



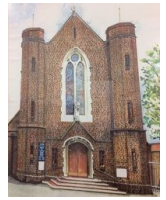
St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi

Parish Secretary: Rachel Hayward

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PARISH NEWSLETTER

9TH / 10TH DECEMBER 2023

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT (B) - Mass Book Pg 28

(Isaiah 40:1-5.9-11, 2 Peter 3:8-14, Mark 1:1-8)

The altar missal contains some beautiful artwork, including the image known as a Jesse Tree – a kind of family tree of Our Lord – which appears on the page before the 1st Sunday of Advent. It is an image taken from Isaiah 11 (“a shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse”) which is often read during Advent. It is an image of future blessing and peace emerging from desolation - an image of hope and thus entirely fitting for this season of Advent.

The Old Testament has a privileged place in this season, for though Advent is given to us primarily as a ‘wake-up’ call, to make us more ready for Our Lord’s second coming, one of the ways we do so is to put ourselves in the shoes of our forefathers, who also waited with great longing for the coming of a saviour, sent by God to redeem Israel. We are separated from them by very many centuries, but we can learn something from their patient trust in God, certain that he is faithful to his promises - the main difference for us, of course, is that our hope is founded on something even more certain: we know that Christ has already come; that the hopes of Israel have already been fulfilled in him. The whole of the Old Testament points to that moment when God comes to live among his people, and in the light of Christ we can make more sense of it. But the prophecies of the Old Testament contain something else that we need to hear, alongside the promise of God’s faithfulness, and that is the call to repent of our sinful ways and turn back to the Lord.

John the Baptist, whom we encounter in today’s gospel, stands as the last in a long line of prophets. He is a bridge between the Old Testament and the New. His message is not a new one, but it has a new urgency. We need to acknowledge our need of God, our need of forgiveness, in order to welcome the saviour and to receive that gift of mercy and new life which is freely on offer to us. The alternative doesn’t bear thinking about: without God, there is no life in us. John’s call to repent is a sign



that God cares about us. He does not want us to be separated from him for ever, burdened by sin and unable to free and fully alive in him. He wants us to turn back to him, and sent his son as saviour of the world to do what we could not do by ourselves. The only sins that are unforgivable are the ones for which we refuse to seek forgiveness!

Mary is another central figure of this season, who appears near the top of the Jesse Tree image just below Our Lord himself. By God's grace, Mary was truly free to say yes to him from the very first moment of her existence. That is the truth we celebrated last Friday, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. Freed from the effects of sin, which tends to blind us and make us hard hearted, Mary was able to see and choose the better path. Let us ask for her prayers and entrust ourselves to the one who walks with us in a special way in this holy season, and longs for our salvation more than we do ourselves.

God bless, Fr Matthew.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES: Sunday 24th: 5pm (early vigil Mass), 6.30pm (family vigil Mass), 11pm ('Midnight' Mass with the choir, carols from 10.30pm). Monday 25th: 8am (said Mass of Dawn) and 10am (Sung Mass). Weekend Masses as usual for the Fourth Sunday of Advent (23rd/24th).

CHRISTMAS CARDS: Every family should receive a parish Christmas card at Mass this weekend. As well as details of the Christmas Masses, you will find a link to a Christmas message from Fr Matthew which you can read or watch (or both as they are slightly different). You can also access this directly from the news section of our website, and there are some printed copies in the porch.

BLESSING OF THE HOLY CHILD: On the fourth Sunday of Advent (23rd/24th December), you are encouraged to bring the figure of the baby Jesus from your home nativity set to Mass on Saturday evening or Sunday morning, for a special blessing.

RIP: Please pray for the repose of the souls

of Marion Dearson and Margaret Stacey, who have died recently, and pray for those who mourn them.

PARISH YOUTH EVENT: There will be an event for those in year 7 and above on Wednesday 20th December from 4pm-6pm, in the Social Centre. Please register online at <https://tinyurl.com/siyouthdec>

CWL LUNCH CLUB: The last CWL lunch club for this year is on Wednesday 13th, December. We will be having fish and chips on this date. If you would like fish and chips please bring your deposit £6 into the social club next Wednesday 6th, December. We will reopen on Wednesday 10th, January 2024. The committee would like to wish everyone a merry Christmas, good health and happiness for the new year.

CANNING TOWN & CUSTOM HOUSE/ROYAL DOCKS: CHRISTMAS Our traditional annual collection for these two parishes will take place after all Masses this weekend. The parish priests will distribute the money raised where the need is greatest. You may use your Gift Aid envelopes. (Last Christmas the Gift Aid tax refunded added some £300 to the collection.) As in past years, both parish priests really appreciate your generosity to support their families in greater need at Christmas.

