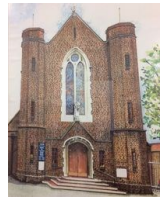




St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi
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PARISH NEWSLETTER

8TH / 9TH MARCH 2025

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT (C) - Mass Book Pg 153

(Deuteronomy 26:4-10, Romans 10:8-13, Luke 4:1-13)

This week I would like to share some of Pope Francis's message to the whole church for the season of Lent:

We begin our annual pilgrimage of Lent in faith and hope with the penitential rite of the imposition of ashes. The Church, our mother and teacher, invites us to open our hearts to God's grace, so that we can celebrate with great joy the paschal victory of Christ the Lord over sin and death.

This Lent, as we share in the grace of the Jubilee Year, I would like to propose a few reflections on what it means to *journey together in hope*, and on the summons to conversion that God in his mercy addresses to all of us, as individuals and as a community.

First of all, *to journey*. The Jubilee motto, "Pilgrims of Hope", evokes the lengthy journey of the people of Israel to the Promised Land, as recounted in the Book of Exodus. This arduous path from slavery to freedom was willed and guided by the Lord, who loves his people and remains ever faithful to them. It is hard to think of the biblical exodus without also thinking of those of our brothers and sisters who in our own day are fleeing situations of misery and violence in search of a better life for themselves and their loved ones. A first call to conversion thus comes from the realization that all of us are pilgrims in this life; each of us is invited to stop and ask how our lives reflect this fact. Am I really on a journey, or am I standing still, not moving, either immobilized by fear and hopelessness or reluctant to move out of my comfort zone? Am I seeking ways to leave behind the occasions of sin and situations that degrade my dignity?

Second, *to journey together*. Christians are called to walk at the side of others, and never as lone travellers. The Holy Spirit impels us not to remain self-absorbed, but to leave ourselves behind and keep walking towards God



and our brothers and sisters. ... Let us all walk in the same direction, tending towards the same goal, attentive to one another in love and patience.

This Lent, God is asking us to examine whether in our lives, in our families, in the places where we work and spend our time, we are capable of walking together with others, listening to them, resisting the temptation to become self-absorbed and to think only of our own needs.

Third, let us journey together *in hope*, for we have been given a promise. May *the hope that does not disappoint* (cf. *Rom5:5*), the central message of the Jubilee, be the focus of our Lenten journey towards the victory of Easter. ... Death has been transformed into triumph, and the faith and great hope of Christians rests in this: the resurrection of Christ!

This, then, is the third call to conversion: a call to hope, to trust in God and his great promise of eternal life. Let us ask ourselves: Am I convinced that the Lord forgives my sins? Or do I act as if I can save myself? Do I long for salvation and call upon God's help to attain it? Do I concretely experience the hope that enables me to interpret the events of history and inspires in me a commitment to justice and fraternity, to care for our common home and in such a way that no one feels excluded?

Sisters and brothers, thanks to God's love in Jesus Christ, we are sustained in the hope that does not disappoint (cf. *Rom5:5*). Hope is the "sure and steadfast anchor of the soul". It moves the Church to pray for "everyone to be saved" (*1 Tim2:4*) and to look forward to her being united with Christ, her bridegroom, in the glory of heaven. This was the prayer of Saint Teresa of Avila: "Hope, O my soul, hope. You know neither the day nor the hour. Watch carefully, for everything passes quickly, even though your impatience makes doubtful what is certain, and turns a very short time into a long one".

May the Virgin Mary, Mother of Hope, intercede for us and accompany us on our Lenten journey – Pope Francis

May God bless you all, Fr Matthew

STATIONS OF THE CROSS: Each Friday evening in Lent we share the Way of the Cross with our neighbours at St Laurence's. This Friday and the Friday after (i.e. 14/3 and 21/3) this takes place at **St Laurence's church** at 7.30pm.

MUSIC IN LENT: At our Sunday morning Masses we will use the simple plainchant setting of the Mass parts included in the missal. You can find it in the purple Parish Mass Book, in the musical section at the end. Kyrie/Lord have mercy (sung in English or Greek): p. 315; Holy, holy, holy: p.321; Lamb of God: p. 324. We don't sing the Gloria on Sundays in Lent, and we have a special Gospel acclamation (in fact we won't use the 'A' word now until Easter, even in hymns!).

