



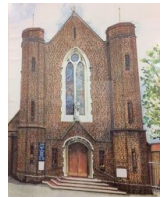
St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi

Parish Secretary: Rachel Hayward

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PARISH NEWSLETTER

11TH / 12TH JANUARY 2025

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD (C) - Mass Book Pg 118

(Isaiah 42:1-4,6-7, Acts 10:34-38, Luke 3:15-16, 21-22)

It is a great joy to celebrate the sacrament of Baptism each month, when on average four children are joined to the body of Christ through the waters of baptism. In Advent we heard John the Baptist proclaim a baptism of repentance in preparation for the coming of the Messiah. Many came to receive the symbolic washing he offered. But as he did so, he also made clear that the one coming after him would baptise not only with water, but also the Holy Spirit. This is the baptism, commanded by Christ at his ascension, through which we receive new life as God's sons and daughters, rejuvenated by the gift of the Holy Spirit.



Our Lord's baptism at the hands of his cousin John is a fitting end to the Christmas season. Not because baptism and babies go together - we've moved on about thirty years - but because of what this event tells us about his identity and his relationship with the Father - and what it says about us. Jesus does not need a baptism of repentance, because he is without sin. He chooses to receive it as a gesture of humility in keeping with the incarnation, and out of solidarity with sinners, whose place he will take on the cross. It is another epiphany, a manifestation of his true identity. Jesus's divine status is confirmed by the voice from heaven. He is truly - and eternally - the Son of God. This relationship is key to his identity. Of no less importance is his relationship to the Holy Spirit: the entire communion of the blessed Trinity is manifested in this moment. We see the essential unity of the three divine persons in the saving work entrusted to the one who has taken our human nature to himself.

What about us? At the heart of what we celebrate at Christmas is a sacred exchange: the immortal one sharing our mortality, so that we who are mortal can share his immortality. Our human nature is for ever united to his divine nature. The sinless one identifies with sinners, so that sinners can be set free. In submitting himself to his cousin's baptism of repentance, he hallows the waters of baptism, making baptism the means by which we can become one with him. To be a Christian means much more than simply being a follower of or a believer in Christ. It means becoming another Christ, sharing his anointing by the Holy Spirit (the title Christ or Messiah literally means 'anointed one'), and sharing both the dignity and responsibility of his threefold mission as Priest, Prophet and King. In this country honours are traditionally bestowed by the sovereign - there is no greater honour, however, than the gift of baptism bestowed by the King of Kings himself. May we who

have received this gift never forget this, and strive with his help to become more and more what we are by virtue of this sacrament.

Our baptismal identity and dignity should be at the forefront of our mind in this Jubilee Year entitled “Pilgrims of Hope”. Our Lord’s relationship with his Father and the Holy Spirit, which we are invited and enabled to share through baptism, is the essence of eternal life. We look forward in confident hope to the perfection of what has already begun. In baptism water is often poured using a scallop shell - the traditional emblem of pilgrimage picked up and worn as a badge when reaching land after a sea voyage. The waters of baptism lead us to the solid ground of hope in God, on which we take each step on our pilgrimage through life. May we be aware of God’s presence leading and accompanying us every step of the way.

God bless, Fr Matthew.

JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE TO ROME AND ASSISI: We would like to fill the last remaining places on our parish pilgrimage for the jubilee year. Once flight bookings are confirmed by the tour operator in the next couple of weeks, any further places on the pilgrimage will be subject to availability of flights. 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.

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, can be found at <https://www.tangney-tours.com/brentwood>. We hope you will join us.

NEW SERVERS: Those who have made their first communion and would like to learn how to serve at the altar during the Mass are asked to give their details (sent from a parent’s email address) to Fr Matthew via the parish office email address, ideally by the end of the month.

PARISH MEETING: There will be a meeting between the morning Masses over Coffee in the Social Centre on Sunday 26th January, principally to continue the conversation begun in October regarding the possibility of a new Social Centre.

MUSIC FEEDBACK: In September we began a trial period of a new approach to music at our Saturday/Sunday Masses, with reduced signing (just hymns) at the Saturday evening Mass. This was prompted by feedback sought from the parish in the summer. If you have any views on music going forward – principally whether or not we should continue with this approach or try something else – please send an email to the parish office.

