



The Catholic Parish
of Bishop's Stortford



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📍 3 Windhill, Bishop's Stortford, Herts CM23 2ND

Parish Office: Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Administrator/ Safeguarding: Mrs Debbie Jackson | **Catechetical Co-ordinator:** Mrs Sophie Sullivan

www.rcstortford.org.uk

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

21 December 2025

Our priests are:

Fr Peter Harris (*Parish Priest*)
Fr Marco Lazzaron (*Asst Priest*)



ADORATION AND CONFESSION

Come and join us at St Joseph and the English Martyrs Church for Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation each Saturday, 3:00 to 4:00 pm.



FOR EACH OF THE CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES AT ST JOSEPH'S WE NEED THE HELP OF AT LEAST 6 ADULT STEWARDS PLEASE.

The role includes welcoming parishioners, ensuring that the aisles and all exits are kept clear from any obstruction and to assist Father in the event of an evacuation. If you are new to the parish or have never helped before, this is your chance to really get involved!

It is a very easy and joyful team task and instructions will be given.

The Christmas Eve Masses are at 5pm, 7pm and Midnight (carols at 11.30pm)

We ask you to arrive around 1 hour before the start please.

The sign up sheet is in the Sacristy.

Thank you very much.

CONTACTLESS QR code
↓ PARISH OFFERINGS ↓



ADULTS CONFIRMATION 2026— If you are a baptised Catholic, but have never been confirmed and would like to prepare to do so, we will be starting our adult confirmation preparation on Wednesday 14 January 2026, with meetings being on Wednesday evenings (with the exception of two Thursday evenings) at 8pm in the parish centre. If you are interested, please speak to Fr Marco in the first instance or email bstortfordcatechist@rcdow.org.uk for further information. Forms, complete with a full list of dates, are available in the sacristy and can be picked up on request from Fr Marco.

BAPTISM PREPARATION COURSE— The next two-part Baptism preparation course via Zoom will be Monday 19 & 26 January 2026 8.15pm—9.30pm. It is a pre requisite to attend the course prior to arranging a Baptism. Please book a place via the parish office **THE PARISH OFFICE**—will be closed from Monday 22 December—Friday 2 January 2026 inclusive and will re-open on Monday 5 January 2026 at 9am.

THE BEREAVEMENT JOURNEY—<https://www.thebereavementjourney.org/> is being run across the UK in person and online. It offers 15 films over 7 sessions, usually held weekly, and sometimes with a light meal or refreshments. Participants are placed in groups of 6-8 for discussion following the films, and volunteers guide them in exploring their loss. Anyone 18 years+ for whom someone important has died at any time is welcome. The local contact is Alison Jordan E: alisonfaith1111@gmail.com M: 07821640781

ST THERÈSE ALTAR— Thank you very much to everyone who kindly made a donation towards the refurbishment and repair of the St Thérèse Altar at St Joseph's. The restoration is now complete and enhanced by the newly framed original painting of St Thérèse.

CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS— You are welcome to make a Christmas donation using our DONA machines, via our website or by using one of the Christmas offering envelopes at the back of the church. Thank you.



HAPPY AND BLESSED CHRISTMAS—Fr Peter, Fr Marco, the Parish Team and the Pastoral Committees of our 3 Churches send you their thanks for the past year and every prayer and good wish for a 'Happy and Blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year!'

VINNIE PACKS—The SVP are distributing over 10,000 Vinnie Packs containing cold weather essentials to the homeless and those spending the principal part of their day on the streets. Each pack contains thermal gloves, thermal hat, two pairs of socks, flannel, toothbrush, toothpaste, information sheet and pen. Please could you consider sponsoring packs at a suggested donation of £4.10 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 for your support.

MENTAL HEALTH / CRISIS SUPPORT OVER CHRISTMAS—Hertfordshire Mind Network's Nightlight Helpline (01923 256391, 7pm-1am daily) and Cafés, plus national resources like Samaritans (116 123) and Shout (text 85258) for 24/7 help with loneliness or crisis **CHILDLINE** is free to contact on 0800 1111. Childline counsellors take calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from children and young people under 19 years old.

SAFER PLACES— supporting adult & child survivors of domestic abuse across Herts & Essex. Everyone deserves a life free from fear & abuse 24/7 helpline 03301 025811. Always call 999 in an emergency



A Reflection on the Fourth Sunday of Advent from Marriage Matters

Fourth Sunday of Advent (Isaiah 7:10-14 Romans 1:1-7 Matthew 1:18-25)

The Gospel relates how Joseph overcame his serious doubts about Mary – and married her! She too had faced her own fears about the future – and said “Yes!” We too can have doubts and lack confidence in the future, but like Mary and Joseph we can take courage from our love for each other and God's love for us too.