

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

There are 1.34 billion Catholics in the whole world – that’s about 17.7 per cent of the global population. That’s a massive number and it would be easy for us to think that as individuals, we are insignificant to the Church, that the Church could very well survive without us. When we read St. Paul’s words in the Second Reading this Sunday about being one body with many parts, you might feel that you’re a foot rather than a hand, as St. Paul would say (1 Corinthians 12:15). It feels that so many people are so much more vital to the functioning of the body of Christ than yourself. There’s the mother of six kids, on the parish council, who has a son in seminary. Or the successful businessman who generously gave thousands of pounds to fix the church’s heating. Or the catechist who prepares 80 kids for First Holy Communion and never misses daily Mass. Are you really as important as these members?

The answer is yes! “God placed the parts, each one of them, in the body as he intended” (1 Corinthians 12:18). This means unequivocally that each member is essential to the proper functioning of the whole body. That includes you. He intended you to be an important part of his body. He intended you to be where you are, as you are.

Jesus called you and made you part of his body through baptism. He knows why he called you—and it’s not so that you would be exactly like someone else. He loves you in a way that he loves no one else. That means you are just as dear to his heart as the people who might look like 100 times more valuable than you.

It is important, then, to see the body of Christ—and yourself—the way God does. Each person has a role to play, and if everyone were the same, the Church wouldn’t be all that God wants it to be. God made you exactly as you are to help make his body, the Church, whole.

Fr Antonio Pineda

Parish Note Friday 21 January 2022 and the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

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

Fri 1/21/2022 2:33 PM

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

 2 attachments (278 KB)

The Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time.docx; Press release (1).pdf;

Good afternoon

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

We are very pleased to welcome Fr Peter back to the parish this weekend following a period of convalescence, although, he does still have hospital appointments over the coming week. Father would like to thank everyone for the kind messages and good wishes that he has received and is very grateful indeed to Fr Antonio for his invaluable support during his absence. Thanks too, to Fr Carlos, who returned to assist. Fr Antonio will now take a well deserved post Christmas break for a few days, starting on Monday and returning next weekend.

Last Saturday, I spent a very nice, but chilly day in the capital, walking around the sites and revisiting the Tower of London, somewhere I have been several times over the years. I was surprised to see that they are currently in the process of digging up the moat and learned that this was in preparation for the celebration of the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen where a spectacular, colourful, vibrant field of flowers will fill and transform the space. In the spring, over 20 million seeds will be sown in the moat from carefully designed seed mixes erupting into new colours and patterns to create a dramatic 'Super bloom' display from June to September. Visitors will be able to wander along a weaving path into the centre of the flowers and experience a specially commissioned sound installation with sculptural elements aimed to make you feel at home amongst the bees and butterflies! Having witnessed the WW1 centenary display of poppies back in 2018 and being fortunate to actually own one myself, I am sure that this will be equally stunning and so look forward to a future return visit in hopefully warmer weather...

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS- the family and friends of Delia Doyle RIP, beloved wife of Danny who sadly died on Wednesday and Deidre Miller RIP, beloved wife of James who died last Friday. *Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen*

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.

FAO CONFIRMATION GROUP 2021-2022 - Confirmation Responsibilities: Please do look out for an email from me about your confirmation responsibility for the year and do respond please! Don't forget to check your junk

mail/spam folder, in case any important email has gone there and click to say that it is "from a trusted sender" or "not junk", so that future emails end up in your inbox! Our next session is on Sunday 6th February, starting promptly at 3.30pm. Many thanks Sophie Sullivan

VACANCY AT ST MARY'S FOR EXAM INVIGILATORS - <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-1554674?preview=1>

Closing date 2nd February, interviews 7th February

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

SCRIPTURE FESTIVAL - From 3rd-5th February 2022, "The God who Speaks" and Westminster Diocese are teaming up to bring you a unique scripture festival, hosted at St Albans Cathedral. This is a beautiful opportunity to take a deeper dive into the wonder of the Bible and there'll be something for everyone to enjoy...So do put this in your diary <https://rcstortford.org.uk/2022/01/21/scripture-festival/>

HM THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE- Bishop's Stortford Town Council will be burying a time capsule and planting a tree in Monastery Park on 2 February 2022 and is calling for residents of Bishop's Stortford to supply a record of their memories' of the Queen's 70 year reign to be included in the capsule. The entries can be written text or stories, drawings, photographs, newspaper clippings or small physical items etc. The Council will also include items representing Bishop's Stortford in 2022 such as a map, newspaper etc. All entries can be dropped off to the Tourist Information Centre either in person, via post or electronically via tic@bishopsstortford.org until 4pm on 31 January 2022. Physical entries must be submitted with a donation form available from Town Council's website or at the Tourist Information Centre. For preservation all entries must be in polyethylene bags (a sandwich bag). Please not do include any entries with batteries, staples, paper clips, rubber bands, cling type films such as protective wrappers or any food products as this destroys preservation. Please see the attached press release.

ACCOMPANIMENT FOR THE SEPARATED AND DIVORCED -Beginning Experience Weekend - a residential weekend to help you to heal will be held from 8th to 10th April 2022 at the Sion Community, Brentwood, Essex. Contact Freda 01322-838415; Maura 07795-498445 or email besouthofengland@gmail.com.

RESTORED LIVES - 8-week online course from 24th January <https://www.restoredlives.org/go-on-a-course>
RL provide workshops to support for teenagers & young adults: 13-18 yrs Wednesday 2nd March 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm; 18 – 30 yrs Wednesday 2nd March 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm, go to <https://www.restoredlives.org/yourdirection>

A QUIET DAY FOR MEN THINKING ABOUT A VOCATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD - The Vocations Promotion Team are holding an event on Saturday 22nd January at Westminster Cathedral for all those considering a vocation to the priesthood. It takes place from 10.30am to 3.30pm and include Mass with Fr Mike Maguire, a reflection by Fr David Reilly and times of quiet. To join, contact Canon Stuart Wilson at vocationspromoter@rcdow.org.uk or on 07515 065696

PARISHIONERS OF THE WEEK - Congratulations to Anne and Robert McLean who celebrate their 55th wedding anniversary today. We send our love, prayers and best wishes to you both. Thank you also to everyone, in particular, Hope and the parishioners at Holy Cross/ St Andrews who have supported the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity which ends on 25th January <https://rcstortford.org.uk/2022/01/18/the-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-18th-25th-january-2022/>

To finish this week, this morning at Mass, Fr Antonio mentioned in his Homily a lovely phrase from 'The Christophers'.

"If everyone lit just one little candle, what a bright world this would be." (The Christophers)

The mission of The Christophers is to empower people from all walks of life to realise they have a God-given purpose that belongs to no one else but them. The Christophers put hope into action by using print and electronic media to remind each person that they are an irreplaceable child of God who can make a difference, and that constructive action works miracles. Each of us has, by the grace of God, the power to change the world for the better. Every act of care and concern for others has a ripple effect, touching many lives. The love to which we are called by the Gospel extends not only to our neighbours but to all who live on God's Good Earth. To be a Christopher means to be a Christbearer - where there is hate, to bring love, and where there is darkness, to carry light..

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

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