

The Parish of Holy Cross and St Luke's

Tracyes Road, Harlow, Essex, CM18 6JJ

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Parish Priest

Rev. Father Bernard Soley

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Parish Deacons

Rev. Michael Smith

Number: 07765948293

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The Brentwood Diocesan Trust Registered Charity No. 234092

Weekend Mass Times

Saturday 5.30pm, Sunday 9.00am, Sunday 11.00am

Sacrament of Reconciliation

After Saturday 5.30pm Mass, prior to Sunday 9.00am Mass, and by appointment

Parish Schools

Holy Cross Preschool, Holycrosspreschool50@gmail.com, Natalie

Holy Cross Catholic Primary Academy, 01279 424452, Headteacher: Mrs Alison Kerrell

St. Luke's Catholic Primary Academy (part of Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Multi Academy Trust), 01279 423499, Executive Headteacher: Mr Ian Kendall

St. Mark's West Essex Catholic Academy, 01God279 421267, Headteacher: Mr John Taylor

Safeguarding

For any safeguarding concerns, please contact Rev. Anthony Rowley by email only (please see above).

Hall Hire

For any enquires to hire the hall, please contact Sheila Underdown by text only, on 07590533511

Twenty First Sunday Ordinary Time (A)

Dear brothers and sisters.

Matthew 16:13-20 - "Who do you say I am?"

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus draws His disciples, fishermen and tax collectors away from the noise of the crowds and into a quieter, more intimate moment perhaps, simply to get them to focus as the question he was about to ask them reaches beyond words and into the soul of each and every one of us: "Who do you say I am?" It is therefore a question meant not only for the Twelve, but for each of us; an invitation to let our hearts speak honestly to the Lord who already knows us completely. In other words, the opportunity to see if

we are thinking as 'simply 'humans or 'spiritual' humans. And the heart of this is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in each one of us. The grace of God himself.

Peter's response, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," rises from a place that can only be touched by grace. Jesus reminds him that such faith is not born from human effort alone, but from the Father's gentle revelation. Faith is always a gift something breathed into us, something awakened by God's love.

Yet Jesus does not stop at blessing Peter. He entrusts him with a mission: "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church." The Lord builds His Church not on the strong, but on the willing; not on the flawless, but on those who allow grace to work through their weakness. Peter will falter, but Jesus will always remain faithful. And I find this personally warming inside for perhaps brothers and sisters we are flawed as much if not more than Peter.

This week, let us allow Jesus to ask us again, quietly and personally: "Who do you say I am?"

May our answer rise not from fear or duty, but from love from the places where we have known His mercy, His patience, His companionship. And may that answer become the rock on which He continues to build His work in our parish, our families, and our hearts as it is His Kingdom in which we live.

God Bless you all Deacon Michael

Saturday 22 nd August 5.30pm Vigil for 21 st Sunday in Ordinary Time (For all Parishioners)
Sunday 23 rd August 9.00am 21 st Sunday in Ordinary Time (Christopher McGirr RIP)
Sunday 23 rd August 9.00am 21 st Sunday in Ordinary Time (Helen Kluza and Jan Wookiskawsku RIP)
Monday 24 th August 10.00am St Bartholomew (Margaret and Ray Slee RIP)
Tuesday 25 th August 2026 9.00am Feria Followed by Holy Hour (Rene and Brian Rowley RIP)
Wednesday 26 th August 2026 9.00am Feria (George Johnson RIP)
Thursday 27 th August 2026 9.00am St Monica followed by Holy Hour (William and Minnie Johnson RIP)
Friday 28 th August 2026 10.00am St Augustine (Deacon Tony's Intentions)
Saturday 29 th August 5.30pm Vigil for 22 nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (For all Parishioners)
Sunday 30 th August 9.00am 22 nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
Sunday 30 th August 9.00am 22 nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (Conor Crawlwy RIP)

Liturgy of the Word

Response to the Psalm: O LORD, your merciful love is eternal; discard not the work of your hands.

Collection: £462.15p

Baptism Key Dates

Next Baptism Registration Meeting: Monday 7th September 2026, 6pm.

Next Baptism Catechetical Talk: Monday 14th September 2025, 6pm.

Legion of Mary Legion of Mary meet up every Wednesday at 10.30am. New members always welcome. For more information, please contact Steven on 07930304001.

First Holy Communion

The programme will begin on 5th September where pictures will be given out that will be needed for the programme, this will be every week. Enrolment is online through the Parish website. The cut-off date for this is 27th September. All work must be completed before then. You and your child will be expected to attend Mass each week. There will be a meeting with Fr Bernard, Dn Tony and Dn Michael. Parents Meeting 8th January, the lesson will begin 22nd January, then February 27th, March 20th, March 26th, April 17th. The communion Mass will be in May.

RCIA

We will be starting the new RCIA course in September on Thursday 3rd at 6pm. This is an introductory session and a chance to register your interest. If you are an adult and are not a Catholic, then this is your opportunity to explore the Catholic faith with no commitment. There may be others who have been baptised, and you are more than welcome to join the course and receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at Easter.

Confirmation

For anyone who is in year 9 and under the age of 18 you may wish to be confirmed. Details about the course for next year will be available later in the year as soon as we know when the bishop's visitation is going to be.

Holy Hour

Just to remind you that we do have a Holy Hour on a Tuesday and Thursday after the 9am Mass, please however check the newsletter as due to other things it may have to be cancelled. We begin with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, followed by a Rosary. Then we have the Divine Mercy at about 10am followed by Benediction. If you are free, you are warmly invited to join us.

GIFT Conference: September 19th 9.30am-5pm at the Most Holy Redeemer Church, Billericay

- Are you disillusioned with your existing First Holy Communion Programme?
- Would you like to place families at the heart of parish renewal and support them to engage and connect with their faith?
- Does the idea of approaching sacramental preparation in a fruit-bearing way excite and inspire you?

Join us for this **one-day conference** which explores the GIFT (Growing in Faith Together) model of family catechesis. GIFT re-imagines how parishes can accompany and encourage families in their faith journey and prepare them for the sacraments.

Whether you have already started your GIFT journey or are looking for a different way to support your families, this conference will share what the GIFT model could look like in your parish and explore why it is transformative for the Church.

You and your catechists can book a place by following this link:

<https://brushfire.com/divinerenovationministry-uk/GIFTConference/627818>

VISIT OF STATUE OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA - The Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, accompanied by relics of Saints Francisco and Jacinta will be coming to Brentwood Cathedral on **Saturday 12th September 2026**- the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary [Patronal Feast of the Society of Mary].

A message from Claire Simms, Elsie Ovenden's daughter. Thank you to each and every one of you that have reached out to me this week and to my siblings and Emily too with all your wonderful messages, visits, phone calls, cards, gifts and the million hugs that have been very welcome.

The Funeral arrangements for Elsie Ovenden

Tuesday 1st of September 2026 at Our Lady of Fatima RC Church Howard way Harlow CM2 two NS at 11 am followed by cremation at Parndon Wood cemetery.