

ST. JAMES THE LESS AND ST. HELEN

CATHOLIC CHURCH, COLCHESTER

WITH MERSEA, MILE END AND MONKWICK

1 PARISH, 4 CHURCHES, 1 COMMUNITY



St James the Less & St Helen

Parish Priest:
Assistant Priest:

Fr. Philip Okoli
Fr Gervase Moo CSSp

Address: 51 Priory Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 2QB
Tel: 01206 866317
E-Mail : colchester@brcdt.org
Website: www.stjamesthelessandsthelen.org



St James the Less and St Helen RC Church, Colchester



FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT (A)

Week Commencing 22nd February 2026

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT (A)			
Saturday 21 st	Monkwick	5.00 pm	Ints: Mr. & Mrs Sebastian Thalanany
Sunday 22 nd	Church	8.00 am	Private Intention
	Church	10.30 am	Oksana Zakhleniuk RIP
	Church	2.00 pm	Polish Mass
	Church	6.30 pm	Mrs Moira Knapp RIP
	West Mersea	8.30 am	Private Intention
	Mile End	9.30 am	Private Intention
Monday 23 rd			Monday of the First Week of Lent
	Church	9.30 am	Ellen Macken RIP
Tuesday 24 th			Tuesday of the First Week of Lent
STM	Church	9.30 am	Norah Hewitt RIP
	Church	6.30 pm	Polish Stations of the Cross
Wednesday 25 th			Wednesday of the First Week of Lent
	Church	9.30 am	Paul Richard B. Brusola RIP
Thursday 26 th			Thursday of the First Week of Lent
	Church	*8.45 am	Ints: Edr Micah
Friday 27 th			Friday of the First Week of Lent
	Church	9.30 am	Bridget Lloyd RIP
	Church	12.00 pm	Stations of the Cross
	Mile End	7.00 pm	Stations of the Cross
Saturday 28 th			Saturday of the First Week of Lent
	Church	9.30 am	Tony Bairstow RIP
SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT (A)			
Saturday 28 th	Monkwick	5.00 pm	Thanksgiving (A.T)
Sunday 1 st March	Church	8.00 am	Robin Ragu RIP
	Church	10.30 am	Parishioners
	Church	2.00 pm	Polish Mass
	Church	4.00 pm	Filipino Mass
	Church	6.30 pm	Terzy Oziadek
	West Mersea	8.30 am	Private Intention
	Mile End	9.30 am	Arnoldus Tinneveld RIP

*** PLEASE NOTE THAT MASS ON THURSDAY 26TH FEBRUARY IS AT 8.45AM.**

- ❖ For Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals, please email or contact our parish office.
- ❖ Marriage Preparation: Please be aware that 6 months' notice of intention for Marriage is required especially if marrying outside the Parish. Couples who are planning to get married should contact us **at least 6 months** in advance. Thank you.
- ❖ Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) Saturdays after 9.30am Mass (Priory Street) and after 5.00pm Mass (Monkwick).
- ❖ Church Loop System: Please note that the Church loop system serves all the seats in the centre Nave but not the aisles or the chancel.
- ❖ Colchester General Hospital: If you would like to arrange for a priest to visit a Catholic relative in hospital, please contact the presbytery direct on (01206 866317).

- **Cardinal Bourne Hall Enquiries/Bookings:** colchester@brcdt.org
- **SVP (St Vincent de Paul Society):** Tel: 07493 439427/email: colchestersvp@gmail.com



Please check out our Facebook page for all the latest Parish/Diocese/Vatican News/ Clergy + Church photos/videos. Please remember to like and follow our page!

