

The Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

"You must come away to some lonely place all by yourselves and rest for a while."

Jesus said this to his apostles in this Sunday's Gospel. If you read it carefully, you will realise that he meant it as a commandment, not as advice or recommendation. He did not say "You should" or "You could", but he said "You must". This shows how important whatever it was he was telling the apostles to do.

So what was it exactly that Jesus was telling the apostles to do? That they must go to a lonely place and take a break from the hustle and bustle of their lives. By a "lonely place", Jesus did not mean somewhere lacking joy or happiness, but somewhere lacking noise and distractions; a place where they could be alone with God in their prayers.

Today, this commandment is as relevant as ever, as crucial to follow as ever. We live in world that is increasingly becoming a non-stop, 24/7 society and we live in a place where there is noise everywhere we turn to. Our lives are surrounded by gadgets, TV and radio broadcasts and different voices demanding our attention. Consequently, it has become more difficult to see and hear God. He is drowned out by all our worldly concerns. We become sheep without a shepherd.

When we retreat to a lonely place, we invite God to speak to us. When we leave our noisy world behind, albeit temporarily, we give ourselves the chance to hear God. When we get lost in silence, we find God. We allow our shepherd again to lead us even when we have to go back to the hustle and bustle of our daily lives.

So make it a priority to find your lonely place. It could be the church, the park, or even a corner of your house. Wherever it is, that is where God will always be waiting for you and He will say, "Come and rest a while, my child."

Fr Antonio Pineda



CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF ENGLAND AND WALES

Statement from the Catholic Bishops of England

Sunday – it is our Day¹

On 19th July, the current legislative powers which assist the mitigations against the covid-19 virus transmission will be rescinded by HM Government. Nevertheless, there will be an encouragement to personal and corporate responsibility in this area; as the Prime Minister said in his most recent statement “The pandemic is not over.” Even without this legislation in place, the Church in England and Wales will be adopting a cautious approach to capacity and activity within our buildings, especially at corporate acts of worship.

We are mindful of the certain fact that the Covid-19 virus is still circulating in society. Vaccines provide genuine protection against the worst effects of the virus, yet we recognise the legitimate fear on the part of some who otherwise desire to gather for Holy Mass. It is our continuing judgement, therefore, that it is not possible at the present time for all of the faithful to attend Mass on a Sunday thus fulfilling their duty to God.

It is hoped that it will be possible for all Catholics in England and Wales to fulfil this most important Church precept, that of the Sunday Obligation, by the First Sunday in Advent 2021. In the meantime, all Catholics are asked to do their best to participate in the celebration of the weekly Sunday Mass and to reflect deeply on the centrality of Sunday worship in the life of the Church.

In April, following our Plenary Assembly, we offered a reflection on the experience of the extraordinary long months of the pandemic. It was titled *The Day of the Lord*. We also began to look at the way forward. We spoke about the important invitation to restore the Sunday Mass to its rightful centrality in our lives. We asked for a rekindling in our hearts of a yearning for the Real Presence of the Lord in the Eucharist, as our response to the total, sacrificial love that Jesus has for us. We said: “The Eucharist should be the cause of our deepest joy, our highest manner of offering thanks to God and for seeking his mercy and love. We need to make it the foundation stone of our lives.”

May this continue to be our striving during these coming months as we journey back to the full celebration of our Sunday Mass and our renewed observance of *The Day of the Lord*.


¹ St Jerome, *In Die Dominica Paschae II*

Parish Note Friday 16 July 2021 and the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

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

Fri 7/16/2021 10:45 AM

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

 2 attachments (173 KB)

The Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.docx; 2021.07.13 - Statement - Sunday it is our Day FINAL.PDF;

Good morning

Please find attached the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, which can also be found on our web site. Also attached is a statement from the Catholic Bishops of England in light of the lifting of restrictions from Monday 19th July 2021. Please do visit our web site which will be updated with further information. We are committed to ensuring that our Churches remain a safe place to enter and worship.

Last weekend we celebrated a beautiful wedding for a lovely young couple at St Joseph's which was a wonderful occasion. It was almost thirty years ago to the day, when I walked down the same aisle myself to be greeted by Fr Trenchard and my then husband to be. The time seems to have flown by very quickly. Looking fondly back at our wedding photographs, when we were both a little more streamlined, had fewer wrinkles and one of us had a bit more hair, was quite surreal. Our photographer, Mr Cox, who was the photographer in the town at that time, and who also had taken my parents wedding pictures back in the 1960's, captured the moment in time. As we stood on the front steps of the Church(like many couples before us in years gone by) and later in the Monastery gardens, our bright,happy, smiley faces had absolutely no idea what the future ahead looked like, or what God had planned for us, but it was an exciting adventure and we were, and still are very much,'in it together' come what may and feel incredibly blessed and thankful. Our wedding brought two families together, a mix of different characters and personalities who all got on incredibly well and lovingly supported and guided us along the way. Attending the Cardinals Matrimonial Mass at the Cathedral for our 25th anniversary was a real treat and to be invited again earlier this year for our 30th with many other couples, some celebrating 50+ years of marriage was a blessing despite the restrictions being in place. There were a few more photos taken again then, this time however masks covered up our faces, but our smiles were still very much there...

