



# MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS



## Saturday 04<sup>TH</sup> May 2024 – THE ENGLISH MARTYRS

9.00am Morning Prayer  
 9.20am Mass and Rosary  
 10.00am – 11.00am Confessions  
 6.00pm **Vigil Mass** The Ladies Social Club Members (1989/2020)

## Sunday 05<sup>TH</sup> May 2024 – SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (B)

9.00am **Mass** John Sullivan RIP  
 11.00am **Mass** Charles & Mary Hurley Intentions  
 5.00pm **Holy Hour**

## Tuesday 07<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – Tuesday after the Sixth Sunday of Easter

7.00pm Novena to Anthony of Padua  
 7.30pm **Mass** Mary Wall RIP

## Wednesday 08<sup>TH</sup> May 2024 – Wednesday after the Sixth Sunday of Easter

9.00am Morning Prayer  
 9.20am Mass and Rosary Gabrielle Wisken RIP  
 10am until 5pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

## Thursday 09<sup>TH</sup> May 2024 – THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD (B) *HOLYDAY OF OBLIGATION*

9.00am Morning Prayer  
 9.20am Mass and Rosary Thanksgiving – People of Parish praying for Janet Bidnamrodi  
 10am until 4pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

## Friday 10<sup>TH</sup> May 2024 – Friday after the Sixth Sunday of Easter

9.00am Morning Prayer  
 9.20am Mass and Rosary Rose White Speedy Recovery  
 10am until 5pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

## Saturday 11<sup>TH</sup> May 2024 – Saturday after the Sixth Sunday of Easter

9.00am Morning Prayer  
 9.20am Mass and Rosary Kevin Patrick Wall RIP  
 10.00am – 11.00am Confessions  
 6.00pm **Vigil Mass** Teresa Vines RIP

## Sunday 12<sup>TH</sup> May 2024 – SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (World Communications Day)

9.00am **Mass** Kerina Lord RIP  
 11.00am **Mass** John Manning RIP  
 5.00pm **Holy Hour**



# OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL



Parish Priest: Fr Britto Belevendran

61 London Road, Wickford, Essex SS12 0AW ~ Tel 01268 733219

Website: [www.wickfordcatholic.com](http://www.wickfordcatholic.com) ~ Email: [wickford@brcdt.org](mailto:wickford@brcdt.org)

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## SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (B)

### 05<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024

### Mutual Love between All Disciples

We are introduced to the Gentile Cornelius. In the verses immediately preceding today's selection, Cornelius has a vision in which he is instructed to meet Peter. Meanwhile, Peter has a vision that confounds him and that he will later understand as a sign that Gentiles who proclaim Jesus as Lord should be welcomed into this new community. Upon his first meeting with Peter, Cornelius Falls before Peter's feet.

While a conversation between the two ensues, a large crowd gathers. For the first time, Peter begins to teach "that God shows no partiality" between Jew and Gentile. The Holy Spirit descended upon the believers, and the baptism of Cornelius and his household followed.

The Gospel emphasizes that the love that exists between the Father and the Son is the same love that must characterize the relationships of Jesus' followers. This love is so foundational for Christians that we are commanded to love one another.

The noun *friend*, which Jesus uses to describe his relationship with the disciples, is derived from the verb *to love*.

Thus, the friendship identified in this Gospel emphasizes mutual self-giving. Such friendship is far more than a casual relationship with another person.

**Love is our calling. Love is the calling of the friends of God in the risen Lord. Not just any love – rather, the love of disciples – finds its basis in following the commandments of love. Let us ask for God's help that we might faithfully discern the ways in which God calls us to love impartially and keep his Word.**



## PARISH NEWS

### Fr. George Towler – Requiem Mass

The Requiem Mass for Fr. George Towler will be celebrated at **The Most Holy Redeemer, Billericay at 11 a.m. on Tuesday 14 May.**

It is not clear at the moment whether Fr. Towler's body will be received into the church the night before, but if this is the case a further notification will be sent.

Please do continue to pray for the repose of Fr Towler's soul.  
May he rest in peace.

### Children's Liturgy

Our next Childrens Liturgy will be held on **Sunday the 12<sup>th</sup> of May.**

### Confirmation Programme 2023/24

The next Confirmation class will be on **Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024** in the back hall (7:30pm-9:00pm). Please attend without fail if you wish to be confirmed this year.

