



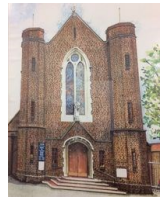
St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi

Parish Secretary: Rachel Hayward

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PARISH NEWSLETTER

20TH / 21ST APRIL 2024

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (B) - Mass Book Pg 137

(Acts 4:8-12, 1 John 3:1-2, John 10:11-18)

On the fourth Sunday of Easter we move away from the post-resurrection meetings to a piece of teaching from earlier in Jesus's ministry: the Good Shepherd discourse from John's gospel. The collect for this Sunday connects this image of Jesus with the mystery of Easter: asking that "the humble flock may reach where the brave Shepherd has gone before". In this discourse there are a number of ideas linked to the theme of shepherding. The voice of the shepherd which is familiar and reassuring to the sheep; the shepherd as the one who physically protects the sheepfold using his own body as the door; the shepherd who knows and loves his sheep, and is willing to lay down his life for them. This last idea, which is the focus of this year's passage, may strike us as odd on reflection. Does a good shepherd really lay down his life for the sheep? Surely a shepherd realises that his own human life is worth more than that of some livestock, and would not be so foolhardy as to die in order to protect them? But Jesus is not just 'a' good shepherd (i.e. good at being a shepherd) he is *the* Good Shepherd – one who is Good because he is God, the source of all good. And this is precisely the scandal at the heart of our faith – that God becomes man so that he can lay down his life for the sake of his sheep, who may only be finite creatures but are infinitely precious in his sight.

This fourth Sunday of Easter is also the World Day of Prayer for Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life. The image of Christ the Good Shepherd is one which particularly resonates with the ministerial priesthood. The risen Christ entrusted St Peter with the care of his flock, charging him specifically to feed them. We speak of pastoral ministry and pastoral care; however the charge to feed the sheep and the example of the one who lays down his life for the sheep also brings into view the priest's ministry at the altar, where Christ's sacrifice is re-presented and the people are fed with Christ's own body and blood.

Our parish has been blessed with many good priests. There is a list of them by the door to the sacristy. We recently celebrated the funeral of our second-longest serving priest, Fr John Taylor, and another priest who spent a few years in the parish, Fr George Towler, died the other week. Including these two, five priests of this diocese have died so far this year. On the other hand I was pleased to be able to attend the ordination of a new priest for our diocese last month, Fr Matus Meleg, and another priestly ordination is due in June, Fr Frank Westcott.

Bishop Alan has asked us to revisit the Diocesan Vision Document. It is tempting to focus on the restructuring part, which inevitably looks to a future with fewer priests than we have at present, however the first part is to do with renewal, setting out 12 areas or 'strands'. Two are especially pertinent today: 'Vocations to the Priesthood' and 'Priests and People'. We all have a part to play in the former, by praying for vocations to the priesthood and religious life, and praying for those who are discerning their vocation in life; also by encouraging those in our midst to consider whether God may be calling him to serve him in this way. We need priests and we can't assume they will come from somewhere else! Maybe he is calling someone reading this newsletter! There are regular events for enquirers in the diocese, and I would be delighted to have a chat with anyone beginning to think along these lines.

The other strand, 'Priests and People', recognises that the church needs both, but the document suggests there can be a gap in our understanding of each other! It's not that priests are different from everyone else (sometimes the problem can be in forgetting we are human and have human limitations) but that this role has many aspects which are often hidden despite it being quite a public role. We all have a share in Christ's priesthood by virtue of our common baptism, and a part to play in the mission and life of the church which is not given to anyone else. Let us continue to pray for each other, let us pray that God may send us the good and faithful priests we need to serve his church, and let us pray that he may show each one of us how best we can use our God-given gifts in his service.

God bless, Fr Matthew

GIFT AID ENVELOPES: Boxes of envelopes for the new financial year (beginning this weekend) are now available for collection in church. Uncollected boxes will be delivered in the coming weeks, but your help in minimising the number to be delivered is appreciated. Statements for the past year will be sent via email if we have an email address, or by post otherwise. Please note that the Gift Aid administration has now been passed on to Rachel Hayward, our parish secretary and finance officer; we extend our thanks to Kevin Armstrong for his work in this area up until now.

FR JOHN TAYLOR RIP: There will be a parish Requiem Mass for Fr John at 8pm on Thursday 16th May.

CAFOD / SVP WORK EXPERIENCE: CAFOD and SVP are working together to offer residential work experience for 20 young adults. Candidates must be over 20 years old and have a passion for social justice. 7th July—13th July. All accommodation costs, meals and travel to the Office throughout the week are covered. For more information please contact Sarahb@svp.org.uk or khutchinson@cafod.org.uk

VOLUNTEER AT THE ST JOHN BOSCO CHILDREN'S CAMP: from 27th July – 3rd August help give 100 children a holiday. Helpers must be 18+, and the Camp will arrange for a DBS check, and appropriate training. To help at the Bosco Camp is a wonderful experience, but there are limited places. Applications open until the end of March. Details: <https://boscocamp.co.uk/volunteer-applications>.

