



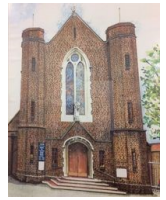
St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi

Parish Secretary: Rachel Hayward

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PARISH NEWSLETTER

18TH / 19TH NOVEMBER 2023

THIRTY THIRD SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (A) - Mass Book Pg 84

(Proverbs 31:10-13.19-20.30-31, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6, Matthew 25:14-30)

Through this month of November we have been praying for the holy souls – our own beloved dead and those who have no one else to pray for them. We do so in the 'sure and certain hope' of the resurrection to eternal life, and also with the conviction that our prayers play a part in Our Lord's work of preparing those who have died for the perfect life of heaven. This month is also an opportunity for us to contemplate our own mortality in the light of the resurrection. Death will come to us all and part of living well means acknowledging this and preparing for it. It is traditional to pray that we be spared a 'sudden and unprovided death' – that is, a death without the provision of the sacraments and prayers of the church. If we have a lively friendship with the Lord, founded on prayer and on regular reception of the sacraments (including going to confession) then we will be as prepared as we possibly can be to meet Our Lord in the moment of death. As death draws close the sacrament of anointing, as well as confession and communion if possible, are the best possible way of finding spiritual strength in that moment – though it must be emphasised the sacrament of anointing is certainly *not* only for those facing imminent death.

We also do well to think about our funeral arrangements. A funeral is of course an opportunity for the living to give thanks for the life of the deceased and it need not be an overly sombre occasion; but it is above all an opportunity to pray for a departed brother or sister, expressing once more our hope of eternal life. There is no greater prayer than the Mass, so for a Catholic person the most appropriate form of funeral is usually a funeral Mass, typically followed by burial or cremation and subsequent burial of ashes. Sometimes people worry that this might seem a bit 'much' for those non-Catholics (or non-practicing-Catholics) attending. However I've often heard non-Catholics remark how moved they were by the dignity of a Catholic funeral Mass. It is also a powerful opportunity to witness – not in an overbearing way – to the hope that lies at the centre of our faith. It is right that we mourn, for Our Lord himself wept in the face of the death of his friend Lazarus. Death is not God's ultimate plan for us and, the separation which death brings about – separation from our loved ones, as well as the separation of body and soul – goes against the meaning and nature of our human life. Our faith assures us however that this separation is only temporary, and this faith and hope runs as a thread throughout the Catholic funeral rites. This is why even though we do still mourn, we do not mourn like those without hope (see *1 Thessalonians 4.13-14*, heard at Mass last week). It also means that we do not need to treat death like the ultimate taboo as it is so often seen by others.

It certainly can't be taken for granted that those charged with making our funeral arrangements would know our wish for a funeral Mass in church, therefore it is prudent (and helpful to them) to set this out clearly in a letter, together with preferences regarding choice of readings and hymns. I am always happy to help with this, at any stage in a person's life (I have done it for myself). You can also find some resources on our website (see under 'Faith & Life'), including an outline order of service and the selection of readings, which may help when planning a funeral. A Catholic funeral is not a 'reward' for being a good Catholic, but a recognition that the dead (from our perspective) need the prayers of the living. On the other hand, our entry into heaven isn't conditional on having the 'right' kind of funeral. As well as the funeral itself, our prayers during this month and throughout the year, and the Masses we offer for the dead individually and collectively, are a means of involving the whole church in Christ's work of preparing the dead for the perfection of heaven, something we too will benefit from one day.

Finally, let us not forget that our community includes many who have been recently bereaved, and others for whom the significant days reopen the wound of loss year after year. Our church should serve as a supportive family for its members who are saddened by grief. There is no fixed time for grieving; indeed the loss of someone we love is never something we 'get over' nor should we. The final spiritual work of mercy is to 'pray for the living and the dead'. As we pray for the holy souls, let us pray also for those of the living who mourn, that the light of Christ may pierce their present darkness.

God bless, Fr Matthew.

THINKING OF BECOMING A CATHOLIC? Please speak to Fr Matthew as soon as possible if so. It's not too late to join our discussion group for all wishing to learn more about our faith—the next session is this Thursday, 7.45-9pm, exploring the nature of a God who reveals himself to us.

CHURCH CLEANING: The church is cleaned by a small dedicated band of volunteers, but we could do with some more volunteers to help spread the load. If you can spare some time to help with this please contact the parish office by email or telephone. We can of course all help by avoiding leaving litter in church and picking it up if we see it.

ALTAR SERVERS: I shall be holding a course for new servers shortly. Are you in Year 4 or above at school, have received your First Communion and are interested in serving Mass regularly? If so, drop a note into Fr Matthew's house giving your name, age and address (or email contact) by the end of November, and I will then send you more information. I hope you would enjoy serving and I look forward to hearing from you. David Burge.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION: Whenever possible, shortly after the conclusion of Mass on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed on the altar for approximately half an hour concluding with simple benediction.

