

Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

The story of Bartimaeus, who features in this Sunday's Gospel, is full of symbolisms. Bartimaeus' transformation from a blind beggar to a follower tells us much about Christian discipleship. When Bartimaeus was blind, he was going nowhere, painting a picture of an individual without faith. But then he recognises his need for light, begs and becomes hopeful. Later, he hears about Jesus. Faith begins in hearing and he allowed this faith to change his life. He was not deterred by those who scolded him. On the contrary, it made him even more determined and shouted all the louder, "Lord, have pity on me". When Jesus finally called him, he cast off his cloak and rose. The casting off his cloak is a baptismal symbol of discarding the old ways and his rising up is an action expressing how one rises in new life at baptism. Bartimaeus then he followed Jesus along the road.

Bartimaeus was physically blind but blindness to the light of Christ comes in many forms: prejudice, refusal to believe, inability to change or to see another opinion, seeing only the faults and ever affirming others, a conscience no longer responding to guilt, insensitivity to feelings, etc. Like Bartimaeus, we must call out to the Lord to free ourselves from blindness, to walk in His light and to radiate His light.

"Lord, have pity on me." In times of darkness or fatigue, we long for a tangible sign, something to see, something to hold on to. The sacred name of Jesus is what we have. In the name is the presence and power of the person. The Jesus Prayer aims at developing a constant attentiveness to the presence of the Risen Lord in our lives.

Bartimaeus' story should inspire us to ask ourselves, "What must I cast off if I am to rise and follow Jesus?"

Fr Antonio Pineda

Parish Note Friday 22 October 2021 and the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

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

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

 1 attachments (24 KB)

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

Good afternoon

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

This week one of the very helpful Diocesan IT technicians came to install new computers in the parish office. We had been pencilled in for an upgrade long before the first lockdown as we had been working with a very old version of unsupported Microsoft office and gently limping along. We are now finally on windows 10, so all is good!

It was quite amazing and a tad embarrassing to see the amount of dubious looking grey fluff lurking behind the back of the main computer unit accompanied by a couple of very disgruntled looking spiders who had been unceremoniously evicted and were now scaling the office walls. Several cups of coffee served and with a rainbow assortment of wires, the transfer of data and the upgrade was complete very late into the afternoon. We now have a screen with the unit inbuilt at the back with a wireless mouse and keyboard, something which I have never had before. I had rather got used to the quirky character of the clunky old one which used to like to stick every now and again making copying and pasting somewhat of a challenge. In a strange way it is sad to see them go as 'my girls' have been the workhorse of the office, my companions through the strangest of times, bringing me news, advice and requests and always being forgiving of my sometimes-uncoordinated fingers pounding the keyboard. It will feel rather odd not to have to bend down in between a filing cabin and the desk to start them up, previously being able to make a pre-work time cup of tea and enjoy a couple of good slurps whilst patiently waiting for them to finally spring into action. There is now a bare space where they once sat by my side which will take a little getting used to. The new computers have what looks like the letter 'V' emblazoned on them so have been dutifully named 'Victor and Virgil'. I hope that they will be here for quite some time to come and do their best to serve us well...

WORLD MISSION SUNDAY - This Sunday is World Mission Sunday which is celebrated in every Catholic community in the world. It's a moment of grace to express solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Christ who are living in situations of poverty, violence and oppression. Every parish, school and community are invited to join this special event, and every penny, pound and prayer you give to Missio helps missionaries everywhere continue their work. Please consider helping by either taking a missio envelope or even easier by donating online via <https://missio.org.uk/wmsdonate/>

Please see the Holy Father's message below about World Mission Sunday.

<https://missio.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/WMS2021-Popes-Message.pdf>

MONTH OF THE HOLY SOULS - November is the month of Holy Souls. We will still have a Parish Remembrance book at St Joseph's this year; however, we will scan all of the pages and upload to our website also. If you would like the names of your deceased relatives added, please do email your list of names to bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk or alternatively drop a note containing the names of your loved ones through the door of number 3 Windhill. Thank you.

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.

