

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

What must we do to inherit eternal life? What should we desire in this world to be happy in the next? These are questions we are invited to ask ourselves this Sunday.

The first reading is from the Book of Wisdom which is attributed to King Solomon, son of David. Solomon asked God for the gift of wisdom rather than longevity or power. To be a good ruler, he desired to know the truth, to have depth and understanding. He knew this was the strongest foundation a ruler could have. Even if he were a king appointed by God, he would one day have to render an account at his own judgment.

The Roman Emperor Constantine (272-337) also learned this truth. There is a fresco in the Vatican by Giuliano Romano called The Vision of the Cross and it is dedicated to a vision of Constantine's. The historians Eusebius of Caesarea and Lactantius tell us of how — ahead of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in which Constantine would attack Maxentius to reunite the empire under himself — Constantine had a vision of a cross in the heavens and heard these words: "In this sign, you will conquer."

Even though Constantine was not a Christian, he had this sign emblazoned on the breastplates and shields of his soldiers. They won that battle against great odds. Archaeologists have uncovered shields, helmets, breastplates, and coins with this symbol, attesting to the truth of his vision.

Eventually Constantine, the most powerful figure in the world, was baptised a Catholic and built several large churches in Rome, including St Peter's Basilica. He did this not to gain political advantage; in fact, he did so at great risks. But in promoting the faith, he showed the sincerity of his conversion. He understood the wisdom of the cross, and it was worth selling all to follow Jesus and receive the treasure of eternal life. Just as Jesus told the young man in this Sunday's Gospel.

Fr Antonio Pineda

Parish Note Friday 8th October 2021 and the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Twenty Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

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

Fri 10/8/2021 2:44 PM

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

 1 attachments (26 KB)

Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Twenty Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time.docx;

Good afternoon

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

Last weekend, I had a very pleasant day out and visited the rather curious 'Royston cave' which has been welcoming visitors since its discovery quite by accident in 1742. Workmen had been erecting a bench in the butter market above and found a millstone in the ground which, when lifted, uncovered a vertical, well-like shaft. Toeholds had been cut into the chalk to form steps and so a small boy was volunteered to make the first descent and found the cave to be filled with earth and debris. In the expectation of finding treasure, the shaft was enlarged, and the cave excavated, uncovering extensive carvings in the lower part of the chamber.

There are four prominent carvings of saints in the cave: St Christopher, patron saint of travellers; St Katherine, holding a representation of the spiked wheel associated with her martyrdom; St Laurence, holding a depiction of the gridiron on which he too was martyred; and a military saint, possibly St George, holding an upturned sword. The sword points to a line of thirteen figures, believed to be Jesus and his disciples. There is also a large panel which appears to relate to the death and resurrection of Jesus. Its uppermost carving shows the outstretched hand and arm of God releasing a dove.

Royston Cave 'remains an enigma. No records of its age or purpose exist. Its origin has baffled visitors and historians alike for centuries'. There are many theories as to what the cave may have been used for, when and why, including that it may have been used as a secret place of worship by the Knights Templar Order who were eventually dissolved by Pope Clement V in 1312, having had a stronghold in Baldock, approx. 8 miles away. If you have never been before, it is definitely worth a visit, just to look at the carvings, perhaps even to review the various papers written following individual historical research and to form your own opinion. I can even recommend a nice place to have lunch afterwards...

ANNUAL MASS COUNT – This weekend 9th/ 10th October will be the last count of the number of people attending Mass as part of our Annual Mass count for the Diocese.

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.

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 10th and Monday 17th January 2022 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.

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.

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

CATHOLIC & LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER OR QUESTIONING? SEEKING SUPPORT? -LGBT+ Catholics Westminster, the LGBT+ Catholic Chaplaincy of the Diocese of Westminster, and Quest, a national organisation for LGBT+ Catholics, both give pastoral support and points of contact for people with queries about LGBT+ issues and their faith. www.lgbtcatholicswestminster.org www.questlgbti.uk Mass welcoming LGBT+ Catholics, parents, families and friends are held on 2nd & 4th Sundays 17.30 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, 114 Mount Street, Mayfair, London W1K 3AH

FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE- The Ascent is starting this October 2021. The ASCENT is a three-year discipleship process for anyone in years 10, 11 or 12 who feels ready to go to the next level in their faith journey. Including weekends away, mentoring and small groups, this process is just what you might be looking for to climb to greater heights in your faith! For more info, do check our web

post: <https://rcstortford.org.uk/2021/09/16/calling-young-adults-the-ascent/>

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 Domains, 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!

