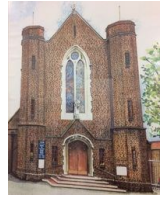




St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi
Parish Secretary: Rachel Hayward
upminster@brcdt.org / 01708 222432



PARISH NEWSLETTER

2ND / 3RD MAY 2026

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (A) - Mass Book Pg 265

(Acts 6:1-7, 1 Peter 2:4-9, John 14:1-12)

Alongside the liturgical calendar, each month of the year has a particular devotional theme. One of the best known is the dedication of the month of May to honouring Mary, Our Lady. It is the month we particularly associate with spring, and the blooming of flowers, and thus a fitting month to honour the greatest of God's creatures.

Many people misunderstand Catholic devotion to Mary, and assume we worship her alongside or even instead of God. That somehow the honour we pay to her diminishes the honour we give to God or detracts from the unique role of Jesus Christ. Not so. We hear his own words in today's Gospel "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through me."

We worship God alone. But we also honour God in his great works, and at the pinnacle of all his creation is the woman who remained utterly faithful to her calling, and unfailingly generous in her response to God. Love is at the heart of every vocation. The objects of our love are not in competition; our capacity for love grows the more we love. So we can certainly love Mary as well as her Son, and we could hardly claim to love her Son if we didn't. At the heart of the mystery of the incarnation is God's sovereign choice to make his work of redemption conditional upon the free consent of one member of the human race. Mary is the one who was totally free, thanks to the unique work of grace in her; grace which nevertheless flows from the cross by which her son reconciled the entire human race to his Father.

Mary was not simply a vessel by which God come into our world. Jesus receives his humanity from his mother. The only DNA he possesses is hers! The title Mother of God does not imply that she is a divine figure, existing

even before God himself, but rather strengthening and securing the identity of her Son, who really is her son, but is also true God. But there is more. Her work was not finished when the Christmas story comes to an end. Her vocation is to present her son to the world, and bring the world to her son; so that all may have life to the full, and access to the Father, through him. She presents him in the Temple; she receives the magi as representatives of the gentile world. At the beginning of his ministry she notices a lack of wine at a wedding feast and intercedes with her son on behalf of the hosts. And then she tells them to 'do whatever he tells you.' At the foot of the cross, Jesus entrusts his mother and the beloved disciple John to each other, and in that moment gives her as mother to all who belong to him. She is mother, not only of his actual body, that body she held tenderly in her arms on Good Friday, but also of his body the Church. Following the practice in the monarchy of ancient Israel, as the King's mother she is honoured as Queen, not just an honorific title but a recognition of a special bond, the one who has unique access to the King and is able to bring the needs of all to him. She is the first disciple of her Son, the first to be redeemed by his saving death, the first to be freed from the effects of the sin of Adam and Eve, the first to experience that fullness of bodily existence not limited by death which is our hope. We do not worship her, but we should and do honour her, giving even greater glory to God as we do so, and entrust ourselves to her maternal care, loving her who loves us so much, and so loving her son even more.

God bless, Fr Matthew.

RIP: please pray for the repose of the soul of Betty Byrne. Details to follow.

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

MAY CROWNING: At each Mass this weekend, the first weekend of Mary's month, some of the children preparing to receive their first holy communion later this month will present Our Lady with a crown symbolising her queenship and a gift of flowers.

FIRST COMMUNIONS: Please pray for all the children of our parish – 73 of them – who are to make their first holy communion over the next two weekends.

SERVERS TRAINING: Those who have already made contacted Fr Matthew about becoming altar servers will begin three weeks of training after the 6.30pm Mass this Saturday (2nd May).

PUBLIC EXAMS: Please pray for the young people of our parish soon beginning their public exams.

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.

LADIES NIGHT: THURSDAY 7TH MAY 7.15 PM: 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.

PRAYER MINISTRY: Members of our parish prayer ministry will be available in St Joseph's chapel after the Mass this weekend, for the benefit of anyone who wants someone to pray with them about anything.

OUR WALK TO PENTECOST: Please join the parish prayer group on Tuesday 12th May here in the Church at 7:30pm for a special evening, Come and be encouraged as members of our community share powerful personal testimonies, and hear an inspiring talk on the power of the Holy Spirit. All are warmly welcome—whether you're seeking renewal, deeper faith, or simply a moment of reflection, this promises to be a meaningful and uplifting gathering.

MARANATHA AT GRAYS FRIDAY 15 MAY 2026: Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus! All are warmly invited to an evening of prayer, praise and worship, including Mass and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at the Catholic Church of St Thomas of Canterbury, Grays RM17 6SR on Friday 15 May 2026, led by Fr. Paschal Uche. The time is from 7:00pm to 9:00pm, with refreshments afterwards. Come and join us! Everyone is welcome.

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.

WALSINGHAM HOUSE TEAM APPLICATIONS: Applications are open for those finishing Year 13 or university who are interested in a year of volunteering at Walsingham House. It is a unique opportunity to grow in faith, serve others and gain key life skills along the way! For further information, please email clairebailey@brcdt.org.

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 2nd May

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

Mon 4th May

The ENGLISH MARTYRS, Mm

9.15am Maureen Springham RIP (Brian)

Tues 5th May

TUESDAY OF THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

9.15am Maureen O'Brien (Bridget Fowley)

Wed 6th May

ST JOHN PAYNE, PR, M

9.15am Adam Munday's Intentions (Bemand-Qureshi)

12 noon—1pm

ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS

Thur 7th May

THURSDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK OF EASTER

9.15am Mary-Anne Madden RIP (Pavitt) (with our Year 5 children)

Frid 8th May

FRIDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK OF EASTER

9.15am Bridget Mitchell RIP (Meenan)

Sat 9th May

SATURDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK OF EASTER

5.30pm—6.15pm ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS

6.30pm John Scully RIP Anniv. (Mary & Family)

Sun 10th May

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

9.00am People of the parish

11.00am Mary Brennan RIP (Michael & Family)

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**