



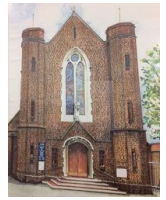
St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi

Parish Secretary: Rachel Hayward

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PARISH NEWSLETTER

25TH / 26TH APRIL 2026

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (A) - Mass Book Pg 262

(Acts 2:14a, 36-41, 1 Peter 2:20b-25, John 10:1-10)

This fourth Sunday of Easter has been designated Vocations Sunday for the past 63 years. It is also known as Good Shepherd Sunday from the Gospel that we always read today, when Jesus speaks of himself as the Good Shepherd. Though we are still very much celebrating the resurrection, we move away from hearing about the post-Easter appearances of Our Lord, in order to reconsider some of his teaching in the light of his dying and rising.

The first thing to say about vocation, from the Latin word *vocare*, 'to call', is that we all have one! The most basic vocation given to every human being is to live up to that divine image and likeness in which we were made. To love with generous hearts, loving God and loving our neighbour as ourselves, is something we can only really do with the help of grace, building on the divine likeness restored to us in baptism. It is, in short, the vocation to become a saint. But within that overall vocation, each of us is called to something in particular. We are called to show love in concrete ways in every single moment of our lives, so in each moment we should ask ourselves, what does God want of me here and now? But 'vocation' also applies to those bigger choices that we have to make. How am I to live my life? What does God want me to do with my life?

Some vocations are lived primarily in the world. Some vocations are more specifically in the service of the church, and it is those vocations in particular that today is designated a day of prayer for. It's full title is, in fact, the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. So the first thing is we need to do is pray: pray that God will call priests to serve his people and sanctify his church; pray that those whom he calls will respond with generous hearts; and pray that all of us may hear that voice, deepen our own sense vocation, and respond generously to whatever it is that God wants of me, even if it is something very different from what I expected or what I am doing now. And it may be that what God is asking of me right now is to encourage someone else on their vocational journey, which is also important.

The Good Shepherd sermon, which we hear in chunks over the three-year cycle, contains many powerful images. The image of the Good Shepherd is an image that in Old Testament times had been applied to God expressing his providential care for his people; that Christ applies this title to himself indicates that he is truly God, and that he cares deeply about us. At the heart of this sermon is the message that the Good Shepherd loves his flock. He knows his flock, and he will lay down his life for them: this is exactly what Jesus does for us on the cross. At the heart of every vocation is sacrificial love, for whatever it is that God wants of us, it will involve making a gift of ourselves. So above all, let us pray for generous hearts, which by giving of ourselves are also enlarged to receive all that God wants to give us. Let us trust that God who has revealed his loving care in the person of his divine Son, will never abandon or desert his flock, but will indeed bring us to the eternal pasture that he has prepared for us. And let us pray that we may indeed have the help of good and holy shepherds acting in his name, to feed and care for his flock.

God bless, Fr Matthew.

VOCATIONS: Please note that we have a second collection after all masses this weekend in aid of Vocations.

ST PETER'S CRANHAM UPDATE: There was a great deal of interest in response to the marketing of the site, which is now finished. Some very promising offers have been received which will give us confidence in going forward with the plans for a new social centre. However there are still a number of steps before anything is signed, which means we cannot provide more information at this stage.

ST EDWARD THE CONFESSOR CATHOLIC PARISH CONTINUE THEIR 170TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS WITH A FLOWER FESTIVAL FROM MAY 2ND – 4TH—Themed around “Eternal Love,” enjoy beautiful displays of flowers filling the church over the Bank Holiday weekend, along with refreshments in the Parish Centre. The church will be open 10.00 – 3.30 on Saturday and Monday, then after the morning Masses from 1.30 – 3.30pm on Sunday. Free entry, donations very welcome. 5 Park End Road, Romford RM1 4AT.

