

Priests serving the Parish of St George & the English Martyrs, Shoeburyness

Fr. George Edward Last – Born 6th October 1802 – Died 24th January 1892

Ordained – St. Edmund's seminary – 10th April 1830, Ware.

Taught at St. Edmund's after his ordination, for approximately two and a half years, before his appointment to Ingatestone Hall (29th September 1832).

At this time Ingatestone was one of seven Catholic Missions in the County of Essex. In September 1850 the Holy See restored the hierarchy of England and Wales, Nicholas Wiseman was appointed Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster; Essex being within the Archdiocese of Westminster. Diocese of Essex 22nd March 1917 Diocese of Brentwood 20th July 1917, Bishop Bernard Ward the first Bishop, 21st January 1920, St. Edmund's College.

Fr. Last was one of the eleven priests nominated to the Metropolitan Cathedral Chapter of Westminster elected 19th June 1852 as Canon. Chaplain to Chelmsford Prison 1853, celebrating mass on a weekday.

As Chaplain at Ingatestone Hall involved pastoral care of Catholic soldiers stationed at Shoeburyness Garrison, by 1850 there were about two hundred Catholics stationed there. During the week Fr. Last would set out from Ingatestone on horseback to the home of the Danes family (non-Catholics) at Bournes Green, Southchurch, then having stayed overnight would continue to Shoeburyness Garrison to celebrate mass for the soldiers and their families and also instructing the children. He then returned to Ingatestone via Chelmsford to celebrate mass at the prison. Canon Last administered to the soldiers at Shoeburyness for nearly thirty years – 1832 – 1862.

Fr. John Moore – 1806 – 1890 – a priest of the Archdiocese from the Stratford Mission was appointed to begin a new Mission at Southend and to serve the Garrison at Shoeburyness; he began in May 1862. The War Office paid him an allowance for his duties in connection with the Garrison.

The church of Our Lady and St. Helen's, Westcliff was opened and blessed by Archbishop Manning of the Archdiocese on the 26th October 1869. Canon Last celebrated the first High Mass at St. Helen's on a wooden altar. Among the congregation, of approximately four hundred, was the commandant of the Shoeburyness Garrison. Canon Last was instrumental with the building of many churches and schools in Essex, including St. Helen's pro Cathedral, Brentwood.

Fr. John Moore – born 1806

Died 1890 – buried, North Road Cemetery, Westcliff-on-Sea

Fr. John Moore came to Southend on his appointment as an Army Chaplain to the Catholic soldiers and their families at the Garrison in 1862, at the age of fifty six, this duty lasted for twenty eight years until the year of his death.

It is recorded he rented a house No. 3, Capel Terrace, Clifftown , Southend on Sea, in an upper room of the house; Fr. Moore celebrated his first mass there, on the first of May 1862. At this time there were only a few Catholics in the area. At this mass, was his old faithful servant and a little boy who was a relative of his who served at the mass. For some weeks the congregation on Sundays, were the server, housekeeper a coastguard and a policeman, and Patrick Brady a local horse trainer and Miss Daines.

In the early days of his chaplaincy; he would hear confessions, give Holy Communion in the upper room of the house on a Sunday morning and then walk to the Shoeburyness Garrison to say mass for the soldiers and their families. After this mass he would return to Capel Terrace on foot, at 11.30am. It was only after this mass that he would break his fast from midnight of the previous day. The Military eventually provided a cab for his travels.

As his congregation grew, in numbers, Fr. Moore could see no possible intermediate stage between the upper room of Capel Terrace and that of a permanent church.

His prayers and that of his faithful, were answered by Miss Helen Tasker, while passing through Southend and heard of his situation. The Tasker family had an association with the district of Brentwood, for over one hundred years. As a result of Miss Taskers visit to Fr. Moore, and the generosity of the family, Our Lady and St. Helen's Church was built and opened on the 26th October, 1869. The families generosity contributed to the building of churches, schools, hospitals and convents in parishes of Essex.

A stained glass window in memory of Fr. Moore is in St. Helen's Church. by the Baptismal Font.

Fr. Dennis Callaghan came to help Fr. Moore in 1889 and remained with him until his death in 1890.