### Teas and Coffees

Our next Teas & Coffees will be held on **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> of May** after the 9AM Mass; are all welcomed to join.

### The First Holy Communion Session

The next Session which will be a Rehearsal is to take place on **Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2024.**

### Booking in Mass Intentions

This is a kind reminder – When booking a Mass, please clearly specify what the intentions will be for. Many Thanks.



### Baptisms - Photography

This is a polite notice - Photographs will not be allowed to be taken during Baptism Ceremonies, they can be taken after the ceremony is done.

Thank you.

### Women's Group OLOGC

The next women's group meeting will be held in the back hall (St. Peter's) on Friday the 10<sup>th</sup> of May and Friday the **24<sup>th</sup> of May at 7:30pm.** All are welcome!

### Parish Repository

In the next few weeks, some of our young people and children will be making their confirmation and Holy Communion. The repository has a lovely selection of gifts and cards to commemorate these wonderful occasions. Please come and visit us. The shop is open after all the weekend masses, and by appointment. Please contact Kathleen, (761195), and Sheila, (767064), for details.

**Sick Friends and Relatives** - Please pray for Jonathan Fabri, Jayne & Danny Balaam, Beniamina Bilewycz, Arthur Brittain, Mary Caruana, Theresa Eldred, Patricia Gammell, Johnny Gee, Celine Guckian, Sharon Guckian, Gabrielle & Ralphie Langridge, Margaret Livesey, John Maguire, Bridget Mahoney, Carmella Micella, Elizabeth Mooney, Cecile Narbeth, Olivia Nazareth, Diane Neale, Margaret O'Doherty, Joy Orrock, Carmelo Piazza, Maureen Price, Conchita Prime, Carol Rushbrook, John Sheridan, Gerry Smyth, Maria Weedon, Elizabeth Arnold, Jane Williams, Gomez, Patricia McEvoy, Maureen Sullivan, Susan Freeman, Jane Davenport, Nathalie Ah-key, Amparo Thorogood, George O'Boyle, Pat McEvoy, Ann Parkinson, Valerie Robinson, Nelly Prada, Michael Fitzgerald, May and Chris Carey, Doreen Green, Conrad Gomes, Peter Turner, Sr. Sior Cosgrave Una, Clairin Molloy, Celine Wells, Patricia Graves and Keith Bottjer, Robert Turner, Patricia Price, George Ross, Paul Grayston, Frank Daniels, Geoff Ebdon.

**Anniversaries** –We pray for Canon Patrick Palmer, Canon Basil Booker, Edward Tibbs, Terence Arthur Fitzsimmons, Fr. John O'Callaghan, John Patrick Sullivan, Thomas Barry, Josephine Moles, Joseph Shipperlee, Henry George Tyler, Helena Gilbe, Jeremiah Kile, Albert Eldred, Ethel Marion Guest, Edward McEvoy, Robert Patterson, Frances Theresa Maguire, Canon Brian Grady, Louie Frances, James Downey, Kerina Jessica Lord, Fr. Augustine Davidson, Mgr. John Howell, Fr John Boyle, Fr. Stanley Joynes, ,Patrick Joseph Garvey.

## DIOCESAN NEWS

### 1. Events:

#### Next Vocations evening for enquirers

The next “Enquirers’ Evening” for those considering or interested in a vocation to the priesthood is on **Tuesday 7 May** at Brentwood Cathedral. The speaker will be Fr Patrick Daly. For further information please contact Fr Mark Swires: [vocprom@brcdt.org](mailto:vocprom@brcdt.org)

#### NATIONAL JUSTICE AND PEACE NETWORK

AGM and Open Networking Day

**Saturday 11th May 10.30am—4pm**

Taking place at CAFOD, Romero House, 55 Westminster Bridge Rd., London SE1 7JB.

We will hear about the ‘New definition of extremism 2024’, what it will mean in practice, and how it affects climate activism. There will be time for discussions and networking. Tea/coffee will be provided, but please bring your own lunch,

For more information, contact [admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk](mailto:admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk).

#### Thy Kingdom Come - Pentecost Prayer Novena 2024

There will be 24/7 prayer running from **2pm on Sunday 12th May** to 10pm on Saturday 18th May at the Sion Community Chapel. You are welcome to join us any time from 6am to 12 midnight. It would be very helpful if you could book an hour slot in the prayer room by visiting this link: <https://signup.24-7prayer.com/signup/75e411> or you can join us for Praise & Worship at 8pm which is taking place each evening. We look forward to welcoming you for this special prayer time.

