



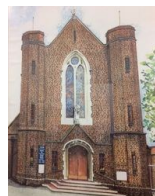
St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi

Parish Secretary: Rachel Hayward

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PARISH NEWSLETTER

17TH / 18TH JANUARY 2026

SECOND SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (A) - Mass Book Pg 125

(Isaiah 49:3, 5-6, 1 Corinthians 1:1-3, John 1:14a, 12a)

We're back in Ordinary Time, the liturgical colour is green, but it seems as though we're not in too much of a hurry to leave the Christmas season behind. The crib is still here, following the tradition of keeping it up until Candlemas, and today's gospel is almost a rerun of last week's: the baptism of the Lord as recounted by John the Baptist himself. But first, we hear words that we hear in every celebration of Mass. Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world.

When we hear these words, perhaps the image that comes to mind is that of fluffy lambs gambolling through green fields in the spring. Or we might think of the lamb typically found at the crib scene, brought by the shepherds. If so, then this gift is no less significant and prophetic than the gifts brought by the wise men. A Jew hearing those words of John the Baptist would immediately think of the Passover: the annual remembering of the greatest event of Israel's history: their deliverance from slavery in Egypt, with the passover lamb at the centre of the celebration. The Passover is quite different from other sacrifices in that the lamb is not sacrificed in the temple and offered as a burnt offering on the altar, but eaten as part of a ritual meal in the home. But in Jerusalem, prior to the Passover meal in family homes, the lambs were brought to the temple to be blessed by the priests and then slaughtered in the Temple precinct. Lambs that may well have been reared by shepherds in the fields outside Bethlehem, which is barely a stone's throw from Jerusalem. John the Baptist knew all this - we often forget that he came from a priestly family: his father Zechariah was a priest and this role was passed on father to son.

In the early chapters of John's gospel, Jesus is addressed by very exalted titles, such as Son of God, King of Israel, and Messiah, by people who've barely met him. It is striking then that John the Baptist, who possesses a

privileged knowledge refers to him with this title in particular. Jesus is the true Passover Lamb of God: and all that we shall celebrate a couple of months from now in the great three days of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday is contained in this simple phrase which we hear at every Mass, right before Holy Communion.

Why are we here, week-in-week out? Simply, to worship God and to be fed by the Lamb, who shares his life with us. Here, at Mass, we are able to fulfil the principal reason for our existence, which is to give glory to God, something which he gives us the means to do, and not for his benefit but ours. John shows his followers, the one who can satisfy the deepest longing of their heart, the one we need as the constant reference point for our lives: Jesus Christ. As we go out from the celebration of Mass each week, let us keep pointing towards him, the true centre of our lives.

God bless, Fr Matthew

CHILDREN'S LITURGY: We are pausing children's liturgy whilst we take stock and establish how best to continue. There will be a meeting in the Social Centre after the 9am Mass on Sunday 1st February (during coffee, in the pre-school room) for parents and others who are interested in becoming part of an expanded team.

RIP: Please pray for the repose of the soul of Kathleen Leek. Kathleen's funeral mass will be on Tuesday 3rd February at 11am. May Kathleen rest in the eternal peace of Christ.

ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH CHOIR: Did you enjoy listening to St Joseph's Church Choir at Christmas? Do you enjoy singing? Have you ever wanted to sing as part of a group? Then why not join us this Easter. We come together twice a year and rehearse for about ten weeks before singing at the Christmas and Easter Masses. We are always looking for new members to swell our numbers, and singers of all abilities are welcome. Our rehearsals for Easter will be in the Church on Mondays at 7.30pm, starting on Monday 19 January. If you are interested, please contact Mark on 07763 210946 or mark142857@hotmail.com for more details.

HEADTEACHER VACANCIES WITHIN THE DIOCESE: Holy Family Primary School, Benfleet. Deadline for applications: 09:00, Wednesday 28th January 2026. St Francis Primary School, Braintree. Deadline for applications: 23:59 Sunday 1st February 2026.

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

ST JOHN BOSCO CHILDREN'S CAMP – AN AMAZING VOLUNTEER

OPPORTUNITY FOR THIS SUMMER: If you are in school year 12 or student age (or any age over 17!) you are very welcome to apply at www.boscocamp.co.uk. The application process includes references and a DBS check, which we can help with, as well as a training and support before and during Camp. The Camp provides over 100 children a week with a summer holiday – for many their only holiday. As a volunteer you use your skills in assisting with different sporting and fun activities, as well as the practical aspects of camp life. Volunteer for 25th July – 1st August or 1st – 8th August. The Camp is a special work of Caritas Diocese of Brentwood, and also seeks financial donations – all information on the website.

CARITAS BRENTWOOD: You are invited to join Caritas Brentwood at our upcoming 'Responding to Homelessness' event on Saturday, January 24th 2026 (10am-12:30pm). The event will be hosted by St Francis of Assisi Catholic Parish in Stratford. It will offer practical support, shared insights and meaningful discussions with local organisations, including Your Place Anchor House, Rainham Foodbank and the Basildon Night Shelter, who are all working on the frontline of homelessness. For more information and to register for free, go to: www.caritasbrentwood.org/events.

BCYS YOUTH MASS: The next Youth Mass will be on 5th February 2026 - Less than 2 weeks before we begin the season of Lent, the SVP will join us to help us begin to think, reflect and prepare with their new resources.

BCYS SUMMER LOURDES PILGRIMAGE (18-25 JUL 2026): Applications are open online for this years' Lourdes pilgrimage for those in year 10 and above. You can find all information and the link to apply at www.bcys.net/events/sl26 As always, there is funding available for which we can provide advice and support. We hope to have as many different schools and parishes represented as possible so if there is any support we can give, please do get in touch.

BCYS DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM (23 MAY 2026): A day pilgrimage of prayer with Mass, picnic, the Holy Mile walk and Vespers/ Benediction at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham with opportunities for young people to serve and an optional overnight at Walsingham House beforehand.

DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD JOB VACANCY: EDUCATION SUPPORT ADMINISTRATOR – CATHEDRAL HOUSE A vacancy has arisen to provide administrative and general departmental support to School Advisors across the Education Department of the Diocese. The post will be 22 hours per week – 4 days per week from 9.00am - 3.00pm with half an hour for lunch. Term time only - Salary £14.50 per hour The closing date for applications is 5.00pm on Monday 16th February 2026. If you have any queries or would like to apply, please send your CV by email to hr@brcdt.org

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 17th Jan	ST ANTHONY, AB
5.30pm—6.15pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
6.30pm	David Burge RIP (Pavitt)
Sun 18th Jan	SECOND SUNDAY OF THE YEAR
9.00am	People of the parish
11.00am	Margaret Munnelley RIP 1st Anniv. (Family)
Mon 19th Jan	
12.30pm	Tony Leonard RIP (Matton)
Tues 20th Jan	
9.15am	Maureen Springham RIP (Brian)
Wed 21st Jan	ST AGNES, V M
9.15am	Bridget Loane RIP (Eleanor & Family)
12 noon—1pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
Thur 22nd Jan	
9.15am	David Burge RIP (Leonard) (With our Year 1 Children)
Frid 23rd Jan	
9.15am	Michael Moore RIP (Matton)
Sat 24th Jan	ST FRANCES DE SALES, BP, D
5.30pm—6.15pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
6.30pm	Henry Christopher Nye RIP Anniv. (Family)
Sun 25th Jan	THIRD SUNDAY OF THE YEAR
9.00am	People of the parish
11.00am	John Fowley RIP (Upminster CWL)

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

**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**