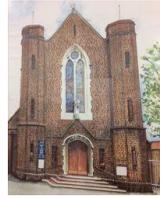




# St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi  
Parish Secretary: Rachel Hayward  
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## PARISH NEWSLETTER

21ST / 22ND FEBRUARY 2026

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT (A) - Mass Book Pg 151

(Genesis 2:7-9, 3:1-7, Romans 5:12-19, Matthew 4:-11)

The season of Lent, which began on Ash Wednesday, is a gift to us. It may not feel that way when we are craving the things we have given up, but it is an invitation to take our spiritual life more seriously, heeding the call to discipleship which has at its heart service and friendship with the Lord. It is not an endurance contest, but an opportunity to experience the grace that allows us to grow closer to God, realising and accepting our total dependence on him. We may fail in our resolve, but it is better to try and fall short, and discover the mercy of God and the strength that comes in our weakness, than avoid the call entirely. And what is that call? Nothing less than to take up our cross and follow him: through the desert, up the hill of Calvary, and ultimately to the promised land of heaven. Lent is shaped by the cross: the sign we receive at its beginning, the end point of this season, and the standard of love we are called to live out in concrete actions: wholehearted, generous and sacrificial love of God and love of neighbour.

The collect for Ash Wednesday refers to our Lenten 'campaign of Christian service', and the gospel for that day identifies the spiritual weapons that are essential in that campaign: prayer, almsgiving and fasting. This must be undertaken in the right spirit: not to impress others, or to convince ourselves that we are better than others, but simply for God's sake, to bring us closer to him. Whatever we choose to give up during Lent, is really a matter of denying ourselves the central place in our lives that belongs to God alone. The gospel today makes us aware of the real temptations we face as we journey through life, temptations which our Lord experienced without giving in to. Temptations to prioritise material comfort, to enjoy status, and seek power. The tempter's subtle lies can only be defeated by trusting in God; unlike Christ we will not always succeed in push those temptations away but we know that we only have to turn once more to Christ and hold fast to his cross, the ultimate weapon by which the evil one is vanquished.

Let us strive to keep a good Lent; not necessarily one in which we succeed in keeping all our Lenten promises and good intentions, but one in which we become more and more aware of God's activity in our lives, our need of him, and his Fatherly love which seeks our true and lasting good. And so may we come to rejoice in that victory which is ours, in the glorious celebration of Easter, when Christ our Passover is sacrificed and death and sin are overcome.

God bless, Fr Mathew.

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**NEW YOUNG PEOPLE'S MUSIC GROUP:** We are launching a new choir and music group for children and young people, with the intention of supporting the liturgy at the 6.30pm Mass once a month. Anyone who wants to sing or play an instrument is welcome. There is no fixed age range, just a need for enthusiasm and willingness to learn new things. Come along to the YOUTH ROOM (through the Prayer Garden) for 5.30pm on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March (and generally each second Saturday) to practise what we will sing at the 6.30pm Mass. For more information contact Bernadette Tsocos [btsocos@gmail.com](mailto:btsocos@gmail.com) (or find her in the Repository).

**ST PETER'S CRANHAM:** Following our decision to sell this property, it is now on the market and offers are invited from interested parties. The sale is being managed by Newmark partner Paul Greenwood, [Paul.Greenwood@nmrk.com](mailto:Paul.Greenwood@nmrk.com). For more information visit our parish website.

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS:** This Friday in St Joseph's Church, 7.30pm.

**EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:** With Fr Matthew's recovery virtually complete, the near-daily pattern of Eucharistic Adoration will now resume, with half an hour adoration generally following Mass on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

**THIS WEEK:** Mass on Tuesday will be at the later time of 10.30am, preceded by a period of eucharistic adoration.

**RITE OF ELECTION:** Please pray for the members of our parish family whose preparation for the Easter sacraments of initiation moves to a new phase in this season of Lent, marked by the Rite of Election this afternoon in Brentwood Cathedral.