Dear friends, the first reading from Genesis reminds us of the creation of the world and of the first humans – Adam and Eve. Having reminded us of the beauty of Creation and of all the good that was in it, it then recalls the great sin of Adam and Eve as they gave in to temptation. In the Cycle of Sunday Readings, the oldest are those of Year A in Lent – these Gospels have accompanied the Church for many centuries. We must realise why: Lent was originally the time of immediate preparation of candidates for Baptism at Easter, something which has been reintroduced to the Church by Rites of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA). This is why so much of the Scripture in Lent is about Baptism, Repentance, New Life and Salvation. What is the new life of Baptism? What are we set free from? What is sin? We begin Lent by hearing about temptation and sin; today's Gospel will tell us of Jesus' own temptations, something he shares with us, though he did not sin. The other Scripture readings prepare us for the Gospel, in which Jesus, the new Adam, triumphs over temptation. Wishing you all a fruitful Lent.

Fr Gervase

PLEASE SEE MASS SCHEDULE FOR ALL CHANGES

DAILY (Mon-Fri)	Rosary/Divine Mercy	at 8.45 am
DAILY	Morning Prayer	at 9.15 am
CHRISTIAN MEDITATION	Wednesdays (Cardinal Bourne Hall)	at 8.00 pm



THE POPE'S INTENTIONS FOR FEBRUARY: *For children with incurable diseases.* Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.

MARRIAGE MATTERS: (Genesis 2:7-9; 3: 1-7; Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11) ***Avoid independence.*** Today, both Eve and Jesus are tempted to become independent, to turn away from the love of God. In marriage, we can think we have a right to fulfil our own desires without considering our partner, but we need to share these deepest hopes and dreams and be prepared to hear the impact on our loved one and our relationship.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK: We continue to pray for those parishioners we know who are sick and housebound especially Jimmy Clarin, Edwina Pastor, J Brian Critchley, Ron & Margaret Griffin, Margaret Hawkins, Valerie Thurston, Grace McCartney, Diana Irvén, Mrs. Maureen McKenna, Peter Wyatt, Hilda Morah, Nicollas and Adam Campbell-Vencarto. We also pray for all people who are ill or are in need.

RECENTLY DECEASED: Please pray for the repose of the soul of Rebecca Ann Coffey who has recently passed away. The parish community offers her family and friends our condolences and the assurance of our prayers at this most difficult time. Rebecca's funeral Mass will be held at St Cedd & St Gregory Church, West Mersea on Friday 6th March at 11.30am. May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT: Theme: *The Temptation of Christ.* As we begin Lent, we recall how Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness, facing temptation yet remaining faithful to the Father. This time of testing prepared Him for His mission. In our own lives, we are also called to turn away from sin and align ourselves more fully with God's will. Repentance is not just about avoiding wrongdoing but about actively choosing a life of grace and renewal.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS (LENT): This will take place every Friday commencing on Friday 27th February in Priory Street at 12.00pm (afternoon) and 7.00pm at Mile End.

POLISH STATIONS OF THE CROSS (Lent): This will take place every Tuesday evening at 6.30pm in Priory Street, commencing on Tuesday 24th February.

DAY OF MERCY on **Friday 20th March 2026:** The Church will be open all day with Mass at 9.30am followed by Exposition & Confession all day; to finish with Benediction at 8.30pm. Please do try to attend at some point during the day.

LECTIO DIVINA: The Holy Father requests that we Pray with the Word of God. Reflection on the following Sunday's Gospel will take place **each Tuesday in Lent, beginning on the 24th February. In the Crypt at 10.15am (after 9.30am Mass).** info Valerie Q: 07941903227/01206 621196



LENT FAST DAY will be on Friday 27th February. We are asked to eat simply and give what we have saved to CAFOD to support families with resources, tools and training to help feed themselves. Envelopes will be in church porch. Please return them the following weekend (1st March) when a 2nd collection will be taken. Thank you for your support and prayers.

'WALK WITH ME' LENT 2026 Booklets (25TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION): Lent Walk with Me booklets are available for sale at all Mass Centre's - please note that they have increased at £1.50 per booklet. Please leave money in Repository Box.