CHURCH CLEANING - Thank you to our regular hardworking team of volunteers who help to clean the Church every day. The weekend Masses are now getting busier and with the inclement weather there is quite a lot of dirt, leaves etc being brought in on shoes. If you are able to help us by staying behind after Mass just for a few minutes to push a broom in between the pews and along the aisles, commandeer a mop, the fogger or any assistance that you could give to share the tasks, would be much appreciated. Thank you. We do have a daily competition to see who can amass the most dirt swept up on each side of the church(!), so if you are feeling competitive, do join us!

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.

RESONATE ONLINE MEETING - We are SO excited to invite you to our Online Resonate evening on the 28th of October, with the amazing Fr Kelvin who will be speaking to us about the Joy of Friendship- what a corker of a topic! Our Resonate evening are aimed at young Catholics who are 18+ and explore the 'art of Christian living' through various speakers from very different walks of life. If you'd like to join us, please email youth@rcdow.org.uk

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. **Today, Friday 22nd October is the last day to receive applications!**

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

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

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!

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 rise 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/>

CAFOD - A message from CAFOD: Thank you for supporting our Climate Crisis Appeal for our recent Family Fast Day. Every donation helps us in our work and is gratefully received. www.cafod.org.uk/climatecrisis .Please pray for the success of the upcoming UN climate talks in Glasgow, COP26, from 31 October to 12 November. There are prayer cards at the back of church; please do take one and pray that that world leaders will put the needs of marginalised communities around the world, those most affected by climate change, right at the heart of these climate talks. For more information see www.cafod.org.uk/COP26

May the Holy Spirit inspire all political leaders at COP26 and instill in them the courage and gentleness to implement fairer solutions for the most vulnerable.

TO ALL OUR YOUNG ADULTS — AGED 18-35- The Diocese of Westminster's Youth Ministry Team would love to take this opportunity to invite you to an evening of extremely important and necessary conversation, leading up to the Synod of Bishops in 2023. On the 2 of November at 6.30 pm, young adults from all over the diocese will gather at the Archbishop's House — where Cardinal Vincent Nichols will be present, to guide us in a time of reflection, prayer and conversation — and we would LOVE for you to join us! We are trying to gather together as many young people as we can, from all different backgrounds and denominations so that we can get a really great reflection on the Church. If you have any friends or family who are not currently church goers but would love to join the conversation, we really encourage you to get them to join us too!

Here is the link to sign up and take part: <https://form.jotform.com/212902469779368> For more information, see the Youth Ministry website. If you would have any questions whatsoever, please do not hesitate to get in touch by emailing youth@rcdow.org.uk.

THE UNIVERSE CATHOLIC WEEKLY - is thrilled to announce that we have launched our new online newspaper with the full support of our first subscriber none other than His Eminence Cardinal Vincent Nichols. Order

your Digital copy by going to www.universecatholicweekly.co.uk or call us on 0743661 7650 and ask for Michelle. Special offer: Only £20 for 3 months.

RESPONSE TO AFGHAN REFUGEES - Caritas Westminster is co-ordinating the diocese's response to refugees newly arrived from Afghanistan. In particular they are looking for :

Anyone who can help find accommodation, including homes for large families

Speakers of Pashtu, Dari or Farsi who could help with interpretations

Teachers of English (ESOL)

Co-ordinated groups of volunteers who can welcome and befriend Afghans arriving in your area.

The response will need to be well co-ordinated, and you will need to work with your local authority. Please contact Caritas Westminster Volunteer Service if you or the organisation you are involved in might be able to help go to <https://www.caritasvs.org.uk/volunteer-to-support-afghan-refugees.php> or email cvs@rcdow.org.uk

WRITE TO YOUR MP REGARDING THE NATIONALITY AND BORDERS BILL - Caritas Westminster and the Jesuit Refugee Service are urging Catholics to write to their MPs about the Nationality and Borders Bill. The proposals in this Bill are unfair, unjust and will not work. They also do nothing to address the root causes of forced migration and trafficking. Find out more and how to respond here: <https://www.caritaswestminster.org.uk/nationality-and-borders-bill-caritas-westminster-response-1232.php>

DIOCESE OF WESTMINSTER SOCIAL OUTREACH VOLUNTEER GET TOGETHER - Saturday, 23 October 2021, from 10 – 11.30 am. This event is for anyone in the Diocese involved in social outreach volunteering. A chance to come together to pray, reflect, socialise and hear the latest news about the work of Caritas. More information and to register, please visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/caritas-volunteer-get-together-tickets-171999754897>

Our Self Care for Volunteers series continues, providing support and encouragement for volunteers at monthly online sessions. Go to <https://www.caritaswestminster.org.uk/event-list.php>

INVIGILATORS - St Mary's Catholic School are seeking to add to their existing team of invigilators. Examinations (internal and external) take place throughout the academic year, including a mock examination season in December, but the main external examination season is during May and June. To apply please click on the link below and complete the application forms, returning them to recruitment@stmarys.net. The closing date 30 October 2021.