For more information, please contact [admin@sioncommunity.org.uk](mailto:admin@sioncommunity.org.uk)  
Sion Community, SENT, Sawyers Hall Lane, Brentwood, Essex, CM15 9BX

#### Pentecost Prayer Novena

The original novena (nine days) was prayed by the apostles in the upper room on the days in between the Ascension of the Lord and the Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. We are all invited to pray this novena, for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon our Church, but also on those we

hold in our hearts who don't know the Lord.

Why not join with the Sion Community in Brentwood, to pray this novena in a special way this year?

There will be a launch event for the Pentecost **Novena at 8pm on the evening of Ascension Thursday, 9th May**, with Praise & Worship and a short talk. There will then be a 24/7 interactive prayer room running from **2pm on Sunday 12th May to 10pm on Saturday 18th May**. People can book an hour slot in the prayer room at a convenient time for them by visiting this link: <https://signup.24-7prayer.com/signup/75e411> or you can join us for Praise & Worship at 8pm each evening.

For more information, please contact [admin@sioncommunity.org.uk](mailto:admin@sioncommunity.org.uk)  
Sion Community, Sawyers Hall Lane, Brentwood, Essex, CM15 9BX

#### Knights of St. Columba Youth Competitions - Easter Grand Draw

Please see the notices in the porch for the 3 current Youth Competitions. The categories are Painting, Photo, and Essay, for different ages and with cash prizes. Any problems please contact Brother Martin Doyle.

#### Walsingham

**Saturday 25th May** is the date of the annual diocesan pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. I remember in our centenary year some forty 50-seater coaches disgorging thousands of pilgrims from all over the diocese. I dare to dream big that I will see this again in my lifetime. My immediate dream is smaller. I would love to see the serving team from every parish have 1 person serving at Walsingham this year. It is important that we engage our young people with the Shrine. Pilgrimage is an important part of our spiritual wellbeing and giving that to our youngsters will ensure that the future of our faith in their hands will be fruitful. The shrine is a wonderful place both spiritually and for the wonderful countryside which surrounds it. I know this is half-term but if you want to get-away for a few days why not choose Norfolk and start at Walsingham.

**Nicola Christmas**, Walsingham pilgrimage MC for the Diocese of Brentwood

### **DM Pilgrimage to Walsingham 2024 Brentwood Diocese**

The Divine Mercy Apostolate, London is holding a First Saturday Divine Mercy Recollection Day at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, on **Saturday 1st June 2024 from 11 am to 4:30 pm**. The Recollection Day will include teachings on the Message of Mercy, Holy Mass, Stations of the Cross, Hour of Mercy with Adoration and Benediction and Veneration of the Image of Merciful Jesus. All welcome.

Pls call millie on [07957594646](tel:07957594646) for more information. Coaches from Ealing Broadway and Victoria/

### **Catholic Parish Summit:**

The Catholic Parish Summit is taking place in Harrogate from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the **14<sup>th</sup> of June** with over 1,000 parish leaders from across the country.

Our diocese has booked some places for the Summit which are available to anyone who is interested in attending. These places are free but they are limited and you will need to make arrangements for accommodation while you are in Harrogate. For more information about the Summit please visit their website: <https://catholicparishsummit.com/>

If you would like to find out more please email Father Dan Mason, the Episcopal Vicar for Parish Renewal at [billericay@brcdt.org](mailto:billericay@brcdt.org)

### **BCCS 40th Anniversary Newsletter and invitation to Anniversary**

You are warmly invited to attend our Anniversary Mass celebrated by Bishop Alan, on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June at the Most Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, Billericay at 6pm: There will be light refreshments after Mass in the pastoral centre and so it would be very helpful if you could RSVP to this email address to let us know if you plan to attend.