MASS INTENTIONS: Anyone may request a Mass to be offered for various reasons. These may include thanksgiving, praying for someone's intentions (*such as on a birthday*), for the repose of the soul of a deceased person, for the well-being of someone who is ill, or any other intention. To book a Mass intention, simply fill out a Mass intention envelope, which can be found in the church porch either side of central doors. Completed envelopes to be returned via the presbytery letterbox (red door) or by giving your envelope to the clergy. A suggested mass stipend is £10.00 per mass. Thank you.

THE BOOK OF GENESIS – LENTEN TALK: On Thursday 12th March at 7pm in the hall at Christ the Eternal High Priest Catholic Church, Gidea Park. Fr Adrian Graffy will be giving a talk on the Book of Genesis, a book which in different ways figures prominently during Lent. The talk will be preceded by light refreshments from 6.30pm. This free, in-person event is also available via live stream at www.whatgoodnews.org



SPECIAL COLLECTION: There will be a special collection taken for the **Church Easter Flowers** on **Sunday 22nd March** the monies collected will be used for the Easter floral displays in Priory Street and Mile End Churches.

SERIES OF FOUR LENTEN LECTURES 2026: Will take place at Brentwood Cathedral Parish Hall commencing Wednesday 25th February 2026 at 7.30pm. The theme this year is: *"What does it truly mean to be Catholic?"* This invitation is to the whole Diocese of Brentwood. All Welcome!

- **Talk 1.** Wednesday 25th February. Abbot Hugh Allan, O Praem. *"I Believe..."* Living and Proclaiming the Catholic Faith. 7.30pm
- **Talk 2.** Wednesday 4th March. Rev Msgr Kevin W Hale, VG. Being Catholic and the call to holiness as seen in the lives of some recently canonised saints. 7.30pm
- **Talk 3.** Wednesday 11th March. Mr Mauro Iannicelli. Prayer as the Foundation of our Catholic Life. 7.30pm
- **Talk 4.** Wednesday 18th March. Rev Msgr John Armitage. The uniqueness of Catholicism for British Society. 7.30pm

PLEASE JOIN YOUR PRAYERS WITH HOLY LAND CHRISTIANS THIS LENT: As we



enter Lent, a season of reflection and renewal, join Friends of the Holy Land's Lenten prayer circle. Every week from February 15th until March 26th we will share the story of a Christian in the Holy Land and their personal prayer request. Please unite with us in prayer, remembering the people who proudly live in the birthplace of Christianity. info www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk/pray

SVP AND CAFOD WORK EXPERIENCE: The St Vincent de Paul Society and CAFOD are working together to offer a week of free residential work experience for 20 young adults in England and Wales. The experience will run from 21st – 26th June in London. Candidates must be aged 18-25 years old, but priority will be given to those in their 1st or 2nd year at university. Applications close on the 6th April. For any queries, please contact KeziaH@svp.org.uk

- **CUPPA CLUB:** Will meet **every Thursday from 10.00am to 11.30am** in the Hall.
- **SUNDAY COFFEE MORNING** after 10.30am Mass in Cardinal Bourne Hall



ST PATRICKS' CELEBRATION on Saturday 14th March from 7.00pm at St Teresa's School, Lexden. Please join us for music, Irish dancers + food to celebrate St Patrick's Day! Tickets: Adults £15; Children (*under 14*) £5; Family £35 (2 x Adults/2 x Children) this includes a hot meal and dessert. There will be a bar, raffle, and music. Proceeds raised will go to our Youth travelling to Lourdes this year. For tickets – contact Paula Light 07718088834.

CHURCH CLEANING TEAM: Friday 27/02/26: Team 5 / Thursday 05/03/26: Team 1

COFFEE MORNING ROTA: 22/02/26: Diane & Adrian / 01/03/26: Peggy & Anne

New Rota's for 26/27 are available in Church porch – please feel free to take one.