RIP NOTICES: Please pray for the repose of the souls of June Corrigan, and Juliana Skelker who died recently. June’s funeral will be held at 10.20am on Wednesday 15th January 2025 at South Essex Crematorium and Juliana’s will be held here at St Joseph’s on Friday 7th March at 11am. May they rest in the eternal peace of Christ.

PAX CHRISTI—SECOND COLLECTION: Please note that there will be a second collection next weekend (18th / 19th January) in aid of Pax Christi.

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

BCYS SUMMER LOURDES YOUTH PILGRIMAGE – July 2024: (exact dates TBC in due course) Bookings are now open online for the Brentwood Catholic Youth Service pilgrimage to Lourdes in July. The week is spent serving the main Diocesan pilgrimage, assisting the elderly and infirm, alongside times of retreat, reconciliation, visiting the baths, taking part in the beautiful Processions, 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

CRIB COLLECTION: You are invited to make an offering when you visit the crib to support the work of Brentwood Catholic Children's Society, a charity which provides various forms of support for children and their families. You can also give using the self-service screen in the porch. For more information, to give online or become a supporter please visit bccs.org.uk. The crib will remain in place until Candlemas after other decorations in church are taken down.

ISLAM STUDY DAY: In 2025 we mark sixty years since the promulgation of Nostra Aetate, the inter-faith document of Vatican II. We are delighted to welcome Sidra Naeem, distinguished teacher and chair of Havering Interfaith, who will speak about Islam. The talk will take place on Saturday 18th January 2025 from 11.00 (11.00 GMT) in the hall at the Catholic Church of Christ the Eternal High Priest, in Gidea Park. The talk will also be available by livestream free of charge at www.whatgoodnews.org

SION COMMUNITY: Our next Maranatha evening will be on Thursday 16th January at Sawyers Hall Lane, Brentwood, CM15 9BX at 7pm for Mass, Praise and Worship and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Everyone is welcome, so do join us for what has come to be a very blessed evening.

CARITAS BRENTWOOD NETWORKING DAY: You are warmly invited to the 2025 Caritas Brentwood Networking Day, taking place on Sunday, 9th February, from 2–6 pm at St. Edward the Confessor Church Hall, Romford. This event is an opportunity to explore the Catholic response to pressing issues such as homelessness, welcoming refugees and migrants, supporting those affected by the Cost of Living Crisis, and addressing climate change. Join us to find inspiration during this Jubilee year, exchange ideas and best practices with parishioners across Essex and East London, and learn about the charities and resources available to support your efforts. Registration is free - find more details at www.caritasbrentwood.org/network.

A YEAR OF HOPE: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE JUBILEE YEAR WITH THE CATHOLIC AGENCY FOR OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT: 2025 is a Jubilee year, but what does that mean? Catholic talk show host and author Nana Churcher, and CAFOD's Simon Giarchi will be hosting Fr Jan Nowotnik (Director of Mission for the Bishop's Conference), Christine Allen (CAFOD's Director) and Kayode Akintola (CAFOD's Head of Africa) and more for a lively start to the Jubilee. With a special appearance by Catholic band Ooberfuse. Saturday 18 Jan, 10:30am-midday, online. All welcome. Register here for free: [//cafod.org.uk/jubilee](https://cafod.org.uk/jubilee)

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 11th Jan 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS Alex Hendry RIP (Joan)
Sun 12th Jan 9.00am 11.00am	THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD People of the parish Martin Campbell RIP (Campbell Family)
Mon 13th Jan 9.15am	Irene & Ronald Robinson's Intentions (Christine)
Tues 14th Jan 9.15am	Winifred & Ronald Threadgill RIP (With our year 1 children)
Wed 15th Jan 9.15am 12 noon—1pm	Paddy (Patrick) Fahy RIP (Burke) ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
Thur 16th Jan 9.15am	Felicity Bemand-Qureshi's Intentions (Bemand-Qureshi)
Frid 17th Jan 9.15am	St Antony, Abbot Patrick Fahy RIP (McCullough)
Sat 18th Jan 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS Maggie Ollington RIP
Sun 19th Jan 9.00am 11.00am	2ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Christopher (Henry) Nye RIP Anniv. (Family) 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](#) **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**