

Sunday Message on the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

You could say that my computer is one of my most favourite things in the world. I cannot imagine life without it. I use it in my ministry as a priest such as when writing homilies and, indeed, this reflection you're reading now. I use it for entertainment (for watching movies and listening to music), for keeping in touch with friends and relatives, online shopping, and for creative pursuits such as photo and video editing, web design and desktop publishing. It would be so easy to get too attached to my computer. Indeed, sometimes I do. I've been known to miss a meal because I was too focused on what I was doing on my computer to think about my stomach.

I consider my computer as a tool for good, generally speaking. But, like all tools, it could also produce undesirable output. My computer could easily be a distraction from the more important things in life if I let it.

In this Sunday's Gospel, we read that Jesus "got up and left the house and went off to a lonely place and prayed there". Why do you think that is? Why did the Son of God need to go somewhere far to pray? I suppose it was because the place he had to leave behind was full of distractions: people, noise, tasks, and other things. As a priest, I have to set aside at least five separate periods during the day to pray the Liturgy of the Hours or Divine Office. To pray in this way is one of the promises priests make at their ordination. The Liturgy of the Hours aids us in following St Paul's exhortation to "pray continuously". To pray continuously is so vital to the Christian life that all priests are under a solemn promise to do so.

And because prayer is so important, it has to be done properly. When you talk to anyone at all, it is right and proper that you give that person your full attention. And so when you pray, it is right and proper that you give God your full attention. That is why when I pray, I have to tear myself away from my computer – away from distractions – so that I can focus only on God. I go to a quiet corner somewhere to give myself the best chance possible to see and hear God, not the sounds and vision that come out of my computer. Many find praying difficult. Indeed, even some of our greatest saints found it challenging. Some even wrote books about it. That's why it's so important for us, like Jesus, to go a lonely place to pray. Noise distracts. Silence communicates.


Fr Antonio

Parish Note Friday 5th February 2021 and the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio

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

Fri 2/5/2021 4:27 PM

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

 2 attachments (25 KB)

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Bishop's Stortford - St Joseph & The English Martyr).docx; WELCOME TO ARMS.docx;

Good afternoon

Please find attached the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on this the fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time which can also be found on the news section of our website.

Well, I can't believe that we are already in February. It already seems a long time ago now since Christmas with Lent only a couple of weeks away and time in my world seems simply to be rushing by. Having some members of the family back and all working from home on lockdown has been lovely, but chaotic at times. The internet usage has been given a real good bashing and the electricity consumption has risen somewhat too, to say nothing of the increasing food bill! Having been married for 30 years this year, there have always been tasks around the house that we each like and prefer to do, many of them being shared, but some which we will each take charge of which is accepted. We both do our own thing to contribute, and it works really well. The washing machine is my chosen domain and compared to the 'twin tub' which my mother had when we were growing up is extremely easy to use. I remember the smell of the hot grey soupy liquid bubbling from my Father's work overalls in the centre of the kitchen, lovingly watching my Mother prodding and hauling them into the spin part of the machine using a pair of clanky metal rimmed wooden tongs and then pulling out a bendy hose to empty the dirty water out. As a child, I found it fascinating!

I am fortunate and very blessed to live in a fairly easy-going household with few disagreements. The other evening, I became involved in a humorous and light-hearted debate over what I would call 'Dishwasher law'. This is nothing to do with the Energy Information (Dishwashers) Regulation 1999 but arose due to my significant other and I clearing the table after tea. I dutifully rinsed off a plate and started to load it into the dishwasher into a space designed for it, when he very innocently muttered the fateful words, 'Oh that doesn't go there..'. Now, I am happy that lockdown has created a new blissful sense of domestic awareness in my abode but having a new 'Feng shui dishwasher guru' and self-appointed 'Neff appliance Tsar' is one that caused much hilarity. As we 'discussed' the pros and cons of the left and right side of the machine and our general 'Tetris style' stacking technique, I thought back to the days before we had a dishwasher, when plates were piled up high on the tiny draining board as we happily washed them with a good squirt of fairy liquid and dried them off with a soggy tea towel whilst chatting together. Apparently, according to research, loading the dishwasher is one of the most divisive household chores and can lead to lots of arguments in couples. Thankfully, we are well past that and can politely accept our individual stacking technique... with one diplomatically and fairly taking turns to load and unload. However, before the machine is eventually turned on each evening with our final night-time cups.. I must confess on occasions to perhaps discretely swapping just a few bits around.. and quietly and without any fuss on either side, I know that he does exactly the same...

