

The Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Twenty Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jesus didn't mince his words to Peter: "Get out of my sight, you Satan! Because the way you think is not God's way but man's." Did Peter deserve such harsh words from the Lord? After all, he simply wanted Jesus to avoid any suffering. He loved Jesus and hated the thought of Jesus' being rejected and put to death. Was that so wrong?

What was wrong was that Peter got Jesus so wrong. Peter had correctly identified Jesus as the Messiah, but mistakenly thought that the promised Messiah would defeat Israel's enemies; would restore the nation's power and prestige; would bring about prosperity; would usher in an era of "good times." But, rather bizarrely, Jesus spoke of a future that included suffering and death as the road to resurrection and peace.

The lesson of this Sunday's Gospel is simple: that more than ever we need to understand that life entails suffering — that love requires us to "die to self" to live for the other.

We live in a world that does all it can to deny the reality and the value of suffering. Many refuse to face their problems and attempt to distract themselves with work and hobbies. Some "cure" their problems with alcohol and drugs. Many expend an incredible effort to keep from feeling the hurt of life.

We all have witnessed human disaster stories. Every family can recount stories of tragedies that would have been avoided if people had the sense and the courage to deal with the reality of their lives. Suffering that is not attended to will mount up and explode.

Today, Jesus teaches us the necessity of taking up our cross, of facing up to the problems, difficulties and sufferings of our life. He will give us the courage and grace to deal with what comes our way.

Going back to Peter, he learned his lesson and learned it well. Fortified by the power of the Holy Spirit, he willingly faced the persecution that is an essential part of following the Lord Jesus. He led the early Church with great wisdom and gave his life as a testimony to his love of Christ. May we learn our lesson as well.

Fr Antonio Pineda

Good afternoon

Please find attached the Sunday Message on the Twenty fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time from Fr Antonio. This can also be found on our website.

Tomorrow is the twentieth anniversary of 9/11, a tragic event in which 2,977 perished during the terrorist attacks at the World Trade Centre, surrounding area and the Pentagon. One of those who sadly died was a much-loved Irish American Franciscan Priest called Father Mychal F. Judge, who was ordained in 1961.

He became a beloved catholic chaplain to the New York City Fire Department in 1992, serving firefighters and their families in Manhattan, the Bronx, and Staten Island. He was particularly close with the firefighters of Engine 1-Ladder 24, located across the street from his church. He was also an adamant supporter of those with addictions, those suffering from Aids and those who were homeless.

Following the attack, Fr. Mychal rushed from the friary to Lower Manhattan to offer his assistance, last rites, and prayers. While in the lobby of the North Tower, he was killed by debris from the collapsing South Tower. First responders eventually found him in the rubble and carried his body, captured in a famous photo, to the corner of Church and Vesey Streets reverently placing him at the altar of the nearby St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church. Fr. Mychal was designated as "Victim 0001," the first 'certified' casualty on 9/11. His televised funeral was held at St. Francis of Assisi and was attended by nearly 3,000 people.

He is the focus of the 2006 documentary 'Saint of 9/11', narrated by Sir Ian McKellen and since 2003, the 'Father Mychal Judge 9/11 Walk of Remembrance' has been held annually on the Sunday before September 11th in memory of all of the first responders, with a route from St. Francis of Assisi to St. Peter's.

REOPENING OF HOLY CROSS AND MOST HOLY REDEEMER FOR MASS - Thank you to everyone who returned to Mass last weekend and assisted Fr Antonio and also Mgr. Vlad.

SOCIALLY DISTANCED SEATING - If you sit in the 'socially distanced ' seating side of the Church, we thank you for continuing to wear a face mask.

CLEANING THE CHURCH AFTER MASS - If you are able to help to clean the Church by taking a cleaning wipe upon entering to just sanitise your own pew and kneeler after Mass or private prayer, that would be very helpful and much appreciated please, leaving our volunteers to sweep, wash the floor, sanitise everything else and 'fog' the Church each day or if you are in the position to donate disinfectant wipes or spray, that would be welcomed too. Thank you very much.

MASS SHEETS - Please feel free to take home with you a printed Mass sheet this week containing the Sunday readings which will be located in the wire basket at the back of the Church as you enter. On the reverse of the sheet is the Sunday message from Fr Antonio. For hygiene reasons, please ensure that if you take one, you do **not** put it back in the basket. Thank you for your understanding.

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 4th October and Monday 11th October 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.

CONFIRMATION APPLICATIONS FOR 2022 NOW OPEN - If your date of birth is on or before 31 August 2007 (Year 10 and above) and you would like to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, Application forms are available from Father after every Mass starting from this weekend. All forms must be completed and returned to 3 Windhill, Bishop's Stortford **by Wednesday 29th September 2021 at the latest**. The preparation sessions will take place between November 2021 and July 2022, with an introductory evening for parents and candidates to take place the week before half term. Further information will follow in due course. If you have any questions, please contact our Catechetical Coordinator Sophie Sullivan at bstortfordcatechist@rcdow.org.uk

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.

