



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
Postal Address: 3 Windhill, Bishops Stortford, Herts CM23 2ND
Tel: 01279 654063 • **Email:** bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk • **Website:** <http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/bishopsstortford>
Live streaming from St Joseph's: www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford
Diocese of Westminster Charity No. 233699



Sunday 8th December - 2nd Sunday of Advent

St Joseph and the English Martyrs:

9am Mass - Paul Kelly RIP

11am Mass - Anna Graveson RIP

6pm Mass - Noreen Davidson RIP

Most Holy Redeemer (Sayesbury Road, Sawbridgeworth)

9am Mass - Fr Bob Styles Intention

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

11.15am Mass - People of the Parish

Monday 9th December - The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

St Joseph and the English Martyrs:

9.30am Mass - Joan and Ted Bubien Intention

Tuesday 10th December - Advent feria

St Joseph and the English Martyrs

9.30am Mass - John Kelly Intention

Wednesday 11th December - St Damasus I, Pope

St Joseph and the English Martyrs:

9.30am Mass - Albert Garrett RIP

Thursday 12th December - Our Lady of Guadalupe

St Joseph and the English Martyrs:

9.30am Mass - Jack Basey RIP

Friday 13th December - St Lucy, Virgin & Martyr

St Joseph and the English Martyrs:

9.30am Mass - Benefactors of the Secular Clergy Common Fund

Saturday 14th December - St John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor

St Joseph and the English Martyrs:

11am Harmonaires Choir 'Jingle All The Way' concert

5pm-5.45pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament &

Sacrament of Reconciliation

6pm Mass - Dom. David O. Cart Intention



Sunday 15th December 2019 - 3rd Sunday of Advent

St Joseph and the English Martyrs:

9am Mass - Patrick and Bernadette Grealy RIP

11am Mass - James Strang RIP

6pm Mass - Rita and Breda Treanor Intention

Most Holy Redeemer (Sayesbury Road, Sawbridgeworth)

9am Mass - People of the Parish

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

11.15am Mass - Caitlin Nally Intention

PARISH MAGAZINE- Sadly, this Christmas issue will be the final printed edition. A 'Huge Thank you' to Astrid, our Editor for the sheer amount of time, energy and devotion she has spent over the years to create a really interesting read and also thank you to everyone who has been a regular contributor. On sale at 30 pence.

WINTER LUNCH- The Justice & Peace Group lunch last week raised £180 for Mike & Sophie Sullivan's "Bricks & Books" Zimbabwe appeal. Many thanks to all who cooked, attended, donated & helped in any way.

COMPANY AT CHRISTMAS- Every year, under the banner of "Churches Together in Bishop's Stortford", we give a party for anyone in our Town who would otherwise be alone on Christmas Day. This is a happy and popular event and is enjoyed by guests and helpers alike. You can help out as a volunteer on Christmas Day or also get involved as a driver (picking up and dropping off guests) and/or dropping off 'Meals on Wheels' to those unable to get to the Church. We also need helpers between (3pm and 6pm) on Christmas Eve to help set up (bring along your own Vegetable knife and peeler). If you want to help in any way please contact companyatchristmas@gmail.com

GENERAL ELECTION HUSTINGS- Tuesday 10th Dec 7.30pm - 9.30pm BS Baptist Church. Your opportunity to question candidates from all the main parties. Send your questions to bpshustings@gmail.com.

VACANCY AT ST MARY'S for a Science technician, 22hrs a week term time only. For details see <http://www.stmarys.net/about-us/vacancies/> or speak to Clare Wright.

ADVANCED NOTICE-FIRE MARSHALL TRAINING - Come and learn what to do should a fire break out in the Church and how you can help to safely evacuate fellow Parishioners. Training (approx. 1 hour duration) will be provided free by 'Precision Safety Services' on Tuesday 21st January 2020 at 7pm in the WCC. Refreshments provided.

FOODBANK- All three of our Churches are collecting for the Foodbank throughout Advent. Please leave donations as usual at the back of each Church where there is a list of most wanted items.. Thank you also to everyone at Most Holy Redeemer who have continued to support the foodbank throughout the whole of this year.



JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM - The Ecumenical Children's Christmas event is at 3pm on Saturday 21st December at Holy Cross.

PENNY COLLECTION- The winter night shelter at Holy Trinity opened its doors on 27th November for its fifth year. It provides 12 beds for the homeless but needs to raise funds to provide more. Please help by putting your pennies and pounds in the labelled jar at the back of the Church at weekend Masses. Our running total for this year currently stands at £734.43. The last week for donations will be 14/15 December, so that we can send our final amount to the Night Shelter before Christmas. Thank you very much.

CRISP PACKETS- Holy Trinity Church are collecting empty crisp packets to recycle to raise money for the Night shelter. If you would like to help please flatten the empty packet (any brand, but crisp packets only) and take to Holy Trinity directly where they have a collection box. Thanks.

