



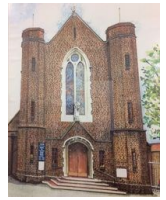
St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi

Parish Secretary: Rachel Hayward

upminster@brcdt.org / 01708 222432



PARISH NEWSLETTER

14TH / 15TH DECEMBER 2024

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (C) - Mass Book Pg 84

(Zephaniah 3:14-18a, Phillipians 4:4-7, Luke3:10-18)

When you open the missal or parish mass book to the page for a particular Sunday, the first thing you see is a short text known as the Entrance Antiphon. We don't tend to use them at our Sunday Masses as we sing a hymn at that point instead. But these texts, usually drawn from sacred scripture, often have a simple but important message for us. That is particularly true on this third Sunday of Advent. Occasionally a Sunday will be known by a name drawn from the original Latin of the entrance antiphon. Thus, today is known as 'Gaudete' Sunday from the Latin 'Rejoice!'. Along with its Lenten sister 'Laetare' Sunday, the theme of joy is reflected in the rose-pink vestments, a lightening of the penitential purple. Let us pay attention to those words: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near."

The season of Advent prompts us to consider three 'advents' or comings of Our Lord: the first which we are soon to celebrate at Christmas, the second coming at the end of time, and his coming to us in the present. Christmas is of course getting nearer day by day. As is the second coming, though it still feels remote from us since God's timescale has not been revealed to us. And in the present, he is indeed very near to us. We are not always aware of his closeness to us, but it is truly a cause for rejoicing.

St John – who was able to speak from his own personal friendship with the Lord – introduces one of his letters "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life". The message of Christmas is that God wants to be close to us, not merely in a spiritual way, but in a way that we can touch and see. The one who St John was able to see, hear and touch, comes to us in the sacraments of the church so that with the eyes of faith we too can see him, hear him and touch him. The one placed in the manger at Bethlehem is placed in our hands or on our tongues as food – he cannot be any closer to us than that.

But there is also a sense of urgency, that we should not miss the opportunity to welcome Christ into our hearts. We hear this in the preaching of John the Baptist, who warns that we must be ready to change those aspects of our lives that do not align with what God has made us for. It is easy to become so caught up in the things around us that we miss the one who wants to be as close to us as we will allow him.

One of the hymns we often sing at the offertory has the line “The chances we have missed. The graces we resist” – sometimes it is a matter of actively resisting what God wants for us, but sometimes, more often perhaps, we are just unaware. I was once waiting for a train, periodically looking up at the display to see its progress, but in the moment it came I was so absorbed with something I was reading (on my phone!) that I didn’t notice until it was too late and I had to wait for the next one. Let us notice what God is doing in our lives, so that our joy may be great indeed.

God bless, Fr Matthew.

CHRISTMAS CARDS AND POSTERS: Two ways we can share our faith are giving someone a parish Christmas Card as an invitation to join us for Mass, and displaying a ‘Keep Christ in Christmas’ poster in your window. Both are available in the porch.

READING AT MASS: If anyone – of any age – is interested in joining our readers rota, perhaps inspired by the recent talk on the Word of God, please email the parish office with your contact details and the Mass you usually attend.

YOUNG READERS: Would you like to read one of the readings at our Christmas Eve Masses (5pm and 6.30pm)? Please speak to Fr Matthew or email the parish office if so.

ALTAR SERVERS: Please think about which Christmas Mass(es) you are likely to attend, and add your name to the list in the Sacristy.

ADVENT RECONCILIATION: Our partner parish St Mary’s is holding an Advent Reconciliation Service on Tuesday 17th December at 7pm, at which Fr Matthew will be assisting with other local clergy. There is a similar opportunity at Brentwood Cathedral on Monday 16th at 7.30pm.

DIOCESAN DIRECTORIES & PARISH DIARIES: These are now available in the porch, priced at £3.20 (directories) and 50p (diaries). You can pay at the repository when open, or use the payment screen (minimum £1) or papers wall slot.

ROME & ASSISI OCTOBER 2025: We are gradually filling the spaces for our parish pilgrimage to Assisi and Rome but there are still a few places available. We depart on Sunday 26th October 2025 for 5 nights, at a basic price of £1299 per person. The brochure and booking form is available in the porch or online at https://www.tailored-travel.co.uk/stjosephs_rome_2025. Please return the completed form to the parish office with your deposit (card details or cheque payable to the agent) as soon as possible.