Fr. Moore obtained a corrugated iron roof hut from the Garrison to give the Parish of Shoeburyness it's first Church. This hut was situated at the end of the site where the present Church is built, in the area that is now the sacristy

**Fr. Thomas C Denny –born ?
Died 4th October 1901**

Fr. Denny was sent to Southend on Sea to recover his health and was appointed rector – 1890; successor to Fr. John Moore. He remained at St. Helen's Westcliff for five years. He produced a monthly news sheet in January 1894, which was published with a printed magazine insert as the (Southend and Shoeburyness Catholic Magazine). In Fr. Denny's words it's purpose was to instruct and amuse and give knowledge of what we are doing, not doing or about to do at Southend and Shoeburyness.

The newsheet continued by his successor – Fr. Patrick McKenna, it provided a mine of parochial information from 1894 – 1912. Fr. Denny was appointed in 1895 to be rector of Hackney, London.

He stayed on in Southend on Sea, until he had completed the erection of the High Altar at St. Helen's.in memory of his predecessor Fr. Moore. The Altar and Redoss was designed in the style of the thirteenth century to accord with the character of the church. It was blessed on Trinity Sunday 1895. Present among the congregation were the Mayor and Mayoress of Southend on Sea, Alderman and Mrs. Brightwell.

Fr. Patrick McKenna (Canon) – Born 15th April 1859
Died 4th January 1949, buried North Road Cemetery, Westcliff on Sea

Ordained 15th June 1884 at the Irish College, Paris by Bishop Fitzgerald for the diocese of Kerry. Appointed 19th July 1884 assistant priest at St. Mary Moorefields, London, then made Parish Priest. Inducted on Sunday 21st July 1895 as the new Rector of St. Helen's Westcliff on Sea by Canon Norris rural Dean of the Brentwood Mission. It is recorded that his doctor recommended him to transfer to a seaside parish, so that the bracing air would help his feeble constitution; this was soon realized and he stayed in the Southend area for the next fifty four years, until his death in 1949.

His (Mission) parish comprised of St. Helen's, Westcliff, Nazareth House, Southend on Sea, St. Mary's Orphanage, Thorpe Bay the Military church of St. George's Shoeburyness and Garrison personnel. The mission was from Vange in the West, to Burnham on Croach, in the North of the County.

The cab provided by the Military in the time of Fr. Moore was withdrawn; this meant for the 6pm service at Shoeburyness, a walk to Southend station a train to Shoeburyness, then a walk on unmade roads to the church, often in darkness and rain, carrying the Blessed Sacrament.

On the 12th June 1908, Archbishop Francis Bourne of the Archdiocese Westminster, made an official visit to the Southend Mission, arriving in an automobile with his secretary the reverend Dr. Jackman. In an account of this visit it is recorded the Archbishop stated for further provisions, for the needs of religion, in the district of Southend; Shoeburyness was the first, of three locations, of his Vision.

This was due to the increased number of Catholics in the area and also Garrison stating that people were not there of choice, but by their duty. The Archbishop wished for a separate Mission with its own priest.

Within months of the visitation, Fr. Frederick Ingle, was appointed to take charge of the Shoeburyness Mission.

Fr. McKenna continued at St. Helen's and in 1917, the diocese of Brentwood was established, with the Right Reverend Bernard Ward as the first Bishop. In 1918 Fr. McKenna became parish priest of St. Helen's and on the 2nd July 1918, was appointed Canon of the newly formed Chapter of Brentwood Diocese. He accompanied Bishop Arthur Doubleday, second Bishop of Brentwood, in October/November 1927 AD LIMINA visit to Rome, and again, October 1937.

Fr. McKenna had many interests including Golf and Fly Fishing.

