



VISION DOCUMENT: SHAPING OUR FUTURE

e-bulletin

September 2019

Welcome to the September e-bulletin.

Summer is behind us and the season of mellow fruitfulness is upon us. With no e-bulletin in August this edition is a bumper edition as our Church provides several opportunities for us to develop the themes of our **Vision Document: Shaping Our Future**.

Christian Life and Worship/Formation/ Prayer and Spirituality

THE GOD WHO SPEAKS: The Year of The Word starts next week on the Feast of St Jerome who said; "Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ". Archbishop Nichols asks us all to pray during this special year, that "we may all be enriched and renewed by the living Word of God. Then we shall be moved afresh to share the love of Christ to the ends of the earth."

This is a year for us all to come to know God and ourselves a little better. When we pray together using the Word of God, we help, encourage and support one another to journey on. This is the heart of our mission as a diocese and of all our efforts for Renewal.

Fr Adrian Graffy (parish priest at Gidea Park, Scripture scholar and a member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission) is organising a range of events for this special year. We will open it on 12th October with Bishop Alan at the first of our study days that are open to all and free. You are asked to book through GPstudydays@gmail.com or 01708 449914

Please take advantage of resources on www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/news/year-god-speaks-begin-genesis/ and www.cbcew.org.uk

This could well be something that your Parish Partnership could organise together.

World Mission Day on 20th October; the theme is *Baptized and Sent: The Church of Christ on Mission in the World* and it encourages prayers, cooperation and help for missions as well as reminding Christians about the fundamental missionary character of the Church and of every baptized person. As we strive to Proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ in East London and Essex this special day is an opportunity for us to reflect and pray for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit that we may be ever more faithful to proclaiming the Gospel of Christ.

<http://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/development>

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Charity, Justice and Social Action

The World Day of The Poor is on 17th November 2019. You may recall that we launched <https://www.caritasbrentwood.org/> on last year's World Day of The Poor. During this year we have had a focus on Homelessness, and a sleep-out in solidarity with the poor and homeless and to raise funds to help was a great success. We will revisit the theme of homelessness and the practical things that we can do to help on this year's WDotP.

Caritas Social Action Network has resources for this special day that has been initiated by the Holy Father <http://www.csan.org.uk/worlddayofthepoor/>

Diaconate/Vocations/Leadership:

A study day on the permanent diaconate on Saturday 14th September 2019 was well attended by some of those interested in finding out more about the permanent diaconate and the role it might play in the future of our diocese, and those who feel a sense of calling to this ancient yet very modern ministry in the Church. We will repeat the day next year. If you are interested in finding out more about the diaconate please contact alanmair63@gmail.com We pray for our deacons and those discerning their vocation.

It was my pleasure to visit our seminarians at Oscott last week. It was good to pray with them and to discuss the future in the context of our **Vision Document: Shaping Our Future**. Bishop Alan has previously said that it is important for us to have a vision of the future so that we can best serve these men who have answered God's call. It was good to hear their thoughts. I hope to sit down with our seminarians at Allen Hall soon. Please keep all our seminarians and those discerning their vocation in your prayers.

Parish Partnerships

Several meetings of cross-parish groups have been taking place. Sometimes this is in the form of joint PPC meetings, sometimes less formal groupings from each parish in a partnership. These are great opportunities for fruitful sharing of ideas relevant to your partnership.

I have also been pleased to read about the progress being made in nearly all parish partnerships in the interim reports that have been sent in.

I am continuously impressed by the way so many of our Parish Partnerships are finding ways to collaborate and to do so with a clear focus on maximising the opportunities for

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evangelisation, maximising sacramental provision and maximising the opportunities for putting our faith into action through charitable works.

Thank you for all the good work and prayer that is going on and we look forward to receiving your Parish Partnership Plans in Advent 2019.

Formation:

Are you currently working as or thinking about being involved in your parish as a First Holy Communion or Confirmation Catechists, or look after the children's liturgy?

We would like to invite you to join us for a training day on Saturday 9th November, at Sacred Heart School, Upminster, where you will have the chance to hear about fresh resources, as well as receiving input to assist you in your programmes.

Confirmed workshops include

- Sycamore with Fr Stephen Wang
- Year of the Word with the Bible Society
- Godly Play and the Children's Liturgy
- New offers for Catechists from Million Minutes

We would particularly like to welcome any young catechists or young people in your parish (16+) who may be interested in working as or with catechists, and wish to develop their faith further post-confirmation.

There will be a special session for them.

Fr Dominic and Brenden Thompson (CEO of Catholic Voices) will give keynote speeches, reflecting on Pope Francis latest document about Youth Ministry, *Christus Vivit* ("Christ is alive!") and the day will be packed with resources and ideas to inspire you in your work.

For more information on times, location and how to reserve your place, please click below!

For information: <https://bcys.net/events/catechist-training-day-2019/>

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Cathedral Parish

Sitting in the heart of our diocese, the Cathedral has a special character and role that it is keen to develop. Our Cathedral plays host to many diocesan and civic events each year. Youth, Ordinariate, Canons and Chrism Masses as well as many musical events and the annual Citizenship Awards to name a few. Partly as a result of the civic role and partly as a result of the large number of baptisms, funerals, weddings, First Holy Communion and Confirmation groups, our Cathedral comes into contact with many relatively “unchurched” people. It is keen to recognise the unique opportunity to share graced moments to make the Risen Christ real to those attending such events. It strives to celebrate the liturgy with reverence, joy and a true “noble simplicity” so that Christ is encountered in His Church and seen with a renewed clarity.

The Cathedral is asking itself questions that we can all ask of our own churches: How do we meet “unchurched” people who enter into the precincts of grace, how do we speak to them and help them to sense God’s love for them?

The newly formed Love in Action group is committed to find practical ways to engage people in the Social Teaching of the Church through two projects, one looking at our Common Home and the other at Loneliness. Starting on Friday 4th October and continuing every first Friday of the month, the doors of the parish hall will be opened between 1pm and 3pm for all people (parishioners or not) to be invited in. They have also set up two groups for married couples and millennials and they will be supporting the God who speaks initiative with a series of Lenten Lectures. Our Cathedral parish is committed to being a channel of God’s grace for the whole of our diocese and we pray for their continuing mission. Thank you.

Young People

For information to share with young people in your parish partnership about monthly Youth Masses (2nd October) or Youth Gather (26/27th October) or National Youth Sunday (24th November) visit <https://bcys.net/events/>

There are no hard and fast rules about what should be in a Parish Partnership Plan but check out resources at <https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/development/resources/> for ideas.

Steven Webb

Director of Development

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