FHC PARENTS 2021 – Please be aware that this Wednesday 10th February is the next parents zoom meeting, at 8pm. Please look out for an email this weekend with details of how to access the zoom meeting. **DO CHECK YOUR JUNK EMAIL TOO** and let other parents, who may have trouble accessing their emails, know about it. The details should also be available on the website www.rcstortford.org.uk/fhc2021. We look forward to seeing you there!

Please ensure, that this weekend, you have completed up to chapter 4 with your child and have filled in the online quizzes for Chapters 3&4

With many thanks

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/meeting/tZ0od-GoqT8rHdIH0V5EvYx0CrmCXM8IRh-5/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGhqzsiGtORsR6BRpx5GYigWfTwtlCGqd0tE_TVgVFWxumFfBPpEYpSSNTi

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

THE DAD'S GROUP - are currently meeting on the second Tuesday of the month via Zoom.

The Zoom Meeting details are:

Topic: Dad's Group

Every month on the Second Tue, 8 occurrence(s)

Feb 9, 2021 08:00 PM
Mar 9, 2021 08:00 PM
Apr 13, 2021 08:00 PM
May 11, 2021 08:00 PM
Jun 8, 2021 08:00 PM
Jul 13, 2021 08:00 PM
Aug 10, 2021 08:00 PM
Sep 14, 2021 08:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89665153775?pwd=YUgyV0Qyd2pnS3htNTJGTzJkNzIDQT09>

Meeting ID: 896 6515 3775

Passcode: 001205

A CATHOLIC FORMATION' LENT COURSE' - During Advent, the Dad's Group ran an exciting new Catholic formation course, Sycamore. We are now looking ahead to Lent and planning on running a six-week course on Zoom with all new content!

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/tJcvcOuuqzsvEtMBwz2hxBzhvwy0hcgyoEb>

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

RESTORED LIVES – Monday 8th February 2022 for nine weeks (via Zoom). This ecumenical resource is designed to enable individuals to recover from relationship breakdown. Through facilitated sessions guests are provided with the tools and insights to resolve the emotional impact of separation and divorce. To book your place on the course visit https://www.restoredlives.org/online_course_relationship_breakdown

VACANCY AT ST ELIZABETH'S - Lay Chaplain. Salary - £29,909 - £33,071 We are currently recruiting for a Lay Chaplain to join us here St Elizabeth's Centre. Working alongside our Senior Leadership Team you will be responsible for ensuring the Catholic identity of the centre is developed and celebrated. Closing Date: Wednesday 10th February 2021 Interview Dates: w/c 22nd February 2021

To apply and to find out more information about St Elizabeth's, please visit our website: www.stelizabeths.org.uk or telephone 01279 844524 for an informal discussion regarding the role.

CARITAS VOLUNTEER EVENT- "Step Forward in Love" Online Event Wednesday 10 February from 11am -1pm Whether you want to try volunteering for the first time or are looking for a new role, come and find out what volunteering opportunities are out there at the moment.

Please register at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/caritas-volunteer-fair-tickets-135713539851>

DAILY WALK? DO SOMETHING POSITIVE FOR CAFOD THIS LENT - Could you walk 10000 Steps either on one day or everyday this Lent? The walk could be a sign of your solidarity with all those who do not have access to a safe water source and who have to walk for water each day. Find out more or sign up online at cafod.org.uk/walk and go the distance this Lent and help to end water poverty.

One minute film also available here:

Walk for Water video:

[Walk for Water: Abdella's journey_| CAFOD - YouTube](#)

LENT EXTRA - We are unable to offer this magazine in church at present, but it can be ordered online from Redemptorist Publications. 'Perhaps, in Lent 2021, Lent Extra might help us to experience Jesus travelling with us towards Easter, filling us with hope. May it be a friend who offers encouragement, support and joy on a road which will have challenges as well as blessings.' Cost: £2.25 + pp.

And you'll never walk alone

*You'll never walk alone
Walk on, walk on
With hope in your heart
And you'll never walk alone*

You'll never walk alone

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

Parish Administrator
(Mon- Fri 9am - 3pm)

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St Joseph and the English Martyrs, Bishop's Stortford
Holy Cross, at St Andrew's, Church Lane, Much Hadham
Most Holy Redeemer, Sayesbury Road, Sawbridgeworth

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

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