

The Sunday Message on the Fourth Sunday of Easter from Fr Antonio

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd is one who lays down his life for his sheep."

This is the kind of shepherd we have in Christ. He is the Shepherd who created each one of us out of His profound love. He created us as individuals. Each one of us matters, each one of us has a unique mission that no-one else can fulfil. When even one of us strays, then the rest of the flock is the poorer. Some of us are called to be teachers, some to be doctors, scientists or lawyers. Some of us are called to the married life, while others are called to blessed singleness. There are those who have special vocations to the religious life or to the priesthood.

It is the latter group whom we remember this Sunday, known as Good Shepherd Sunday or Vocations Sunday. This weekend, we are asked to pray for those who have dedicated their lives to shepherding the Christian flock: our deacons, priests and bishops. At the same time, we are asked to pray for more vocations so that we may have shepherds in the future. We are asked to give practical support too, by way of donating to the Priest Training Fund which pays for the training of our future priests. It costs approximately £50 a day to train a man for the priesthood for six or even seven years.

Your prayers as well as your financial assistance go a long way in ensuring that we continue to have good shepherds who will guide us and show us the path to Christ, today and tomorrow.

Fr Antonio Pineda

Parish Note Friday 23rd April 2021 and the Good Shepherd Sunday Message by Fr Antonio

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

Fri 4/23/2021 3:54 PM

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

 1 attachments (26 KB)

The Sunday Message on Good Shepherd Sunday from Fr Antonio.docx;

Good afternoon

Please find attached the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on Good Shepherd Sunday or Vocations Sunday which can also be found on our website, along with a Diocesan video, 'Hearing God's Call' which is very interesting to watch.

This week, it has been glorious, looking out on to the Monastery Garden from the Parish office window. I have always said that I have the best view in the whole of Bishop's Stortford! It really is beautiful, and I feel very blessed indeed. There has been a hive of activity on the lawn with all sorts of different visitors at various times of the day, from the little wag tail who for weeks was on his own bobbing around and now seems to have found a new chum, a seagull who has rather questionable toileting habits and my favourites, the squirrels. They really are an entertaining crowd, sitting quite still one moment raised up on their hind legs in 'Meercat fashion' and sprinting at full speed the next, chasing each other round and around the garden. When they scamper up the trees in front of the office window, they cling hanging upside down in the strangest of angles. Apparently, they can turn their ankles around 180 degrees and their hind legs are double jointed allowing them to be one of very few creatures that can run down a tree headfirst.

I have always liked squirrels. I know they are considered verminous pests by some and that they can do an awful lot of damage to buildings, but I have a lot of time for them, which prompted the question, 'What ever happened to the Tufty Club?'. Tufty Fluffy tail was an iconic red squirrel created in 1953 by Elsie Mills MBE and was instrumental in helping millions of children to learn about road safety from the 1950s-1990s, myself included. I still remember the sheer excitement at primary school when our village policeman brought in some pedal cars, a roll up pelican crossing, traffic cones and Tufty stickers, way before the 'Green Cross code man!'

Tufty is 68 years old this year and actually still going strong. The 'Tufty' generation according to RoSPA, ironically, are now believed to be among the groups most at risk of being seriously injured in accidents, especially from falls in the home, and they are a key priority group in the national accident prevention strategy for England.

So, if you are feeling nostalgic and would like to reminisce, Tufty loves to receive messages and memories from people who remember him, by emailing tufty@rospa.com...