PLANNING THE RETURN OF READERS, ALTAR SERVERS, EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS - If you have been a Eucharistic Minister (either at Mass or visiting the Sick or Housebound), Reader, Altar server, Musician or Welcomer, and are now willing to continue in your volunteer role, or no longer wish to continue, please do let us know now, so that we can start to plan the way forward. Please send a simple email to our parish office– bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk (or call 01279 654063) giving us your details and telling us which ministry, in due course, you might be willing to return to, either immediately or in the future. Thank you very much.

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: July 19, 2021, 08:30 AM London

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

Weekly: [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZ0od-GogT8rHdIH0V5EvYx0CrmCXM8IRh-5/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGhqzsiGtORsR6BRpx5GYigWfTwtilcgqd0tE_TVgVFWxumFfBPEYpSSNTi](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZ0od-GogT8rHdIH0V5EvYx0CrmCXM8IRh-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 417

BAPTISM PREPARATION COURSE - We are pleased to advise you that Sophie Sullivan, our Catechetical Coordinator and her husband Mike shall be running the next two-part Baptism preparation course on the dates below via Zoom. The places will be limited to a maximum of 10 couples on each.

Monday 2nd August and Monday 9th August 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. If you have not yet completed a Baptism application form, please contact the office so that we can send you one for completion so that we have your details on file.

CONFIRMATIONS 2021-2022- As you know, with the challenges brought on by the pandemic, we decided to put a pause on Confirmations this year and concentrated on ensuring that last year's group were able to celebrate the sacrament, after it had been postponed in 2020.

We plan to kick-start our Confirmation programme again this autumn. What form it will take (i.e. in person or virtual) has yet to be established, as we are awaiting up-to-date government announcements and also need to make the necessary decisions regarding use of our parish facilities. However, we would like to gauge interest, as this will enable us to plan accordingly.

If you are a young person with a birthday on or before 31 August 2007 and would like to make your confirmation in 2022, please do get in touch, in the first instance, with our Catechetical Coordinator, Sophie Sullivan, by Friday 30th July, to express your interest. Please email her at bstortfordcatechist@rcdow.org.uk or phone the parish office on 01279 654063 to leave your details.

JULY - By tradition, the Catholic Church dedicates each month of the year to certain devotions. July is devoted to the Precious Blood of Jesus.

The early Fathers say that the Church was born from the pierced side of Christ, and that the sacraments were brought forth through His Blood. See our website for more info <https://rcstortford.org.uk/2021/07/01/july-is-dedicated-to-the-most-precious-blood-of-our-lord/>

BEDA COLLEGE DISCERNMENT WEEKEND - For men between the ages of 30 and 55, the Beda College in Rome is running a discernment weekend from 3rd to 5th September 2021. It will take place at St Beuno's Spirituality Centre in North Wales and is aimed at reaching those not already in touch with their diocese to explore the possibility of priestly vocation. Information and registration forms can be found at <https://www.pathwaystogod.org/courses-events-retreats/discernment-weekend-older-men-1>.

CATECHISTS WANTED - The parish is currently looking for some parishioners willing to volunteer their time to journey with individuals in the parish who maybe finding out more about their faith – in particular, we would love some extra support for our young people preparing for Confirmation. You do not need to be an expert in theology or have a halo to polish in order to volunteer! In fact, enthusiasm and a readiness to develop yourself is all that is needed to get started. Training and support will be given.

If you would like to find out more, please get in touch with Sophie Sullivan at bstortfordcatechist@rcdow.org.uk or call Debbie in the parish office.

You may also like to look at the Catechists' page on our website: <https://rcstortford.org.uk/ministries/catechists/>

RCIA -" Do you have questions?"

Do you have questions about the Catholic faith? The reality of living under the restrictions imposed by the pandemic may have stirred within you a growing desire to connect or – indeed – to reconnect with God. The lockdown may have caused you to look again at life's purpose and meaning.

Do any of these questions apply to you?

- Are you new to the parish – but are not a member of the Catholic Church – and would like to find out more about what we believe?
- Maybe you are from another denomination within the Christian Family, but have questions about Catholicism specifically and want to know more?
- Or maybe you have been baptised a Catholic, but have lapsed or would simply like to understand the faith better?

Whatever the case, did you know that there are people within the parish who are dedicated to helping you to explore life's big questions? Everyone's journey to faith is very different, but we can assist you to find the right path. The RCIA is a programme aimed at helping you on this journey. For more information, please contact Sophie Sullivan at bstortfordcatechist@rcdow.org.uk or leave your details with Debbie in the parish office."