### **'Revive; Discover; Empower' a young adults retreat**

Walsingham House are hosting a young adults retreat on the weekend of **22<sup>nd</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> June**. The retreat is open to those who are 19+. It will be a weekend of prayer and friendship and a wonderful opportunity to take a break from work or university. The cost of the retreat is £45 and more information, including how to book, can be found at [www.bcys.net/events](http://www.bcys.net/events)

### **Lourdes Pilgrimage**

Join Bishop Alan on the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes (**Friday 19 – Friday 26 July**). To book, please go online: [Brentwood Lourdes - Lourdes - Tangney Tours \(tangney-tours.com\)](http://Brentwood Lourdes - Lourdes - Tangney Tours (tangney-tours.com)) If you wish to discuss any aspect of the pilgrimage, please e-mail Kathryn Young: [kathrynyoung@mail.com](mailto:kathrynyoung@mail.com)

### **The Campion School**

Would like to warmly invite parents/carers and year 5 boys to our Open Evening on **Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> June** from 4.30pm to 7pm.

The Headteacher's talk will be at 5pm and repeated at 6.30pm. Please visit our school website for more details [www.thecampionschool.org.uk](http://www.thecampionschool.org.uk)

**BCYS SUMMER LOURDES YOUTH PILGRIMAGE – Last week of July 2024 (exact dates TBC)**

**Bookings are now open online for the Brentwood Catholic Youth Service pilgrimage to Lourdes in July.**

Serve the main Diocesan pilgrimage, assist the elderly and infirm, with times of retreat, reconciliation, visit the baths, take part in the beautiful Processions, as well as an afternoon in the mountains, party and social nights - all with other young Catholics from around our Diocese.

The pilgrimage is open to all those in school year 10 – 13, with all those of school leaver age (18+) invited to join us as young leaders (subject to attending a training weekend). All details and applications can be found on the website [www.bcys.net/events/sl24](http://www.bcys.net/events/sl24)

### **40yrs of Walsingham House Teams**

2024 marks 40 years of retreat teams at Walsingham House. There will be a celebration Mass with Bishop Alan on **Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024** at Walsingham House at Abbots wick. Please save the date as it would be wonderful to see Walsingham House and BCYS alumni and friends gather to mark this milestone. More information to follow in the new year.

### **A Day with Mary pilgrimage to Fatima & Italy**

A Day with Mary 2024 Pilgrimages to Fatima (7-14 June) and Italy (4-12 September).

For more information, email: [adwmary.uk@gmail.com](mailto:adwmary.uk@gmail.com), web: [www.adaywithmary.org](http://www.adaywithmary.org) or phone +(0)20 8641 6418.

Booking forms are available at any DWN venue.

### **FLAME 2025 “Unstoppable” – Fan the Flame of Hope**

Although it may feel like months away, we are excited to be preparing for Flame in March 2025, following on from the incredible experience that 1000 young people from the Brentwood Diocese had at the event earlier this year.

Once again, the BCYS will purchase a block of early bird tickets on behalf of the Diocese, to enable us to allocate seats together, in a very desirable area as close to the front as possible.

**These early bird tickets are £29 each, a saving of £5 per ticket on the full price of £34, and will be purchased in January, which is why we are asking for your ticket requests now!**

### **Caritas Diocese of Brentwood**

is inviting you to take part in several activities during Lent. We have a photo challenge for all ages, Stations of the Cross for teenagers, a Giving Calendar to help collections for local foodbanks, suggestions on how to raise awareness for the homeless within Essex and East London and some great resources from charities such as SVP and CAFOD. All information and resources can be found at [www.caritasbrentwood.org/lent](http://www.caritasbrentwood.org/lent) or by emailing [sianthomas@brcdt.org](mailto:sianthomas@brcdt.org).

### **Canonesses of the Holy Sepulchre – St Patrick’s Way Pilgrimage 2025**

The Community is organising a pilgrimage on 22-27 April 2025. We will be journeying along the newly-established St Patrick's Way in the North of Ireland. The pilgrimage is open to all faiths and none and is aimed at being accessible to everyone - walkers and non-walkers.

If you are interested in joining us, please find further details and booking form on our website <https://canonesses.co.uk/pilgrimage-st-patricks-way-april-2025/> or email [projects@canonesses.co.uk](mailto:projects@canonesses.co.uk). Closing date: 10 May 2024.