ADVENT ESCAPE ROOM: Families are invited to take this fun activity pack which will help you celebrate the season of Advent together. See Fr Matthew if there are no copies left in the porch.

OUR CATHOLIC FAITH: Our next session is this Thursday (14th December) at 7.45pm in Church, on the Holy Spirit.

ST JOSEPHS PRIMARY SCHOOL—RELIEF MIDDAYS: St Joseph's School are looking to recruit a number of relief middays. To view the details please following the link: [Havering Schools \(jgp.co.uk\)](http://Havering Schools (jgp.co.uk))

BISHOP'S CERTIFICATE IN CATECHESIS AND YOUTH MINISTRY: This is an online course designed to be an entry level qualification to help in the ongoing formation of adults involved in sacramental preparation (First Holy Communion and/or Confirmation) or youth ministry in the Diocese of Brentwood. For more information or to register your interest please email clairebailey@brcdt.org

"VOICES FOR CHRISTMAS": Wednesday 20th December in the North St. Halls, RM11 1QX 8.00p.m. Written and performed by Kevin Walsh. The nativity story told by the people who were there. With popular carols for all to sing. Complimentary festive refreshment included in the price, £8 payable on the door. All profits to the Hornchurch Passion Play.

BCYS YOUTH MASS – First Thursday of the Month, 6pm at Brentwood Cathedral. Beginning with pizza & refreshments with a workshop or speaker in the Parish Hall from 6pm, Youth Mass will then be celebrated in the Cathedral at 7:30pm. Absolutely everyone is welcome, please bring instruments, and sing, serve or read if you wish! No need to book, but do let us know if you have a group coming – just email info@bcys.net

BCYS YOUNG ADULT RETREAT – Saturday 6th January 2024. A full day retreat for those aged 18 – 27 (having left school), at our beautiful retreat house Walsingham House at Abbotswick. Explore your faith, be inspired to put your faith into action, learn, ask questions and pray, all with other young adults. There is a small cost of just £10 to cover the day, with lunch and refreshments provided. For more information and to apply, please visit www.bcys.net/events/youngadults/

BCYS SUMMER LOURDES YOUTH PILGRIMAGE – Last week of July 2024 (exact dates TBC). Bookings are now open online for the Brentwood Catholic Youth Service pilgrimage to Lourdes in July. Serve the main Diocesan pilgrimage, assist the elderly and infirm, with times of retreat, reconciliation, visit the baths, take part in the beautiful Processions, as well as an afternoon in the mountains, party and social nights - all with other young Catholics from around our Diocese. The pilgrimage is open to all those in school year 10 – 13, with all those of school leaver age (18+) invited to join us as young leaders (subject to attending a training weekend). All details and applications can be found on the website www.bcys.net/events/sl24

RETRouvaille: Do you need help in your marriage? Retrouvaille has helped many couples find new hope, nourishment and growth in their marriages. If you want to uncover or reawaken the love, trust and commitment that brought you together and work through difficult times in your marriage contact Retrouvaille confidential for more information about our 2024 programmes. There is no group therapy or group work. Our next programme commences with a Virtual weekend on 8 - 11 February 2024 or there is a Face to Face weekend in Welwyn Garden City on 14-16 June 2024. Call or text 07887 296983 or 07973 380443, email retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com - or visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk

CDOT VOICES CHOIR THANK YOU: Thank you to everyone who came to the concert. We raised £900 for the centenary appeal. Particular thanks to the teachers and children of St Joseph's Primary school who made the evening so enjoyable.

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 9th Dec

5.30pm—6.15pm

6.30pm

ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS

People of the parish

Sun 10th Dec

9.00am

11.00am

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Jenny Maplesden RIP B'Day (Paul)

Fr Matthew's birthday intentions (Lucy)

Mon 11th Dec

9.15am

MONDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT

Rosina Foster RIP Anniv. (Byrne)

Tues 12th Dec

9.15am

TUESDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT

Barbara Steele RIP (Podmore) (With our Year 4 children)

Wed 13th Dec

9.15am

12 noon—1pm

ST LUCY, V, M

Fr Frank Kerrigan RIP Anniv. (Williamson)

Thur 14th Dec

9.15am

ST JOHN OF THE CROSS, PR, D

Rev. Mgr. Anthony McDermott (Northampton) RIP

Frid 15th Dec

9.15am

FRIDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT

Ron Frost RIP (Teresa)

Sat 16th Dec

5.30pm—6.15pm

6.30pm

SATURDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT

ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS

People of the parish

Sun 17th Dec

9.00am

11.00am

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Mon & Noel Lynch RIP (Keefe)

Bernard Barrett RIP 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).

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