

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 13th May 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	ST ERCONWALD, BP EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS Bridie McDonagh RIP (Dodd)
Sun 14th May 9.00am 11.00am	SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER Anne-Marie Roberts RIP (Keefe) People of the parish
Mon 15th May 09.15am	Roderick Milroy RIP (Bemand-Qureshi)
Tues 16th May 9.15am 4pm	Baby Musa Zaman's Intentions (Medley) (with Year 1) Reception of the body of Frank Everett
Wed 17th May 9.15am 11am 12 noon—1pm	Mary Woulds RIP. Anniv. (Doug Woulds) Funeral Mass—Frank Everett EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
Thur 18th May 10am 8pm	THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD—HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION Stephanie Dunn RIP (Rudgeley & Catton) People of the parish
Frid 19th May 09.15am 12 noon	NO MASS THIS MORNING Funeral Mass—Betty Devine
Sat 20th May 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS Edward Horigan RIP. Anniv. (Family)
Sun 21st May 9.00am 11.00am	SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER People of the parish Alf Driscoll RIP, 3rd Anniv. (Maureen)

USEFUL INFORMATION

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION & CONFESSIONS: Saturday evening 5.30-6.15pm and Wednesday 12 noon-1pm. Confessions also available on request when Fr Matthew is available or by appointment.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS: Mon-Fri 9am-12.30pm (except Wednesdays).

St Joseph's School - School office 01708-220277

Sacred Heart of Mary School - School office 01708-222660

Baptisms & weddings - please speak to Fr Matthew after Mass

Repository: Saturdays before & after Mass, and Sundays after the 9am Mass until 10.55am

PLEASE ENSURE YOU ARE AWARE OF THE POSITION OF THE EMERGENCY FIRE EXIT DOORS IN THE CHURCH, AND PLEASE ENSURE THAT ALL MOBILE TELEPHONES ARE SILENCED BEFORE THE SERVICE BEGINS



St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

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PARISH NEWSLETTER

13TH / 14TH MAY 2023

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (A) - Mass Book Pg 148

(Acts 8:5-8, 14-17, 1 Peter 3:15-18, John 14:15-21)

This Thursday is the day when Our Lord ascended to heaven, 40 days after his resurrection. This is one of the great days in the year, when we are expected to make every effort to be present at Mass (10am and 8pm). On Easter Day we celebrated a hidden event, an event without parallel which defies description or depiction. The Ascension of Our Lord is a little different: Luke gives us two accounts - at the end of his gospel and at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles - of our Lord literally ascended to heaven having taken the disciples up to the top of a hill. We can picture them staring up into the sky, after he had been hidden from view by a cloud, hoping perhaps for another glimpse of him, disappearing into a tiny dot, like a balloon that has been released into the sky.

If the idea of Jesus floating up into the sky strike us as slightly odd, when we know that heaven is not really a place up above us, let us consider what this event teaches us about Jesus' humanity and his divinity - and our humanity too. For this is an event as real as any other in the earthly life of Our Lord, part of the drama of the resurrection and what we collectively term the 'Paschal Mystery'. Although in his risen, glorified body Jesus seems able to appear in closed rooms at will, and presumably disappear too, it was necessary to show to the disciples that he was now returning to the Father who had sent him into the world. From this point onwards they would experience his presence in a new, different way, through the working of the Holy Spirit - the Advocate or Paraclete who Jesus speaks of at the Last Supper. It is also part of the drama of the incarnation, marking the end of the 30 or so years in which Jesus lived among us and walked this earth. In the incarnation, the Son of God became fully human without diminishing his divinity. In Mary's womb, God and man became one person. As a man, God suffered the agony of the cross, was buried, and rose triumphantly from the grave. When his work on earth was finished, he ascended to the place from which he had come, but this was not a reversal of the incarnation. Christ's human nature is not merely a vehicle for his earthly mission, or like a garment, to be laid aside. No: the Son of God ascended to heaven as man, just as he was born, lived, suffered and died as man, and rose as man. But the Ascension also shows that this man is not just a teacher or even a great prophet. He is truly God and is returning to his rightful place. Human and divine nature, joined together when Mary consented to her unique part in God's plan of salvation, can never be separated. And the incarnate son of God will come again in the fullness of time to bring all things to completion.

The permanence of the incarnation, revealed by Christ's bodily ascension into heaven, also tells us something about our own humanity. Our human nature is essentially good, and has the potential to be raised up to the heights of heaven. Not by our initiative or merits, but through the infinite grace of God who has made us for this. God is not changed by the incarnation, but our human nature is glorified and perfected through this intimate contact with God. Our destiny is with Christ: when he rose from the tomb, our humanity rose with him; when he ascended to heaven our humanity ascended with him. In Christ, our own perfection and glorification is anticipated. Where he is gone, we hope to follow. And this hope will be fulfilled in each one of us if we allow him to live in us now.

Finally, we should notice how the disciples, encouraged by their final encounter with the Lord, go out into the world with a new sense of purpose, eagerly awaiting the promised gift of the Holy Spirit. Our Lord's parting words, found at the conclusion of Matthew's gospel, contain both a command and a promise: make disciples of all the nations; and know that I am with you always. Christ has not abandoned his church, but has ensured his presence among his people in every place and time, above all through the gift of his Body and Blood in the Mass. God bless, Fr Matthew.

