

The Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on
The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe,

With the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, we arrive at the last week of the liturgical year. Pope Pius XI instituted the feast in his encyclical letter *Quas Primas* in 1925 in response to the growing secularism and to emphasise that Christ has dominion over all creatures. The feast reminds us that Christ should reign in our minds, wills, hearts and bodies, but all too often it is tempting to let other individuals and other things reign over us and dictate how we conduct our lives.

Many of us idolise certain actors, sports personalities, and artists and we resolve to imitate them. We want to look like them, act like them, and possess what they have. Before we know it, our worldly desires become our false idols. We allow ourselves to be enslaved by our addiction to gadgets, success, wealth and material acquisition. These false idols demand much from us for so little, and only for temporal gain. We also pay more attention to the laws of men rather than the laws of the divine King, resulting in much of the unhappiness in the world. We do certain things because it is “normal” and we don’t wish to look out of place.

Consequently, we forget Christ the King’s great commandment to love God and our neighbours as ourselves. Therefore, as this liturgical year ends, and as we welcome the new one with the season of Advent, let us make the resolution to detach ourselves from the false gods of the earthly kingdom and serve the King of the Universe with love and humility.

This Sunday as you worship the King of kings at Mass, think about what you most value and what you are most anxious to achieve. Then see if these things are more in line with God’s kingdom or with the kingdom of the world. We are all tempted at times to straddle both kingdoms at the same time. But over and over again, we are faced with choices to serve one or the other. May we always choose to serve Jesus, our King and Lord!


Fr Antonio Dineda

Parish Note Friday 19 November 2021 and the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

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

Fri 11/19/2021 2:58 PM

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

 1 attachments (25 KB)

The Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ King of the Universe.docx;

Good afternoon

Please find attached the Sunday Message on the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe from Fr Antonio which can be found on our website.

I was reminded again this week as to how truly invaluable a defibrillator is, when a very good family friend unfortunately suffered a cardiac arrest at the Remembrance day service in the town last Sunday. Thankfully, he is now doing well because of the intervention of the fabulous paramedics and fire service who came to his assistance and used a defibrillator to save his life.

Yesterday, the BBC were filming outside the front of St Joseph's church with another good news story of how, as you may recall, 'our parish defibrillator' and the swift intervention of the workmen who were installing the under floor heating last year, along with another couple, saved the life of a lovely lady called Jeanette who had collapsed nearby.

Our defibrillator is available 24/7 and is registered with 'The Circuit' which is a national defibrillator network providing a national overview of where defibrillators can be found.

At the moment, many defibrillators never get used because emergency services do not know where they are or how to access them. This can cost lives and that's why this new infrastructure is so vital. If you are a business owner, part of a community group etc or have a defibrillator at your work place, please do consider registering your device with the Circuit. <https://www.thecircuit.uk/> It could make all the difference to someone in need when they call 999...

HONOURING SUNDAY -During the pandemic, public worship was suspended for a time and there have been restrictions on parish life. As a result, people have been exploring other ways to practice their faith including Spiritual Communion via live streaming. As people begin returning to more regular patterns of parish life, the bishops of England and Wales have issued the following statement about the importance of honouring Sunday. <https://rcstortford.org.uk/2021/11/19/bishops-statement-honouring-sunday/>

An extract from the Bishop's Conference. *'The Sunday Eucharist is a gift; as God's holy people we are called to praise and thank God in the most sublime way possible. When the Church speaks of the Sunday obligation, it reminds us that attending Mass is a personal response to the selfless offering of Christ's love.'*

At this time, we recognise that for some people there may be certain factors which hinder attendance at Sunday Mass. The pandemic is clearly not over. The risk of infection is still present. For some, there is legitimate fear in gathering together. As your bishops, we recognise that these prevailing circumstances suggest that not everyone is yet in the position to fulfil the absolute duty to attend freely Sunday Mass.'

SYNOD 2023: The time has come to participate!

What is it?

The synod is in response to Pope Francis' call for us to become a "synodal Church"; in other words, a Church which journeys together. A synod is a council of the Church normally convened for us to think and pray together on an issue of doctrine, administration or application. According to the synod handbook, this particular synod is "an opportunity for the entire people of God to discern together how to move forward on the path towards being a more synodal church in the long-term". In the first stage, we are called to reflect together as a parish on how to renew our sense of mission in the light of eighteen months' experience of pandemic.

