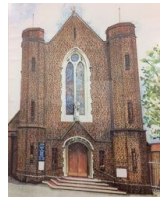




St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi
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PARISH NEWSLETTER

4TH / 5TH APRIL 2026

EASTER SUNDAY (A) - Mass Book Pg 251

(Acts 10:34a, 37-43, Colossians 3:1-4, John 20:1-9)

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Our Lenten observance is over. We might be looking forward to enjoying once more whatever it was we chose to give up. Our self-denial had one aim in view: to centre our lives more completely on Christ. Perhaps we fell once or twice – or many times – in our Lenten resolutions. Easter is not a reward for having stuck to it. Our Lord greeted the disciples who had abandoned him with words of peace, rather than recrimination. Easter, then, is not merely the end of our Lent. It is the summit we have been climbing to, from where we can see everything more clearly. And what we now see, as a new day dawns, is that Christ, risen and glorified, truly is everything. He is our life, our salvation and our hope: the promise of what we shall be, and the means by which we can attain that fullness of life for which we were made. We are made for life, not death, and God does not allow death to have the final word.

We might look at the world around us and feel that there is no end in sight to the wars, the unfairness, the corruption that blights humanity. Not to mention the fact that people we love suffer and die. Nothing seems to have changed. Is our hope baseless, no more than wishful thinking? No. The Easter message cannot be separated from the cross. Christ gets right into the suffering and darkness of a creation at odds with its creator, into order to heal everything from the inside out. Creation has been reconciled to God. We are no longer slaves to sin and death. We have been set free. But our freedom still allows us to be pulled in the opposite direction from where we should be heading. Our Lord has conquered death, but we need to come to him in order to discover the possibilities of this new life. We need to live in him, in order to truly live and be certain that death no longer has any hold over us. Everything has changed, but we also need to change, to be the men and women we are

made to be. The new commandment given at the last supper, 'love one another as I have loved you' is not just one more rule to follow; it is the essence of this new life, a totally new way of being, in which the cross is not seen as a defeat, but a sign of true power; the love that is stronger than death. Joined to Christ in baptism, nourished by his body and blood, making an offering of ourselves to the Father in union with his perfect offering, we become heralds of the new creation and live now in anticipation of that day when the corruption of this world will truly be a thing of the past.

The Easter story is not just a nice story (it isn't really a 'nice' story at all!). Nor is it just a moral message. It is the proclamation of God's love for each and every one of us, the truth that gives meaning and purpose to our lives, founded on an event in human history when the reality of human life changed decisively: because the one who is true God and true man died for us and rose from the grave. What we profess week by week in the creed, and in a special way when making or renewing our baptismal promises as we do today, is the faith that unites Christians around the world and across two millennia, from the first privileged eye-witnesses to the present day. A faith many have borne witness to at great cost, even of their lives, in every generation since. This is our faith, and we are proud to profess it, to the glory of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God bless, Fr Matthew.

THANK YOU: On behalf of the whole parish, heartfelt thanks to all those who have worked extremely hard to contribute to our celebration Holy Week and Easter, behind the scenes and in visible roles: including cleaners, flower arrangers, musicians, servers, readers, welcomers, extraordinary ministers of holy communion and office team.

CANTERBURY WALK: The group of pilgrims from our parish walking the ancient pilgrimage way to Canterbury will set off after the Mass on Wednesday of this week, which is at the earlier time of 7.30am. The pilgrimage concludes on Saturday with Mass in the Chapter House of Canterbury Cathedral, close to the site of the martyrdom of St Thomas, at approximately 1pm. See updates on the facebook page if you would like to come down to Canterbury for the final walk into the city.

EASTER OFFERING: The collection at Mass on Easter day forms a significant part of the priest's income. Please note that standing orders are not counted as part of this, only what is put in the collection bag on Easter day, or what is otherwise given specifically for the Easter offering (either in an envelope, online or by card). The Easter Offering can be gift-aided in the usual way.

EASTER MONDAY: Please note that Mass will be at the later time of 10am on the bank holiday Monday.

EASTER SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION: Congratulations to those baptised, received into the Church, and/or confirmed at the Easter Vigil: Dominion, Redeemer, Goodness, Treasure, Christiana, Westley, Kingsley, Lauren, Adesola, Akintide, Sam, Lucy, Daisy-Grace, Toks, Victoria, Callie-Mae, Amy and John; also for the children of our First Communion group who are to be baptised today or next Sunday: Clayton, Rose, Isabel, Betsy and Cooper.

MOTHERS PRAYERS: Our next prayer meeting will be on Tuesday 14th April at 2pm in the social centre. You are very welcome to join us any Tuesday in term time.

LADIES NIGHT—THURSDAY 9TH APRIL 7.15pm: Come and join us for an evening where we chat and nibble! If you are new to the parish this is an opportunity to meet new friends. It will be good to see you if you can make it. More info from Bernadette in the Repository or Frances 07765 206738.

SOCIAL CLUB: Please note that St Joseph's Catholic Club will shut on Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday. We reopen as normal the following week.

NEW TAX YEAR: Next weekend is the first of a new tax year. Those who use weekly envelopes for giving will receive an email about the distribution of boxes for the new year, which we will make available for collection as soon as possible. In the meantime you can use leftover envelopes from a previous year, or even write your number on a blank envelope.

HORNCHURCH PASSION PLAY: Your last chance to see this dramatization of the passion is the evening of Easter Sunday: 7.30pm, Queen's Theatre Hornchurch. Congratulations to all involved in a hugely successful production.

MARRIAGE SUPPORT: From relationships that are 'Just in a Rut', needing some refreshment or more serious issues - If you are open to try again – Retrouvaille could be the solution. We have helped thousands of couples get their relationship back on track as they rediscovered hope and trust in the marriage. To find out more: www.retrouvaille.org.uk +44 797 338 0443

CHILDRENS MUSIC GROUP: Our next rehearsal and mass will be on Saturday 18th April not 11th April. New members welcome.

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 4th April

5.30pm—6.15pm ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS

8.30pm

Easter Vigil—For parishioners and those newly Baptised.

Sun 5th April

EASTER SUNDAY

9.00am

Stephen Czudej RIP (Maude family)

11.00am

Leonard James White RIP Birthday (Pain)

Mon 6th April

MONDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER

10am

Mary Brennan RIP (Pavitt)

Tues 7th April

TUESDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER

9.15am

David Wisker RIP Anniv. (Alice)

Wed 8th April

WEDNESDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER

7.30am

Mary Timoney RIP (Maguire)

12 noon—1pm

ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS

Thur 9th April

THURSDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER

9.15am

Veronica Cass RIP (Talbot)

11am

Funeral Mass—Annette Dagnall

Frid 10th April

FRIDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER

9.15am

Brian Crowley RIP (Pavitt)

Sat 11th April

SATURDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER

5.30pm—6.15pm ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS

6.30pm

John & Mary Donoghue RIP Anniv. (Larner)

Sun 12th April

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

9.00am

John Dennehy RIP Anniv, (Dennehy)

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

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