



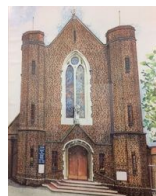
# St Joseph's Catholic Church

**Champion Road, Upminster**

**Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi**

**Parish Secretary: Rachel Hayward**

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## **PARISH NEWSLETTER**

**13TH / 14TH DECEMBER 2025**

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A) - Mass Book Pg 88**

(Isaiah 35:1-6a,10, James 5:7-10, Matthew 11:2-11)

This time of year it can feel like there is an expectation, even an obligation, to be in a 'festive' mode, regardless of how we might actually feel. If the jollity of Christmas sometimes feels a little forced, that doesn't mean we go to the other extreme, imitating Scrooge or the Grinch. For we know that the saviour coming among us is truly something worth celebrating. Sometimes we make the mistake of thinking that we have to be miserable to be a saint – and either we turn into a killjoy or more likely we give up on the idea of being a saint! But this isn't true. Joy is one of the hallmarks of authentic holiness. It is something much deeper than the Christmas party spirit. It is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, whose gifts helps us to see more clearly what God is doing in our lives, and the good which he is working towards. Above all, to know deep in our hearts how completely we are loved by God. This is a cause for joy, even amidst the most painful trials we experience, which doesn't deny the reality of those things but places them in a new context.



Joy can be linked to patience, a virtue that Advent particularly emphasizes. As our second reading from the letter of St James suggests, there are two aspects to patience. One is the necessity of waiting for something to come to fruition at the proper time. Instant gratification is not always beneficial: sometimes the waiting helps us appreciate what is coming. The other aspect is to do with how we respond to situations and people that may irritate or inconvenience us. If we can bear things more patiently, then we can be more joyful because are less susceptible to the changing fortunes of life. It is of course easier said than done, but patience is a gift of the Holy Spirit that most of us need more of, so let us ask.

On this third Sunday of Advent the penitential purple is lightened to signify the joy alluded to in the entrance antiphon given for this Sunday. The joy of knowing that our Saviour is near. The celebration of his birth is indeed growing nearer. The wait is nearly over. But we also become more aware that he is near to us in the present, bringing us strength, consolation and hope. Not fixing all our problems in a superficial way but helping us to bear things patiently, until everything is made new at the appropriate time. May the joy of knowing that we are infinitely loved by a God who cares about us individually and who wants to share his life with us, sustain us through the struggles we face, and bring added depth to all the things we enjoy in this life as a foretaste of the even greater joys to come.

God bless, Fr Matthew

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**RIP:** Please continue to pray for the repose of the souls of Patricia Ashford and John Parker. Patricia's funeral is at South Essex Crematorium at 10.20am this Monday. A requiem Mass will be celebrated for John Parker here on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> January at 11am.

**BURGE FAMILY THANK YOU:** Many thanks to all who participated in and attended David's funeral mass. Your support was greatly appreciated by all the family. Maura Burge.

**ADVENT RECONCILIATION:** There is a Reconciliation Service at St Mary Mother of God, Hornchurch, this Tuesday at 7pm. NB Not Monday (mistake in last week's newsletter).

**CHRISTMAS CARDS AND POSTERS:** Please take one or more of our parish Christmas cards, and use them to invite friends and neighbours to our Christmas Masses. It is also a good witness to display a Christmas poster in your window to remind passers-by of the significance of this season – posters are now available in the porch. The cards include a QR code linking to a message (text and video) from Fr Matthew. If you prefer, hard copies of the message are also available in the porch.

**CHRISTMAS MASSES:** We will follow the pattern established in recent years of two family Masses on Christmas Eve (5pm and 6.30pm), a 'Midnight' Mass at 11pm (carols from 10.30pm), and on Christmas morning, a quiet dawn Mass at 8am and a sung Mass at 10am.