UN CLIMATE CONFERENCE - Events taking place in Bishop's Stortford to mark the UK's hosting of the 26th UN Climate Conference in Glasgow from 31st October to 12th November 2021 include:

A free screening of the film 'Tomorrow' on **Saturday 9th October at 2:30pm at South Mill Arts Centre**. The film challenges us to think about the state of our planet whilst offering a hopeful vision of what's possible when people come together to act on what matters to them. It is free and open to all.

After the film there will be the opportunity to chat and discuss the film and we will provide information about the subsequent **Community Climate Gathering on the weekend of 6/7 November**. This community meeting, spread over two days and timed to coincide with COP26, will bring together local people to answer the question: 'what can we do together, starting now, to improve our environment and fight climate change?'

Spaces at the events will be limited. Tickets for the film can be reserved on the South Mill Arts website www.southmillarts.co.uk and you can sign up for the Gathering at www.communityclimategathering.org.

There will be two special opportunities to join with other Catholics in London to raise your voices for climate action while the politicians and business leaders are meeting in Glasgow for COP26 between 1st -12th November.

1) 1st November, 6pm – Candle-lit vigil and procession to pray for successful climate negotiations at COP26. From Westminster Cathedral to Farm Street Church via Buckingham Palace.

2) 6th November, 11am – Rally for the Climate with many other groups from civic society. Meet with CAFOD and Westminster Justice & Peace at St Mary Moorfields Church. Bring a banner

APPEAL FROM THE FOOD BANK - We anticipate that demand, which is already high, will increase as we approach the Autumn and Winter due to a combination of factors including the end of the furlough scheme and the Universal Credit uplift, the higher cost of food and the increase in gas and electricity prices.

Unfortunately, this is coming at a time when for a variety of reasons our stocks of food are already low (the Storehouse we share with Harlow Foodbank has never been as depleted). So, the more food items that churches can donate the better! We are also hoping to recruit more volunteers to cope with the likely increased demand - particularly people who could volunteer regularly. If anyone is interested, please could you email Hana Hainsby (Food Bank Coordinator) at: Hana.hainsby@bishopsstortfordfoodbank.com. Items most in demand include soup, pasta, rice, noodles, cereals, tinned foods, toiletries, jam, biscuits etc.

LITTLE AMAL - A 3.5m puppet of a refugee girl, is walking from the border of Turkey / Syria to Manchester, 8000km, in search of her mother. On her journey she will visit Westminster Cathedral on Monday 25th October at 2pm, where she will be welcomed by Cardinal Vincent. You are invited to join Cardinal Vincent for this Welcome Liturgy and to learn more about migrants and refugees. It is during half term week, an opportunity for families to come together. Further information about Little Amal's journey is available at <https://www.walkwithamal.org/>

THE PASSAGE - a Catholic Charity working with homeless people has its annual opportunity to take up a public collection on the streets of the City of Westminster on Tuesday 19 October (from 7.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.). In order to make the most of this opportunity to raise funds to support homeless people they need more volunteers on the day. Could anyone interested please contact Andrew Hollingsworth andrew.h@passage.org.uk 020 7592 1886 (07928 703131)

TALK ON ST ANDREWS CHURCH MUCH HADHAM - Martin Dillon will once again be giving a very interesting talk about St Andrew's Church, Much Hadham at 11.00 am on Saturday 16 October 2021 in the Church itself.

All welcome to attend.

PARISHIONERS OF THE WEEK - This week BIG thanks to our First Holy Communion Catechists, Catechetical Coordinator and our Parish Priests for preparing our First Holy Communion children who received the sacrament of reconciliation on Wednesday. Also, very grateful and special thanks to our Choir who accompanied by members of the Bishop's Stortford Choral Society sang beautifully at the Requiem Mass for much loved parishioner, friend and colleague Tom Cuff RIP.

With tomorrow being the feast day of St John Henry Newman, please find below his beautiful meditation, which Fr Peter had specially printed on his prayer card for the silver jubilee of his ordination to Priesthood.

*God has created me to do him some definite service;
He has committed some work to me which he has not
committed to another. I have my mission – I may never
know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.*

*I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between
persons. He has not created me for nothing.
I shall do good. I shall do his work.
I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my
own place while not intending it – if I do but keep
his Commandments.*

*Therefore I will trust him. Whatever, wherever I am,
I can never be thrown away.
If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve him;
in perplexity, my perplexity may serve him;
if I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve him.
He does nothing in vain.
He knows what he is about.
He may take away my friends.
He may throw me among strangers.
He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink,
hide my future from me – still He knows what He is about.*

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

Debbie

Parish Administrator

(Mon- Fri 9am - 3pm)

Catholic Parish of Bishop's Stortford

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