LIVE STREAM: Visit [is.gd/sjuptv](https://www.is.gd/sjuptv) in any web browser to access live streamed and recorded Masses. Visit our website for more information.

CDOT CHRISTMAS CONCERT: Thank you to everyone who made the evening such a success. A particular thank you to Mrs Calver and the year 3 and 4 choir from St. Joseph’s Primary School. We raised £750.

RIP NOTICES: Please pray for the repose of the souls of Martin Ortisejafor, Margaret Munnely, and Maggie (Margaret) Ollington who died recently. Martin's funeral will be held here on Monday 30th December at 11.30am. Margaret Munnely's funeral will be held here on Tuesday 7th January at 10.30am and her body will be received into the church on Monday 6th January at 4pm. Maggie's funeral will be held at Upminster Cemetery Chapel on Thursday 9th January at 11am. May Margaret, Martin and Maggie rest in the eternal peace of Christ.

"VOICES FOR CHRISTMAS": The Hornchurch Passion Play presents the Nativity story told by the people who were there! Monologues written and directed by Kevin Walsh, this year performed by different actors, with popular carols for all to sing. Wednesday 18th December at 8:00pm. In the North Street Halls, Hornchurch RM11 1QX. Tickets on the door @ £8 including complimentary festive refreshment. All profits support Hornchurch Passion Play Reg. charity no. 1169216.

CAFOD-DEC MIDDLE EAST HUMANITARIAN APPEAL: The conflict in the Middle East is getting worse and the families affected need our help. Please donate today to the CAFOD-DEC Middle East Humanitarian Appeal and support our local Caritas partners in Gaza and Lebanon as they continue to provide essential food, water and shelter: //cafod.org.uk/give

THE DIOCESAN LOURDES PILGRIMAGE: Will be led by Bp Alan, will be from Friday 18 July – Friday 25 July 2025. The flights will be Southend to Lourdes. Details, including how to book, will follow. We hope you will join us.

NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS SERVICE will take place at Brentwood Cathedral on Sunday 22nd December at 4.00 p.m. A celebration of prayers, readings and carols presided over by Bishop Alan Williams. With music by the Brentwood Cathedral Choir. Please do join us for this very special celebration.

ADMISSIONS TO ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL SEPTEMBER 2025: The initial window for applications to Reception in September 2025 is open until 15th January 2025. Please encourage friends and family with children in this age cohort to apply. Applications no longer require a 'Certificate of Practice' (often thought of as a priest reference) which had previously deterred families from applying, especially from Catholic non-practicing families. Applications can be made by anyone, regardless of faith or address and we warmly welcome families from a range of backgrounds. Queries can be sent to admissions@st-josephs.havering.sch.uk There is an open day tour date left on 8th January – contact the address above to book a space.

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE STAFF AND TRUSTEES OF BRENTWOOD CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S SOCIETY: We would like to wish everyone across Brentwood Diocese a very happy and blessed Christmas. As we come to the end of our 40th anniversary year, we would like to thank everyone who has supported our work by making a donation at one of the parish crib scenes across the Diocese over the years. This steadfast support has allowed us to give hope to thousands of children, young people and families by offering them the specialist care they need. Thank you all.

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 14th Dec 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	ST JOHN OF THE CROSS, PR, D ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS People of the parish
Sun 15th Dec 9.00am 11.00am	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT Clare Argent-Hall RIP Anniv. (Dominic) Deceased members of the Earley Family (Early)
Mon 16th Dec 9.15am	MONDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT Michael Ferguson RIP (Devitt)
Tues 17th Dec 9.15am	WEEKDAY OF ADVENT John Foy RIP Anniv, (Family) (With our year 2 children)
Wed 18th Dec 9.15am 12 noon—1pm	WEEKDAY OF ADVENT Barney O'Neill RIP (Ryan) ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
Thur 19th Dec 9.15am	WEEKDAY OF ADVENT Tracy Regan RIP (Regan Family)
Frid 20th Dec 9.15am	WEEKDAY OF ADVENT Joan Henderson RIP Anniv. (McCarthy Family)
Sat 21st Dec 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	WEEKDAY OF ADVENT ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS Perry Southgate RIP (Larner)
Sun 22nd Dec 9.00am 11.00am	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT Mitzi Williams RIP Anniv. (Cunningham) People of the parish

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**