

The Parish of Holy Cross and St Luke's

Tracyes Road, Harlow, Essex, CM18 6JJ

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Parish Priest

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Parish Deacons

Rev. Michael Smith

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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 Second Sunday Ordinary Time (A)

Dear brothers and sisters.

This week's Gospel is not gentle. It is meant to unsettle us but in a way that opens a door. Up to this moment, the disciples have followed a Messiah who heals, teaches, feeds, and inspires. Today the tone shifts. Jesus speaks openly of being rejected not only by Rome but by those who once welcomed Him and that this will lead to suffering and death. He offers no parables here, only the truth of what love looks like when it meets resistance. We see echoes of this in every part of our world where peace struggles to survive. Yet Jesus does not speak to frighten us. He speaks to steady us: "Stay close. The road will be difficult, but I will walk it with you."

This leads us to a gentle invitation: Are we willing to follow Jesus not only when the road is bright, but also when the path becomes demanding? Christ walks toward the Cross in faithful love. This is where discipleship becomes real. So perhaps this week we might pause and ask: Do we allow Jesus to guide us when His way asks more than we expected? Do we make space to hear His voice in the quiet places of our hearts?

Peter's heart is sincere. His reaction is familiar the desire to protect the one he loves and to avoid pain. His understanding is incomplete, and Jesus' response, though firm, is filled with care: "You are thinking not as God thinks, but as humans do."

Peter is not wrong in his love; he is simply human. And here Jesus places the shape of our faith in our hands. The cross we carry is not symbolic but lived: the cross of costly love, of forgiveness when it feels undeserved, of integrity when it is difficult, of compassion when we feel tired, of truth when silence would be easier.

Then Jesus asks one of the most searching questions of the Gospel: "What will it profit you...?" What will it profit us if we gain comfort, approval, success, or ease, but lose the message of the Gospel? What will it profit us if our faith becomes polite but fruitless a routine, we follow rather than a life we live?

This Sunday's Gospel is not meant to reassure. It is meant to awaken. Jesus is inviting each of us to look gently and honestly within: What part of your life still avoids the Cross? What part of your discipleship remains untested? What part of your heart still thinks as humans do, not as God does?

And Jesus does not say, "Watch me." He says, "Follow me."

So perhaps the invitation for this week is this: Where is Jesus encouraging you to grow in courage? Where is He asking you to trust Him more deeply? Where might He be calling you to follow Him a little further than before? Have you considered our RCIA course?

He does not ask us to carry the cross alone. He simply asks us to walk with Him.

God Bless you all Deacon Michael

Saturday 29 th August 5.30pm Vigil for 22 nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (Bill Barnaville Ints)
Sunday 30 th August 9.00am 22 nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (For all Parishioners)
Sunday 30 th August 9.00am 22 nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (Conor Crawlwy RIP)
Monday 31 st August 10.00am Feria (Concetta Comaratta RIP + Betty Lawson RIP)
Tuesday 1 st September 2026 8.45am St Sebbi (St Mark's Staff Mass) SMS
Wednesday 2 nd September Feria 9.00am Feria Holy Cross Staff Mass
Thursday 3 rd September 2026 9.00am St Gregory the Great followed by Holy Hour
Friday 4 th September 2026 8.15am Feria (Staff and Students St Marks School) SMS
Saturday 5 th September 2026 5.30pm Vigil for 23 rd Sunday in Ordinary Time (Kathleen Kenny RIP)
Sunday 30 th August 9.00am 22 nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (For all Parishioners)
Sunday 30 th August 9.00am 22 nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (Terry Sparling's Ints))

Liturgy of the Word

Response to the Psalm: For you my soul is thirsting, O LORD, my God.

Collection: £561.15p

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.