GUIDES / BROWNIES & RAINBOWS: There will be a Brownie Unit opening up at St Peters, Cranham on the 18th April for ages 7-10 years - time 5.45pm-7pm. We are also recruiting Rainbows aged 4-7yrs—time 4.30pm-5-30pm. If you are interested for your daughter to come to either meeting ,please contact Sharon shazza@31281@hotmail.com We are also recruiting more guides aged 10-14yrs. Please contact dianeconsultants@gmail.com

THE CAMPION SCHOOL OPEN EVENING: The Campion School would like to warmly invite parents/carers and year 5 boys to our Open Evening on Wednesday 26th June from 4.30 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. The Headteacher's talk will be at 5.00 p.m. and repeated at 6.30 p.m. Please visit our school website for more details
www.thecampionschool.org.uk

DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES: Join Bishop Alan on the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes (Friday 19 – Friday 26 July). To book, please go online: Brentwood Lourdes - Lourdes - Tangney Tours (tangney-tours.com). If you wish to discuss any aspect of the pilgrimage, please e-mail Kathryn Young or Suzanne Reeves at Lourdes@brcdt.org

RAINHAM FOODBANK: A big thank you for your contributions. From February last year until last week St Joseph's parish has donated a total of 125Kg to the food bank which is greatly appreciated. Please note that all donated items should be in supermarket condition, unopened and within their best before / sell by dates. We are unable to accept opened items. Thank you. Margaret Holden.

DOMINIC ARGENT-HALL THANK YOU: Dom's British Supper Night last Saturday 13th April raised £380 for Medecins sans Frontieres UK. Thank you to everybody who supported the event.

GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY: This Sunday is Good Shepherd Sunday, or the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Please pray for vocations to the priesthood for our diocese and for those currently training for the priesthood. The second collection supports the education and formation of our seminarians.

MOST HOLY REDEEMER PARISH BEREAVEMENT GROUP: Come along to find comfort, support and understanding at our welcoming and informal bereavement support group. Sheila Delander and Liz Hill will lead the group. We invite you to join us as we navigate through grief together. Our next meeting will be held **Wednesday 1st May, at 2pm** in St. Anthony's Hall at the Most Holy Redeemer Church, Harold Hill. There will be subsequent meetings scheduled for the 1st Wednesday of every month. All are welcome. Tea/Coffee and Cake will be provided.

REDISCOVER YOUR MARRIAGE: Retrouvaille offers you the chance to rediscover yourself, your spouse, and a loving relationship in your marriage. 10s of 1000s headed for divorce have successfully saved their marriages by attending and using the tools provided. There is no group therapy or group work. The next programme commences with a 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

YOUTH 2000 LONDON RETREAT DAY—COME AND SEE: Youth 2000 are running a retreat day for young adults (16-35) on 11th May at Sacred Heart Parish in Wimbledon. It is jam-packed one day event, where people come together as a community of young adults in prayer and friendship. The retreat is an invitation to come as you are, and to come and see who Jesus is and what He can do in your life. The cost £25 and more information can be found at: <https://www.youth2000.org/events/london2024>

DEPUTY HEADTEACHER VACANCY AT ST JOSEPH'S, UPMINSTER: St Joseph's is looking to appoint a Deputy Headteacher, starting from 1st September 2024. The Governors and Headteacher invite applications from experienced, enthusiastic and suitably- qualified practising Catholic leaders. Full details can be found on the school website: <https://st-josephs-upminster.net/vacancies/> Applications must be submitted by 9am on Wednesday 8th May 2024.

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 20th April 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS Shirley Geaney RIP (Ryan Family)
Sun 21st April 9.00am 11.00am	FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER Brother Raymond Hynes OFM & Mick Nash RIP (Woulds) People of the parish
Mon 22nd April 9.15am	Jean-Marie Muanda Mbunga RIP (Bemand-Qureshi)
Tues 23rd April 9.15am	ST GEORGE, M Joe Weir RIP (Kee) (With Year 5 children)
Wed 24th April 9.15am 12 noon—1pm	ST MELLITUS, BP OF LONDON Thanksgiving to parishioners (Claire Ramm) ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
Thur 25th April 9.15am	ST MARK, EV Denis Sullivan RIP B'day (Sullivan)
Frid 26th April 9.15am	Lar Fennessy RIP (Adrian, Michelle & Family)
Sat 27th April 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS Laurence O'Brien RIP B'day (Ann, Jim & Family)
Sun 28th April 9.00am 11.00am	FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER People of the parish Robin Clist 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).

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