## **2. Programme:**

### **Retrouvaille – Do you need help in your marriage?**

Retrouvaille has helped many couples find new hope, nourishment, and growth in their marriages. If you want to uncover or reawaken the love, trust and commitment that brought you together and work through difficult times in your marriage contact Retrouvaille confidential for more information about our 2024 programmes. There is no group therapy or group work. Our next programme commences with a weekend in Welwyn Garden City on **14-16 June 2024**. Call or text 07887 296983 or 07973 380443, email [retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com](mailto:retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com) - or visit [www.retrouvaille.org.uk](http://www.retrouvaille.org.uk)

### **LECTIONARY READINGS FOR LENT**

Commentary on every Scripture reading from Ash Wednesday to Good Friday by Fr Adrian Graffy, parish priest of Gidea Park and member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, is available free of charge on [www.whatgoodnews.org](http://www.whatgoodnews.org) Click on ‘Scripture Readings’ and ‘Lent Readings’. The commentaries are also available in book form from Darton, Longman and Todd [www.dartonlongmantodd.co.uk](http://www.dartonlongmantodd.co.uk)

### **Apprenticeships at Walsingham House**

Walsingham House are offering a two-year apprenticeship course in Youth Ministry and Chaplaincy (Yr13 school leavers). Participants will live and work at Walsingham House, running retreats for young people across the diocese whilst studying with St Mary’s University, Twickenham. For more information please email [clairebailey@brcdt.org](mailto:clairebailey@brcdt.org) or visit the website [www.bcys.net/apprenticeship-opportunity-at-walsingham-house/](http://www.bcys.net/apprenticeship-opportunity-at-walsingham-house/)

### **Bishop’s Certificate in Catechesis and Youth Ministry**

is an online course is designed to be an entry level qualification to help in the ongoing formation of adults involved in sacramental preparation (First Holy Communion and/or Confirmation) or youth ministry in the Diocese of Brentwood. It includes both the development of practical skills & the deepening of theological knowledge. For more information or to register your interest please email [clairebailey@brcdt.org](mailto:clairebailey@brcdt.org) or see the website <https://bcys.net/bishops-cert/>

### **BCCS FREE SELF-HARM WORKSHOP FOR FAMILIES**

Brentwood Catholic Children’s Society (BCCS) is aiming to deliver free Self-Harm support groups to both parents/carers and their teenagers should they wish to attend. The workshops will be held on a Wednesday evening for four consecutive weeks at their premises at 133 High Street, Billericay between 6.30 and 8pm. The parents’ group will run alongside a separate group for the young people and will be an opportunity to think about how self-harm is affecting you, your child, and your family. The young people will attend a separate group session with a BCCS Child and Adolescent Therapist. Parents will come together with their teenager at the end where they will be supported to communicate, reflect, and connect. Parents are welcome to attend without their child or young person if that is a more comfortable option. To book your space, please contact Catherine Munns asap; places are likely to fill quickly: [cmunns@bccs.org.uk](mailto:cmunns@bccs.org.uk)

(A Flyer of the event is displayed on the Church Notice board).

### **BISHOP ALAN LISTENS' RESEARCH REPORT**

Understanding why Catholics in the Diocese of Brentwood no longer come to Church.

Last summer Bishop Alan invited Catholics who no longer regularly come to Church to get in touch so that he could seriously listen to their stories and experiences and begin to understand why so many Catholics no longer feel as though they belong in the Church.

This report presents a moving and challenging insight into how our Church and the covid-19 pandemic have contributed to a movement away from a regular practice of faith for many Catholics and offers our Church a rich repository of wisdom that might enhance and inform our ongoing journey of renewal in the diocese.

Thank you to all those who so generously and thoughtfully participated in this research. Please share this link/report with those whom you know have participated in this research. Go to the home page of <https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/> to see the responses of hundreds of Catholics across our diocese and hear what Bishop Alan heard.

### **3. Appeals:**

#### **Caritas Diocese of Brentwood**

In the Gospel narratives, we hear of the family displaced from their home, finding solace in a humble stable, cradling their newborn amidst the simplicity of their surroundings. This Holy Family, vulnerable yet resilient, resonates profoundly, urging us to reach out to those facing hardships during this Advent season. It prompts us to remember that amidst the festivities, there are individuals and families across Essex and East London experiencing great difficulties, requiring our support, kindness, and care. Numerous charitable organisations persist in their efforts to aid the most vulnerable in our communities, and they rely on our collective support. Please visit the Caritas website to access links to the many charities in need of generosity and volunteers.