On the 10th December 1943, at the age of 84, he was knocked unconscious by bomb blasts that caused the collapse of his dining room ceiling, whilst at supper with his assistant priest, who had been a friend of 24 years, Fr. Edward Littleton. In the stained glass window, in memory of Canon McKenna, is the name of his friend Fr. Littleton. They both died in a private nursing home in Valkyrie, Westcliff; maintained by two nurses who were devout parishioners of St. Helen's

Fr. Alfred Ingle – First Appointed Parish Priest

Born: Kew, Victoria, Australia

Died: 1948, Ealing, Middlesex

Fr. Ingle in 1908, having been appointed to the newly formed Mission as priest in charge, within the Archdiocese of Westminster, the corrugated iron roof of St. George's, first church was extended in length and a transept was added for the use as a Sacristy. This building was to serve as the Parish Church, until the present church was built, in 1938/39, when Canon Toft was Parish Priest of Shoeburyness, in the Diocese of Brentwood.

As there was no presbytery, Fr. Ingle lived for some time in a house in Seaview Road, Shoeburyness.

The Parish records show that the first Baptism was 6th July 1908, the first Marriage 19th December 1908, both officiated by Fr. Ingle

Fr. Vincent Cameron – Born Born 26th January 1877

Died 23rd August 1945

Ordained 24th September 1904, by Archbishop Bourne, St. Edmunds College, Ware.

From September 1904 to July 1914, served on the staff of St. Edmund's under monsignor Bernard Ward (Future Bishop of Brentwood) He taught Latin, Greek and French, and as a Choir Master, Plainchant. July 1914, appointed to take charge of the New Independent Mission of Shoeburyness. Commissioned as Chaplain to the forces 1915, serving at the Shoeburyness Garrison; he also served in France in 1918 and with the occupation forces in Germany and India –being demobilised in August 1920.

September 1920 returned to St. George's Parish for three years, during that time he built the Parish Hall. Other appointments - diocesan inspector of schools, assistant inspector to Canon Norris, when Essex was part of the Archdiocese of Westminster., Canon of Brentwood Diocese 1928, when Arthur Doubleday was Diocesan Bishop.

Sustained injuries in an accident at Thorpe Bay in 1930.

Appointed Parish Priest St. Mary's and Ethelburger, Barking 1931, where one of his curates, a Fr. John Carmel Heenan – 1931 to 1937 – was to become the future Cardinal of the Archdiocese of Westminster.

It was Fr. Heenan, in 1945, as parish priest of St. Stephen's, Manor Park, who arranged for the Canon to be admitted to Aldersbrook Nursing Home, Manor Park and administered to him the last rites.

**Fr. William Toft – Born 18th September 1889 – Died 31st March 1968
Ordained 2nd July 1916, by Cardinal Bourne – St. Edmund's College, Ware**

Appointed assistant priest at St. George's Walthamstow, in the Archdiocese of Westminster. On the 8th April 1918, he was commissioned as a chaplain to the forces, serving in France and then the Royal Artillery Garrison, at Shoeburyness, 1919, finishing his military service at Aldershot, February 1921.

After appointments to parishes in London and Essex, in which time his health had declined. On the 1st October 1923, he was appointed as Parish Priest of St. George's, Shoeburyness, remaining until 16th September 1952, when appointed Parish Priest at Our Lady of Lourdes Leigh on Sea. On the 27th November 1952, became honorary Canon of Brentwood Cathedral, and Chapter Canon in November 1954.

During the twenty nine years that Canon Toft was Parish Priest of Shoeburyness, the present presbytery was built in 1928, also St. Gregory's, Thorpe Bay. The foundation stone of the present church was laid on the 30th January 1938 and the church opened and was dedicated to St. George and the English Martyrs, on the 30th July 1939 by Bishop Arthur Doubleday, the second Bishop of the Brentwood Diocese. Canon Toft served on the local council and in 1951, was the diocesan representative on the Southend Borough Education Committee. It is reported that when Fr. Toft first arrived at Shoeburyness, there being no presbytery, he lived in several lodgings, including Richmond Road, and at times in the iron roof parish hall.

With increasing deafness he retired in April 1966, from Leigh on Sea, to a nursing home at Gidea Park, where he died in March, 1968; his requiem mass was celebrated by Bishop Wall, at St. George's, Shoeburyness on the 8th April, he was laid to rest at St. Andrew's Church, Shoeburyness.

