

Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Fourth Sunday of Lent

Sometimes it is tempting to think of our Lord Jesus Christ a bit like Santa Claus. We all know how Santa likes to keep two lists, one with the "good children" in it while the other has the "bad children" in it, so that he'll know whom to reward come Christmas time. Similarly, we try to be good little Christians by following the Ten Commandments so that on the day Jesus returns for Judgement Day, he will reward us by taking us to heaven with him and not condemn us to hell.

But in this Sunday's Gospel, St John reminds us that Jesus was sent into the world not to condemn but to save us. He didn't come to tell us on which list our names can be found. He came to heal, protect, and rescue us. Yes, sometimes we choose to be naughty rather than nice. But rather than justly condemning us, God sent Jesus to be "lifted up" and to give "eternal life" to all who believe in him. That refers to the story in the Book of Exodus, when the Israelites were being bitten by poisonous snakes for complaining against God. God directed Moses to make a bronze serpent and mount it on a pole so that anyone who looked at it was healed (Numbers 21:4-9).

Like the Israelites, if we want to be saved, the first step is to acknowledge that we need to be saved, that we are not perfect, that we occasionally fall. The salvation Jesus offers us is far greater than the Israelites' physical healing from snake bites. He heals us spiritually. He forgives us and strengthens us to live differently. He restores us to a right relationship with God. And he gives us a real hope of heaven. So don't fall into the trap of thinking of Jesus as Santa Claus. He is watching us not waiting to punish us as soon as we make a mistake, but to offer us forgiveness and guidance when we need it. He wishes not to condemn but to offer salvation. As we reach the half-way point of Lent, let us gaze on him, lifted up on the cross. Bring all your vulnerabilities to him, and let him heal and restore you.

*Fr Antonio Pineda*

## Parish Note Friday 12th March 2021 and the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Fourth Sunday of Lent

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

Fri 3/12/2021 4:31 PM

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

 2 attachments (10 MB)

Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Fourth Sunday of Lent.docx; Newsletter - Planned Giving 2021.doc;

Good afternoon

Please find attached the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on this the Fourth Sunday of Lent which can also be found on the news section of our website, as well as another reminder of the Planned Giving newsletter from Mike Carroll, our Finance Chair.

Another busy week has quickly flown by, with the lighter evenings slowly creeping in. It has been lovely to see so many children making their way back to school passing the Church in the mornings. I have really missed the noise and chitter chatter that they make as they walk by. The minor downside is that the traffic seems to have increased somewhat with everyone being back on the road again at the same time, but it's nice to have some 'normality' again.

The other evening, with cars being in my subliminal subconscious, I suddenly had the 'When is my MOT due?' question pop into my head. I knew that it was very soon and usually I would always record everything on my kitchen calendar at least a year and a month in advance as I like to be super organised, well, I really try my best anyway ... I had not been sent a usual reminder for when my car service was due because of the restrictions, so thought I had better check. Good job that I did as my MOT ran out the following day! A quick call to the garage had me booked in but meant that for the next two days I would be using 'Shanks Pony' as my mode of transport. My own fault entirely and something which I will not repeat again in a hurry..

As I walked down the Great Hadham Road being buffeted by the wind and rain believing that I was burning off the equivalent calorific value of at least half a biscuit whilst avoiding some really big worms on the pavement (and rescuing a couple, so they didn't get squashed), I got thinking about the phrase 'Shanks Pony'. Apparently, 'Shank' comes from the Old English word 'sceanca' which referred to that part of the leg from the knee to the ankle. There was a verb shank or to shank it, which meant to go on foot, using your legs to get you to your destination, according to 'An Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language', compiled by John Jamieson in 1808. The first association with a horse however appeared in Allan Ramsay's 'The Tea-Table Miscellany' of 1724 in which the song, 'Scornfu' Nansy, contains the couplet, *"and ay until the Day he died/ He rade on good shanks Nagy"*.

There are also other phrases which mean having to go by foot. In Northamptonshire at the turn of the last century a writer reported the phrase "go in a shoe-cart" which I quite like, and other variants include "to borrow Mr Foot's horse", "to go by Walker's bus" and "to go on or ride Bayard of ten toes". Hopefully next week I'll be off the shoe cart and back in 'Betsy' listening to the radio, keeping dry and munching my secret stash of Werther's Originals...