[Caritas Diocese of Brentwood \(caritasbrentwood.org\)](http://caritasbrentwood.org)

#### **CAFOD Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal**

Donate to CAFOD's Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal at [cafod.org.uk/ipc](http://cafod.org.uk/ipc) or call 0303 303 3030 to support those affected and get funds to local trusted experts in Gaza and southern Israel who have been working alongside communities helping those most in need. Your donation will help support aid workers providing urgent humanitarian aid including food, water, and emergency shelter to those in need. Thank you for your prayers.

### **4. Job adverts:**

#### **Health and Safety Co-ordinator**

A vacancy has arisen for a Health and Safety Co-Ordinator to work full time from Monday to Friday. They will be based at Cathedral House and will be required to travel around the Diocese.

Candidates must have H&S experience and H&S qualifications including NEBOSH.

Please send your CV and cover letter by email to [hr@brcdt.org](mailto:hr@brcdt.org)

Full job description is available on the Diocese website.

Closing date for applications: **14th May 2024**

#### **Assistant Secretary – Cathedral House (Bishop's Office)**

The Diocese of Brentwood are looking for an Assistant Secretary to work for the Bishop's Office at Cathedral House – Brentwood.

The primary purpose of the role is to assist the Bishop's Secretary with providing office management and secretarial support to the Bishop.

The post will be full time working Monday to Friday.

Full job description: Assistant Secretary – Bishops Office – Job Description

If you have any queries regarding the role or if you wish to apply, please email your CV and cover letter to [hr@brcdt.org](mailto:hr@brcdt.org).

Closing date for applications is **22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024**.

#### **Retreat Manager for Walsingham House at Abbotswick**

Walsingham House are seeking to appoint a Retreat Manager for Walsingham House. The Retreat Manager will work to ensure the smooth and efficient running of retreats and leading the volunteer team. This is a live in position and ideal for someone with previous experience in youth ministry. Full details, including background information and how to apply, can found at [www.bcys.net/news/vacancies/](http://www.bcys.net/news/vacancies/) The closing date is **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May**.

### **Programme Leader for Walsingham House at Abbotswick**

Walsingham House are seeking to appoint a Programme Leader. The successful applicant will work alongside the Retreat Manager helping to lead retreats for the schools and parishes of our diocese. Full details, including background information and how to apply, can be found at [www.bcys.net/news/vacancies/](http://www.bcys.net/news/vacancies/) The closing date is **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May**.

### **St Vincent de Paul Society - Work Experience**

The St Vincent de Paul Society and CAFOD are working together to offer residential work experience for 20 young adults in England and Wales. The experience will run from **7<sup>th</sup>- 13<sup>th</sup> July** in London. Candidates must be aged between 20-30 years old and have a passion for social justice.

### **The Canonesses of the Holy Sepulchre**

are recruiting a couple/two adults to support the nine elderly sisters who live in the main house. The role is residential in a two-bedroom bungalow, adjacent to the main home in Colchester. Precise role, and salary are dependent on the skills of the successful applicants.

For further information please contact: [crssuk@canonesses.co.uk](mailto:crssuk@canonesses.co.uk)

### **Cleaner - Our Lady of Ransom Catholic Primary School**

16 hours per week cleaning vacancy. Please see the website for details <https://www.olorcps.net/school-info/vacancies>. All positions are subject to statutory safeguarding checks.

### **VOLUNTARY TREASURER NEEDED**

Do you have financial experience and a couple of hours per week to spare?

If so, the National Justice and Peace Network would like to hear from you. Due to the sad passing of their Treasurer, they are now in urgent need of a new one. If you are looking for some voluntary work, and share their passion for social action, please email: - [admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk](mailto:admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk)

### **Supply Teachers - Our Lady of Ransom Catholic Primary School**

We are also looking to build a team of Supply Teachers

Please Contact Mr Parascandolo via [info@olorcps.net](mailto:info@olorcps.net) for further details.

### **Vacancies for Foundation Governors**

have arisen at several Catholic schools across the Diocese and expressions of interests are being sought from practising committed Catholics for the ministry.

The term of office is for four years from the date of appointment.

Foundation Governors are personally appointed by the Bishop to Diocesan schools to represent his interests and those of the Catholic community.

Our schools would benefit from people with a range of skills and experiences including Finance, Education, Special Needs, Legal and Administration.

Anyone interested in the role and mission of Foundation Governor should not be put off by a lack of experience. Appropriate training is available during the period of service.