SATURDAY 23RD MAY, DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM.: Join hundreds of pilgrims from across the Diocese at “England’s Nazareth.” Coach leaves from outside St Edward the Confessor Catholic Church, 5 Park End Road, Romford RM1 4AT at 07.45, arriving into Walsingham in good time for Mass at Midday, lunch and a walk to the original Walsingham Shrine for prayers and a look at the village. Return to Romford about 7.30pm. £25 covers the coach for the day. To book a place call the parish office on 01708 740308.

GIFT AID BOXES: These are now available for collection in the church porch.

THE LEGACY OF ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI: As we mark 800 years since the death of St Francis (3rd October 1226), Fr Alban McCoy OFM Con will speak about how Francis changed the Church of his day, and can help us to renew the Church in our own times. The event will take place in the hall at the Catholic Church of Christ the Eternal High Priest, Gidea Park (RM2 6DH) from 11 am until 1 pm on Saturday 2nd May. Refreshments available from 10.30. Everyone is welcome to this free event, which is also available by live stream on www.whatgoodnews.org No booking necessary.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S MUSIC GROUP: Our new group will be supporting the music at the 6.30pm Mass on Saturday 16th May. New members welcome. Meet at 5.30pm in the Youth Room (through the Prayer Garden) and stay for the evening Mass. Come and sing or bring an instrument.

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.

A DAY WITH MARY PILGRIMAGES 2026 Pilgrimage to Fatima (Wednesday, 8 th to Wednesday, 15th July 2026. Closing date Tuesday, 28th April 2026 Pilgrimage to Italy (Tuesday, 1 st to Thursday, 10th September 2026). Closing date 23 June 2026 Further information is available at <https://www.adaywithmary.org/>

ST JOHN BOSCO CHILDREN'S CAMP, SUMMER 2026. Applications are now open for children currently in school year 5 – 7 (i.e. aged 9-12 in August 2026) to spend a week at camp. 25th July – 1 st August or 1st – 8th August. Activities include archery, fishing, AquaPark visit, football, kayaking and much more. The camp is especially for children who may not otherwise have a summer holiday. Suggested donation £200, but full bursaries are available. All application details are at <https://boscocamp.co.uk>. Places are likely to go quickly – early applications are encouraged.

MASS FOR MIGRANTS: You are warmly invited to join the Dioceses of Brentwood, Southwark, and Westminster for the 20th annual Mass for Migrants on Bank Holiday Monday, 4 May 2026, at St Antony of Padua Catholic Church. The celebration will begin at 12.00 pm with a procession of banners. This year, the Mass is hosted by the Diocese of Brentwood. Celebrated for the Feast of St Joseph the Worker, the Mass is prepared by the Caritas and Ethnic Chaplaincies of the three dioceses and gives thanks for the contributions made to faith, life and work in the UK by all those who have come from other countries to make their home here. The preacher will be Archbishop Richard Moth, and the celebrant will be Bishop Alan Williams, SM.

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 25th April	ST MARK, Ev
5.30pm—6.15pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
6.30pm	Denis Sullivan RIP B'day (Kevin)
Sun 26th April	FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
9.00am	People of the parish
11.00am	Robin Clist RIP (Family)
Mon 27th April	MONDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF EASTER
9.15am	Joe Carter & Esther Murphy RIP (Bragg)
Tues 28th April	TUESDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF EASTER
9.15am	Sid McAllister RIP (Dennehy)
Wed 29th April	ST CATHERINE OF SIENA, V, D
9.15am	Morgan, Nora & Mary-Anne Madden RIP (Hannah & Rachel)
12 noon—1pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
Thur 30th April	THURSDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF EASTER
9.15am	Delia Said RIP (with our Reception children)
Frid 1st May	FRIDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF EASTER
9.15am	Mary Brennan RIP (Cavalier Family)
Sat 2nd May	ST ATHANASIUS, BP, D
5.30pm—6.15pm	ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS
6.30pm	John Gibbs RIP Anniv. (Gibbs / Quinn)
Sun 3rd May	FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
9.00am	Margaret & Michael Nicolson RIP Anniv. (Galt)
11.00am	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/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**