

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO a new Catholic parish was established in Upminster dedicated to St Joseph. The generosity of past parishioners enabled the building of the first church on Sunnyside Gardens, and the new church we now worship in. It seems fitting to mark our Centenary by leaving a tangible legacy for the future: a means of giving thanks for the past whilst also increasing the prominence of our building as a sign of God's presence among us. I propose two specific projects, to be funded by a Centenary Appeal, which you can read about in this leaflet.

In addition to something for our church building, I know that we will continue to find ways of supporting our local community and the worldwide community of faith, in which we support one another in material ways as well as in prayer.

Finally, this is a beginning, not an end. During the centenary year **and beyond** I hope each of us can have a clearer sense of our own calling within the mission of the church. I hope that as a *community* we can also have a clearer sense of how we can further our mission in Upminster, and what investment is needed to make that happen.

To enable us to move forward with the projects described in this leaflet, I hope that we can raise **£19,000** over the coming months. If each family in our parish community was able to give £30, that would get us there. I know this will be too much for some in addition to your existing commitment to the parish, others will be able to give more, but please consider prayerfully what you can give.

Thank you for your support.

Fr Matthew

A BELL TO ANNOUNCE THE GOOD NEWS

Bells have long been associated with churches as an invitation to prayer, a call to worship, and as a means of proclaiming God's presence. That is part of the function of the Church: a sign of God's presence among his people. Our church does not have a bell, but we do have two turrets either side of the main entrance which seem tailor-made to house at least one modestly-sized bell. In the Catholic tradition, a bell is rung as the Angelus is recited: the prayer which begins with the Angel announcing to Mary the good news that she is to become the mother of the divine Saviour. It is a reminder of the Incarnation, God dwelling among us, that is not only prayed but traditionally rung morning, noon and evening. The other moment when a bell might be rung is at the consecration, the moment when Our Lord literally becomes present on the altar in the form of bread and wine. When the bell is heard at these moments it signifies to all who hear it that God is with us. It is an invitation to all who hear it to lift our hearts to God in prayer, joining with the whole community inside and outside the church building.

The bell is not going to be ringing constantly nor will it be rung at unsociable hours. It probably won't be very noticeable indoors either. But if the distant tolling of a bell captures our attention it should remind us of what is of greatest importance: God's desire that we should be one with him. It is truly a means of evangelizing: announcing the Gospel.

Update: we look forward to the bell being installed hopefully in August 2024



A PRAYER GARDEN FOR SCHOOL AND PARISH

A narrow strip of grass between the church and the school playground is set aside as a prayer garden. It is a place where some former members of the school community are remembered. However it is not usable by the children of the school as there is a steep bank and it tends to get muddy when wet.

Our plan is to replace the grass with patio-style paving, with level access from the car park and steps to the playground. It will have a gate at either end so it can be safely used by the school during the school day and by the public at other times.

The prayer garden will be completed with a shrine of Our Lady, recalling places such as Lourdes and Fatima where Our Lady has appeared to children. The connection with Our Lady of Lourdes is especially significant as under this particular title she is honoured as patroness of our diocese.

Update: this project was completed in March 2024 and the garden is now open!



HOW TO SUPPORT THESE PROJECTS

If every family in the parish gave £30 then we would meet our (revised) target of £19,000.

You can give:

...by **card** using the self-service screen in the porch.



...**online**, by scanning the QR code or following the link on our website at stjosephschurchupminster.com/giving

...by **bank transfer** or **standing order** using the following details and putting 'Centenary' and your Giftaid number (if you have one) as the reference
Account Name:
Catholic Church Upminster St Joseph
Sort code: 40-13-22
Account number: 91019910

...by placing **cash** or a **cheque** in an envelope with 'Centenary' and your name and Giftaid number or a note with your name and address to request a Giftaid declaration form.

giftaid it

With all these methods, if you are a UK taxpayer and have made / make a Giftaid declaration your gift goes even further as we can claim 25% back from HMRC. You can also offset this against higher rate tax if applicable.

LATEST NEWS

We have raised £6,220: together with a legacy of £5,000, we are now approximately **60%** of the way to our target! With the Prayer Garden complete and the Angelus Bell commissioned we hope to close the gap soon!

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR PARISH

HAIL, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.

Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage,
and defend us from every evil. Amen.

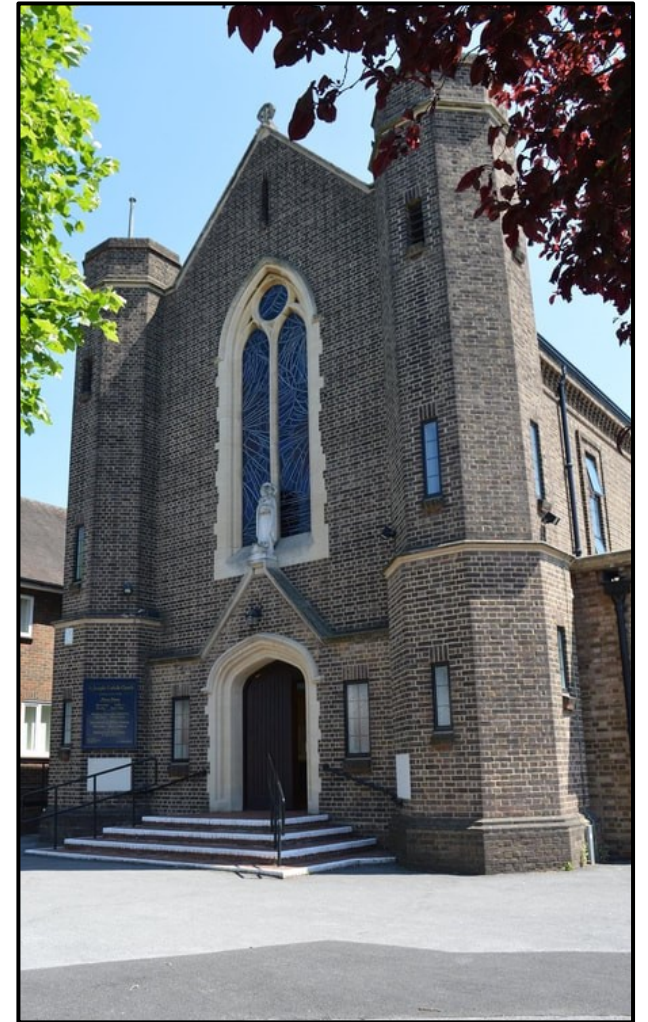
ALMIGHTY and merciful Father,
bestow your grace upon this Parish
as we celebrate our Centenary Year.
We give thanks for the witness of past generations and pray for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit that we may be ever more faithful in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ. Bless Alan our Bishop, the Clergy, Religious and Faithful of our Diocese, and graciously grant plentiful vocations to the Priesthood, the Consecrated Life and the Sacrament of Marriage. Strengthen us in the communion of faith, hope and charity, united in prayer with our Holy Father the Pope and the Universal Church.

We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

St Joseph, Pray for us.



St Joseph's Upminster



CENTENARY APPEAL

Updated May 2024