



# The Catholic Parish of Bishop's Stortford



*St Joseph and the English Martyrs, Bishop's Stortford*  
*Holy Cross, at St Andrew's, Church Lane, Much Hadham*  
*Most Holy Redeemer, Sayesbury Road, Sawbridgeworth*  
 Parish Priest: Fr Peter Harris • Assistant Priest: Fr Carlos Quito

Parish Office: Windhill Churches Centre, 1st Floor • 10am - 3pm Monday to Friday  
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 Live streaming from St Joseph's: [www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford](http://www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford)  
 Diocese of Westminster Charity No. 233699

**Sunday 30th December 2018 – The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph**

**St Joseph and the English Martyrs:**

9am Mass - Anna Marie Graveson RIP

11am Mass - Betty Bell RIP

12.30pm Baptism - Thomas Michael Kanabar

6pm Mass - Sheila Main RIP

**Most Holy Redeemer (Sayesbury Road, Sawbridgeworth):**

9.00am Mass Christopher Straughan RIP

**Holy Cross (at St Andrew's, Church Lane, Much Hadham):**

11.15am Mass - People of the Parish

**Monday 31st December – 7th Day in the Octave of Christmas**

*St Joseph and the English Martyrs:*

9.30am Mass – Costanzo Millico RIP

**Tuesday 1st January 2019 – Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God**

*St Joseph and the English Martyrs:*

10am Mass – Patricia Stott RIP

**Wednesday 2nd January – St Basil the Great and St Gregory**

**Nazianzen, Bishops & Doctors**

*St Joseph and the English Martyrs:*

9.30am Mass – Georgina O'Neill RIP

**Thursday 3rd January – Christmas feria**

*St Joseph and the English Martyrs:*

9.30am Mass – Tom Maher RIP

**Friday 4th January – Christmas feria**

*St Joseph and the English Martyrs:*

9.30am Mass – Intention of Sofia Zapata Gavia & Guillermo Marquez Gonzalez- Andrio

**Saturday 5th January – Christmas feria**

*St Joseph and the English Martyrs*

5pm- 5.45pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & Sacrament of Reconciliation

6pm Mass – Rita and Breda Treanor Intention



## Mass requests

Please fill in the envelope provided, the date & time you would like the Mass with a contact number/ E-mail address and hand in to the Sacristy, Parish Office or 3 Windhill with your donation. Thank you very much.

## Dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ,

These days of Christmas are a time for going home. Our hearts, like homing pigeons just after their release, turn homeward at this time. We want to spend time 'at home'. Yet those two simple words carry many meanings.

Being 'at home', in its obvious sense, is to be in the circle into which we were born, bringing together the generations of which we are a part. Yet, 'at home' also means celebrating all the love and friendships that sustain us. It includes embracing again the important life-choices we have made, the duties of faithfulness and its graces, too.

This lovely Feast of the Holy Family is a moment for thanking God for the family, the families, to which we belong, be they bonds of flesh and blood, bonds of friendship, or bonds created by freely given commitments, including the promises of religious life. The word 'family', then, is capable of including many different patterns and dimensions of life, and some bring with them the experience of sadness and failure.

Today's Gospel takes us to the rich heart of these experiences. Two young parents, Mary and Joseph, are beside themselves with anxiety at the disappearance of their son, the young Jesus. He has been missing for two days! When eventually they find him, the words they exchange are both familiar and revealing. In a cry echoed by parents throughout the ages, Mary says: 'Why have you done this to us? See how anxious your father and I have been, looking for you!' (Luke 2:48-49). How deep and inescapable are these bonds of family!

In his reply, Jesus seems to defy them: 'Why were you looking for me? Did you not know I must be about my Father's business!' (Luke 2:50).

To understand, we must look more closely. Jesus returns home with them and 'lives under their authority'. The inner calling within the boy Jesus has to wait until he comes to an age of human maturity. But Mary knows there is something afoot. In the beautiful words of St Luke, we read that she 'treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart' (Luke 2:19). Their truth is finally revealed to her at the foot of the Cross and in the Upper Room, where the 'business' of the Father is made clear: that in her Son the darkness of this world, the stranglehold of death, is finally overcome.

