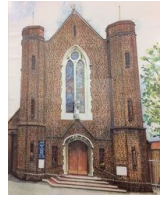




St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

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PARISH NEWSLETTER

28TH / 29TH OCTOBER 2023

THIRTIETH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (A) - Mass Book Pg 78

(Exodus 22:20-26, 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10, Matthew 22:34-40)

The month of November, which begins this week, is a time for us to think especially of the holy souls: our relatives and friends, past parishioners, and those unknown to us who have already reached the end of their earthly lives.

The remembrance of the dead can be a painful thing, as we are reminded of the gaping hole left in our lives, even as we recall with gratitude the many happy times shared with those we now miss. But our faith – that is, our decision to place our trust in Jesus Christ – leads us to the certain knowledge that the dead are still alive, even though we no longer see them. If death had the final word, there would be no point in praying for the dead. The fact that we do pray for the dead is a sign of our conviction that death is not really the end, and that our loved ones still benefit from our prayers as they continue their journey, as we also benefit from theirs.

This month begins with a feast – the Solemnity of All Saints - which holds before us the end of that journey, as we celebrate and rejoice in the company of saints who have already completed it. The word 'saint' comes from the Latin word 'sanctus', which means 'holy'. 'Holy' is not an easy word to define. God is holy: to be holy is therefore to be like God. Our English word 'holy' is derived from the same old English word that gives us 'whole', so to be holy also has a sense of being complete, entire, perfect. God, and God alone, is perfect; God is the only being which is complete in himself, lacking nothing whatsoever. Only God is holy in himself.

Those we call 'saints', and other things we call 'holy' (like holy places and holy things), are holy by association. We are all created in the image and likeness of God, who has chosen to share his divine life with us, and therefore we are holy to the degree to which we reflect God's holiness, or to use a different analogy, to the extent to which divine light shines through us, as if through a window. We can see this light shining through the lives of others to varying degrees, as their lives communicate to us something of the goodness and love of God. But we also know that none of us is perfect, for our wills are not perfectly aligned with God's, and consequently the mirror becomes a little tarnished, or the window a little clouded, by our sin, so that the light of divine goodness is obscured.

The goal of Christian life is to attain that perfection which is necessary to enter God's presence for eternity. We are, in other words, all called to become holy, to be saints. It seems a daunting prospect. Those we honour as saints are those who have dedicated themselves to following this path and have strived in heroic fashion to let the light of God shine clearly through them, by living lives of integrity. They are the ones who have recognised God as the only one who can make us truly 'whole'. Today's gospel, the beatitudes, reminds us that true fulfilment, true happiness, is something we can only find if we look in the right place. If we look for happiness only from created things, then we will only find a temporary happiness. Only God can give us eternal happiness. Understanding this is the key both to holiness and to happiness, for they are ultimately one and the same thing.

The saints are essentially no different to us. It bears repeating often: we are all called to be saints. But this is something many of us resist because it seems too hard, making too many demands of us, requiring too much sacrifice, and ultimately, so we imagine, requiring us to be miserable much of the time. And yet the lives of the saints, whilst certainly being marked by sacrifice, do not bear this out – for another common feature of the saints is their joy. There is no greater happiness than to share in the life of the Blessed Trinity for eternity; and no greater happiness in this world than to be journeying ever closer to that goal, knowing that we have Jesus as our constant companion and friend. A saint is someone who is able to discover a deep joy beneath the circumstances of life however hard, a joy which comes from deep friendship with Christ, knowing that this friendship transcends all difficulties.

Today is not about individual saints, but the *communion of saints*. We are made to be in communion with God and with one another. To be in communion does not mean losing our identity; it means living for others rather than merely for ourselves. We are made in the image of the God who is love, and who exists as the perfect communion of the Blessed Trinity. The saints we honour today - whose number without doubt includes many whose identity are unknown to us - are not merely heroic figures from the past. Their stories certainly can and do inspire us in our quest for holiness, but they are also living members of a communion to which we also belong, the communion of Christ's body, the church, and their prayers are a very powerful aid to us.

May God in his infinite goodness instil in us a deep longing for heaven, that the hope of sharing in the eternal glory of his saints may be a source of abiding joy for us, even when faced with being separated for now from those we love but see no longer.

God bless, Fr Matthew.

All SAINTS' DAY: This feast which occurs on Wednesday is a holy day of obligation, and as such the morning Mass will be at the later time of 10am. There will also be an evening Mass at 8pm. Fr Matthew will also be celebrating a lunchtime Mass for students and staff at Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School, and a whole-school Mass for St Joseph's in the afternoon.