**ZOOM** - Thank you to John and our 9am Sunday Mass Musicians who have joined together each week for the past year (!) 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: Mar 14, 2021 08:30 AM London

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



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-GogT8rHdIH0V5EvYx0CrmCXM8IRh-5/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGhqzsiGtORsR6BRpx5GYigWfTwilcgqd0tE\\_TVgVFWxumFfBPEYpSSNTi](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/tZ0od-GogT8rHdIH0V5EvYx0CrmCXM8IRh-5/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGhqzsiGtORsR6BRpx5GYigWfTwilcgqd0tE_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

**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, 7 occurrence(s)  
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=YUgyV0Q0yd2pnS3htNTJGTzJkNzIDQT09>

Meeting ID: 896 6515 3775  
Passcode: 001205

**CONFIRMATION PREPARATION** - Last year's confirmation group (2019-2020) are still awaiting reception of this sacrament, in some cases, due to delays caused by the pandemic. We thank them for their patience!

A new confirmation programme has yet to commence this year, having obviously been on hold for some time. The decision has been made to pause any confirmation preparation for this year, in order to allow covid restrictions to subside and to re-envision our current confirmation provision. We will open up applications again in the autumn term for Confirmations to next take place in 2022.

Therefore, any young person who would have been in the cohort for this academic year, 2020-2021 (those born on or before 31st August 2006 – current year 10 or above), or any young person planning to join the confirmation programme for 2021-2022 (those born on or before 31st August 2007 – those who will be in year 10 next academic year) please note that we will open up applications again later this year for a

confirmation programme for both groups for 2021-2022. We will keep you informed as to when this will take place. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

In the meantime, if you haven't already, you may like to browse our new parish youth portal on our website: [www.rcstortford.org.uk/youth/](http://www.rcstortford.org.uk/youth/)

For any questions or to register your interest, please feel free to email Sophie at : [bstortfordcatechist@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:bstortfordcatechist@rcdow.org.uk)

**BAPTISM PREPARATION COURSES** -Thank you very much for your continued patience whilst awaiting to have your Child baptised. If you have not already attended a recent Baptism preparation course, we are pleased to advise you that Sophie Sullivan, our new Catechetical Coordinator and her husband Mike shall be running a series of two-part Baptism preparation course on the dates below via Zoom. The places will be limited to a maximum of 10 couples on each.

#### **Course 2**

Monday 22nd March and Monday 29th March 2021 at 8pm - 9.15pm

#### **Course 3**

Monday 10th May and Monday 24th May 2021 at 8pm - 9.15pm

If you would like to attend one of the courses, please contact the parish office as soon as possible, so that we can send you an invitation in plenty of time. You are requested to attend the course prior to your Child being baptised.

At the current time, **depending on the success of the Government COVID-19 road map steps**, we hope to be able to start to celebrate the sacrament of Baptism again at St Joseph and the English Martyrs, sometime after 29 May **if all is well**, with 30 persons being permitted to attend.

As you will appreciate, we have a large number of Children still to be baptised since the first lockdown in 2020 and will do our best to prioritise those who had their Baptism date cancelled at that time to start with when able to do so.

If you have not yet completed a Baptism application form, please contact the office so that we have your details on file.

**THE YEAR OF ST JOSEPH** - Pope Francis has declared a year dedicated to St Joseph, from 8 December 2020 to 8 December 2021. He says in his encyclical, *Patris Corde* – With a Father's Love:

**"EACH OF US CAN DISCOVER IN JOSEPH – THE MAN WHO GOES UNNOTICED, A DAILY, DISCREET AND HIDDEN PRESENCE – AN INTERCESSOR, A SUPPORT AND A GUIDE IN TIMES OF TROUBLE."**

Let's do that. Let's ask St Joseph to keep a watchful eye on this family of the Church, to intercede on our behalf with this special novena running from 11 – 19 March (the Solemnity of St Joseph). The beautiful novena reflections are compiled by Sister Silvana Dallanegra RSCJ from Caritas Westminster and Deacon Adrian Cullen from the Agency for Evangelisation.

You can either follow the novena below or download the novena in PDF format. <https://rcstortford.org.uk/novena-of-st-joseph/>.