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

[www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/education/vacancies/school-vacancies/](https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/education/vacancies/school-vacancies/)

**WALK WITH ME BOOKLETS:** These popular booklets with a daily reflection for Lent are available in the porch for £1.50.

**RIP:** Please pray for the repose of the souls of Patricia Merrigan and Mary Brennan who have died. Mary's funeral will be held here at St Joseph's on Tuesday 24th February at 12.30pm and her body will be received into the church on Monday 23rd February at 4pm. Patricia's funeral will also be held here on Tuesday 31st March at 11am. Please also pray for the repose of the soul of Penny Cassidy who died recently. Penny was a member of our parish for many years before moving away. May Patricia, Mary and Penny rest in the eternal peace of Christ.

**CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE UPMINSTER:** We are holding a Branch Meeting and Retreat on Saturday 7th March, in St Joseph's Social Centre. Starting at 10.00am (The first hour will be for any business issues). Mass will be at 11.30am, followed by a break. Please bring your own lunch, but tea and coffee will be provided. Join us, you will be very welcome. A donation of £5.00 to attend would be appreciated

**ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CLUB:** 6 Nations England Games - Sat 21st vs Ireland open at 1:30pm, live on the Big Screen. Irish Night (18+) - Friday 20th March - <https://buytickets.at/stjosephscatholicclubupminster/2034551> "We Got The Funk" feat Simon Bartholomew from the Brand New Heavies (18+) - Saturday 25th April - <https://buytickets.at/stjosephscatholicclubupminster/2034562> Membership now just £5: <https://membermojo.co.uk/stjosephscc>

**LOURDES WITH OUR DIOCESE:** Would you like to join our bishop and parishioners and clergy from around the diocese on our annual pilgrimage to Lourdes this summer? The dates are Friday 17th – Friday 24th July. Please visit <https://tangney-tours.com/brentwood> for further information and to book, or contact Deirdre Pembroke, [lourdes@brcdt.org](mailto:lourdes@brcdt.org) if you have any questions. Paper booking forms to follow.

**COME AND ENJOY THE FUN AT BROWNIES AND GUIDES:** We have places for girls to join the Brownies (aged 7-10) and for Guides (aged 10-14). We currently are meeting at St. Peter's on a Thursday evening. For more information please contact :- Sharon for Brownies via email at [shazza31281@hotmail.com](mailto:shazza31281@hotmail.com) or for Guides Diane at [dianeconsultants@gmail.com](mailto:dianeconsultants@gmail.com) Please also see the articles on the church website.

# MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

<b>Sat 21st Feb</b>	<b>SATURDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY</b>
<b>5.30pm—6.15pm</b>	<b>ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS</b>
<b>6.30pm</b>	Private Intention (Bemand-Qureshi)
<b>Sun 22nd Feb</b>	<b>FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT</b>
<b>9.00am</b>	People of the parish
<b>11.00am</b>	Martin Campbell RIP Anniv. (Campbell)
<b>Mon 23rd Feb</b>	<b>MONDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT</b>
<b>9.15am</b>	John Quinn RIP Anniv. (Quinn)
<b>Tues 24th Feb</b>	<b>TUESDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT</b>
<b>10.30am</b>	Eileen Kennelly's Intentions (Lynch)
<b>12.30am</b>	Funeral Mass—Mary Brennan
<b>Wed 25th Feb</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT</b>
<b>9.15am</b>	David Barrett RIP (Lynch)
<b>12 noon—1pm</b>	<b>ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS</b>
<b>Thur 26th Feb</b>	<b>THURSDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT</b>
<b>9.15am</b>	Stephen Coyne RIP (Butler) (With our year 4 children)
<b>Frid 27th Feb</b>	<b>FRIDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT</b>
<b>9.15am</b>	Patick & Annie Doherty RIP (Etchells)
<b>Sat 28th Feb</b>	<b>SATURDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT</b>
<b>5.30pm—6.15pm</b>	<b>ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS</b>
<b>6.30pm</b>	People of the parish
<b>Sun 29th Feb</b>	<b>SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT</b>
<b>9.00am</b>	Rita Hall RIP (Pavitt)
<b>11.00am</b>	Hanna Tarkowska RIP Anniv. (Berry)

## 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**