St Joseph's Catholic Church

Champion Road, Upminster

Parish Priest: Fr Matthew Bemand-Qureshi
Parish Secretary: Rachel Hayward
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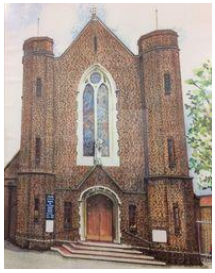

PARISH NEWSLETTER

31ST OCTOBER / 1ST NOVEMBER 2026

ALL SAINTS, Pg 184

(Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14, 1 John 3:1-3, Matthew 5:1-12a)

The transition from October to November is marked by an important feast day: the Solemnity of All Saints. Many houses and shops in the area have, for some weeks, been decorated by cobwebs, pumpkins, witches and skeletons. And for some, this is simply a bit of harmless fun marking the changing of seasons. Others may be concerned that it as an unwelcome opening to darker spiritual forces seeking to confuse God's children. Some take a different view and even see this as a way of mocking the evil one, showing he has no power over us. But for us, this time of year is above all about bringing the light of God into the darkness of human frailty and mortality.

We don't subscribe to notions predating Christianity of spirits of the dead wandering this earth. But we do believe that death is not final, that we are made for life, not death. In this month of the holy souls, we are called to remember, in a particular way, those for whom we still have a duty to pray, those who are, in fact, fellow travellers on the road to heaven, albeit at different stages of that journey. Those whose earthly life is complete, and are now being prepared for their eternal reward. Who are united with us as members of the church, the body of Christ. And, though separated by death, we trust, with a certainty founded on the resurrection of Jesus Christ, that we that we will see them again. This separation is painful, but temporary.

We begin this month by first honouring those members of the church who have been shining witnesses to the vocation given to all of us, demonstrating what is possible when our lives are completely transparent to the workings of God. When we recognise our own imperfection, but do not allow that to limit us, instead allowing God to bring about that growth in holiness which he desires for us.

To be a saint is truly our common vocation. Our hope, though, lies not in necessarily attaining perfect holiness in this life. Most of us won't. Rather, it lies in allowing God to perfect us in the next. But there are some who the church venerates as saints - not all known by name - who have, by God's grace, achieved this perfection, who have already run the race, and are now standing at the finish line, urging us on. They are the ones who are truly blessed, having lived the way of their beatitudes, and shown us that blessedness is not only a future reward, but something we can enjoy in the present, in the measure that we open ourselves to God. Abiding in him, allowing him to abide in us. The saints are great role models, but even more, they are friends, and helpers on our journey. They want

us to be with them in glory. If our celebration of All Saints leads us to want that as much as they do, then we will, indeed, be truly blessed.

God bless, Fr Matthew

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BUILDING UPDATES: Two significant milestones have been reached this week in our plans for the future of our parish. The planning application for a new Parish Centre has now been submitted to Havering; and the sale of the former Mass Centre, St Peter's Cranham is due to complete as we print this newsletter. To clarify the figure that appeared in the recent finance update (which is still available in the newsletter section of our website) the agreed sale price was £1.8 million, but we anticipate the net proceeds being closer to £1.6 million after sale and conveyancing costs and a levy due to the diocese.

THIS WEEK: There is no Mass or holy hour on Wednesday, and Thursday's Mass is at the later time of 5.30 pm, as Fr Matthew is attending the UK Lourdes pilgrimage directors' conference.

PARISH MEETING: There will be an open meeting on the evening of Wednesday 18th November at 7.30 pm to which all parishioners are invited. This will be an opportunity to raise any aspect of parish life, including but not exclusively to do with our building plans. The last such meeting was on a Sunday afternoon and at the time I promised to vary when these meetings happen.

NEW ALTAR SERVERS: Anyone who has already made their first communion and wishes to become an altar server should ask their parent to contact Fr Matthew. There will be a series of three training sessions after the Saturday evening Mass on 21st and 28th November and 19th December.

ALL SOULS' DAY: There will be an extra Mass on Monday evening at 8 pm, for the souls of the faithful departed.

HOLY SOULS MONTH: you are invited to place names of departed family and friends in front of the altar. They will be remembered at Mass through this month. Please don't add money to the basket: if you wish to make an offering for the month of the holy souls please consider contributing to the new parish centre building fund.

CDOT CHRISTMAS CONCERT: Raising funds for our new parish centre. Christmas songs and carols. The choir from St. Joseph's Primary School will be joining us. Friday 27th November, 7.30 pm in the church. £10 for adults, children free. Tickets from Bernadette in the Repository.

BRENTWOOD CATHOLIC YOUTH SERVICE: The BCYS offers retreats, events and pilgrimages for young people throughout the Diocese of Brentwood. If you'd like to get involved, you can find out more at **www.bcys.net** or follow **@BrentwoodCYS** on social media.