ALL SOULS' DAY: Mass will be celebrated at the usual time of 9.15am on Thursday morning. Fr Matthew will be celebrating Mass at Campion School at 7pm, which is open to all who wish to attend and will be followed by refreshments.

MONTH OF THE HOLY SOULS: The names of our beloved dead may be placed in the basket that will be in front of the altar from Wednesday. They will be prayed for at each Mass throughout this month.

PARISH FORUM: Everyone is invited to a **Parish Forum** on **Sunday 5th November** from 4-6pm in church, when we will have an opportunity to pray together and discuss how to build on our mission, hopefully joined by one or two members of the Sion mission team. There will be a chance to meet socially in the club afterwards.

REPOSITORY: Please note that the repository now has Christmas stock—why not take a look?

ST JOSEPH'S KNITTING / CRAFT GROUP: The next group meeting will be on Monday 13th November 12.30pm—2.30pm in the social centre. The number of charities that we are not supporting is growing. Therefore, more members would be most welcome to help us continue our work. For more information please contact Yvonne Dickens on 01708-228087.

PRIMARY SCHOOL APPLICATIONS: Fr Matthew will be issuing Certificates of Catholic Practice to parents applying for places at Catholic primary schools who have been attending Mass each week, on Tuesday 14th November 4-6pm and Thursday 23rd November 5-7pm. You do not need to bring anything, but you will need to submit a baptism certificate to the school along with the Supplementary Information Form, as well as completing the local authority online application by the deadline in January. If you know that you have not been practicing your faith on a weekly basis you are still encouraged to apply to the school without a Certificate of Catholic Practice, as there is a good chance that a place may be offered on the basis of your child's baptism.

DOM'S QUIZ 8pm SAT 11 NOV 23 St JOSEPH'S SOCIAL CENTRE : At half time a cod and haddock fish pie with peas will be served. Alternative veggie dish for up to 8. Bar open **WITH ONLY CARD PAYMENTS**. In aid of CAFOD to buy (£300) a 'Medical Outreach Team' see <https://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk/products/medical-outreach-team>. Teams of up to 8. Cost £10 a head. **Put cash and names in a sealed envelope marked 'DOM'S QUIZ - £ ENCLOSED' and post through presbytery letter box.**

CDOT MUSIC CONCERT SATURDAY 2ND DECEMBER 2023: CDOT Voices with guests St. Joseph's Primary School Years 3 and 4 choir. 7pm - 9.15pm. £10 adults £2 children. Light refreshments. Raffle. Raising money for the Centenary Appeal . All tickets purchased from Bernadette - phone or text 07825235717.

CALLING ALL RED MISSIO BOXES: Please leave the red boxes at Clergy House on or before Sunday 3rd December. Replacement boxes will be available to collect in the new year. Thank you.

BCCS TREE OF ANGELS: This November, Brentwood Catholic Children's Society is pleased to re-launch their virtual **Tree of Angels** which will allow you to light up a symbolic angel on a virtual Christmas tree in memory of a loved one who has died while making a donation to the work of BCCS. Please visit www.bccs.org.uk and click on the Christmas tab where you will see 'Tree of Angels'. You can read more about this initiative and can click onto the Tree of Angels portal to make your dedication and secure donation. If you have any questions about lighting an angel, please contact Damian ddillon@bccs.org.uk.

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 28th Oct 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	SS SIMON AND JUDE, APP ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS People of the parish
Sun 29th Oct 9.00am 11.00am	THIRTIETH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR Eileen Furzer RIP Anniv. (Laura Ferreira) Maureen Baillache RIP Anniv. (Claude)
Mon 30th Oct 9.15am	Sean Sullivan RIP (Regan)
Tues 31st Oct 9.15am	Rev. Fr Martin Orme RIP (East Anglia) PACT
Wed 1st Nov 10am 12 noon—1pm 8pm	ALL SAINTS James Brocklehurst RIP (Tan) ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS People of the parish
Thur 2nd Nov 9.15am	ALL SOULS Dennis Barter RIP (Talbot)
Frid 3rd Nov 9.15am	Martin & Mark McDonagh RIP (Mullen)
Sat 4th Nov 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	ST CHARLES BORROMEO, BP ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS Michael Healy RIP (McCarthy)
Sun 5th Nov 9.00am 11.00am	THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY OF THE YEAR People of the parish David, Margaret & Andrew Milliken RIP

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

Queen's Hospital: If someone staying in the hospital would like Holy Communion, please contact the lay chaplaincy coordinator Helen Miranda on 01708 477890. In an emergency ask the ward staff to request the on-call Catholic priest via switchboard.

**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**