

Parish Priest: Fr Bartolomeu Blaj

Deacon: Rev Alan Mair

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Sunday 7th January 2024

A registered charity

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The Epiphany Year B

Please use the QR code for your weekly offertory. It is a safe and easy method to donate. Do Gift Aid if you are a Tax payer.



After the birth of Jesus, the Magi, who came from the East, arrived in Jerusalem to worship the Lord of Heaven and earth. They assumed that the Messiah would have been born in the principal city of his kingdom. The

Magi had no doubt about the dignity of he who was born: they had seen the star, and, after having seen it, they believed. How great was their surprise, and disappointment, to see King Herod and all Jerusalem become so agitated when they spoke of the birth of the Messiah! They needed the light of the Scriptures.

The chief priests and the scribes who knew the Scriptures were able to point them in the direction of Bethlehem. On our own journey towards the Lord, we too need the light of the Scriptures. The Scriptures are a fuller revelation of God than the natural world. It is in and through the Scriptures that we meet God in a special way and his Son.

Herod made enquiries of the Magi: he wanted to know the precise date when the star had appeared to them. It is easy to understand the interest expressed by King Herod in this sort of information.

Having been moved by the presence of God in nature and in the Scriptures, the wise men came face to face with God in a child. They did not worship the star. But they did worship the child, because they recognized that here was Emmanuel, God-with-us.

The story of the Magi has no end, they adored the child, offered him their gifts and they and the star disappeared.

The gospel reading declares that after the wise men had offered the child Jesus their worship and their gifts they returned to their own country by a different way. The journey back from Bethlehem was different to their journey to Bethlehem, because at Bethlehem they had

encountered the Lord. As we seek the Lord, as we worship him and offer him our lives, the Lord will often prompt us to go on by a different way. This is the call to ongoing repentance, that continuing turning more fully towards the Lord and his way. The more we seek the Lord, the more we worship him and offer him our lives, the more clearly we will hear that call of the Lord to take a different way.

Since that first Epiphany, Jesus, heritage of humanity, Christmas becomes the universal Christmas, for all humanity.

The Christmas of the Gentiles, represented in the tale of the Magi, has become the journey of all men towards freedom, happiness and epiphanic truth.

Fr Barto

Baptism of infants & RCIA Please contact the Office or speak to Fr Barto and Rev Alan. For Baptism it is essential that you make contact with us as soon as possible to ensure that Diocesan requirements are fulfilled and a suitable date can be placed in the diary.

Confession is after weekday Mass (Wednesday to Saturday). Confessions can be heard in English, Italian, Spanish and Romanian.

Marriages We welcome the marriage of parishioners and those who regularly worship here. Please notify Fr Barto or Rev Alan **at least six months in advance** to allow adequate time for preparation.

Can we persuade you to **set up a standing order** if you don't have one? Bank details at the front of the newsletter. If you are a taxpayer, please complete a Gift Aid Declaration Form found in the porch and send it back to the church. You can donate **online** through the Diocesan donation page following this link: <https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/donations?parish=south-woodford>

Weekday Morning Prayer

Psalter Week 1

Lectionary

Sunday Year B: Week 1 in Ordinary Time

BLESSING OF CHALK

Fr Barto will be blessing chalk (Epiphany blessing) so that you may mark the names of the three Magi over their doors, for Christ to bless your home and that He stay with those who dwell therein throughout the entire year. For 2024 this is what you will write on your door in chalk:

20 + C + M + B + 24

BLESSING OF HOLY WATER THIS WEEKEND

There will be holy water for you to take home which Fr Barto will be blessing this weekend at all Masses. This can be used to bless your homes.

BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Mass will be celebrated at 9.30am on **Monday, 8 January**.

HELP NEEDED

On **Wednesday 10 January** after the morning Mass to take down the Christmas decorations in Church. Please come along if you can help.

CRIB OFFERINGS

There will be no retiring collections over Christmas – you are encouraged to make donations to Brentwood Catholic Children's Society (BCCS) through Crib Offerings. Donations can be placed in the fire extinguisher next to the crib.

SACRAMENT PREPARATION

Confirmation – Next session on 13 January at 4.45pm in the hall.

First Holy Communion - Next session on Sunday 14 January at 3pm in the hall.

PARISH SOCIAL EVENT DATES

COFFEE MORNING – next Sunday 14 January after both morning Masses.

AFTERNOON CLUB- is meeting on Wednesday 17 January in the hall.

BOARD GAMES EVENING – on 20 January at 7.30pm. Free and all are welcome.

PRAYER GROUP MEETING DATE

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION- This will resume in January 2024.

LECTIO DIVINA - Thursday 11 January after the morning Mass.

A FIRE IN MY HEART - A CONVERSATION WITH BIBLICAL FRIENDS:

On Saturday 3 February from 11 am - 2 pm (coffee at 10.30 am), at Christ the Eternal High Priest in Gidea Park (RM2 6DH), Fr Adrian Graffy, will be in conversation with professor Nuria Calduch-Benages, secretary of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, and Carlos Castillo Mattasoglio, archbishop of Lima, Peru. The speakers will be present in-person, but this free event is also live-streamed on www.whatgoodnews.org If attending in person please book your place at gideapark@brcdt.org.

