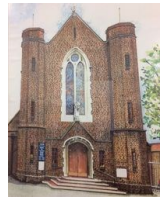




# St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi  
Parish Secretary: Rachel Hayward  
upminster@brcdt.org / 01708 222432



## PARISH NEWSLETTER

1ST / 2ND FEBRUARY 2025

THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD (C) - Mass Book Pg 296

(Malachi 3:1-4, Hebrews 2:14-18, Luke 2:22-40)

The liturgical year has a wonderful rhythm to it. The anticipation of Our Lord's coming in Advent flows into the celebration of his birth and his manifestation to the world. The beginning of his public ministry in the first bit of Ordinary Time leads naturally into the season of Lent, the ancient time of preparation for Easter, when we celebrate the culmination of Our Lord's saving work. After the fifty days of Easter we return to green, as the rest of the year is spent once more following the teachings and miracles that occurred during Our Lord's public ministry.



Week by week the colour, the prayers and the readings reflect the character of the particular season, but the liturgy is essentially the same, with the notable exception of Holy Week. Just occasionally, however, we are able to experience something a little out of the ordinary that provides some additional variety and richness to the year and, more importantly, orients us in a particular and often thought-provoking way to the mystery of Christ, the who is at the centre of everything. Thus, for example, the proclamation of the date of Easter and other feasts which occurred on Epiphany – which is clearly unnecessary as a means of communicating dates – signifies the sanctification of the whole year as a celebration of the mystery of our redemption.

Today the church's calendar offers us another opportunity to revisit the mystery of our Lord's birth, and to experience something a little different liturgically. Forty days after his birth, Mary and Joseph took the infant Jesus to the Temple to present him to God in accordance with the Jewish Law. We commemorate this event, as it were, in real time. Since the fortieth day falls on a Sunday this year, we interrupt the cycle of green Sundays in order to do so; this means that more of us will be able to take part in the distinctive ceremonies that give today's feast its other name of Candlemas.

As you come to church you will be invited to take a candle (at 11am our first communion children will be presented with a special candle at the beginning of Mass). Before the entrance procession gets underway the candles are lit, passed from person to person. The candles are then blessed with holy water – including some of the candles that will be used on the altar in the coming months.

And only then does the entrance procession properly begin, as the servers and priest make their way to the sanctuary for the celebration of Mass (going straight into the Gloria). The prominence of candles on this feast day is linked to the proclamation of Jesus as the light to lighten the nations, by the old man Simeon who greets the Holy Family in the Temple.

What does this extra ceremony tell us? Most obviously, it emphasises the point that Jesus is truly the light of the world, and we should remain in his light: light which banishes the darkness, which guides us in the right path, helps us to see more clearly the truth of God's love for every person, and which also exposes that which is contrary to God's purposes. Light which we carry ourselves, as we strive to be Christ to others. It will surely bring to mind the other occasion when light is passed from person to person, as the darkness is literally banished by the risen Christ at the Easter Vigil. But there is another aspect that we shouldn't overlook. Liturgically, it seems to me that the beginning of Candlemas most resembles the beginning of Palm Sunday. Today, the infant Jesus is brought to the house of God and sacrifice offered. Simeon speaks of his destiny, both to be rejected and to raise up God's people; and he speaks of Mary's own share in his suffering. On Palm Sunday the adult Jesus enters the holy city to make of himself the sacrificial offering that will reconcile the whole world to God. At this and every Mass, the entrance procession represents our movement to God in Christ, as we unite ourselves to his perfect sacrifice and experience anew the redemption won for us.

God bless, Fr Matthew.

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**CANDLEMAS:** Mass today begins with the blessing of candles. Please take care with lighted candles. The liturgy can be found in the purple Parish Mass Book from page 296. We welcome our Confirmation candidates who will be formally enrolled at the 6.30pm Mass, whilst our First Communion children will come together for the 11am Mass.

**PARISH MEETING:** A report of last week's meeting, continuing the conversation regarding a new social centre and the future of St Peter's Centre in Cranham, is now available on our website. A copy is also displayed in the porch and social centre together with a hypothetical floor plan.

**NEXT WEEKEND:** Fr Gerald Gostling will be celebrating our weekend Masses as Fr Matthew will be in Lourdes. There will be no Holy Hour on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February.

**PRAYER MINISTRY:** Trained members of our parish prayer group will be available in St Joseph's chapel after each Mass this weekend, for anyone who wishes to speak with them in confidence and pray with them for any intentions.