If you are interested in becoming Foundation Governor please email your expression of interest to [governanceappointments@brcdt.org](mailto:governanceappointments@brcdt.org) or call: 01277 265216



## This Week's Article:

### **Parish priests were missing at the Synod. Now 300 will meet at the Vatican.**



Gerard O'Connell



Members of the assembly of the Synod of Bishops start a working session in the Vatican's Paul VI Audience Hall Oct. 18, 2023. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

Three hundred parish priests from around the world will come to Rome at the end of April to take part in a meeting in preparation for the final session of the Synod on Synodality at the Vatican next October.

The meeting, to be held from April 28 to May 2, was announced by the Synod Secretariat in a press release on Feb. 3. The 300 representatives of the world's parish priests will participate in a five-day international meeting "of listening, prayer and discernment," entitled "Parish Priests for the Synod." On May 2, the parish priests will meet Pope Francis and will be able to have a dialogue with him.

Pope Francis launched the synod process in October 2021, seeking input from all baptized Catholics on building a listening church. After the local, national and continental phases of the synod, more than 400 people participated in its universal phase at the first synod assembly held at the Vatican in October 2023; 365 participants, 70 of which were non-bishops, were eligible to vote in synod proceedings.

The press release said "the initiative responds to the indication expressed by the participants" of the synod, who, in the [synthesis report](#) released after the October session, identified the need to "develop ways for a more active involvement of deacons, priests and bishops in the synodal process during the coming year. A synodal Church cannot do without their voices, their experiences and their contribution."

Members at last October's synod, which included cardinals, bishops, women and men religious, lay men and women, noted their concern with the almost total absence of parish priests at the synod assembly.

The decision to hold this international meeting of priests is a direct response to the strongly felt position expressed and voted on at the synod and detailed in the synthesis report. It was added in the report because many of the 365 voting members at last October's synod, which included cardinals, bishops, women and men religious, lay men and women, noted their concern with [the almost total absence of parish priests at the synod assembly](#). Bishops who I spoke with during and after the synod saw this as a major omission, given the central role parish priests have in the life of the church. They understood that unless the priests in the parishes are involved in the process, synodality has little chance of taking root in the church at the local level.

They were also aware that bishops in many dioceses globally, including in the United States, had done little or nothing to engage parish priests in the synodal process, and they viewed this as tantamount to undermining, if not dooming, the possibility of advancing synodality at the local level of the church. The decision to call local priests to this international meeting, even at this late stage, is an important recognition of the crucial role played by parish priests in the Catholic Church worldwide.

According to the secretariat's press release, next April's meeting envisages "the active involvement of participants." And just as at last October's synod session, so too at this international meeting, the 300 parish priests will sit at [round tables](#) to share best practices, take part in workshops around pastoral proposals, dialogue with experts and participate in liturgical celebrations.

Their input will be forwarded to the synod secretariat and taken into account in the drafting of the working document (*instrumentum laboris*) for



the final session of the synod next October. As of the time of writing, there is no indication that any representatives of this group will be invited to that final session.

The event will be held at the Fraterna Domus retreat and conference center at Sacrofano, outside Rome, about 18 miles from the Vatican, where the participants stayed for the retreat before the first session of the synod in October 2023.

The 300 parish priests are in the process of being selected by the world's 114 bishops' conferences and the 23 Eastern rite Catholic churches. The selection has to be made by March 15, and the names will then be sent to the synod secretariat.

The international meeting is being organized by the Secretariat of the Synod together with three Vatican departments that agreed on holding the event: the Dicastery for the Clergy, which has overall responsibility for the more than 400,000 Catholic priests in the world; the Dicastery for Evangelisation's section for First Evangelisation and New Particular Churches (that is, churches mainly in Africa and Asia); and the Dicastery Eastern Churches.

The synod secretariat provided two criteria to the bishops' conferences and the Oriental churches to assist them in selecting the parish priests: "give preference to parish priests who have significant experience in the perspective of a synodal Church" and "favour a certain variety of pastoral contexts of origin (rural, urban, specific socio-cultural contexts, etc.)."

The task of selecting the parish priests will be challenging because, the synod press release said, the number of participants is determined using a criterion similar to that used for the election of the members of the synodal assembly in 2023-24. This means that bishops' conferences or Oriental churches with less than 25 members may only send one, while churches with over 100 members can send four priests. Given these criteria, the conferences in the United States, Brazil, Mexico, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Italy and some other countries can send four parish priests.