PRIEST TRAINING FUND - This Sunday is Good Shepherd Sunday, the day we pray for priests and for vocations to the priesthood. The annual collection for the Priest Training Fund will take place this weekend. This fund pays for the priestly formation of men for the Catholic priesthood. There are currently 42 men studying at Allen Hall seminary, 18 of whom are for our own Diocese, and two men are studying in Rome, also for our Diocese. Last year two men who studied at Allen Hall and one who studied in Rome ordained to the priesthood to serve as our future priests. This fund also supports the ongoing enrichment and formation of our ordained priests. Your generous donation helps ensure we can support these men who are called to be like Christ the Good Shepherd. Donation leaflets are available in the back of the church. Please take one home, read the information, and bring it back with your donation. Please continue to pray for vocations and for our priests. You can donate online anytime at www.rcdow.org.uk/donations

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS- the family and friends of Tony Barrance RIP, beloved Husband of Kate (from our St Joseph's RCIA Group and Choir) who sadly died suddenly last weekend. Tony was well known, loved and much respected in the parish. A quiet, faithful and truly gentle man, who dedicated so much of his time and talents over the years to many projects that benefitted others. Please also pray for Robert Moodie RIP, who also sadly died recently. Robert was the beloved son of former parishioners Gill and Bill Moodie RIP.

Eternal rest grant unto Tony and Robert O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.

CONGRATULATIONS! - We extend our love and prayers to Sophie and Mike Sullivan who welcomed a new beautiful baby boy to their family , born yesterday weighing 3.8kg (8lb 3oz). We very much look forward to meeting the newest member of our parish.

POLITE REMINDER RE BOOKING OF MASS - If you know that you are unable to attend Mass, once you have booked a place, **please** call 01279 654063 and leave a message. This is so that we may offer your seat to another, particularly at the weekends when we often have a waiting list. Thank you.

ZOOM -Thank you to John and our 9am Sunday Mass Musicians who will be continuing to celebrate the livestreaming of the Mass via Zoom each Sunday until further notice, 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: April 25, 2021 08:30 AM London

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

Apr 25, 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=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 417

MARRIAGE CARE COUNSELLING SERVICES -Marriage Care offers support from trained counsellors to couples and families who need help in coping with the pressures of lockdown. Find out more at <https://rcdow.org.uk/diocese/marriage-andfamily-life/news/marriage-care-at-75---we-are-here-for-you/>

SETTLEMENT SCHEME FOR EUROPEAN CITIZENS- EU, EEA and Swiss citizens who were living in the UK by 31st December 2020 have until 30th June 2021 to apply for the Settlement Scheme. Those who do not apply are at risk of losing their rights to live and work here or access important services such as healthcare. There is a need to continue drawing this to people's attention as we approach the deadline. Older and vulnerable people may require assistance with the online application or not even know that their status is at risk. In many cases their main point of contact with society will be through the Church. Relevant information can be found on the official government website (www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families), from the European Commission

(www.eurights.uk/what-you-need-to-know) or from the charity Settled (www.settled.org.uk). Please note, Irish citizens do not need to apply.

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 the next two-part Baptism preparation course on the date below via Zoom. The places will be limited to a maximum of 10 couples on each.

Course 3

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

If you would like to attend this course, 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.

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: 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.

CATHOLIC ETHOS ADVOCATE - Circa £40k per annum (dependent upon skills, qualifications and experience, pro-rata where applicable). The Trustees of St Elizabeth's, Much Hadham Hertfordshire SG10 6EW are creating a new post to further, celebrate and promote the distinctive Catholic identity and ethos of the Centre. St Elizabeth's is a long-established charity, (which has a school for 5–19-year-olds; a college for 18–25-year-olds and a Registered Children's Home and Care Home with Nursing for Adults), providing education, care and medical support on a 52-week basis of up to 200 people of all ages with learning disabilities and other complex medical needs, often caused or complicated by severe epilepsy and/or autism. To apply and to find out more information about St Elizabeth's, please visit our website: www.stelizabeths.org.uk. Informal discussions are encouraged prior to interview, for further information please call the Recruitment Team on 01279 844348 or 01279 843451 or email us at recruitment@stelizabeths.org.uk. The closing date for applications will be Friday 7 May 2021

