

Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Feast day of the Baptism of the Lord

I have a confession to make: I am a big Bryan Adams fan and one of my favourite songs is Everything I Do (I Do It For You). The title of the song takes on an extra layer of significance for me this Sunday as we celebrate the baptism of our Lord. God says in this Sunday's Gospel that His favour rests in Jesus. Why? Because everything Jesus did on Earth was for the glory of God. So it must be for us. We were created by God, for God which means everything we do must be for the glory of God. This involves acknowledging that we are nothing without God; only with God can life have meaning. As baptised Christians, we should only do what pleases God and reject what does not.

It is fitting that we should mark this event at the beginning of the year because baptism symbolises new beginnings, purification and renewals. Christ's baptism should remind us of our own. Though most of us were baptised as babies, we should still know the significance of it. Baptism is not just a ritual or a tradition. It is not just an excuse for a family gathering or party, or a way of getting into a good Catholic school when the time comes. When I talk to parents who want their child baptised, I always emphasise the important point that the real celebration is what happens in the church and not at the party afterwards. When we are baptised, we become members of God's family. We become the brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ which means we should be committed to being more like him as well.

So, as Christmas time ends and we return to Ordinary Time, let us do something extraordinary: let us glorify God in everything we do. Everything we do, we do it for Him.

Fr Antonio Pineda

Parish Note Friday 8 January 2021 and the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Feast day of the Baptism of the Lord

Bishop's Stortford - St Joseph & The English Martyr <bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk>

Fri 1/8/2021 5:17 PM

To: Bishop's Stortford - St Joseph & The English Martyr <bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk>

 1 attachments (26 KB)

Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Feast day of the Baptism of the Lord.docx;

Good afternoon

Wishing you all a very 'Happy and healthy New Year!' Please find attached the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the feast day of the Baptism of the Lord, which also highlights Fr Antonio's secret confession! The Sunday message can be found on our website too.

Well, the Christmas tree is down and my decorations safely wrapped and back in the loft, leaving the room looking just a little bit bare, but, fresh and ready for a bit of overdue decorating to hopefully be done at some point. I haven't yet advised my blissfully unaware significant other of this fact, but I am confident that this year it will happen! As for so many people in the country, Christmas was very 'different' and certainly, a rather strange affair in my household. It is definitely one that I shall not forget and hope not to repeat in a hurry. Missing family members and friends and those loved ones who are sick were very much in our thoughts and prayers. My daughter was sadly unable to be with us, but we used technology to the full and enjoyed the celebration of Mass followed by a virtual Christmas lunch altogether. This happened via a video skype call, with her 'seated' at the head of the table, being lovingly transmitted over a tinsel adorned lap top. During the late morning we coordinated the exact timings of our separate lunches with various instructions on when to put the roast potatoes in the oven and advice on the rather interesting settings of her student house cooker, so that we could all sit together and share our meal at the same time. After lunch she was then ceremoniously 'carried' into the sitting room, for a short time once again balanced carefully on my 'motherly hip' and propped up on the pouffe for the opening of presents, followed by the traditional game of charades. The New Year crept in very quietly, apart from the stentorian sound and smoky smell of my neighbour's scud missile strength fireworks as they were launched into the midnight sky. Despite all of the continued restrictions and worries, I am always forever hopeful, gratefully thankful and continue to count my blessings whilst praying for a better 2021, being reminded of the following verse from Isaiah 41:10 ..

*'Do not be afraid, for I am with you;
Stop being anxious and watchful, for I am your God.
I give you strength, I bring you help,
I uphold you with my victorious right hand'*

SUSPENSION OF MASS AT HOLY CROSS MUCH HADHAM -We are sorry to announce that in agreement with the Rector, PPC and Church Warden at St Andrew's, Much Hadham, there will be no Anglican or Catholic services, or opening for private prayer there, during the current government lockdown.

We expect to recommence the celebration of Mass at Holy Cross after the lockdown has been lifted. Weekday Masses at 9.30am and Mass at 6pm Saturday and 9am Sunday, will continue at St Joseph's. For booking places at these Masses, please go the [Events page](#).