What do we learn here? We learn that all family love has to be rooted in the soil of God's grace. We learn that the will of our Heavenly Father is the source of the enduring love with which our lives are graced. We learn that nurturing, protecting and fostering that love is to 'be about the Father's business'. When we recognise this truth, we make a more clear and definite space in our family life for this Heavenly Father, so that our love may be deeply rooted and blessed. In contrast, a family which, day by day, lives without reference to God, in prayer and action, risks closing itself off from the very source of its love. Then, all the more easily, that love may wither or break under the remorseless pressure of daily living.

Kneeling at the crib can refresh in us openness to the deepest meaning and source of the family love we treasure. The babe we see in the manger is the Eternal Word of the Father. The source of all love is at the heart of this Holy Family. Here is God, who is love, giving that love to us, knitting that love into our story in a way which changes everything. Mary and Joseph are wrapped in awe because they know that here is something beyond their doing. And that same awe can fill our hearts as we, in our turn, rejoice in the love of our families. It is a precious gift of God, even if it is still marked and shaped by our shortcomings and sins.

This great truth of love, as the creative gift of God, lies at the heart of the Sacrament of Matrimony. The former Chief Rabbi, Lord Jonathan Sacks, speaking in Rome in 2014, expressed this truth so beautifully in these words:

'When a man and woman turn to one another in a bond of faithfulness, God robes them in garments of light, and we come as close as we will ever get to God himself, bringing new life into being, turning the prose of biology into the poetry of human spirit, redeeming the darkness of the world by the radiance of love' (Jonathan Sacks, Rome, November 17, 2014).

May the radiance of the love of your families not only encourage and enlighten you today but also be a source of strength and support for all whom you meet. May your lives bear witness to the radiance of that love for, no matter its measure, it is a great gift of God.

To God we give our joyful praise today. Amen.

Yours devotedly,

+ Cardinal Vincent Nichols  
 Archbishop of Westminster

**FOODBANK -MHR** continue to collect for the Foodbank throughout the year, donations can be left at the entrance to the church. Thank you to all who continue to contribute in our Parish. The children and families of St Joseph's school also helped by donating 35 boxes and 10 bags of food to the food bank this year.

**CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE-** Applicants for St Joseph's School for **RECEPTION places in 2019** should collect a white 'embossed' application form for a certificate from No 3 Windhill, the Sacristy or the Parish Office in person. Once completed it should then be posted through the letter box of No 3 Windhill marked for Fr Peter's attention **with a stamped addressed envelope please**. The Certificate will then be posted to you. The School **deadline is 15/1/2019**.

Open our heart, O Lord, to accept the words of your Son



**Baptism:** Forms and information are available from the Parish Office.

**Marriage:** enquiries call the Parish Office or email

RCIA: Applications open

**First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion**  
 Applications closed for 2019

**Confirmation:** Applications closed for 2019



Parish Administrator – Debbie Jackson

Parish Office: 01279 654063 (9am-3pm Mon - Fri)

Parish Centre Bookings and All Enquiries:

[bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk)

Safeguarding enquiries only

[bishopsstortfordsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk](mailto:bishopsstortfordsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk)



Collections 22<sup>nd</sup> / 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2018 Loose Coin & Envelopes

**St Josephs and the English Martyrs:**

Collection: £702.90 November S/ Order £6220.34

**Holy Cross**

Collection: £72.81 November S/Order £1055.00

**Most Holy Redeemer:**

Collection: £92.16 November S/Order £655.33

The Christmas Collection totals will be reported next week

Fr Peter and Fr Carlos, send their sincere thanks to 'everyone' who generously gave their time and helped over the Christmas period as well as continuously throughout the year. We are blessed to have so many willing volunteers in our parish, from those who clean the Churches, read, sing, play music, serve, create beautiful flower arrangements, run groups, organise, visit the sick, look after the repositories, make tea, hand out hymn books, collect money and count money, the list is endless...! They would also like to thank everyone for the kind gifts, cards and good wishes which they very gratefully received and extend their prayers and every good wish to you for a Happy, Blessed and prosperous New Year!