RESONATE - Resonate is Westminster Youth Ministry's primary event for young adult Catholics aged 18-35, looking to explore and learn more about their faith. Currently taking place online, the next meeting is on Thursday 13 May at 7pm. All Details can be found here: <https://dowym.com/events/resonate-2/>

CHILDREN'S LITURGY PAGE -For families and especially children – Have you checked out the Children's Liturgy page on our parish website yet? It is updated weekly with videos you can watch, aimed at opening up the Sunday readings that we hear at Mass – especially for our younger parishioners. You can also download from that page the "Look" and "Ichthus" Mass sheets which are there to help children understand the themes of each Sunday's Mass. We encourage you to take a look, as we believe this page will really enhance your children's understanding of Mass, which can be a challenge at this time:

<https://rcstortford.org.uk/childrens-liturgy/>. Both video resources also include songs to enjoy!

MASS FOR MIGRANTS - This year's Mass celebrating the contribution of migrant communities in the Dioceses of Westminster, Southwark, and Brentwood, will be livestreamed from St William of York Church, Lewisham on 1st May from 11.30am. Bishop Paul McAleenan will be celebrating; join using the link <https://actionnetwork.org/events/migrants-mass>

ANNUAL MASS OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY MATRIMONY via live stream from Westminster Cathedral, on Saturday 15th May 2021 at 3pm

The Cardinal will be celebrating a live-streamed Mass for all couples in the Diocese who are celebrating their 5th, 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60) wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2021. If you are celebrating an anniversary, please give the parish office the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number if no email), and these details will be sent to those organising this celebration. An Order of Service can be downloaded from the Cathedral website before the event – www.westminstercathedral.org.uk.

THY KINGDOM COME - Join the global wave of prayer calling all Christians to pray between Ascension and Pentecost for more people to come to know the love and peace of Jesus Christ. May 13th - May 23rd, 2021, <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

HOLIDAY BIBLE WEEK -The Holiday Bible Week committee are continuing to meet online to pray and plan for HBW 2021. The situation remains difficult in the UK and around the world and we are sad to say we cannot hold HBW in person this year for all the safety of all involved. HOWEVER - we are feeling very hopeful as we explore plans for an online virtual HBW with games and teaching and various things to teach and entertain the children of our town! We need your help to do this: do you or anyone you know have the skills to help with producing material to share online - perhaps in filming or sound mixing? Or do you want to be involved with the live week? There are lots of plans and ideas for this online adventure so people would be joining this team effort. You can also be involved at "prayer points" in the town churches during the week.

If you are able to help, please email David King at davidholidaybibleweek@gmail.com or Sue Vassell at h14vas@yahoo.co.uk

DEAF AWARENESS WEEK - 3rd- 9 May <https://www.deafcouncil.org.uk/deaf-awareness-week/>

PARISHIONERS OF THE WEEK - This week Agata and Elwira, who are delightful rays of sunshine! They are always willing to go the extra mile to help others and have volunteered their services to assist in the Church many times recently. Thank you, Ladies.

FREE 'SPECIAL GYM' MEMBERSHIP - Open daily, Sessions on a Monday - Friday at 9.30am, Saturday at 6pm and even on Sundays 9am and 11am. All equipment provided and friendly instruction given in beautiful spiritual surroundings. Designed to burn off a few calories at a time within a fun team building environment. There are various exercises to suit, starting with the 'Dettol wipe pew action', door handle spritz, broom sweep floor challenge, mop and bucket marathon and finishing up with a gentle cleansing fog spa. Free membership for life and rewarded with huge grateful thanks, all the while knowing that you are helping to keep the Church clean and safe for others. If you are interested, please contact the parish office or simply join in for a free 15-minute taster session after Mass one day! Also available at Holy Cross at 11.30am. Thank you very much :)

To finish, with today being the Feast Day of St George.

'Let us pray for the courage to be like our patron and be ready to proudly proclaim the values of the risen Lord Jesus, in all that we do and say.'

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

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

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

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