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS - Eldon Harvey RIP, beloved husband of Judy Harvey who sadly died recently.

Eternal rest grant unto Eldon O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace Amen.

Please also remember all those that are currently sick or in hospital, the children and residents at St Elizabeth's Centre, all those currently isolated in care homes, our housebound, elderly and frail and all those who care for them.

ZOOM - Thank you to John and our 9am Sunday Mass Musicians who join together each week to celebrate the livestreaming of the Mass via Zoom, followed by a virtual tea/coffee afterwards. Everyone is welcome to join, please click on the link below.

Topic: Family Mass via Zoom during lock-down (music starting at 8:45am)

Time: Jan 10, 2021 08:30 AM London

Every week on Sun, until Apr 4, 2021, 13 occurrence(s)

Jan 10, 2021 08:30 AM

Jan 17, 2021 08:30 AM

Jan 24, 2021 08:30 AM

Jan 31, 2021 08:30 AM

Feb 7, 2021 08:30 AM

Feb 14, 2021 08:30 AM

Feb 21, 2021 08:30 AM

Feb 28, 2021 08:30 AM

Mar 7, 2021 08:30 AM

Mar 14, 2021 08:30 AM

Mar 21, 2021 08:30 AM

Mar 28, 2021 08:30 AM

Apr 4, 2021 08:30 AM

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Weekly: https://us02web.zoom.us/join/tZ0od-G0qT8rHdIH0V5EvYx0CrmCXM8IRh-5/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGhqzsiGtORsR6BRpx5GYigWfTwtilcgqd0tE_TVgVFWxumFfBPEYpSSNTi

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89508074176?pwd=TE9YWjQzb01hdmhXbVZibGpuY1hDZz09>

Meeting ID: 895 0807 4176

Passcode: 2021

One tap mobile

+442039017895,,89508074176#,,, *2021# United Kingdom

Dial by your location

+44 203 901 7895 United Kingdom

Meeting ID: 895 0807 4176

Passcode: 2021

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2021 - Important notice for all those with a child starting their FHC Preparation this Saturday, 9th January 2021

As we are unable to meet in church during lockdown, other than for communal acts of worship, on Saturday 9th January, a number of Catechists will be OUTSIDE the church between 10 am and 11.30 am – we ask that ONE parent comes along during that time to collect the following resources: your child's "I Belong" Book, your parent's guide book and a one-page picture of a dove, for your child to colour in and bring along to the first face to face session that we hold.

The first Parents Zoom meeting for parents of FHC children will be taking place on Wednesday 13th January at 8pm (with a repeat of the zoom meeting, for those who are unable to make the Wednesday meeting, at 1pm

on Thursday 14th January). Details are as follows:

Catholic Parish of Bishop's Stortford is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting:

Topic: **FHC Parents Meeting 13th Jan 2021**

Time: Jan 13, 2021 08:00 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89666112684?pwd=T0FOTzR4UGlkc243L3Z4Wk9NNlJMQT09>

Meeting ID: 896 6611 2684

Passcode: 2sf3C1

Catholic Parish of Bishop's Stortford is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting:

Topic: **FHC Parents meeting 14th Jan 2021**

Time: Jan 14, 2021 01:00 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82053982706?pwd=OW5ESmJ4aIllSzVNTUJ5NHlTNnFIQT09>

Meeting ID: 820 5398 2706

Passcode: 866084

This meeting will be a good opportunity, as we begin our First Holy Communion programme for 2021, for you to hear how we are going about delivering the content of the course and the importance of this preparation for your children. We do expect at least one parent from each household to attend one of the online meetings.

In advance of our meeting on Wednesday, do take a look at the resources we are making available on our website for you to access, as you may have questions you will want to ask at the meeting. These can be accessed at this address: www.rcstortford.org.uk/fhc2021

Please do also check your junk mail for any emails from the FHC team and check with other families you know are signed up for this year, to ensure that they have received the information about picking up books on Saturday and about the zoom meeting.