FAITH AND REASON RESIDENTIAL COURSE- For those wishing to deepen their understanding of the Catholic faith, as well as to spend time in the beautiful surrounds of the Christian Heritage Centre at Stonyhurst in Lancashire, this residential course called "Faith and Reason: A Catholic Integration" takes place between 5-8 August 2021. Lectures are from experienced tutors. There is an opportunity for discussion, questions and social time and full board and lodging in en-suite accommodation is provided. Please see our web post for more details: <https://rcstortford.org.uk/2021/06/24/faith-and-reason-residential-course/>

WALK WITH AMAL- 'Little Amal', a 3.5-metre-tall puppet of a young refugee girl, created by the acclaimed Handspring Puppet Company, will be travelling through the UK between 18 July and 3 November. Representing all displaced children, Little Amal will travel over 8,000km embodying the urgent message "Don't forget about us." Experience the journey of Amal as she travels from the Syria-Turkey border to safety in the UK. <https://www.walkwithamal.org> Follow on Twitter: @walkwithamal

LOURDES PILGRIMAGE MASS- Cardinal Vincent will celebrate the Lourdes Pilgrimage Mass at Westminster Cathedral on 28th July at 2pm. With restrictions removed on the 19th July, the Cathedral will be at increased capacity, so all are welcome in person and via livestream at www.westminstercathedral.org.uk.

YOUNG CHRISTIAN CLIMATE NETWORK RELAY - Westminster Justice and Peace is hosting two events to contribute to the Young Christian Climate Network Relay on Friday 6th August. The first will be a lunch at Farm Street parish and walk to Westminster Cathedral from 1pm to 3pm. Sign up at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/163375276851>.

The second event taking place on the same day is an ecumenical prayer service at Westminster Cathedral from 3.30pm to 4pm. Sign up at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/163372454409>.

SELF-CARE FOR VOLUNTEERS - 13 July and 14 September, 13:00 – 14:00, on Zoom 'You can't pour from an empty cup - take care of yourself first'.

As we are volunteering to support others, who is it that helps the helper when the pressure of a role becomes too much, when we disagree with another volunteer or client, or we have a bad day?

Come to one of the regular support sessions run by Caritas Westminster and the Irish Chaplaincy, to learn some tips and strategies for self-care, with opportunities for further support if you need it.

Please register on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/self-care-for-staff-and-volunteers-tickets-138513887767>

INTRODUCTION TO VOLUNTEERING - 21 September, 10 – 11:30 am, Zoom. Eventbrite link:

Thinking about volunteering? Find out how to get started at a free interactive session run by Caritas Westminster. It is for people thinking about or just starting out in volunteering. Explore what your perfect role could be and how to find it, discover what your first days might be like, and how to deal with issues that may crop up along the way. This event covers all the basic need-to-knows about becoming a volunteer.

Book your place on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/introduction-to-volunteering-tickets-159672389415>

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITY WITH THE CARITAS VOLUNTEER SERVICE - The Caritas Volunteer Service is growing! We are looking for a couple of volunteers who share our passion for social action and volunteering. This is an opportunity to help transform lives throughout the Diocese by helping charities and outreach projects find volunteers. Deadline for applications: 31 July. For more information please contact: <https://www.caritasvs.org.uk/volunteer-with-us.php>

ADVANCED NOTICE OF FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 2022 - For parents of children in Year 3 in September 2021 (born on or before 31st August 2014)

First Holy Communion classes will begin in January 2022. **Application forms will be available from 1st September 2021** and should be returned by half term - Friday 22nd October 2021. Further information will follow in due course...

CONTACTLESS GIVING MACHINES - We now have 3 new 'Dona Contactless Giving Machines' at St Joseph's which will gratefully accept all donations and also payments by debit card, thus reducing the need to handle amounts of cash. The system has pre-set amounts but also has the option to enter a specific amount of your choosing. It is very easy to use and in time will also capture Gift aid. Thank you to Martin, our first donor on 'Dona!' <https://rcstortford.org.uk/2021/07/16/arrival-of-new-contactless-giving-machines/>

PARISHIONERS OF THE WEEK - This week a special mention to Brenda O'Carroll, who has been a Reader at St Joseph's Church for over 45 years, a flower arranger for 33 years and a governor of RE at St Josephs School for 22 years. Thank you Brenda for your dedicated service, friendship and continued support!

To finish this week.. part of Cardinal Vincent's Homily from the Matrimonial Mass which with the lifting of restrictions seems fitting, *"Today is a day of thanksgiving. Today we thank God for his presence in our body and spirit; we thank God for so many sacrifices made in families today; we thank God for all the nurture and encouragement, given and received in the shared life of matrimony. Today is a day of thanksgiving, and therefore it's a day of Eucharist, indeed."*

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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