RIP FUNERAL NOTICES: Please pray for the repose of the souls of Betty Devine, Iveron Stone, Catherine Thomas, Frank Everett and Mary Kelly who have died recently. The body of Frank Everett will be received into the church on **Tuesday 16th May at 4pm** followed by his funeral on **Wednesday 17th May at 11am**. Iveron's funeral will be on **Thursday 18th May 12.20pm** at South Essex Crematorium. Betty's funeral will be held here at St Joseph's on **Friday 19th May at 12 noon** followed by a burial at Upminster Cemetery. Catherine's funeral will be here on **Monday 22nd May at 11am**. Mary's funeral will be here on **Tuesday 23rd May at 10.30am**.

WE CELEBRATE THE EUCHARIST 2022—2023: Please note that there is a parents session on Monday 15th May at 6.15pm in the church. Parents are expected to attend these sessions for their own faith enrichment and to support them in their journey through the programme with their children.

ROSARY: All are welcome to come and pray the Rosary and chaplet of Divine Mercy at 10am on Wednesday mornings in the church, each week in term-time between now and October.

EMAIL ADDRESSES: The Diocese has introduced a new shorter email address format for all diocesan emails, including our parish and Fr Matthew's own email addresses. The older version will continue to work, but you are encouraged to use the newer addresses going forward especially as the possibility of mistakes in typing the address is reduced: Parish – upminster@brcdt.org / Fr Matthew – frmatthewbemand-queshi@brcdt.org (if you are wondering, it stands for 'Brentwood Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust' which is the legal name of the Diocese).

CENTENARY MUGS: Own a part of parish history! Commemorative mugs are now on sale from the repository for £5, featuring our centenary logo and the logo which will appear on our soon-to-be-launched new website. They are (according to the manufacturer) dishwasher and microwave safe.

PRIZE DRAW: There is still one unclaimed prize, ticket number 968. We will draw a new winning number if it is not claimed within a month of the original date.

BAPTISM CONGRATULATIONS: Congratulations to Isla Felicity Fearon, Nia Carolina Vieira Crai, Marcus Daniel Vieira Crai, Monar Cherie John Baptiste and Justin Luke John Baptiste II who were baptised into the parish last weekend. Congratulations to them and to their families.

SECOND COLLECTION WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY: Please note that we will be holding a second collection after all masses next weekend in aid of World Communications Day. Please support this worthy cause and if you are a registered gift aider please do not forget to use your special collection envelopes.

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CLUB: Club survey (open to all - not just members) - Please take 5 minutes to feedback on the Catholic Club as we approach our 1st anniversary of reopening and plan for the future: <http://tiny.cc/STCC2023> We are open Thursday, Friday, Saturday (from 7:30pm) and Sunday (from 6:30pm)

WEEK OF PRAYER: The period between Ascension and Pentecost was a period of intense prayer for the apostles. Inspired by Christ's prayer that all his followers may be one, Churches Together in Upminster and Cranham are keeping a Week of Prayer for Christian Unity from next Sunday (14th May). The week will conclude with an ecumenical service at Trinity United Reformed Church at 6pm on Sunday 21st. Next week's newsletter will include details of opportunities to pray together during the week.

BISHOP ALAN LISTENS: Bishop Alan would love to hear from you! Do you, or someone you know, no longer go to Mass or feel that you belong in the Church? Bishop Alan would love to hear your story and listen to your experience, via this online survey. PLEASE ASK your friends or family, your neighbours and colleagues who no longer come to Church to complete the survey so that we might hear from as many people as possible (the link is clickable in the online newsletter): https://cambridge.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9Gn08WXvvKfwJts

CDOT VOICES CENTENARY FUNDRAISING CONCERT: On **Friday 2nd June at 7.30pm** CDOT Voices choir returns to St. Peter's. We hope to raise £1000 for the purchase of a statue for the grotto in our new prayer garden in celebration of our church's 100 years in Upminster. 130 tickets at £10 each for adults and £1 for children. Light refreshments and raffle. Tickets from Bernadette on 07825235717 or from the repository.

THE BETHLEHEM NATIVITY GROUP: A missionary from Bethlehem, The Holy Land, will visit us on this weekend **13th - 14th May** to briefly talk about the Holy Land. They will have religious articles made out of olive wood displayed outside the church weather permitting. Purchasing these items helps and supports poor Christian families.

CARITAS: Interested in the Catholic response to homelessness, welcoming refugees and migrants, assisting with the Cost of Living Crisis, or tackling the causes and effects of climate change? Come to the first Caritas Brentwood networking day, Saturday 10th June, 10am – 2.30pm, at Sacred Heart of Mary School, Upminster. Hear national speaker Raymond Friel OBE, Chief Executive of the Catholic Social Action network (CSAN). This day is a chance to be sustained, share ideas and good practices with people from parishes across Essex and East London and hear about charities and resources available. Details and registration (free!) at www.caritasbrentwood.org/network

