11th December at Walsingham House at Abbotswick. Open to all those in years 10-13, at our beautiful retreat house just outside Brentwood, the BCYS invites you to join us and other young Catholics for our Advent Retreat, with an exciting variety of interactive workshops, times of reflection, prayer and as we look at different themes and aspects of the Advent story. The cost of the retreat is just £35, including accommodation, activities and meals. You can find out more and book your place at www.bcys.net/events or get in touch at info@bcys.net!
BCYS CAROL CONCERTS, Sunday 12th December at Walsingham House at Abbotswick. You are warmly invited to join us at Walsingham House at Abbotswick on Sunday 12th December. For just £10 you can hear Christmas carols both classic and contemporary performed by our incredibly talented BCYS musicians, and accompanied by readings from scripture, Christmas poems and stories, followed by light refreshments. A beautiful event for the whole family, to help us all journey through Advent and prepare for Christmas, whilst fundraising to help young people travel on service pilgrimage to Lourdes. Concerts will be at 3.00 p.m. or 7.00 p.m. with limited capacity. To book your tickets, please contact Joe Beattie, Walsingham House manager at josephbeattie@dioceseofbrentwood.org or on 01277 373959.

BCYS SUMMER LOURDES PILGRIMAGE 2022: 23rd - 30th July 2022. Applications are now open for our summer pilgrimage to Lourdes for those in Years 11-13, with those of school leaver age (18+) invited to join us as young leaders. This is one of our most popular events and after a 2-year gap we are excited to be returning next year. The week is spent travelling alongside the main Diocesan pilgrimage as we assist the elderly and infirm with going to Masses and services, as well as visiting shops and cafes within the town. For those travelling with the BCYS the week will also include a retreat, reconciliation service, as well as social events and a party. Please see www.bcys.net/events/sl22/ for more information including visas, vaccinations and how to apply.

THE DIOCESAN LOURDES PILGRIMAGE, led by Bishop Alan, will take place from Sunday 24 - Friday 29 July in Lourdes. It will be the first time in three years that the diocese has returned to Lourdes. Brochures for the pilgrimage, which will include costs, will be available soon. If you would like further information now, please contact Cathy O’Connor, the Administrative Director: cathy@dioceseofbrentwood.org or 07813 710070.

THE UNIVERSE CATHOLIC WEEKLY have launched their new online newspaper. Order your Digital copy by going to www.universecatholicweekly.co.uk or call on 0743661 7650 and ask for Michelle. Special offer: Only £20 for 3 months.

RELIGIOUS CHRISTMAS CARDS Pax Christi now have available for sale a variety of Christmas cards have real integrity and come in a mixed pack of 10 cards with envelopes; these can be ordered from https://paxchristi.org.uk/product/nativity-trio-cards/

VACANCIES Sacred Heart of Mary Girl’s School, Upminster are seeking 2 x Relief General Kitchen Assistants APTC Scale 1 Point 1 - 3 (£11.01 to £11.40 per hour); required as soon as possible to work on a relief basis in the first instance. Normally 10.00 hours per week, Monday-Friday 12.15 p.m. - 2.15 p.m. Please refer to the ‘Job Vacancies’ section of the school website for a Support Staff application form and further details can be provided by contacting the Catering Manager, Sharon Flynn, sflynn@mary.havering.sch.uk. Closing date Monday 13th December 2021.

DIOCESAN SCHOOL VACANCIES Details of current vacancies: https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/education/vacancies/school-vacancies/

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