#### **LENT COURSES**

It's not too late to discover all the wonderful resources we have made available to parishioners during Lent to mark this special season in your homes and with your families. If you haven't already, do check out our Resources for Lent and Easter: <https://rcstortford.org.uk/lent-and-easter-resources-2021>



You can also view everything that's on offer during Lent by looking at the purple strip on our homepage. There will be a number of updates for Holy Week – so keep an eye out for them

### **A CATHOLIC FORMATION' LENT COURSE' -**

The course is structured to provide parishioners with the opportunity to share and grow in their faith together as a community. Each week we will come together, sharing our news and a prayer, before we watch a short video about the week's topic, breaking briefly during the video to reflect as small groups on the topic.

The Lent Course will run every Wednesday for 6 weeks and started on Wednesday February 24th at 7:30pm.

Please feel free to invite your friends/family from both inside and outside the parish. We are looking forward to sharing this exciting new course with you all!

If you want to know more about Sycamore before the course, all the Sycamore resources are freely available on-line at: <https://www.sycamore.fm/>

Next week we are delighted to be joined by **Fr Stephen Wang** to share in our discussions on **The Gift of Faith**.

### **Session 4: THE GIFT OF FAITH**

What is faith? Are there good reasons to believe? How to take a step of faith.

### **Session 5: FINDING TRUE FREEDOM**

Is there such a thing as right and wrong? Where can we find moral guidance? How do you discover your true identity?

### **Session 6: THE MEANING OF LOVE**

What is love? How to love your neighbour. Knowing the love of God.

If you are interested in attending the course, please contact: John Wright ([johncharles.wright70@gmail.com](mailto:johncharles.wright70@gmail.com)) or David Wilkinson ([wilkinsondavid@mac.com](mailto:wilkinsondavid@mac.com)) or the Parish Office to register and get the Zoom login details.

**ECUMENICAL LENT REFLECTION** -Michael McAdam has kindly prepared an ecumenical series of Lent reflections which will be presented through zoom and to which everyone is invited. These will be short meetings on Zoom at 9 a.m. every day except Sunday, beginning on Ash Wednesday and continuing through Lent.

Each meeting will be very short – just a reading, a brief message, some prayers and a little thought to take with you during the day. The whole thing will not last more than ten minutes.

Topic: Lent Reflections with Michael McAdam

Time: 9 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/73006220841?pwd=SzFkYVU2TjNpSjY1WlZWdjc4b0FmQT09>

Meeting ID: 730 0622 0841

Passcode: DAS5s6

**PASSION PLAY** -Riding Lights has produced a Passion Play under lockdown conditions which is available for individual households to view via a video link from 15th March. *Breaking Day* centres on the Roman Governor's household on Good Friday, the people and choices that led to Jesus' crucifixion. The play lasts

about 45 minutes in 3 acts. Further details of the play including a trailer can be found by following this link: <https://ridinglights.org/breaking-day> where details of how to book and the cost are also available.

**CARDINAL'S LENTEN APPEAL** -This Lent, please support the Cardinal's Lenten Appeal and help provide food for children and families in our communities who are facing hunger. You could also support work to help our brothers and sisters come through the global pandemic stronger and better able to cope. [www.cardinalslentenappeal.org.uk](http://www.cardinalslentenappeal.org.uk)

**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](http://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](#)

**CAFOD LENT APPEAL**- Please donate online at [www.cafod.org.uk/give](http://www.cafod.org.uk/give) or by using one of our envelopes.

You can also easily give via text.

Text LENT 5 to 70460 to give £5

Text LENT 10 to 70460 to give £10

Text LENT 20 to 70460 to give £20

Or Telephone: 0303 303 3030 to donate over the phone \*Texts cost £10 plus one standard rate message and you'll be opting in to hear more about our work and fundraising via telephone and SMS. If you'd like to give £10 but do not wish to receive marketing communications, text LENTNOINFO to 70460.

For more information, please see our Privacy Policy: [cafod.org.uk/Legal-information/Privacy-notice](http://cafod.org.uk/Legal-information/Privacy-notice)

**PERMANENT DIACONATE COME AND SEE** - Men interested in finding out more about the permanent diaconate are invited to come to a two-hour session on a Saturday from 10am to 12pm on one of the following dates: 17th April at St Edward the Confessor, Golders Green, 22nd May at St Anthony of Padua, Radlett or 19th June at Vaughan House, Victoria. Prior booking is required as it isn't known whether the event venue is open or the session is online via zoom. Wives welcome. For further details and booking, contact Deacon Adrian Cullen on 07961 594725 or [adriancullen@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:adriancullen@rcdow.org.uk).