SAVE THE DATE – ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR: Saturday 5th December, 12 pm-3 pm. Free entry to all.

SHALOM WORLD MEDIA: On All Saints' Day (Sunday 1st November) Thomas Chakalamattathu of our parish will give a presentation on behalf of Shalom World during coffee time in the Social Centre between the morning Masses, sharing the witness of the 40 martyrs of England.

BCCS CHRISTMAS CRAFT & GIFT FAIR: Join us for Christmas crafts, stunning gifts & refreshments, in support of BCCS. Sunday 15th November - 10:30-15:30 - The Mill Arts & Events Centre, Rayleigh, SS6 7ED. £1.50 entry (free for under 14s) & free onsite parking

CHARITY CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON: Join BCCS for a delicious two-course meal, exclusively hosted in the beautiful Grade II listed Georgian House. Friday 4th December - 12:30-15:30 - The Lawn, Rochford, SS4 1PL. £38.50 per person - book now: //www.bccs.org.uk/christmas/christmas-luncheon/ or scan the QR code
Any questions contact Julie: jabbott@bccs.org.uk | 07912277413.

SACRED HEART OF MARY 6TH FORM OPEN EVENING: Join us at Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School 6th Form Open Evening on **Thursday, 12 November 2026, from 6–8pm**. Discover the exciting opportunities available, explore our courses and facilities, and find out what makes our Sixth Form a fantastic place to learn, grow and plan for the future. We look forward to welcoming prospective students and their families!

'JESUS HEALS' SERVICE: FR. FRANKIE MULGREW ON 13TH NOV 2026: Come with your burdens, hopes, and prayers! We are happy to inform that the forthcoming '**Jesus Heals' Service** on 13th November 2026 at 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm in English Martyrs Parish, Hornchurch, RM12 6BJ, directed by Rev. Fr. Frankie Mulgrew. The Shalom global network UK will be organising this healing service. All are welcome to this Jesus Heals service.

READING THE BIBLE THROUGH ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS: Fr Adrian Graffy, parish priest of Gidea Park and member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, has just published *Reading the Bible through Advent and Christmas*. This new book includes commentary on all the Scripture readings for Mass throughout these two seasons. Full information about the book can be found on the homepage of the website *www.whatgoodnews.org*

CAFOD SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS: Could you inspire the next generation and gain valuable experience of presenting to young people at the same time? CAFOD, the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, is looking for volunteers to visit local schools to present assemblies and workshops. Full training and support provided. See cafod.org.uk/Volunteer for more information or contact CAFOD representative Chris Driscoll at cdriscoll@cafod.org.uk or call 07776 493162.

JOB OPPORTUNITY ASSISTANT TO THE CHANCERY AND TRIBUNAL OFFICES: We are looking for an organised and reliable person to join our team as an assistant within the Chancery and Tribunal Offices. The role will be to provide administrative and practical support to help to ensure the continued smooth running of the offices. The successful candidate will initially work 12 hours per week (three days, 10 am – 2 pm), with the role expected to develop over the next few years into additional hours and increased responsibilities. Please note this role will be office-based at the Diocesan Offices in Brentwood. For more details or to apply, please email: hr@brcdt.org. Closing date for applications: 5 pm on 16th November 2026.

HALL MEAD SCHOOL – CHRISTMAS AFTERNOON TEA: Friday 4th December 1.30pm – 3pm. Eat, drink and enjoy! Join us for a Christmas Afternoon Tea with sweet and savoury treats along with a choice of hot drink. Music performed by Hall Mead Students. Please RSVP to Karen Read on 01708-225684 / kread@elatschools.co.uk

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

Sat 31st Oct	
5.30pm—6.15 pm	**ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS**
6.30 pm	People of the parish
Sun 1st Nov	**ALL SAINTS**
9.00 am	Daniel Corrigan RIP Anniv. (Corrigan)
11.00 am	Maureen Baillache RIP Anniv. (Claude)
Mon 2nd Nov	**COMMEMORATION OF ALL THE FAITHFULLY DEPARTED**
9.15 am	Mary O'Brien RIP (Regan Family)
8pm	The Holy Souls
Tues 3rd Nov	
9.15 am	Carlene Norton RIP (Devitt Family)
Wed 4th Nov	**ST CHARLES BORROMEO, Bp**
9.15 am	**NO MASS THIS MORNING**
12 noon—1 pm	**NO ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS**
Thur 5th Nov	
5.30 pm	Helen McMahon RIP (Springham)
Frid 6th Nov	
9.15 am	Edward and Sheila Willoughby RIP (Mark)
Sat 7th Nov	
5.30pm—6.15 pm	**ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS**
6.30 pm	Patrick Fahy RIP Anniv. (Family)
Sun 8th Nov	**THIRTY SECOND SUNDAY OF THE YEAR**
9.00 am	Anne Cooper RIP (Family)

USEFUL INFORMATION

EUCHARISTIC 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 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