



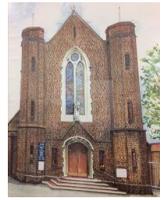
St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi

Parish Secretary: Rachel Hayward

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PARISH NEWSLETTER

7TH / 8TH MARCH 2026

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT (A) - Mass Book Pg 158

(Exodus 17:3-7, Romans 5:1-2, 5-8, John 4:5-42)

In year A of the lectionary cycle, the gospel readings for the middle three Sundays of Lent all come from the Gospel of John, and follow a pattern established in the early centuries of the church. This week, the Samaritan woman who meets Jesus at the well. Next week, the healing of a man born blind. The following week, the resurrection of Jesus' friend Lazarus. In each case a person is moved towards deeper faith through their encounter with Jesus. John presents these encounters in quite some detail which means these are amongst the longest Sunday gospels (even the alternative shorter versions are quite long). These readings have a particular connection with the journey of faith undertaken by those preparing for baptism at Easter. On these three Sundays our catechumens – those to be baptised – take part in a series of rites known as the 'Scrutinies'.

It is *not* the case that we are scrutinising or examining these candidates to test their suitability or their knowledge. It is instead an opportunity for them to scrutinise their own hearts to see what is not of God and what needs to be left behind in order to make room for Christ. Each week the prayers for the Rite of Scrutiny take up the themes of the gospel for that week: Christ as the source of living water, the light that leads us to the truth, and the one who frees us from death. All themes connected with baptism. The Rite includes a prayer of exorcism, something which also features in the celebration of baptism for children throughout the year. This is not to suggest demonic possession, but rather to recognise that in order to resist the subtle lies of the evil one we need strength from God. It is a sign that the sacraments of initiation are one of the most significant things the church does, and need to be approached with serious intent. Those who are preparing to renounce him publicly and decisively, and proclaim their faith in God, are in particular need

of this strength. As we pray for this group of elect, as well as those preparing for reception into the communion of the church and for confirmation, let us also pray for ourselves: the regular examination of ourselves in the light of the gospel is a key part of our own ongoing conversion to Christ. For baptism is the beginning, rather than the end-point, of a life of deepening union with God. As we ponder the gospel of the women at the well, let us ask ourselves, what do I thirst for? i.e. what desires and longings truly drive me and lie at the root of my actions and choices. What do I worship? i.e. what do I place ultimate value and worth on (worship=worth-ship)? Am I willing to turn aside from the things that distract me from what is truly life-giving, as often as necessary?

May our catechumens and all of us receive the graces we need to grow in faith.

God bless, Fr Mathew.

NEW ALTAR SERVERS: Anyone who has already made their first holy communion and is interested in joining our team of altar servers, is invited to speak to Fr Matthew and get your parents email the parish office with your contact details and the time of Mass you usually attend.

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 14th 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 (or find her in the Repository).

LENT APPEALS: As part of our Lenten almsgiving you are invited to support either or both of our Lent Appeals: CAFOD, helping those in need overseas, and Your Place (formerly Caritas Anchor House), helping those faced with homelessness locally. There will be a collection at the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday, as Lent comes to its conclusion, or you can use the contactless giving screens in the porch; alternatively place your offering in an envelope marked Lent Appeal with your gift aid details and give it to Fr Matthew.

EASTER TRIDUUM: The times for the main celebrations on the three sacred days of our redemption are as follows: Maundy Thursday (2nd April) 8pm; Good Friday (3rd April) 3pm; Holy Saturday (Easter Vigil – 4th April) 8.30pm.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS: St Joseph's Church, 7.30pm on Friday.

RIP: Please pray for the repose of the souls of Patricia Merrigan, Mary-Anne Madden, Annette Dagnall and Delia Said who have died. Patricia's funeral will also be held here on Tuesday 31st March at 11am, Mary-Anne's funeral will be held here on Tuesday 24th March at 10.45am and Annette's funeral will be on Thursday 9th April at 11am here at St Joseph's. Delia's funeral will be at South Essex Crematorium on Monday 23rd March at 1.30pm. May Patricia, Mary-Anne, Annette and Delia rest in the eternal peace of Christ.

LADIES NIGHT: Thursday 12th March at 7.15pm in the Social Club. If you are new to the parish this is a great way to make new friends. We meet once a month. Table snacks. Drinks purchased from the bar. More information from Bernadette in the Repository or Frances Chalk.

SCAM EMAILS: We are aware that some people have received emails purporting to come from Fr Matthew or the parish office. If something looks off, don't reply but email or call the parish office directly using the published contact details. Check the sending email address, which should be frmatthewbemand-ureshi@brcdt.org, or upminster@brcdt.org. Be especially careful about downloading attachments or clicking on links.

FREE LENT RESOURCE: From Shalom World this Lent Kit is designed to help children (ages 6–12) walk through Lent, Holy Week, and Easter in a meaningful, fun, and prayerful way. The kit includes coloring pages, crossword puzzles, Works of Mercy bingo, Lenten planner with reflections, videos and family ideas, and even Easter party placemats to celebrate the Resurrection. Download it for FREE at: <https://shalomworld.org/lenten-kit>

CANTERBURY WALK 2026: The Canterbury Walk 2026 will take place from Wednesday 8th April to Saturday 11th April. You can register by simply scanning the QR code or by contacting **Andrew Pearce on 07903 654288**. This pilgrimage is a chance to step away from screens, spend four days walking more than 70 miles through beautiful countryside, and enjoy the restorative benefits of being outdoors. It offers space to unwind, reflect, and reconnect—whether through quiet moments, meaningful conversations, or simply sharing the journey with others in faith.

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CLUB: 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>



MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 7th March	SATURDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT
5.30pm—6.15pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
6.30pm	Felicity Bemand-Qureshi's Intentions (Bemand-Qureshi)
Sun 8th March	THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT
9.00am	Ambrose Alabi RIP Anniv. (Bridget & Family)
11.00am	People of the parish
Mon 9th March	MONDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT
9.15am	Winnie Tracy RIP (Swan)
Tues 10th March	TUESDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT
9.15am	Fred Regan RIP Birthday (Family)
Wed 11th March	WEDNESDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT
9.15am	Emily & James Holden RIP (Margaret)
12 noon—1pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
Thur 12th March	THURSDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT
9.15am	Joan Sullivan RIP Anniv. (Kevin) (With our year 2 children)
Frid 13th March	FRIDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT
9.15am	David Burge RIP (Butler)
Sat 14th March	SATURDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT
5.30pm—6.15pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
6.30pm	Irene Stubbings Intentions (Christine)
Sun 15th March	FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT
9.00am	People of the parish
11.00am	Irene Robinson's Intentions (Christie)

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**