For more information on the synod, there is a special page on our website: <https://rcstortford.org.uk/synod2023/>

How do I participate?

Everyone is encouraged to participate, whether you are a regular church-goer nor not, a Christian or of no faith at all. There are two ways of participating:

1. Attend our Listening Meetings. These are sessions lasting 50-60 minutes, to be held in the Parish Centre. A list of Listening Meetings will be published on the main synod page <https://rcstortford.org.uk/synod2023/> and on the Events page <https://rcstortford.org.uk/events/>. You need to book to attend any of the sessions, either online on the Events page or by calling the Parish Office. A leaflet outlining the questions you might want to think about in preparation for the meetings is available in church from this weekend, and it's also attached in this email.

2. Complete the questionnaire. If you are not able to attend the Listening Events, you are invited to complete a short questionnaire, Share Your Thoughts. This is attached, and it can also be filled in online: <https://rcstortford.org.uk/synod2023/share-your-thoughts/> or hard copies can be found at the back of the church. Please ensure you return/submit the completed questionnaire by 30 November.

Your feedback, both from the Listening Meetings and the questionnaire, will be submitted to the diocese. They, in turn, will collect feedback from all parishes which will be put together in a document and sent to Rome for the synod taking place in October 2023.

HELP THE SVP - The SVP are distributing **11,500 Vinnie Packs** containing cold weather essentials to the homeless this winter. Please could you consider sponsoring packs at a suggested donation of £3.70 per pack? Donations can be sent to **Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ** with cheques made out to SVP or by bank transfer to Nat West **sort code 60-60-04, account no. 4608 8237**. Thank you so much for your support.

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.

THE PASSAGE - The Passage, a Christian Charity working with homeless people, is holding a fundraising concert at the Royal Festival Hall on **Thursday 25 November on the theme Bohemian Rhapsody**, featuring popular works by Dvořák, Mahler and Smetana. **The performers include** Andrei Ioniță, Cello; Anush

Kovhannisyan, Soprano; Streetwise Opera; Toby Purser, Conductor; and the Orion Orchestra. Full details and booking at <https://passage.org.uk/night-under-the-stars-2021/> or telephone 020 75921856.

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.

AFGHAN REFUGEE SUPPORT - Support is still needed for those who have arrived from Afghanistan in recent months, particularly teaching English and finding accommodation, but also general befriending. Two leaflets have been produced, to explain the situation. One is asking for general help, with befriending, English teaching etc. The other is specifically for parishes where there might be accommodation available, and has a space for local contact details. [These leaflets can be found here.](#)
The next **Network Meeting for those involved with Refugees and Migrants is on Thursday 9 December** and will focus on Community Sponsorship. All are welcome, even if your parish is not yet involved in any refugee project. If you want to know more about this in the meantime, please contact Rosa at Caritas Westminster rosalewis@rcdow.org.uk

Gift aid forms have been prepared for those who would like to make a monetary donation which can be found at the back of the Church.

ADMISSION TO ST JOSEPH'S 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.

CONFIRMATION GROUP 2021/22 - Bishop Paul has allocated us a date for the Confirmation Masses - **Saturday 16th July at 11am and 2pm.** Please put this important date in your diaries!

SYCAMORE ADVENT COURSE - The Dad's Group and the Catenians are delighted to invite you to a Sycamore Advent Course.
Sycamore is a fabulous resource produced by the Westminster Diocese. We will be facilitating an Advent journey over four sessions using Zoom:

30 Nov: The Gift of Faith - Hope

7 Dec: Finding True Freedom - Peace

14 Dec: The Community of the Church - Joy

21 Dec: The Light of Christ - Love

Each session consists of a brief welcome and introduction, three short video clips linked to the session theme and a chance for small group discussion on each clip.

All sessions start at 7:30pm and will be complete by 9:00pm.

