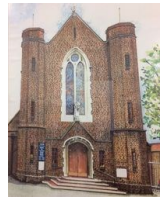




St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi
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PARISH NEWSLETTER

5TH / 6TH APRIL 2025

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT (C) - Mass Book Pg 176

(Isaiah 43:16-21, Phillipians 3:8-14, John 8:1-11)

On Ash Wednesday Lent seems to stretch a long way into the distance. Now, though, we are drawing close to its conclusion. Next Sunday we begin the final week of Our Lord's earthly ministry, commemorating his entry into Jerusalem and recalling the events that unfold as his ministry reaches its conclusion.

Lent involves a stripping away of our self-reliance and our self-will. We empty ourselves in order to make more room for God, to become more fully alive in him. By giving up certain things, we become more appreciative of all that he gives us. As a further act of self-denial, the sacred images in the church are veiled for the last two weeks of Lent. We strip away even those images which help us in our spiritual journey, so that we can be more focused on Christ alone. Even the crucifix will be covered, paradoxically, to be uncovered solemnly on Good Friday. Only the 14 images of the Stations of the Cross remain uncovered, a reminder that there is no other route to the celebration of Easter than this path, which we are all called to follow.

This week we begin to feel the mounting tension as the loving mercy of God made visible in Jesus Christ meets the hard-heartedness of human pride. Today (in the gospel for year C, used at the 6.30pm and 9am Masses) a sinner is given another chance, reprieved from the justice demanded by an angry mob; next week we hear the familiar story of an innocent man condemned and put to death on trumped up charges to please the crowds. He died for that woman's sins, for my sins, and for your sins.

At the 11am Mass, as part of the rite of Scrutiny we hear a different gospel: the raising of Lazarus. Jesus is deeply moved by the death of his friend, and for the terrible pain death brings to the human race, even as he anticipates the great victory he will accomplish over death by his



sharing in it. Lazarus's sister comes to deeper faith, but the leaders of the people are more determined as a result to be rid of Jesus.

We are moving close to the climax of our Lenten journey, when we are reminded just how much God loves us; and how seriously he takes our sin and the damage it causes to us. We see on the cross that mercy is real, and concrete. We know that whatever our past failings may be, we are not forsaken or abandoned. God delights in us. And he does not intend sin or death to have the final word.

Let us ask the Lord to remove any hardness of heart, anything that comes in the way of us giving ourselves completely to him and receiving all that he wants to give us. Let us pray that the whole world may experience the mercy of God that truly sets us free and allows us to become ourselves once more. And I encourage you to avail yourself of one of the opportunities to experience this freedom in a profound way through the sacrament of reconciliation in the coming days. Lent is nearly over, let us make the most of what remains.

God bless, Fr Matthew.

RECONCILIATION SERVICES: There will be a reconciliation service here at 7.30pm on Tuesday of Holy Week (15th April), with visiting priests on hand to celebrate the sacrament individually. Fr Matthew is assisting at similar services at St Mary's Hornchurch this Tuesday 8th April (7pm) and at Brentwood Cathedral next Monday 14th April (7pm) and anyone is welcome to attend any of these. There are further opportunities for individual confession during Holy Week: see poster in porch.

GIFT AID ENVELOPES: This is the first weekend of the new tax year. For those who use weekly giving envelopes, the boxes for the new year are now available in the porch for collection. For those who give by standing order, a personal set of special collection envelopes can be made available on request, or feel free to use older envelopes. There is a supply of envelopes in the porch which can be used for special collections – simply add your Gift Aid number (or name & postcode). Gift aid declarations can be made at any point in the year: download the form from our website or collect one from the porch or parish office. Those who give by standing order or card may wish to use the optional giving tokens available from the welcomers, in order to have something to put in the collection bag and symbolically placed before the altar.

PALM SUNDAY: Next Sunday is the beginning of Holy Week. The blessing of palms will take place at all weekend Masses to commemorate Our Lord's entry into Jerusalem. The 9am Mass will begin with a procession from the junior playground.

FINAL SCRUTINY AND FHC PRESENTATION: Our adult catechumen, and older children due to be baptised in the Easter season, will take part in the rite of Scrutiny at the 11am Mass this weekend. At the same Mass our children preparing for First Holy Communion in May will be presented with a cross as a reminder of God's saving love. The readings and prayers begin at p.180 in the purple Parish Mass Book.

HOLY WEEK & EASTER: The main timings for the Easter Triduum are as follows: Holy (Maundy) Thursday Mass at 8pm; Good Friday Liturgy at 3pm; Holy Saturday Easter Vigil at 9pm. Please note that Easter Vigil is later than last year because Easter occurs later in the year, and the vigil cannot start until after nightfall. Mass times on Easter Day as usual.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY: Thanks to a wonderful team of Catechists we are able to offer a children's liturgy during the 9am Mass every Sunday in term time. However as numbers increase, it is essential that we have additional adults (with a diocesan DBS certificate) to ensure we operate with appropriate ratios and don't have to turn children away. If you think you can help, please email the parish office or speak to one of the existing leaders/ helpers. It needn't be every week!

RIP JOHN MYLOD: Please pray for the repose of the soul of John Mylod who died recently. His funeral will be held here on Thursday 10th April at 10.30am. May John rest in the eternal peace of Christ.

THE ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY AND CAFOD are working together to offer a week of free residential work experience for 20 young adults in England and Wales. The experience will run from 22nd to 27th June in London. Candidates must be aged have completed their first or second year at university and have a passion for social justice. Applications close on the 20th April. For any queries, please contact KeziaH@svp.org.uk

THE DIOCESAN LOURDES PILGRIMAGE 2025: Join Bishop Alan in Lourdes from Friday 18th to Friday 25th July. We can support those with medical needs. For further information, please 'phone Tangney Tours on 01732 886 666 or book online: Brentwood Lourdes Pilgrimage - Tangney Tours.

BRENTWOOD URSULINE – 125th ANNIVERSARY To mark our 125th anniversary, we invite past and present staff and students to attend an anniversary Mass at Brentwood Cathedral at 11.15 a.m. on Saturday 26th April 2025, to be followed by a community celebration at the Brentwood Ursuline School from 1.00 to 5.00 p.m. For further details and to book a place at the event, please visit the website: www.brentwoodursuline.co.uk

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

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 5th April 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	SATURDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT NO ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS Lyn Oliver RIP (Taylor Family)
Sun 6th April 9.00am 11.00am	FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT People of the parish Pat Ives RIP (O'Brien)
Mon 7th April 9.15am 11.00am	MONDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT For the intentions of The Holy Souls Memorial Service—Pat Ives
Tues 8th April 9.15am	TUESDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT Charles Cantwell RIP Anniv. (Pauline)
Wed 9th April 9.15am 12 noon—1pm	WEDNESDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT Bridget Alabi's Intentions ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
Thur 10th April 9.15am 10.30am	THURSDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT For those who mourn Funeral mass—John Mylod
Frid 11th April 9.15am	FRIDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT John Foy RIP Birthday (Family)
Sat 12th April 5.30pm—6.15pm 6.30pm	SATURDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS Mr & Mrs Proto RIP (Pacheco)
Sun 13th April 9.00am	PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD 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**