BAPTISMS CONGRATULATIONS: Congratulations to Cassidy Rae Poll, George and Sofia Watson, Kruz and Kaia Sanderson-Brown, Sophia Grace Lally and Parker Tobin who have all been received into the parish through the sacrament of baptism.

FOOD BANK DONATIONS: Please note that the black bin in the porch of the church is solely for food bank donations and not general waste such as used coffee cups and chewing gum. Putting general waste into the bin contaminates the food that has been donated. There is a bin in the toilet for items that cannot be taken home for recycling.

SECOND COLLECTION NATIONAL YOUTH SUNDAY: Please note that there will be a second collection after all masses next weekend **25th / 26th November**. Please give as generously as you can to this worthy cause.

SOCIAL CLUB EVENTS: PFA Parent Nights in November - 24th: Junior mums - a chance to socialise and raise funds for the school. **Family Pokémon Night** - Sat 18th Nov - come play and trade! **Wreath Making** - 7th and 14th December. Book via link here: <http://eepurl.com/iCARzM> - raising funds for young people of the parish and school.

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 Thursday 23rd November 5-7pm. This will be the last opportunity! 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.

DOMINIC ARGENT-HALL THANK YOU: Thank you to everybody who came and supported the quiz on 11th November in the social centre. We made a profit of £300 which has been used to purchase a £300 CAFOD medical outreach team.

CHRISTMAS MASSES: This year's Christmas Mass schedule will be as follows:
Sunday 24th: 5pm (simple vigil Mass aimed at families with younger children); **6.30pm** (family vigil Mass with carols and blessing of the crib); **11pm** ('Midnight' Mass with the choir; carols from 10.30pm); **Monday 25th: 8am** (said Mass); **10am** (sung Mass of Christmas Day). Please note this is in addition to the usual weekend Masses for the weekend of 23rd/24th December, the fourth Sunday of Advent. We should plan on attending Mass for the Sunday and for Christmas.

BCYS SUMMER LOURDES 2024: Registration is now open on the BCYS website for Lourdes next July, for those in year 10 and above. Early booking encouraged; no payment required until places are confirmed in February. Financial assistance will be available from the parish and other sources. Visit bcys.net/events/sl24 or speak to Fr Matthew for more information.

SENIOR CITIZENS' PARTY: The annual senior citizens' party at Champion School will this year be held on Sunday 17th December in the school from 12.30pm to 5pm, with lunch served at 130pm. St. Joseph's parish has been allocated 15 places. If you would like to attend, then please ring Peter Jones on 07932 539106 indicating whether or not you will require transport.

CALAIS LIGHT: On 24 November 25 ordinary people will be crossing the channel for a Calais Light weekend to support charities working with refugees living in dreadful conditions in France. This will be the 25th time a volunteer convoy has been organised by Mary Stretch, who founded the charity over seven years ago. "We've asked each volunteer for this milestone trip to ask family, friends and colleagues to sponsor them with donations via GoFundMe on the Calais Light website," she says. "Alongside the convoys, we help, befriend and fund refugees here in the UK and organise mass brand deals for clothing for refugees in bridging hotels. It all takes cash and effort – and we really need people to show their faith in this work." If you would like to donate to the charity, please go to www.calais.light.com

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 18th Nov 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS Leesa Otero RIP (Quinn)
Sun 19th Nov 9.00am 11.00am	THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY OF THE YEAR People of the parish Richard Cooper RIP (McCarthy)
Mon 20th Nov 9.15am	Tony Stock RIP (Anniv)
Tues 21st Nov 9.15am	THE PRESENTATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY Brian & Maureen Springham's intentions (With our Year 5 children)
Wed 22nd Nov 9.15am 12 noon—1pm	ST CECILIA, V, M Michael Maguire Junior RIP Anniv. (Mary & Michael) ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
Thur 23rd Nov 9.15am	Philip Mario D'Aliessio RIP (Bemand-Qureshi)
Frid 24th Nov 9.15am	ST ANDREW DUNG-LAC, PR, & COMPS, MM Fred Regan RIP (Family)
Sat 25th Nov 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS Hugh Gallagher RIP (Taylor)
Sun 26th Nov 9.00am 11.00am	OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST THE KING People of the parish Rosemary Underwood RIP 11th Anniv. (Family)

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). [closed Mon 20th]

Fr Matthew (emergencies—voice only) - 020 3332 0486

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.

Facebook: [stjosephschurchupminster](https://www.facebook.com/stjosephschurchupminster) **Web:** www.stjosephschurchupminster.com

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