NEW ALTAR SERVERS: Training for new altar servers (who have already made their first communion) will begin after the 6.30pm Mass on Saturday 22nd March, lasting about 20 minutes.

LIVE STREAM – MEA CULPA: I have been made aware that the sound hasn't been working. It appears that I 'broke' it by trying to improve the sense of the congregation being present. Sound is now restored, and I am working on an optimum balance between clarity of individual speakers and the congregation. Thanks to those who pointed out the problem, and apologies for what has been missed.

RACHEL JURY SERVICE: Please note that the parish office will be closed from Monday 17th March until Friday 28th March inclusive as Rachel will be on jury service. Please feel free to send an email to Upminster@BRCDT.org with any questions and we will reply to you as and when possible.

CANTERBURY WALK 2025: The Canterbury Walk 2025 will take place from **Wednesday, 23rd April to Saturday, 26th April**. To register, please email stjosephscanterburywalk@gmail.com or contact **Andrew Pearce at 07903 654288**. This pilgrimage offers a wonderful opportunity to disconnect from the digital world, embrace the beauty of the outdoors over 70+ miles, and enjoy the many benefits of walking. It's a chance to boost physical and mental well-being, reduce stress, and find peace in nature. Whether you seek quiet reflection, meaningful conversations, or simply the joy of walking in faith with others, this journey provides a perfect blend of spirituality and fellowship.

CANTERBURY WALK QUIZ NIGHT: To support this year's walk, the Canterbury Walk Committee is hosting a **Quiz Night at St Joseph's Social Club on Saturday, 22nd March**. Tickets are **£10 per person** and can be purchased by emailing stjosephscanterburywalk@gmail.com or contacting **Andrew Pearce at 07903 654288**. Gather your team (maximum of six per table) and join us for an evening of trivia, fun, and friendly competition. Test your knowledge across a range of topics, take part in the raffle, and be in with a chance to win some fantastic prizes. It promises to be a great night in support of The Canterbury Walk.

CAFOD JUBILEE ICON: The original icon commissioned by Cafod for the jubilee year is visiting St Joseph's school this week as part of a national tour. It will be in our church for a time of prayer on Monday evening from 6.30pm (feel free to drop in during this time), concluding with evening prayer at 7pm. To learn about the icon visit <https://cafod.org.uk/pray/jubilee-icon>

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD: In the second talk in the series 'Proclaim the Word', entitled 'A richer table of God's word', Fr Adrian Graffy explains how after the Second Vatican Council readings from all parts of the Bible were arranged so that more abundant provision of Sacred Scripture is available to all at Mass. The talk will be at 7 pm (tea and coffee from 6.30 pm) on Wednesday 2nd April at the Catholic Church of Christ the Eternal High Priest, Gidea Park, RM2 6DH. The talk is also available via live stream on www.whatgoodnews.org. No need to book for this free event.

VACANCIES IN DIOCESAN SCHOOLS: <https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/education/vacancies/school-vacancies/>

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 8th March 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	SATURDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS Maisie Moss RIP (Stanley)
Sun 9th March 9.00am 11.00am	FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT People of the parish Kathy Faulks & Colin Martin RIP Anniv. (O'Donnell)
Mon 10th March 9.15am	MONDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT Marie Mellon RIP Anniv. (Watson)
Tues 11th March 9.15am	TUESDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT Breege Kane RIP (Sammon) (with our year 2 children)
Wed 12th March 9.15am 12 noon—1pm	WEDNESDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT James & Emily Holden RIP (Margaret) ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
Thur 13th March 9.15am 12.30pm	THURSDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT Robert Davis RIP (Earley) Funeral Mass—Sheila Kathleen Furey
Frid 14th March 9.15am	FRIDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT Irene Stubbings Intentions
Sat 15th March 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	SATURDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS Dinkie (Dympna) Burke RIP Anniv. (Burke)
Sun 16th March 9.00am 11.00am	SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT People of the parish Margaret & Michael Nicolson RIP Anniv. (Galt)

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**