**Fr. Ronald Roberts – born India 16th November 1909 – Died 4th April 1983
Ordained 29th June 1935, by Bishop Doubleday at Brentwood Cathedral,
Seminary St. Sulpice Paris**

At the age of 16years on the 20th May 1925, baptised as a Catholic at Our Lady of Grace, Charlton.

His Mother, Brother and Sister also became Catholics.

Appointed assistant priest at Chelmsford. A keen sportsman playing for Chelmsford Rugby Club. Commissioned September 1939 as a chaplain to the forces, serving with the Household Cavalry, stationed in Palestine, serving in Jerusalem and other Middle East Countries; in1943 in Tunisia, suffered head injuries. Served with the British forces in the invasion of Italy and Sicily, was at the liberation of Rome 1944. As Garrison Chaplain in Rome 1945/6, he met Pope Pius X11 and also Monsignor Giovanni Baptista Montini (Pope Paul V1). Founded a school in the Lebanon and was received in audience by Pope Paul V1.

Returned to Brentwood diocese and appointed Parish Priest of Frinton on Sea.

He also served as a chaplain to the Territorial Army.

On the 16th September 1952, was appointed Parish Priest of St. George's Shoeburyness and officiating chaplain to the Royal Artillery Barracks.

Other offices held - Spiritual Director, Southend Branch of the Catholic Evidence Guild ,a Catholic Representative on the Southend Borough Youth Committee.

During this time parts of the Parish were affected by the Floods of 1953.

On the 30th July 1958 he resigned as Parish Priest of St. George's Shoeburyness.

After a visit to Lourdes of nearly 3 months, he returned to London and then went to the Lebanon where he devoted the rest of his life to working for people with in curable illnesses and deaf children. From his wartime service he suffered partial deafness.

Worked with Group Captain Leonard Cheshire VC, assisting with the organisation of the Cheshire Ryder Foundation.

In connection with his work with the deaf and deaf-mute, he received a visit from His Royal Highnes Prince Phillip, who was on tour of the Middle East.

Pere Roberts, as he was known in the Lebanon, received from the British Ambassador in Bierut the M.B E on the 15th May 1959 and the O.B.E on the 20th July,1972 from Her Majesty the Queen at Buckingham Palace

**Fr. Francis Dobson – Born 4th June 1909 – Goldhanger, nr Maldon
Died 12th January 1991 at Nazareth House, Southend**

Ordained 24th July 1932, by Bishop Doubleday at Maldon

Father Dobson was assistant and Parish Priest at several parishes in the diocese. Appointed Parish Priest at St. George's Parish, Shoeburyness, 27th August 1958 until 12th September 1965, then appointed Parish Priest at St. Helen's ,Westcliff., where one of his assistant priests was to become the future Bishop of Brentwood, Thomas McMahan.

Father Dobson was appointed as a Canon of Brentwood Diocese in November 1966, he produced '100 years of the Catholic Church , Southend on Sea, 1869 to 1969' In the forward of his book there is some doubt about the number of Catholics in the Southend area (1850 – 1851) it states that "At Shoeburyness, however, there were Catholics serving in the army, many with their families and it was due to them that our story begins"

Having been born in Essex, he loved the Essex Countryside and all of his appointments were in Essex, as opposed to London Parishes.

In his retirement he continued his lifelong pursuit of Essex Catholic history and the history of his family.

**Fr. Stanley Bernard Joynes
Born 5th July 1908, New Southgate, London
Died 11th May, 1987, Rochford Hospital**

Ordained 22nd March 1958 , Cardinal Traglia, Lateran Basilica Rome

Father Joynes worked at Marconi's Limited, Chelmsford, before his ordination. In the Second World War, he was a Corporal in 296 Works Section, Royal Engineers, part of the Central Mediterranean Forces. Received into the Church by Father J Dennehy CF, at Monzu, Italy on the 19th August 1945. Later that year he returned home to Chelmsford.

Confirmed by Bishop Doubleday at Our Lady Immaculate, Chelmsford, on the 26th May, 1946, involved in Parish life at Chelmsford, the Knights of Columba and Catholic Social Guild. September 1954, aged 46 years, he was accepted by Bishop Beck for the Brentwood Diocese and studied for the Priesthood at Beda College, Rome.