**VACANCIES IN DIOCESAN SCHOOLS:** [https://](https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/education/vacancies/school-vacancies/)

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**NEW DOORS:** Following fire safety advice, the main doors were re-hung to open outwards earlier in the year. Although this gives a bit more space in the porch as well as being easier to open in an emergency, the existing doors were not designed for this and a number of problems have emerged. New doors have now been installed, and will be blessed at the end of the Saturday evening Mass.

**MOTHERS PRAYERS:** Our last meeting will be on Tuesday 16th December 2025 and we will meet again on Tuesday 6th January at 2pm in the social centre. Wishing everyone a very happy and blessed Christmas.

**CWL NOTICES:** The last lunch club for 2025 will be Wednesday 17th, December. On that day it will be a fish and chip lunch. The cost will be £13 per person. Our fish and chip lunches are very popular so we ask if you can reserve your place by coming in to the lunch club and paying a small deposit. We will reopen for the new year on Wednesday 14th, January 2026.

**NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS SERVICE** will take place at Brentwood Cathedral on Sunday, 21st December at 4.00 p.m. A celebration of prayers, readings and carols presided by Bishop Alan Williams. With music by the Brentwood Cathedral Choir. Please do join us for this very special celebration.

**SECOND COLLECTION CANNING TOWN & ROYAL DOCKS:** Thank you to everybody who gave so generously last weekend to our collection in aid of Canning Town & Royal Docks we raised £847.72..

**BISHOP THOMAS MCMAHON RIP:** Full funeral details are posted on the Cathedral website. Please note that the Funeral Mass in the Cathedral on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> is restricted to two representatives from the people of each parish; our two Stewards of the Gospel will be there for us. The celebration of Vespers, when Bishop Thomas's body is received into the Cathedral, at 5pm on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> is open to all. The funeral Mass will be live streamed at 11.30am via the following link <https://www.shealolin.co.uk/bishop-thomas>

**PARISH DIARIES & DIOCESAN DIRECTORIES:** These are available from a table in the porch. Diaries are priced at £1 and directories at £3.20. Posters are free. The Parish Diaries include a Catholic liturgical calendar and some useful prayers. If you do business with advertisers in either publication please mention where you saw the advert, to ensure the viability of future publications.

**ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL:** The Governors of St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Hornchurch, are seeking to appoint an inspirational and dedicated Head Teacher from April 2026. Closing date: Friday 9th January 2026 at 5pm / Interview Date: Friday 23rd January 2026. Enquiries can be made by email to [admin@stmcps.co.uk](mailto:admin@stmcps.co.uk), or phone 01708 448430.

## MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 13th Dec	ST LUCY, V, M
5.30pm—6.15pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
6.30pm	Lucy Bemand-Qureshi's Intentions (Bemand-Qureshi)
Sun 14th Dec	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
9.00am	Colm Cronin RIP (Eleanor & Family)
11.00am	People of the parish
Mon 15th Dec	MONDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT
9.15am	Clare Argent-Hall RIP Anniv. (Dominic)
Tues 16th Dec	TUESDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT
9.15am	Joe Newman RIP (Manning)
Wed 17th Dec	WEEKDAY OF ADVENT
9.15am	John Foy RIP Anniv. (Family)
12 noon—1pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
Thur 18th Dec	WEEKDAY OF ADVENT
9.15am	Bridget Gillan RIP B-Day (Claire & Carla)
Frid 19th Dec	WEEKDAY OF ADVENT
9.15am	Joan Day RIP Anniv. (Mike)
Sat 20th Dec	
5.30pm—6.15pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
6.30pm	June Corrigan RIP Anniv. (Corrigan)
Sun 21st Dec	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
9.00am	People of the parish
11.00am	Joan Henderson RIP 2nd Anniv. (McCarthy)

### 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/pastoral need):** 07356 292542

**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.

**St Joseph's Pre-School** - (available 7.30am-6pm) 07983-859090 / 07807-700900

**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**