**THE PARISH SOCIAL COMMITTEE WOULD LIKE TO WISH YOU ALL A VERY 'HAPPY NEW YEAR'** and we look forward to seeing you on Saturday, 19 January for our **WINTER LUNCH** ... if you know someone retired or living alone who would like to join us for an afternoon of feasting and entertainment, please take an invitation from the back of Church. However, if you'd prefer an evening out, tickets are available now for our **CHARITY PARISH QUIZ** - also on 19 January - to raise funds for our next Pilgrimage to Lourdes via Jumbulance. £5 BYO drinks and nibbles. **Contact Debbie Hourihan on 07584 623472.**

**JOB VACANCIES WITH ACROSS** – Across is a small charity specialising in group pilgrimages to Lourdes, France, for those who are sick, disabled and terminally ill. They are currently looking for an experienced Book keeper, a Fund raising & Legacy Manager and a Lead Nurse. The full job adverts are currently on our parish web site and more information can also be found on [www.across.org.uk](http://www.across.org.uk) the closing date for all applications is 7/1/19

**REFRESHMENTS** – There will be NO refreshments after the 11am Mass this week.

*Mother of Christ! Hear thou thy people's cry,  
 Star of the deep, and portal of the sky!  
 Mother of Him Who thee from nothing made,  
 Sinking we strive and call to thee for aid;  
 Oh, by that joy which Gabriel brought to thee,  
 Thou Virgin first and last, let us thy mercy see.*



**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

The shepherds went in haste,  
and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant  
lying in a manger.

**GLORIA**

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

**COLLECT**

O God, who were pleased to give us  
the shining example of the Holy Family,  
graciously grant that we may imitate them  
in practising the virtues of family life and in  
the bonds of charity,  
and so, in the joy of your house,  
delight one day in eternal rewards...  
Amen.

**FIRST READING** Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28

A reading from the first book of Samuel.

Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son,  
and called him Samuel "since" she said "I  
asked the Lord for him."

When a year had gone by, the husband  
Elkanah went up again with all his family to  
offer the annual sacrifice to the Lord and to  
fulfil his vow. Hannah, however, did not go  
up, having said to her husband, "Not before  
the child is weaned. Then I will bring him and  
present him before the Lord and he shall stay  
there for ever."

When she had weaned him, she took him  
up with her together with a three-year-old  
bull, an ephah of flour and a skin of wine, and  
she brought him to the temple of the Lord at  
Shiloh; and the child was with them. They  
slaughtered the bull and the child's mother  
came to Eli. She said, "If you please, my lord.  
As you live, my lord, I am the woman who  
stood here beside you, praying to the Lord.  
This is the child I prayed for, and the Lord  
granted me what I asked him. Now I make  
him over to the Lord for the whole of his life.  
He is made over to the Lord."

There she left him, for the Lord.

The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

**PSALM**

Psalms 83

Response:

They are happy who dwell in your house,  
O Lord.

- How lovely is your dwelling place  
Lord, God of hosts.  
My soul is longing and yearning,

is yearning for the courts of the Lord.  
My heart and my soul ring out their joy  
to God, the living God. (R.)

- They are happy, who dwell in your house,  
for ever singing your praise.  
They are happy, whose strength is in you;  
they walk with ever growing strength. (R.)

- O Lord, God of hosts, hear my prayer,  
give ear, O God of Jacob.  
Turn your eyes, O God, our shield,  
look on the face of your anointed. (R.)

**SECOND READING** 1 John 3:1-2, 21-24

A reading from the first letter of St John.

Think of the love that the Father has lavished  
on us,

by letting us be called God's children;  
and that is what we are.

Because the world refused to acknowledge  
him,  
therefore it does not acknowledge us.  
My dear people, we are already the children  
of God  
but what we are to be in the future has not  
yet been revealed,  
all we know is, that when it is revealed  
we shall be like him  
because we shall see him as he really is.

My dear people,  
if we cannot be condemned by our own  
conscience,  
we need not be afraid in God's presence,  
and whatever we ask him  
we shall receive,  
because we keep his commandments  
and live the kind of life that he wants.  
His commandments are these:  
that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus  
Christ  
and that we love one another  
as he told us to.  
Whoever keeps his commandments  
lives in God and God lives in him.  
We know that he lives in us  
by the Spirit that he has given us.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Open our heart, O Lord,  
to accept the words of your Son. Alleluia!

**GOSPEL**

Luke 2:41-52

A reading from the holy Gospel according to  
Luke.

Every year the parents of Jesus used to go  
to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover.  
When he was twelve years old, they went  
up for the feast as usual. When they were  
on their way home after the feast, the boy  
Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem without  
his parents knowing it. They assumed he  
was with the caravan, and it was only after a  
day's journey that they went to look for him  
among their relations and acquaintances.  
When they failed to find him they went back  
to Jerusalem looking for him everywhere.