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS 2021-22 - If your child was born between 1st September 2016 and 31st August 2017, you can apply for a Primary School place to start in September 2021. The application process opened **2nd November 2020** and closes on the **15th January 2021**.

CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE- Applicants for St Joseph's School for RECEPTION places in 2021/22 should download an application for a Certificate of Catholic Practice which can be found on the parish website. Once completed it should then be posted through the letter box of No 3 Windhill marked for Fr Peter's attention **with a stamped addressed envelope please**. The certificate will then be posted to you. No personal collection of the certificate is permitted. The school deadline is 15/1/2021

ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL - hope to raise £100k towards the new school building and need your help please! Click on the link below to donate any amount from £5 to £1k. St Joseph's school began in 1909. Your contributions will benefit the many children who will continue to pass through its doors now and in the future. Thank you.

[St. Joseph's New School \(virginmoneygiving.com\)](http://virginmoneygiving.com)

THANK YOU TO OUR 11AM CHOIR - Thank you to Duncan, Ann and our wonderful 11am Choir who give so much of their time and share their talents so generously each week. As we have once again entered a further lockdown it has been agreed for the time being that the Choir will have a short break and a well-deserved rest. They will be back! The 11am Mass will continue to be livestreamed.

CONGRATULATIONS - Some of our young people in the parish finally received the Sacrament of Confirmation last Saturday, after patiently waiting since May last year. We hope that the second half of the group will follow

suit shortly, but the provisional date of 16 January 2021 has had to unfortunately be postponed due to the current lockdown until mid-February at the earliest. We can then make a new assessment of the situation, based on any changes to restrictions etc. We are keen to ensure that we rearrange these Masses as soon as possible and are hopeful that they might be able to take place by the end of February or during the month of March so please keep your diary free on a few of the Saturdays around that time, in the hope that we will be able to safely go ahead at some point then.

Regrettably there is nothing more we can do at this stage, but wait patiently – which our young people have been so good at doing so far! Apologies for this.

Please pray for them at this time, that the Gifts of the Holy Spirit would give them extra graces and the courage and fortitude they need, as they step into 2021.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY - The next online meeting on the evening of the 18th January at 7.30pm which will be hosted by **Rev. Dr David Chapman, Chair of Churches Together in Hertfordshire and there will be a short service of prayer led by Bishop Paul McAleenan.** Everyone is welcome so please do share the invitation

Topic: Churches Together in Hertfordshire Prayer Meeting

Time: Jan 18, 2021 07:30 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85476164857?pwd=RHhTa3VrdWh1NjRSSzF0NUxJTHBhQT09>

Meeting ID: 854 7616 4857

Passcode: 850163

Throughout the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity we will also be sharing prayers and reflections from Christians across the county online so please do join us on Twitter and Facebook and “like”, “share” and “retweet” these posts to help encourage others in prayer for greater Christian Unity. <http://www.ctherts.org.uk/>

GLOBAL HEALING -The Global Catholic Movement invites you to “Global Healing.” In 2015, Pope Francis published his ground-breaking letter on the environment *Laudato Si’*. Since then, millions of people worldwide have joined the global movement to address the environmental crisis our world is facing. This Lent, we are inviting YOU to join us for a series of reflective evenings with inspiring speakers, prayer and discussion, using the film-based resource “Global Healing”. These engaging documentaries will inform and challenge people to respond to Pope Francis’ call to Care for Our Common Home. Suitable for all who are concerned about what is happening to our world and who want to take action.

When? Six Thursdays from 18th February – 25th March 2021, 7.30pm – 8.30pm How to join? To register please visit <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcvOuuqzsvEtMBwz2hxBzhvwy0hcgyoEb>

or email jane@catholicclimatemovement.global Hosted by GCCM *Laudato Si’* Animators in the UK.

