

**PARISH WEEKLY OFFERTORY:** Could I ask all our parishioners who use the Parish Gift Aid Scheme to kindly use their Gift Aid envelopes, without the envelopes each week we are not able to claim the tax back at the end of the year. If you forget your envelopes there was spare ones in the church porch, just write your number or name on the envelope. A big thank you to all parishioners who contribute to the upkeep of the parish on a weekly basis; the parish is truly grateful for your ongoing support. Once again I appeal to the whole parish community; the weekly offertories are not meeting the monthly outgoings – Please take this into consideration when you place your envelope or offering in the basket on Sundays.

**NOTE TO EVERYONE IN THE CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP :** Our next practice takes place on Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> January (6.30pm musicians / 7pm singers) to go over the hymns and music for the 11am Mass on Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> February. We look forward to seeing you all there. New singers are warmly invited to join us – simply come along and you will be made very welcome!

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2018/2019:** The next session will take place on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> January at 10.00am in the Parish hall. The next Parents' Meeting will take place on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> February at 8.00pm in the Parish Hall. (Please note change of date). I do encourage all the parents of our First Communicants to attend some of the Sunday sessions.

**ST. JOHN FISHER:** PTA presents their Spring Nearly New Sale, Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2019, 10.30am – 1.00pm St. John Fisher School, Loughton, IG102DY. Children's and baby's clothes, toys, books, games, equipment & accessories for sale at great prices. 50p entrance for Adults, children FREE. Having a Spring Clean? Want a Stall? Please E.Mail SJFPTA@outlook.com

**LOYOLA PREPARATORY SCHOOL:** OPEN MORNING Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2019, 9.30am (prompt) – 11.30am. Loyola is the leading Catholic Independent School for boys in Essex aged 3-11, which welcomes pupils of all denominations. Come and spend a morning at our school, with a guided tour and the opportunity to meet our Headmistress, staff and pupils. 7+ applications also welcome. 103 Palmerston Road, Buckhurst Hill, Essex, IG9 5NH. Tel No: 020 8504 7372 www.loyola.essex.sch.uk

**IN CASES OF EMERGENCY:** Tuesday is usually Fr. John's Day Off. In cases of emergency please call one of the local parishes, either in Epping – Tel: 01992 572516, or the St. Thomas of Canterbury Friary at Woodford Green – Tel: 020 8504 1688. This would also apply if Fr. John is away for a few days break or on Retreat. All the local funeral directors have a contact number for Fr. John if a funeral needs to be arranged in his absence.

Dear Friends in Christ,

Third Sunday of the Year, Year C, 2019

The Gentiles, like Luke himself, had believed in Christ on the testimony of others, not because they were eyewitnesses to Jesus' life, ministry and resurrection. To build up their faith, Luke wrote down an orderly account of the events and encounters of Jesus' earthly life and ministry 'just as they were delivered to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word'. Luke's Gospel shows the continuity between God's promises made through the prophets and their fulfilment.

Jesus, reading from the prophet Isaiah the promise that God would send one who would free his people from oppression and imprisonment, and restore their freedom and liberty, announced: 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing'. His words electrified his audience. They had heard this promise many times before. But now Jesus, in front of their own eyes, was saying: 'I am fulfilling this great promise of God. I am the Spirit-bearer foretold by Isaiah and, I am bringing in a new age of freedom and divine favour, restoring men and women to health, and casting out demons'. It's not surprising that 'the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him'. It's also unsurprising that they could not accept him and 'rose up and put him out of the city'.



Jesus now stands before us. He still proclaims the Good News, making us see with new eyes that we are loved and forgiven, and leading us into his Father's presence as beloved sons and daughters. He restores to us our inheritance as God's children, freeing us from oppression and liberating us from whatever imprisons us. Do we believe this and go to Jesus to receive his grace and life? Or do we not believe that he can do all things for us and so reject him? Jesus stands before us as he stood before his fellow townspeople and challenges us to come to him for healing and freedom. The choice, however, always remains ours.