**'LET US DREAM' Lenten Retreat** - Young Caritas Westminster have organised a retreat for young people aged 18-35 to break open the themes discussed in Pope Francis' 'Let Us Dream' this Lent. Retreatants will attend three online sessions and receive a pack including a copy of the book and a notebook for their reflections.. There is also an opportunity for 1:1 accompaniment. Sessions take place between 18.30 and 19.45 on 9th and 23rd March. Please book at: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/young-caritas-let-usdream-lenten-retreat-tickets-138923194013>

**COMMUNITY MONEY ADVICE CONNECT BISHOP'S STORTFORD**- is a voluntary organisation run by a trained team of Christian money mentors. We offer non-judgemental



advice and are supported by local churches. We are a member of Community Money Advice, a national debt advice charity. We are an associate member of Churches Together Bishop's Stortford. We work in association with Community Money Advice. To make an appointment or for more information about how we can help, please contact us on: 01279 652523 [bsmoneyadviceservice@ntlworld.com](mailto:bsmoneyadviceservice@ntlworld.com)  
[www.bs-money-advice-service.org.uk](http://www.bs-money-advice-service.org.uk)

**CATHOLIC UNIVERSE AND CATHOLIC TIMES READERS** - You can have this delivered direct to your home every week; POST FREE. Please go to [www.thecatholicuniverse.com](http://www.thecatholicuniverse.com) or call them on 0161 820 5722 and they will arrange for you.

SPECIAL OFFER 3 MONTHS :- £25.00

SPECIAL OFFER 12 Months:- £99.00

DIGITAL COPY:- 12 Months: £55.00 OR DIGITAL COPY/AND HARD COPY FOR:- £115.00 (EASTER SPECIAL OFFER)

**STORT VALLEY SCHOOL TRUST** - are seeking a chaplain, working in the Bishop's Stortford area, whose primary role will be to offer a pastoral and listening service in school. This will involve building relationships with young people who may be facing all kinds of challenges and will create opportunities to influence young lives for good. It will also lead to opportunities to share the Christian faith in lunch clubs, in collective worship, in prayer spaces, and in conversations with school staff.

The position is for 7.5 hours per week in term time only.

CLOSING DATE: Monday 5th April 2021

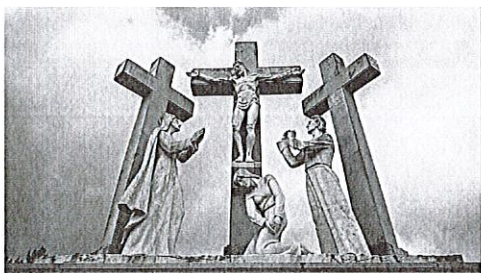
If this sounds like you, please get in touch. You can find out more, download the full job description and application form or apply online by clicking the button below.

<https://www.svst.org.uk/job-vacancies>

**AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED VIRTUAL LUNCH** -What if you could provide a hot meal for a desperate Christian family in Lebanon while you enjoy your Sunday lunch at home?

You are invited to join ACN benefactors and parishes all across the UK for a virtual Sunday Lunch in aid of the St John the Merciful Table, a fantastic initiative that serves daily meals to over 1,000 Christians in and around the city of Zahle. Many of these families are refugees from Syria or local people who have lost their livelihoods because of the national financial crisis or the pandemic. They struggle every day to get by, but you can help. Sunday 21 March 2021 at 1pm <https://acnuk.org/event/acn-virtual-sunday-lunch/>

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS** - Starting this week there will be a Stations of the Cross video posted on our website, Twitter and our Youtube channel <https://youtu.be/R6fX5J9xWXQ> presented by Fr Antonio and hopefully by next week via our livestream at 4pm. Please visit our website for more information.



Stations of the Cross with Fr Antonio

Stations of the Cross with Fr Antonio

[youtu.be](https://youtu.be/R6fX5J9xWXQ)

**PARISHIONERS OF THE WEEK** - This weekend being ' Mothering Sunday' is an appreciation for all Mothers, including those who have since passed, Mothers to be, those Mothers who have sadly lost their precious children and those who might not have any children of their own but may be a Mother figure to others. Our greatest Mother is the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of our Church who is our wonderful advocate and protector.

To finish this week..

*Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly to thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to thee do I come; before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.*

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**

*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*

3 Windhill, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 2ND

Telephone: 01279 654063

email: [bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk)

Parish Website: <https://www.rcstortford.org.uk>

Follow our Live streaming on [www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford](http://www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford)

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