



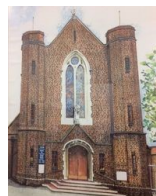
St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi

Parish Secretary: Rachel Hayward

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PARISH NEWSLETTER

4TH / 5TH SEPTEMBER 2026

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY OF THE YEAR, Pg 125

(Ezekiel 33:7-9, Romans 13:8-10, Matthew 18:15-20)

For those of us whose lives are in some way shaped by the academic year, the start of a new one is a significant moment. Our prayers for all those beginning a new school, a new class, or preparing to begin a new adventure after school; not to mention parents, and those who work in school. For the parish, it feels like the return to our normal pattern of life, as we also welcome back those who've been away for part of the summer. It also marks the beginning of a new year of sacramental preparation, and we look forward to journeying with our families and young people preparing for first reconciliation and communion, confirmation, and adults preparing to be received into the church at Easter (which is much earlier next year). There is information below in particular for prospective first communion parents, and information about other programmes will appear in the coming weeks.

Today's gospel also concerns the reality of community life. There are a couple of things we can note. First of all Jesus is clearly intending to establish a community of faith – a church – and not just leave his followers to do their own thing as individuals. Second, he recognises that the reality of sin and pride means that even within a community bound by common faith and mutual love there will be occasions when people fall out, cause offence or hurt to others, or give cause for concern by their behaviour. For the church is not a hotel for saints but a hospital for sinners and a school for saints-in-the-making. Ideally we should encourage one another on our journey of faith. But when things go wrong, we need to recognise that and work towards healing and reconciliation. That might mean accepting constructive criticism gracefully, apologising when we have done wrong, being ready to forgive rather than hold a grudge, or make sure that if we find it necessary to comment on someone else we do so sensitively and from a place of love. We should all aspire to become the saints we are called to be, and recognise that we have some way to go!

Finally a brief word on confession, or the sacrament of reconciliation. This is a gift which aims both to restore the individual person to a right relationship with God, but also to restore communion with the church, which can be damaged by our sin. An honest recognition of our shortcomings, humility to accept we are not fine just as we are, and desire for a new start, free from sin, are all essential. A key dimension of the sacrament is the so-called 'seal of the confessional': the assurance that whatever is mentioned in confession can never be spoken of or acted upon by the priest outside of confession. There can be no exceptions to this seal, without removing the freedom of every sinner to open their soul before God in complete trust. Be assured that God's mercy is always available in that room, no matter how long it has been.

God bless, Fr Matthew.

PARISH CENTRE PLANS: Members of the parish and members of the local community are invited to drop in to view the latest plans for the new Parish Centre on Monday 14th September from 6-8pm in the existing Social Centre. The plans will also be on display during Sunday coffee the weekends either side of this.

PARISH OFFICE: Please note that the parish office will be closed from Friday 4th—Friday 11th September inclusive as Rachel is on annual leave.

MARANATHA AT ST JOSEPH'S: For the next few months we will be hosting a monthly evening of praise and worship centred on the Mass and Eucharistic Adoration organised by the Brentwood Catholic Charismatic Renewal. This will be from 7pm on the third Thursday of the month starting 17th September. All welcome. For more information, speak to a member of the group who will be joining us this weekend.

SECOND COLLECTION CATHOLIC EDUCATION SERVICE: Please note that there will be a second collection after all masses next weekend (12th / 13th September) in aid of the Catholic Education Service.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A CATHOLIC? Please speak to Fr Matthew if you are an adult who wishes to be baptised, confirmed or received into the Catholic Church: the preparation leading up to Easter 2027 will be announced in the coming weeks.

MOTHER'S PRAYERS: We resume on Tuesday 8th September at 2pm, and each week for an hour or so in the Social Centre. We reflect on scripture followed by prayer for our intentions, either silent or shared confidentially in the group. You will receive a warm welcome.

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CLUB: It's time to renew for 26/27. Please go to: <https://membermojo.co.uk/stjosephscc/> New members are very welcome and all parishioners are very welcome to join - just £10 per adult for the year. We open Thurs, Fri, Sat and Sun evenings and are planning various events over the year. Feel free to pop in and say hello!

FIRST COMMUNION REGISTRATION: Registration is now open for parents of children in year 3 or above who wish to be prepared for first reconciliation and first communion over the coming year, with a view to celebrating first communion next May. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/stjfhc> to register **by the end of September**. Please note this is for children who belong to St Joseph's parish (either by residence or regular practice) and are already attending Mass weekly with their families. Please speak to Fr Matthew if you have any questions about this.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S MUSIC GROUP: Our new group will be supporting the music at the 6.30pm Mass on Saturday 12th September. 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 10th September 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.

CATHOLIC TEACHING IN THE WORLD OF AI: Pope Leo has recently published *Magnifica Humanitas*, an encyclical letter on 'safeguarding the human person in the time of artificial intelligence'. The Holy Father writes: 'In the era of artificial intelligence, when human dignity is threatened by new forms of dehumanisation, ours is the pressing duty to remain profoundly human.' Fr Hugh MacKenzie, chaplain at Westminster Cathedral, is an expert on AI. He will be giving a presentation on the topic on Saturday 26th September 2026 at the Catholic Church of Christ the Eternal High Priest in Gidea Park, beginning at 11 am. The event is in-person but is also available live-stream from www.whatgoodnews.org. The talk will be of particular interest to our young people, with their IT competence.

CARITAS BRENTWOOD EVENTS: *Environment, Laudato Si:* Saturday, 26th September hosted by Brentwood Cathedral of St Mary & St Helen 9:45am arrivals - 12:30pm departures. A talk on Catholic Social Teaching from Fr Matthias Baidoo. Followed by lived experience from parishioners in St Teresa of Lisieux Parish, Lexden. *Homelessness and the Cost of Living:* Saturday, 17th October hosted by St Alban's Church, Elm Park 9:45am arrivals - 12:30pm departures. A talk on Catholic Social Teaching from Monsignor John Armitage. Followed by lived experience from parishioners in St Margaret & All Saints Parish, Canning Town.

URGENT: STOP ASSISTED SUICIDE BEING LEGALISED: Assisted suicide campaigners have sadly brought back the Leadbeater Bill. This can be stopped if MPs vote down the Bill on 11th September. Right To Life UK has launched an EasyAction tool to help you email your MP to ask them to vote NO to assisted suicide in the vote in the House of Commons on 11 September. Please take 30 seconds to email your MP today to ask them to vote NO to assisted suicide: <https://righttolife.org.uk/Sept11vote>

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 5th Sept

5.30pm—6.15pm ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS

6.30pm Rebecca Corrigan RIP Anniv. (Corrigan)

Sun 6th Sept

TWENTY THIRD SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

9.00am People of the parish

11.00am For the Alabi Family's Intentions (Bridget)

Mon 7th Sept

9.15am Rachel O'Donnell RIP (Doolan Family)

Tues 8th Sept

THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

9.15am Lucian Vasile RIP (Tan)

Wed 9th Sept

9.15am Richard Cooper RIP Anniv. (Pat)

12 noon—1pm

ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS

Thur 10th Sept

9.15am Maureen Springham RIP (Brian)

1pm Requiem Mass—Roger Tisi

Frid 11th Sept

9.15am Tony Newman RIP (Fowley)

Sat 12th Sept

5.30pm—6.15pm ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS

6.30pm Mon & Noel Lynch RIP (Keefe)

Sun 13th Sept

TWENTY FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

9.00am People of the parish

11.00am John & Elizabeth Berry's 50th Wedding Anniv. Intentions

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**