MARRIED SINGLES LIFESTYLE –The Married Singles Lifestyle describes couples that may have lost a sense of closeness they once had as marriage partners and are living more like roommates. ‘Retrouvaille’ teaches couples how to survive times like these in their marriages. This programme has helped 10s of thousands of couples experiencing difficulty at all levels of marital distress from disillusionment to deep misery. There is no group therapy or group work

For confidential information about ‘Retrouvaille’ or to register the next programme commencing with a Virtual weekend on 25th – 28th February 2021, Call or text 0788 7296983 or 0797 3380443 or Email retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com - or visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk

SPUC COLLECTION ON LINE - The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children will be making their annual White Flower Appeal next week, 16 and 17 Jan. SPUC is campaigning to stop home abortion which provides abortion pills to take at home without medical supervision. You can help SPUC to defeat this latest attack on

the unborn, and protect mothers from increased risk of coercion, by donating on line at www.spuc.org.uk/donate or by direct transfer SPUC PRO LIFE, 40-07-13 a/c 51170546 Ref 381301.

VACANCY - Head of Christian Mission at One YMCA - We are seeking a courageous and creative leader who can challenge, inspire and encourage us to take our Christian distinctiveness to a new level. We want to be helped to think, communicate to act in different ways, to find more ways to put faith in action and to wrestle with life's biggest questions with colleagues and service users of all faiths and none.

Over the next five years we want to double our positive impact on people's lives in body, mind and spirit. This person will help us build on our Christian foundation, to see more lives transformed by God's love. We cover the whole of Hertfordshire, with the Hostel in Bishops Stortford and the Family Support Service being part of our Team.

You can find more information [here](#) . Closing date is Monday 11 January.

THANK YOU - On behalf of Fr Peter, Fr Antonio, Sophie and myself, thank you very much indeed to everyone for their Christmas cards, gifts and best wishes along with support, prayers, telephone calls and emails of encouragement. It was very much appreciated. Thank you also to everyone who helped to ensure that the Christmas Masses were celebrated safely and volunteered their time as a Steward or Cleaner to keep our Churches COVID-19 secure. Cleaning the Church thoroughly is a continuous process after every single Mass. If you are attending Mass and not in a vulnerable category, being fit, willing and able to help, please consider offering your assistance. Thank you.

SCAM MESSAGE WARNING - Scammers have been contacting elderly people in Hertfordshire claiming they can arrange Covid-19 vaccinations for a fee. Herts Constabulary is reminding residents that the NHS is the only organisation that has access to the vaccine and will never ask for payment. If you receive any unsolicited messages or calls, you should always be sceptical. Avoid clicking links in text and email messages – check out the website directly via a search engine to make sure you are visiting a genuine site.

If you believe you have been a victim of fraud, report it to 0300 123 2040 or online at www.actionfraud.police.uk

PARISHIONERS OF THE WEEK - This week, I would like to pay tribute to the fantastic Teachers, Staff, Parents and Pupils of the schools in our parish, who despite everything have continued to work extremely hard, without much of a break and are doing their absolute best in very difficult circumstances. I was heartened the other day by my friend who is currently home schooling her two lovely little boys. She told me that every evening before her eldest goes to sleep, he kisses the class photograph of his friends and teacher who he misses very much and wishes them all in turn, by name, good night. Hopefully it won't be too long before everyone can once again be safely back together in the classroom.

To finish this week, I would like to share the following message which was kindly sent to me along with a lovely image of Winnie the Pooh..

Not Everything is Cancelled

Sunshine is not cancelled

Love is not cancelled

Relationships are not cancelled

Naps are not cancelled

Devotion is not cancelled

Music is not cancelled

Dancing is not cancelled

Imagination is not cancelled

Kindness is not cancelled

I hope that you all have a very happy and healthy week

Best wishes

Debbie

Parish Administrator

(Mon- Fri 9am - 3pm)

Catholic Parish of Bishop's Stortford

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Most Holy Redeemer, Sayesbury Road, Sawbridgeworth*

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Follow our Live streaming on www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford

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