WEEKLY MASS ATTENDANCE FORMS

Are available in the porch as you enter for the Sacraments, (FHC & Confirmation) and for nursery, primary & secondary Catholic Schools. **Attendance at weekly Sunday Mass and Holy days of obligation by your child is required** unless they are ill or isolating. Complete one per child and drop the completed form into the box provided as you leave Church.

SAHARA DESERT RETREAT IN MOROCCO

26 February – 11 March 2024. Including a day visiting Marrakesh and 9 full days in the Desert. With Fr Arnaud and Deacon Vladimir from St Antony's in Forest Gate.

Designed for young adults, open to all adults able to hike 4 - 6 hours a day for 9 full days in the desert. £952 (plus flight). www.desert-retreat.com or phone Catherine at 07807 348223.

MEDJUGORJE PILGRIMAGES 30 APRIL - 7 MAY 2024 AND 2-9 SEPTEMBER 2024

The total cost for either pilgrimage is £700 and a £30 discount will be given to those who book and pay a £100 deposit before the end of January 2024. The package includes flights, luggage, transfers, half board at the hotel, plus our own guide for the week. To book and for further information please phone Gail on 07989879148 or email gail.hewett@hotmail.com.

NEW PARISHIONERS

Welcome!! Please introduce yourself to Fr Barto and Rev Alan. Also complete a registration and GDPR form found in the porch and return to the Parish Office once completed.

BRENTWOOD DIRECTORY 2024

On sale in the porch. Price £2.95. Please place money in the wall box marked 'CTS & publications'.

DONATIONS FOR THE HOMELESS

(To be left on the table by the organ loft)

- Jumpers, tee-shirts, fleeces, underwear jackets - all sizes
- Joggers, jeans, socks all sizes
- Toiletries (shower gel, deodorant, razor)
- Bleach, anti-bacterial hand wash, laundry detergent (liquid)

NO FORMAL CLOTHES OR FORMAL SHOES AND NO CHILDREN'S CLOTHES NEEDED.

VACANCIES

Trinity Catholic High School

- Teacher of Design & Technology, F/T February 2024
 - Teacher of Business, F/T, February 2024
 - Teacher of English, F/T, Easter 2024
 - Teacher of English F/T, Jan- Easter 2024 (perm or temp)
 - Careers Leader, F/T, January 2024
 - SEN TA/ELSA, F/T January 2024
 - Teacher of Theology, F/T January -Easter 2024 (temp)
- To apply please see: www.tchs.org.uk

Intention for the week: “As we begin this new year, we pray for all who may be considering an abortion. We pray that we will see a decrease in cases of abortion, and instead a year of increased support, both practical and emotional, from all of us in society, bettering the care for all expectant mothers. Lord hear us”.

Please pray for those who are sick

Anniversaries 8th – 14th January.

Michael Regan, Mrs F H Biss, Charles Booker, Anne Morton, Gertrude Thwaites, Arthur Stritch, Jenny Glynn and Mrs McSweeney, Ethel Bush, Doris Poulain, George Mokrzycki, May Florence Bocking, John Bourk, Giselle Zagon, Molly Scrutton, William and Lucy Brady & Michael Watling.

Last weekend Mass attendance was 195.

Stay In Touch

Follow us on Facebook -
[facebook.com/SaintAnneLine](https://www.facebook.com/SaintAnneLine) and also at
[facebook.com/SALSocialCommitee](https://www.facebook.com/SALSocialCommitee).

Follow us On Twitter/X - @Stannelinesw

Safeguarding Coordinator

Mary Lamb 020 8491 0970

mary-annelamb@hotmail.co.uk

Parish Gift Aid Co-ordinator

Anthony Collins 020 8989 9547

anthony.collins53@ntlworld.com

SVP SUPPORT

If you, or anyone you know in our community, could benefit from support from the SVP please contact the Parish Office (in strict confidence)

PARISH OFFICE (IN THE PRESBYTERY)

The Parish secretary is in the office on Monday afternoons, Wednesday and Friday mornings.

DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION

<https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/safeguarding/>

Pope Francis' Prayer Network: Monthly Prayer

Holy Spirit, who builds the unity of the Church and shows your infinite creativity through the diversity of charisms, fill the Church with your gifts, according to the marvellous God's Providence design, so that we may learn to appreciate the gifts of others and work together for the good of all, sharing our charisms at the service of the community.

May diversity among Christians never be a cause of division, but of mutual enrichment, because diversity gives depth and richness to life. Do not allow us to fall into the temptation to consider our gifts as superior to those of others, or ourselves as superior to them. May there be room for all in the Church and may we grow together in harmony, in faith and in love as one body, the Body of Christ. Amen.