

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

We can glean many things from the Gospel this Sunday. Many of us are familiar with the story that it relates, that of the wedding in Cana. We know that it was where Jesus performed his first miracle when he turned water into wine, foreshadowing the transubstantiation that takes place in the Eucharist. That he performed his first miracle at a wedding suggests the significance that Jesus attaches to marriage. His presence tells us that he "approves" of matrimonial union; he blesses it, in fact, with a miracle. The Gospel of John, from which the passage this Sunday is taken, is often called a "book of signs", put together so that the reader "may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God". In this first sign or miracle, Jesus revealed his glory and his disciples believed in him.

The wedding at Cana also tells us a lot about Mary. The role of Mary in the story is significant. In fact, we can identify three roles that Mary has in our lives even today. First, her role as our universal mother. We see her universal motherhood in her solicitude for the host family. She showed concern for the bride and groom and she wanted their wedding day to be a happy one. Second, Mary's role as an intercessor. She intercedes with Jesus as only a mother can. His response sounds like a refusal but a mother's instinct knows that he is not refusing. Third, her role as a signpost to Jesus. Protestants' main objection against praying to Mary is that she takes our attention and leads us away from the Lord, but nothing could be further from the truth. In the story, she directs the servants to do whatever Jesus asks of them. True devotion to Mary does not lead one away from Jesus for she will always lead a person to her divine Son.

Let us follow Mary's instruction, "Do whatever He tells you." This is the only recorded command given by Mary in the New Testament, and it is a prerequisite for miracles in our families. The Bible tells us how to do the will of God and effect salvific changes in our daily lives. Just as Jesus filled the empty water jars with wine, let us fill the empty hearts around us with love. By the miracle of Cana, Jesus challenges us also to enrich the empty lives of those around us with the new wine of love, mercy, concern, and care. Let us learn to appreciate the miracles of God's providence in our lives. God, often as an uninvited guest in our families, works daily miracles in our lives by protecting us from physical and moral dangers, providing for our needs, inspiring us, and strengthening us with His Holy Spirit. Let us also appreciate that at every Holy Mass, God transforms our offering of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus.

Fr Antonio Pineda

Parish Note Friday 14 January 2022 and the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

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

Fri 1/14/2022 5:08 PM

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

 2 attachments (416 KB)

The Sunday Message on the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time from Fr Antonio.docx; Pilgrimage Administrator Job Description January 2022 (1).pdf;

Good afternoon

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

Fr Peter continues to undergo tests via A&E at The Princess Alexandra Hospital, and has been there two full days this week. His initial infection has now passed but there remain symptoms that the doctors are working hard to alleviate and that is taking time. So Father is in limbo for the time being, very tired and very grateful to Fr Antonio for carrying the weight of the Parish.

We are hoping that Fr Carlos may be able to help us with Masses this weekend. He has not yet (at the time of writing) been able to confirm to us and so we will make sure that notices will be placed on the doors of Most Holy Redeemer and Holy Cross by lunchtime tomorrow (Saturday) and on our web site should be unable to help.

We must assure you that we are doing the best we can in these very difficult times.

Thank you for your understanding. Please do keep Fr Peter and Fr Antonio in your prayers at this time. We hope that Fr Peter will be on the mend soon.

Please do pass this message on to as many people at Holy Cross and Most Holy Redeemer known to you who may not subscribe to parish emails. Thank you very much.

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.

CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES -Following our zoom meeting last week, new resources have now been uploaded to the Session 3 webpage - please do go to www.rcstortford.org.uk/conf2022 and take some time to check them out! We will next be meeting on Sunday 6th February. More details to follow. Please do ensure you check your junk mail box for any emails and do click "trusted sender" (or whatever similar option your server gives you), to ensure emails from church get to your inbox! Many thanks.

VACANCY AT ACROSS - Please see attached to this email a vacancy for a Pilgrimage Administrator at Across

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.

HOLY TRINITY WINTER NIGHT SHELTER - <https://www.htwinternightshelter.org/> If you would like to help raise funds towards the Holy Trinity Shelter, please donate online Sort code: 60-02-36 Account Number: 67759521 Thank you very much.

SPUC WHITE FLOWER APPEAL 2022 - There will be a retiring collection after Mass for the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children next weekend 22/23 January 2022. Thank you for your support

PEACE SUNDAY - This Sunday is Peace Sunday with ' Education, work and dialogue between generations: tools for building lasting peace' being the theme announced for World peace day. See www.paxchristi.org.uk

REQUIEM MASS FOR PATRICK LEWIS RIP - The Requiem Mass for Patrick Lewis RIP will take place on Monday 17 January 2022 at 12pm at St Joseph's followed by a burial in Bishop's Stortford Cemetery. All are welcome to attend. Please keep Patrick , his family and friends in your thoughts and prayers.

PARISHIONERS OF THE WEEK - Big thanks to Piotr this week who has been a fantastic help in cleaning St Joseph's every day, before he starts his own full time job. Thank you!

JANUARY PRAYER INTENTION -For the first month of 2022, Pope Francis has asked Catholics to pray for those facing religious discrimination and persecution.

In a video appeal released Jan. 4, <https://twitter.com/i/status/1478380195480363008>

"Let us pray that those who suffer discrimination and suffer religious persecution may find in the societies in which they live the rights and dignity that comes from being brothers and sisters," he said.

To finish on the theme of Peace Sunday, a prayer adaptation from Pope Francis' Laudato Si'

God of Love

Show us our place in this world as channels of your love for all the creatures of this earth, for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.

Enlighten those who possess power and money, that they may love the common good, advance the weak and care for this world in which we live. The poor and the earth are crying out

O Lord, seize us with your power and light, help us to protect all life, to prepare for a better future, for the coming of your Kingdom of justice, peace, love and beauty.

Praise be to you! Amen

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

Best wishes

Debbie

Parish Administrator

(Mon- Fri 9am - 3pm)

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

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