<https://www.tes.com/jobs/vacancy/exam-invigilators-casual-st-mary-s-catholic-school-bishop-s-stortford-herts-pounds-9-95-p-h-hertfordshire-cm23-2nq-1495811>

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL FOUNDATION GOVERNOR - A vacancy for Foundation Governor on the governing body has arisen and expressions of interests are being sought from practising committed Catholics for the ministry. The term of office is for four years from the date of appointment. Closing date for applications: 1st November 2021. Please see www.stmarys.net for more information.

RCIA – A Journey in Faith - Autumn seems to draw the natural world towards lifelessness when in fact nature is working quietly behind the scenes on the new life slowly moving towards the increasing light of spring. So, it is in St Joseph's just now as we welcome among us several interesting people who are enquiring into a life of faith in the Catholic Church. As the parish, we are once more invited to be alongside our enquirers, embarking together in prayer on this journey in faith. The group asks to be remembered in your prayers that we may each be reminded of where God is and has always been, in our lives as we too move towards the increasing light of Christ, light of the world.

ADMISSION TO ST JOSEPHS ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL RECEPTION - The application process for admission to **Reception Class** at St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School for children born between 1st September 2017 and 31st August 2018 will open on 1st November 2021 and close on 15th January 2022.

School application forms will be available on St. Joseph's School website from 1st November. They must be completed with the necessary documentation and returned to the school by 15th January 2022.

In addition to the school forms, you **MUST** complete the online Hertfordshire County Council application form (or your local authority if not Hertfordshire) - see www.hertsdirect.org
For more information, please see the school website: www.stjosephs207.herts.sch.uk

CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE - Applicants for St Joseph's School for **RECEPTION** places in 2022 should collect a white 'embossed' application form for a certificate from No 3 Windhill, the Sacristy after Mass or the Parish Office in person. Once completed it should then be posted through the letter box of No 3 Windhill marked for Fr Antonio's attention **with a stamped addressed envelope, please**. The Certificate will then be posted to you. The School deadline is 15/1/2022.

CHRISTIAN AID SECRETARY VACANCY- The Bishop's Stortford Christian Aid Committee is seeking a secretary. We have just three committee meetings a year at which you would need to take minutes/notes and you would be our contact with Head Office, ordering the envelopes, etc, for the house-to-house collection each year. This is a voluntary position, which the current incumbent describes as "not a big-time commitment but a very worthy cause". If you are interested, please telephone Karen to discuss on 07951 522573.

PARISHIONERS OF THE WEEK - This week BIG thanks to the very lovely Clare Wright for helping at the First Holy Communion Masses last weekend, along with our fantastic Catechists and Altar servers who gave up so much of their time. Clare is a lady of many talents, who along with her family does so much in parish being much loved and well known by all. She will be celebrating her 'Second 25th Birthday' this coming week and so we send her our love, best wishes and prayers for her special day. Clare is raising money for 'Across' who will be travelling to Lourdes next year and has set up a fundraising page should you wish to support her with this amazing cause. <https://justgiving.com/fundraising/clare-wright-50>

To finish this week with the Missio prayer for peace between people of all faiths

*Father of all goodness,
mercy and love,
You call people of all Faiths
to live and work together
for the coming of your
Kingdom on earth.
Make us instruments of your
peace, and cultivate in us the
fertile seed of your healing love.
Create in us the spirit of
understanding, acceptance,
and respect for one another,
irrespective of our differences.
Stir within our hearts a renewed
sense of reverence for all life.
Give us the vision to recognise
your spirit in every human
being, and help us to break the
cycle of violence by realising
that peace begins with me.
Amen*

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

Best wishes
Debbie