Appointed as parish priest of St. George's Parish, Shoeburyness, 28th July 1965 until 1973.

He loved Music, Reading and the Countryside.

Fr. David William Kenny
Born 8th September 1937

Died of Cancer on the 29th July 2001, Dublin

Ordained to the Priesthood by Bishop Bernard Wall DD, Bishop of Brentwood, at Our Lady of Lourdes, Wanstead on Trinity Sunday, 17th June 1962

He was the youngest of four children, two brothers and a sister, his Mother died when he was six years old.. Went to Ft. Ignatius Preparatory School, Woodford and evacuated to Welling Garden City during the war, followed by Secondary School at St. John Fisher, Surrey, as a boarder.

Studied at St. John's Seminary, Womersley, for the Priesthood.

Ordained a Deacon by, Bishop C. C. Cowderoy of Southwark, at St. George's Cathedral – 27th May 1961. Ordained to the Priesthood by Bishop Bernard Wall DD, Bishop of Brentwood, at Our Lady of Lourdes, Wanstead on Trinity Sunday, 17th June 1962..

As a curate, served at Walthamstow, Leigh on Sea and Eastwood. As Parish Priest at Danbury and from 1972 – 1975 St. George and the English Martyrs Shoeburyness. He was buried at Creamford, nr Porey County Wexford. Home of the Kenny family since 1825

Father Patrick Taylor – Born Hornchurch, 10th December, 1933
Died 21st July, 1996, Swansea, Wales.

Ordained 18th March 1962 – St. Michael's, East Ham, by Bishop Wall.
Baptised at St. Mary's Hornchurch, 14th January, 1934. Patrick Lauderdale (Mothers Maiden Name). Confirmed by Archbishop Amigo at the Sacred Heart Church, Wimbledon, on the 7th July 1942, with the name of Joseph.

Evacuated to Greenways Convent, Collegiate School, Tiverton, Devon, during the Second world war, educated by Jesuits At Donhead Preparatory School and then in College 1945 – 1951. Worked in a London office until National Service 1953 – 1955 Royal Army Service Corps.

October 1955 accepted by Bishop Beck for the Diocese of Brentwood and he entered St. Thomas Seminary Grove Park Warrick. Began his studies for the priesthood at Ascot College in 1956. Towards the end of his studies he edited "The Oscotian"

As assistant priest at Grays and Manor Park, 1962 – 1971, becoming Parish Priest of Lendon 1971 and St. George's 1976 to 1988. In 1988 to 1990 Parish Priest of St. Teresa's Rochford. Where he took sick leave, residing in London and Swansea and he had to resign his parish. In Hospital at Swansea admitted suffering from Cancer He died while awaiting surgery.

Fr. John Garrett – Born Born during an Air Raid in the East End of London 1944 – Baptised in the Church of England

Religion did not form much of his early life. His parents were if anything – Baptists. His Mother revealed to him that distant relatives were Catholics with a cousin a Franciscan, but to John Catholicism was a religion of mystery and ritual. In his teens, he became a member of the Baptist Church at Stratford, London and recalls that with others, going to Billy Grahams Christian Rally. Working in the City of London, he went to St. Mary Moorfields Catholic Church, near Liverpool Street Station, with the intention of joining the Lunch Club and it was there that a friendship was started with Father Stevenson the Parish Priest.

John was received into the church by Father Stevenson on the 29th July 1960 and after several visits to his Franciscan cousin he decided to be a priest. He spent time at Campian House, with the Jesuits; teaching him Latin and other academic subjects. He then joined the Franciscans, at Woodford Green as a Lay Postulant where his stay was brief as he came to realize that the Priesthood was the right course for him. With the help of Father Stevenson, spent two years at Campian House Osterley, before returning to the Franciscans in the Novitiate at Chilworth.

After nine months he applied to the Brentwood diocese and was sent by Bishop Wall to the seminary at Womersley. These were six happy years.

Ordained Priest by Bishop Casey of Brentwood, on the 23rd July 1972, at St. Teresa's of Lisieux, Lexden, nr. Colchester.