Three days later, they found him in the  
Temple, sitting among the doctors, listening  
to them and asking them questions; and all  
those who heard him were astounded at  
his intelligence and his replies. They were  
overcome when they saw him, and his  
mother said to him, "My child, why have you  
done this to us? See how worried your father

and I have been, looking for you." "Why were  
you looking for me?" he replied. "Did you not  
know that I must be busy with my Father's  
affairs?" But they did not understand what he  
meant.

He then went down with them and came to  
Nazareth and lived under their authority. His  
mother stored up all these things in her heart.  
And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature,  
and in favour with God and men.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**PROFESSION OF FAITH**

I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with  
the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,

(all bow during the next three lines)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the  
Virgin Mary,  
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under  
Pontius Pilate,  
he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,  
the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is adored  
and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and  
apostolic Church.  
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness  
of sins  
and I look forward to the resurrection of the  
dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

We offer you, Lord, the sacrifice of  
conciliation,  
humbly asking that,  
through the intercession of the Virgin Mother  
of God and Saint Joseph,  
you may establish our families firmly in your  
grace and your peace.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

Our God has appeared on the earth, and  
lived among us.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Bring those you refresh with this heavenly  
Sacrament,  
most merciful Father,  
to imitate constantly the example of the Holy  
Family,  
so that, after the trials of this world,  
we may share their company for ever.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

# Sunday Message

**THE WORD**

Today's episode from the Gospel  
is usually called "the finding of  
the child Jesus in the Temple",  
and brings to an end the Infancy  
Narrative of Luke.

It is the only story we have which concerns  
the childhood of Jesus. It is a very human  
story, the worst nightmare of every parent  
of a child who has begun to use his or her  
freedom to move about independently. In  
the case of this boy it is pointing towards  
his own future which his parents only  
discern dimly.

It might be better if we read this incident in  
the light of Luke's artistic skill as a writer.  
The first two chapters set out the main  
themes which the evangelist will later  
develop. One of these motifs is that even  
the most devout and faithful person can  
misunderstand who Jesus is and what he  
means.

We also find details in this scene which  
anticipate the resurrection: for example  
three days; Luke's connecting being lost  
with being dead, and being found with  
coming back to life; Jesus' question, "Why  
are you looking for me?" corresponds  
to the angel's question to the women  
about looking for the living among the  
dead. Perhaps the most poignant feature  
here is that just at the moment when his  
distraught parents (as Luke refers to them)  
find Jesus, he has entered the stage which  
every adolescent has to undergo, that of  
separating from them in order to establish  
his own identity and to fulfil his calling  
in life. That is why he is "busy with my  
Father's affairs" (rather than being "in my  
Father's house"). Once more, the fact of  
Jesus being a true human being comes to  
the fore: he has to grow up like all of us  
(hopefully) in wisdom, in stature, and in  
favour with God and other people. ■

**LEARN**

Passover was one of the three pilgrimage  
feasts when faithful Jews were expected to  
travel to Jerusalem if possible for the feast.

Pilgrims would travel in groups (caravans)  
for safety and companionship.

The presentation of Jesus as a boy of twelve  
possibly indicates his readiness to accept  
adult religious responsibilities.

**SAY**

Jesus, Mary and Joseph!

**REFLECT**

Any parent will be able to identify with the powerful emotions which Luke  
ascribes to Mary and Joseph in this narrative. We have the loss of a child and  
the desperate search for him over three days. Then there is the relief at finding  
him safe and sound; this is followed by bewilderment, first of all at his apparent  
indifference to the anxiety he has caused them and then the perplexing reference  
to "my Father's affairs". Not even the fact that he appears to be instructing the  
recognised teachers of the Law seems to help them understand what is going on. The  
attitude, characteristic of many adolescents – What are you getting so excited about? –  
will no doubt be all too familiar to parents of teenagers.

It is easy, and perhaps dangerous, to idealise the Holy Family by imagining a  
completely peaceful and idyllic life in Nazareth. For all we know it may well have been.  
But the further we remove Mary and Joseph from our own human experience, the  
less we can identify with them; and the doctrine of the incarnation, that Jesus is truly  
divine and truly human, becomes less and less meaningful. ■

**DO**

Consider a child who is twelve years old.  
How could he or she help you to understand  
better our belief in Jesus as a true human  
being?