*Lord Jesus, you restore all things. You break the power of evil. You heal our sins. Help me to come to you with complete faith and confidence. Teach me to fix my eyes on you.*

Dear Friends in Christ,  
2019

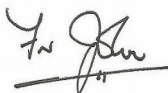
Third Sunday of the Year

**LANDINGS – RETURNING TO THE PRACTICE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC FAITH:** For whatever reason, sometimes people lapse from the regular practice of their Catholic Faith. This new programme, called Landings, is designed to help people return to the practice of their faith. This is an invitation to anyone who would like to come along to our first informal ‘Landings Meeting’ on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at 8.00pm in the Parish Retreat at St. Edmund’s Parish Hall. Tea and Coffee will be provided.

This is a New Year, and an opportunity for a new beginning. Landings are a place of compassionate listening. The group listens respectfully and without judgment to one another’s faith story and reflects on the them. Participants are invited to be honest and open about struggles with their faith. Participants are asked to share only what they feel comfortable sharing. Listeners are bound by confidentiality to promote sharing. Landings don’t attempt to ‘fix’ problems. Those with particular issues are invited to consult with specialised professionals – counsellors, priests, religious – who can help with specific needs.

If you, or anyone you know, a family member, friend or colleague, has been away from the regular practice of their faith for a long time, please tell them about this programme. Hopefully this little message is just one way that God might be ‘Calling you Home!’ What more beautiful occasion than Christmas to feel the real beauty of God’s love for us in sending us his Son, Jesus Christ. In the innocence of the Christ-child God entered our world and he desperately wants each one of us to be part of his!

**BCYS Summer Lourdes Pilgrimage 20<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> July 2019:** Join the Brentwood Catholic Youth Service in Lourdes this Summer as we travel alongside the diocese, assisting the elderly and infirm on their annual pilgrimage. Alongside this we also run a retreat, daily Masses and excursions for the young people, as well as experiencing the Lourdes Torchlight Procession and Blessed Sacrament Procession. Places will be allocated to ensure as many parishes and schools as possible from the diocese are represented and applications will remain open until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019. Where we receive a large number from one school or parish, places will be allocated on a “first come, first served” basis. Please be aware, this event is always heavily oversubscribed. The pilgrimage is open to anyone currently in school year 10 and above and the cost will be around £570 (TBC). For all information and the chance to apply, please visit [www.bcys.net/events](http://www.bcys.net/events) or for any queries, please Email [gabriellafusi@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:gabriellafusi@dioceseofbrentwood.org)



May God Bless You All,  
**YOUR CRIB OFFERINGS** Will go to the work of the Brentwood Catholic Children’s Society. This wonderful Diocesan organisation does not receive government funding so is heavily dependent upon all charitable diocesan contributions. You have always been very generous with offerings in the past. The Cribs will remain in our church until the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2019 .



**RCIA PROGRAMME:** Will continue on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019 at 8.00pm in the Presbytery. Theme: The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. If you know of anyone who may be interested in the Roman Catholic Faith, please contact Fr. John at the Presbytery Tel No: 020 8508 3492

**THE GOSPEL OF LUKE:** On Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> January at 7 pm Fr Adrian Graffy will lead an exploration of the Gospel of Luke, the gospel being read on Sundays in 2019. These ‘Gidea Park Faith Evenings’ will take place in the hall at Gidea Park Catholic Church (410 Brentwood Road, Gidea Park, RM2 6DH). Please book by email to [GPstudydays@gmail.com](mailto:GPstudydays@gmail.com) Refreshments provided. Admission free.

**EPPING FOREST FOODBANK DONATIONS:** Thank you to all parishioners who donated items for the Foodbank in 2018. Your donations are needed as much as ever at this time of year so please do continue to support the Foodbank in 2019 if you can. Basic staple items are always welcome including the unbranded supermarket basic ranges which can make your generous donations go even further. In January they are in particular need of the following items: UHT milk, powdered milk, long-life fruit juice, instant mash, sponge pudding, tinned spaghetti, small jars of coffee and toilet rolls. Thank you! You can also keep up to date with the Foodbank via their Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/EppingForestFoodbank/](http://www.facebook.com/EppingForestFoodbank/)

**PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – NEW DATE:** Monday 18<sup>th</sup> February at 8.00pm in the parish Retreat. As most PC members were unable to attend the last meeting, I would ask all parish council members to kindly make every effort possible to attend this meeting, as there are some very important issues to discuss. Thank you!

**PARISH REPOSITORY:** There is a wonderful selection of religious goods, statues, Mass cards for all occasions, rosaries, medals, children's books. Many of these can be given as gifts. Please check out the Repository!