Father John had several curacies in Essex and one of the Parish Priest's he assisted was Father Patrick Taylor, who he was later to succeed as Parish Priest of St. George's, Shoeburyness, from 1988 – 1996.

His Mother and other relatives converted to Catholicism.

**Fr. Martin Joyce - born 15th November 1951 – County Cork Ireland
Ordained 24th July 1976 by Bishop Casey of Brentwood at Christ the High King,
Gidea Park**

His family moved to Romford in connection with his father's work at Ford's Dagenham, he attended St. Edward's Catholic Primary School, Romford, and was taught by the Sister's of Mercy.

At Bishop Ward, Secondary Modern School, Becontree Heath; his friend at that school told him that he was leaving to go to a seminary to train for the priesthood, and at that time when the young Martin was a regular altar server he thought that maybe that way of life was for him also. His Parish Priest Monsignor Kearney, briefed him for the interview with Bishop Wall of Brentwood and drove him in his new car, accompanied by his mother who was wearing high heeled shoes and trying not to tread on pieces of paper scattered in the car.

Having been accepted, took O and A Levels at St. John's Seminary, Ushaw. Of the Six years at the Seminary, three of the years were at the University of Durham, obtaining a BA. He also successfully completed a three year diploma in Counselling at the Anglia Polytechnic at Brentwood and Chelmsford.

As a young boy he remembers coming to Southend with his family and being a keen footballer and a lifelong supporter of West Ham United Football Club.

Prison Chaplain of Bullwood Hall Prison, 2004 to 2013. He has a brother who is a black cab driver in London. As a curate served in many Essex Parishes, as a Parish Priest, his first Parish was Maldon for six years, prior to coming to St. George's for eight years, 1996 to 2004.

**Fr. Martin Buckley - Born 18th August 1962, Romford Essex
Baptised, Martin John Buckley, 26th August 1962, St. Peter's Dagenham.**

School St. Peter's Dagenham Primary; Dagenham Priory State Secondary School.

Employment, Ford's Training -Westminster College, Battersea, - The Ritz, Paris, Chef Training., plus other London Hotels, Ritz – 1990's Patisserie Chef

St. John's Womersley Seminary.

Deacon – St.Peter and Paul's, Ilford. Visited St. George's , Shoeburyness on several occasions.

Ordained to the Priesthood – 13th June, 1998, aged 36 by Bishop Thomas McMahon, At Holy Family, Oxlow Lane, Dagenham, Essex.

Fr Britto Belevendran

Appointed Parish Priest 2005 -2008

Fr Graham Smith

Born 29th August 1971 Westcliff-on-Sea

Educated:

Earls Hall Primary School

Cecil Jones High School

St. John's Seminary Womersley.

Ordained: St. Anthony of Padua Forest Gate 2002

Assistant Priest - Forest Gate 2002-2005

Assistant Priest - Grays 2005-2008

Appointed Parish Priest - Shoeburyness 2008-2015

Fr. Brett Adams

Father Brett was born in Grays, Essex
He attended St Thomas of Canterbury Primary School in Grays and St Cedd's Secondary School in South Ockendon.

Fr Brett worked for 14 years in the City and the West End of London as a financial controller for various travel companies. In 1998 he entered St John's Seminary, Womersley to begin his formation for the priesthood. During this time he served various pastoral placements which included Holy Trinity Parish, Basildon; The Most Holy Redeemer, Billericay; St Edmund of Canterbury, Loughton; Palmers Sixth Form College, Grays; and Basildon Hospital.

Fr Brett was ordained a Deacon in June 2004 at St John's Seminary and later served his Diaconate at Our Lady & St George, Walthamstow. He was ordained to the priesthood on 11th June 2005 at his home Parish of St Thomas of Canterbury, Grays, and continued serving at Our Lady & St George, Walthamstow as assistant priest. In October 2007, Fr Brett was appointed assistant priest at St James the Less & St Helen, Colchester. In October 2010 Fr Brett was appointed as assistant priest in Basildon. He enjoys travelling and quality time with his friends.

Bishop Alan has now appointed him as Parish Priest in the parish of St George and the English Martyrs, Shoeburyness.

Appointed Parish Priest 2015 – present