**ST BLAISE BLESSING:** The customary blessing of throats, invoking the intercession of St Blaise, will take place after Mass on Monday, the day of his feast in the universal calendar, though we celebrate a diocesan martyr St Anne Line on that day.

**DOORS:** You may have noticed a change to the front doors of the church. We have been advised that the doors should open outwards to facilitate easier evacuation of the church in the event of a fire. This was not as straightforward as it sounds, but does also give us a little more room in the porch. It means that to open the door from the outside it is now necessary to pull the left-hand door. We are hoping to fix the automatic opener to the side door soon, so that those who would struggle to pull the main door open have another easier means of getting in. The door to the confessional has also been brought into line with current good practice by the addition of a glazed panel. This also means it will be easier to see when confessions are available.

**RIP NOTICES:** Please pray for the repose of the souls of Brenda Cridge, Elizabeth Joan Walsh and Juliana Skelker who died recently. , Brenda's funeral will be held here at St Joseph's on Thursday 6th February at 1.30pm and Elizabeth's funeral will be held here at St Joseph's on Wednesday 26th February at 1pm. Juliana's funeral will be held here at St Joseph's on Friday 7th March at 11am. May they all rest in the eternal peace of Christ.

**CRIB COLLECTION:** The crib figures will be put away for another year following this weekend's feast. We will be forwarding the proceeds of the crib collection to Brentwood Catholic Children's Society (BCCS) – thank you on behalf of the charity for those who have contributed; it is not too late to do so.

**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.

**LOURDES SICK HELPERS—SECOND COLLECTION:** Please note that there will be a second collection after all masses next weekend—8th / 9th February in aid of the Lourdes Sick Helpers fund.

**THE DIOCESAN LOURDES PILGRIMAGE 2025:** Join Bishop Alan in Lourdes from Friday 18 to Friday 25 July. We can support those with medical needs. For further information, please phone Tangney Tours on 01732 886 666 or book online: [www.tangney-tours.com/diocese-pilgrimages/diocese-brentwood/](http://www.tangney-tours.com/diocese-pilgrimages/diocese-brentwood/)

**DOM's FRENCH SUPPER 8pm Sat 1st Mar 2025:** in the Social Club in aid of Medecins sans Frontieres UK. £15 per head. Two courses: main (pork in cider) and dessert. I can provide a veggie/vegan main for no more than 8 diners. To attend please leave names and money in an envelope marked 'French Supper' with Parish Office or email me: [dom.argenthall@btinternet.com](mailto:dom.argenthall@btinternet.com)

**SOCIAL CLUB SIX NATIONS RUGBY:** The Club will be open from 4pm on Sat 1st Feb, Sat 8th Feb, Sat 22nd Feb, Sat 15th March. This is to show the 4:45pm England games. All welcome. More details on our socials: [https://linkpop.com/stjosephs\\_cc](https://linkpop.com/stjosephs_cc)

## MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

<b>Sat 1st Feb</b> <b>5.30pm—6.15pm</b> <b>6.30pm</b>	<b>ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS</b> Irene Robinson's Intentions (Christine)
<b>Sun 2nd Feb</b> <b>9.00am</b> <b>11.00am</b>	<b>THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD</b> Pauline Clark & Walter Enns RIP (Margaret) People of the parish
<b>Mon 3rd Feb</b> <b>9.15am</b>	<b>ST ANNE LINE. M</b> Nora & Teddy O'Brien RIP (Biggs)
<b>Tues 4th Feb</b> <b>9.15am</b>	Brian & Maureen Springham's Intentions (With our year 5 children)
<b>Wed 5th Feb</b> <b>9.15am</b> <b>12 noon—1pm</b>	<b>ST AGATHA, V, M</b> Grace Robinson RIP 2nd Anniv. (Finigan)
<b>Thur 6th Feb</b> <b>9.15am</b> <b>1.30pm</b>	<b>SS PAUL MIKI AND COMPS, MM</b> Fr Matthew's Intentions (Lucy) Funeral—Brenda Cridge
<b>Frid 7th Feb</b> <b>9.15am</b>	Fr Mark Reilly's Intentions (Dennehy)
<b>Sat 8th Feb</b> <b>5.30pm—6.15pm</b> <b>6.30pm</b>	<b>ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS</b> David McCardle RIP Anniv. (Family)
<b>Sun 9th Feb</b> <b>9.00am</b> <b>11.00am</b>	<b>FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR</b> People of the parish John Quinn RIP Anniv. (Quinn)

### 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](http://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**