CLOSURE OF THE PARISH OFFICE - Debbie will be taking a two-week break from Monday 30 August (Bank holiday) - Friday 10th September inclusive. Any non-urgent enquiries during this time will be dealt with immediately upon her return. For any urgent matters please contact Fr Peter or Fr Antonio on 01279 654063. The answer phone message will be checked daily.

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 are available now from Father every day after Mass** and should be returned by half term - Friday 22nd October 2021. Please only collect a form for your child.

SEPTEMBER - is World Alzheimer's Month

10th - World Suicide Prevention Day - <https://www.iasp.info>

24th - Macmillan Coffee Morning <https://coffee.macmillan.org.uk/>

STORTFORD KICKSTART - Job hunting? Helping people back to work. at the Methodist Church, South Street, Bishop's Stortford, open Thursday and Friday 10am -12.30pm with free professional advice on CV's, cover letters, internet job search, interview training and skills. www.stortfordkickstart.org.uk Tel; 01279 501745

THINKING ABOUT SEPARATION OR DIVORCE? – Is your marriage or that of a relative or friend heading for divorce? Do you know how to save that marriage? Or do you feel helpless? Retrouvaille (pronounced retro-vi with a long i) is designed to help troubled marriages regain their health. It helps spouses uncover or re-awaken the love, trust and commitment that originally brought them together. The programme is highly successful in saving hurting marriages, even bringing reconciliation to couples that have already separated or divorced. There is no group therapy or group work

For confidential information about 'Retrouvaille', or to register for the programme commencing with a 'Virtual weekend on 21st– 24th October 2021 Call or text +44788 7296983/+44 797 3380443 Email retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com or visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk

ST ANDREWS 800th ANNIVERSARY -St Andrew's Church is celebrating its 800th anniversary next Saturday 18 September 2021 from 2pm. Please join us for a community afternoon tea, followed by a tree-planting and a joint Anglican and Catholic service of celebration led by the Bishop of London. All are welcome.

To reserve your place, please email standrews800@gmail.com (preferred). For those without email, please telephone 01279 842339 To help with our catering numbers, advance notice is requested. Cost £4 each of £10 per family. Full details provided on registration.

ST MICHAELS CHURCH - are holding a Heritage Open Days event at St. Michaels in partnership with Bishop's Stortford Museum tomorrow, Saturday 11th September between 2pm - 4pm and would particularly like to welcome members of other churches in Stortford. We have a self-guided tour to show the historical items and features of the church. There will also be talks in the ringing chamber

about the history of the bells but due to limited space, places for this need to be booked by visiting www.southmillarts.co.uk or telephoning 01279 710200

ST. AUGUSTINE'S SCHOOL - School Office Administrator Vacancy. We have a vacancy in our School Office for an Office Administrator. If you are interested in applying for this position, please follow the link [School Office Administrator](#) to access further details and a school application form. Visits and an informal chat with our Headteacher, Mrs Napier are warmly welcome, please call 01992 463549 to arrange.

BISHOP'S STORTFORD ACROSS TRIP TO LOURDES 2022- 6-15 October 2022

We have just agreed a date for our parish Across trip to Lourdes next year subject to all the usual caveats at this time! We are planning to go on 6-15 October 2022.

Across take those, who wouldn't otherwise be able, to take a trip on a very special pilgrimage to Lourdes. Our trip is not like any other pilgrimage, it is a holiday with Our Lady.

We manage to uniquely combine daily celebration of Mass in a variety of churches in and around the Domaine, a visit to the baths and opportunities for prayer with day trips, entertainment, great food and making genuine friendships.

If you are interested or keen to travel with us, either as a helper, or a VIP then put the date in the diary and contact me, John Wright on 07739789169 or email: johncharles.wright70@gmail.com

Pricing will be confirmed from Across soon. We are looking forward to planning our trip and fundraising over the next few months as well as finding VIPs who will (as those who have already travelled with us know) have a fabulous holiday with Our Lady!

PARISHIONERS OF THE WEEK - Big thanks again this week to everyone who helped to prepare and clean our Churches before and after Mass last Sunday but particular thanks to Martin Haynes who stayed behind and patiently waited until Fr Antonio returned from Holy Cross to ensure the security of the sacristy at St Joseph's.

To finish this week, in memory of all those who suffered as a result of 9/11 and still are suffering today, a prayer taken directly from the Irish Franciscan website, written by Fr Mychal RIP and also the Homily from his Requiem Mass. It is said to be a guide to his approach to his pastoral ministry, a ministry rich in life-giving compassion.

*Lord, take me where You want me to go.
Let me meet who You want me to meet.
Tell me what You want me to say.
And keep me out of Your way.*

Fr. Mychal F. Judge, O.F.M.
FDNY Chaplain

"We will bury Mychal Judge's body, but not his spirit. We will bury his mind, but not his dreams. We will bury his voice, but not his message. We will bury his hands, but not his good works. We will bury his heart, but not his love. Never his love."

Fr. Michael Duffy, O.F.M.

Homilist at Fr. Judge's funeral

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

See you on Monday!

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

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

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