We look forward to seeing you during Advent! **Any questions, contact John Wright (07739 789169)**

Zoom Meeting Details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89576068767?pwd=SWVWURlTmV2V3NW0XBU0GNNYXdlUT09>

THE GIVING TREE - is our annual charitable present-giving endeavour to support children of the St Francis Family Centre in Poplar, East London. The area has the highest rate of child poverty in the country, more than double the national average. Many of the families we work with live in crowded and dilapidated accommodation and struggle to afford basic essentials for their children. The family centre works in partnership with parents to provide outstanding pre-school education, giving disadvantaged children the best possible start in life. Presents and Hampers at Christmas complement the services the family centre provides and brings a good dose of Christmas cheer! This year, following the success of last year's collection, we have set up an online [Wishlist with Amazon](#). The advantage of this means that the Centre can receive the gifts directly and we can keep the process Covid-secure. Gifts need to be received by the Centre by Friday 10 December, so please order your gift to arrive by then. Thursday 9 December would be the last day for Prime deliveries please! We are sending the gifts directly to the St Francis centre so you must click on 'Other Addresses' and choose the Giving Tree 2021 gift registry address. Please visit our website for full instructions. <https://rcstortford.org.uk/2021/11/18/support-the-giving-tree-2021/>

And finally, a word of thanks, in advance, from those working at the Centre itself:

"Thank you so very much for thinking of us again this year. Your unfailing support means the world to us and the families we work with".

WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION-a wonderful evening of music and readings for all the family in the magnificent Mother Church of the Diocese, is taking place this year on Wednesday 15th December and Thursday 16th December at 7:30pm. Doors will open at 6:30pm, with organ music being played from 7pm. The programme includes some of the finest Advent and Christmas choral music from across the centuries, sung by the world-famous Cathedral Choir, as well as favourite congregational carols. Westminster Cathedral Choir and Orchestra will be conducted by Simon Johnson, the Cathedral's new Master of Music.

This year's selection of readings ranges from the Scriptures to writers such as GK Chesterton, all read by an array of celebrity readers.

Tickets are now available at Ticketmaster:

<https://www.ticketmaster.co.uk/westminster-cathedral-tickets-london/venue/254582>

CAROL SINGING IN JACKSON SQUARE - Friday 3rd December at the top of the traveller 4-6pm to spread the good news of Christmas and to raise money for the Winter Night Shelter.

CHURCH BELLS BEYOND THE STARS - A short concert of classics for organ, played by Richard Carr and introducing organ student James Frans. Saturday 20th November 7.00pm. St. Michael's Church. All welcome. No booking required. Donations invited in aid of St. Michael's Church Bell Restoration Appeal.

AN EVENING OF CHRISTMAS MUSIC - with harpist and singer Lucy Bunce Sunday 12th December, 7.30pm at the St Barnabas Centre. Tickets: £10 and can be purchased online at www.stjamesthorley.church or by contacting St James Church Office on 01279 506753

PARISH CHARITY GOLF DAY - As the new year approaches and we are starting to make plans we are hoping to resurrect our Parish Charity Golf Day. So, for 2022 we have booked FRIDAY 10TH JUNE at the GREAT HADHAM GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB. Further details will follow later and all is subject to any restrictions from possible Covid complications! So, for now pop the date into your diaries and we will contact you later. Thanks Angela Tyson.

FLOWERS DURING ADVENT - Next Sunday 28th November will be the first Sunday of Advent and it is from this time that we no longer display flowers on the altar as we prepare for Christmas with devout and joyful expectation.

PARISHIONERS OF THE WEEK - This week thank you very much to Colleen Lindley from Most Holy Redeemer who has looked after the Repository for many years and now hands over the reigns to Joan Corby. Thank you also to Ann, Catriona and Yvonne who spent a great deal of their time this week busily sorting and pricing Christmas stock in the St Joseph's Repository. Big thanks too to Marie Rhodes who kindly tended to the large planters outside the front of the Church. The planters had been donated some years ago by parishioner Tony Allen RIP whose funeral service was celebrated on Wednesday.

Please do remember to visit the Synod page, fill in an anonymous questionnaire or book a place at a listening event to share your thoughts. It really is very important that all views are heard. Thank you to everyone who has submitted their views or booked onto a listening session so far.

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

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Most Holy Redeemer, Sayesbury Road, Sawbridgeworth*

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

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