SUPPORT DALIT CHILDREN by buying your Christmas cards/ gifts from their online shop www.supportingdalitchildren.com. In the Indian caste system the Dalit people are known as 'The Untouchables' and deemed unclean. Dalits perform the jobs that nobody else wants to do. Human right abuses against the Dalits are numerous and go on throughout India. Dalit women suffer the most abuse- mental, physical and sexual. Education is the fundamental key for the Dalit children of today and their future generations by lifting them out of poverty and oppression and this is why the charity supports them by sponsoring education and the boarding costs of as many children as possible.



GIVING TREE 2019

PROVIDING CHRISTMAS PRESENTS FOR UNDER PRIVILEGED CHILDREN
 Many thanks for your continued support and generosity providing gifts for the Catholic Children's Centre in East London. If you have taken a gift tag but didn't fill out your contact details can you please contact Mandy on 07985 111 235 - (with the exception of gifts for a Mum)

All gifts must be returned by next weekend, Sunday 15th December please
FOUND PROPERTY AT ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH - Our eclectic collection of discarded hats, glasses, treasures, trinkets and trousers (!) is growing. Please do check the back of the Church and reclaim any lost items before they are donated to Charity or disposed of. Thank you

BAPTISM PREPARATION COURSE 2020 - The next Baptism course with Fr Carlos will be Thursday 9 January 2020 at 7.30pm in the WCC. Please contact the office to book a place.

RCIA - The next session on Monday 16th December 2019 at 8pm in the WCC will discuss Prayer; the Heartbeat of a Christian.



Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness: in your compassion blot out my offence. Psalm 51:1

YOU CAN HELP TO HERALD THE CHRISTMAS GOOD NEWS

... by volunteering for a Churches Together Christmas card delivery round (approx. 85 letter boxes). The cards list the Christmas services of all the Stortford churches. Simply go to the St Joseph's information area, choose your round and sign for it on the sheet on the counter top, then take the corresponding map and card pack (lettered A to K).

CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE- Applicants for St Joseph's School for **RECEPTION** places in 2020/21 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 15/1/2020



HARMONAIRES CHOIR - 'Jingle All the Way' concert 11am Sat 14 December at St Joseph's Church. Tickets £5 Adult £3 Children. Proceeds to 'Save the Children'.

www.theharmonaireschoir.com

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

RECYCLE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREES in aid of Grove Cottage Sunday 5 January 2020 Link Road Car Park BS CM23 2BA. Call in and drop off your tree and make a donation to Grove Cottage (Suggested minimum is £5 per tree). Trees must be bare, no decorations please and they will be chipped and recycled.

CHARITY ACROSS QUIZ (in aid of Across Bishop's Stortford Jumble) Saturday 18th January 2020 at 7pm - Windhill Churches Centre. BYO drinks and Nibbles. £5 per person. Maximum of 10 on each table. Tickets sell out fast so call to get yours before they go on sale at the end of Mass in January. Call/text Debbie on 07584 623472 or Fiona on 07790 444130 for tickets.

CHARITY BARN DANCE (in aid of Across Bishop's Stortford Jumble) - Saturday 7th March 2020 at St Joseph's School - details to follow...

'ALPS'-A 'catch up' coffee morning on Thursday 9 January 2020 from 10am in the WCC for all 'Across Lourdes' Pilgrims, VIP's and Helpers'



Parish Administrator: Debbie Jackson

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

Parish Centre Bookings and All Enquiries:

bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk

Safeguarding enquiries only:

bishopsstortfordsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

Thank you

Collections 30 Nov/ 1 Dec 2019 Loose Coin & Envelopes Oct D/D

St Joseph and the English Martyrs:

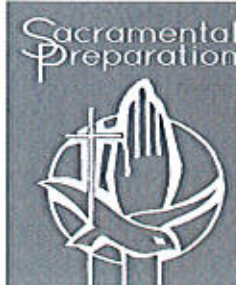
Collection: Loose- £ 884.74 Envelopes- £675.40 D/D £7,502.34

Holy Cross

Collection: Loose- £ 35.90 Envelopes-£10 D/D £1,450

Most Holy Redeemer:

Collection: Loose- £ 59.98 Envelopes-£ 25 D/D £1,141.33



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

Marriage: enquiries call the Parish Office or email

RCIA: Applications closed

First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion
 Applications closed

Confirmation: Applications closed

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy; hail, our life, our sweetness, and our hope! To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy towards us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.

Sunday Message

THE WORD

Year A • Psalter Week 2

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

O people of Sion, behold,
the Lord will come to save the nations,
and the Lord will make the glory of his voice
heard
in the joy of your heart.

COLLECT

Almighty and merciful God,
may no earthly undertaking hinder those
who set out in haste to meet your Son,
but may our learning of heavenly wisdom
gain us admittance to his company.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 11:1-10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

A shoot springs from the stock of Jesse,
a scion thrusts from his roots:
on him the spirit of the Lord rests,
a spirit of wisdom and insight,
a spirit of counsel and power,
a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the
Lord.

(The fear of the Lord is his breath.)
He does not judge by appearances,
he gives no verdict of hearsay,
but judges the wretched with integrity,
and with equity gives a verdict for the poor of
the land.

His word is a rod that strikes the ruthless;
his sentences bring death to the wicked.

Integrity is the loincloth round his waist,
faithfulness the belt about his hips.

The wolf lives with the lamb,
the panther lies down with the kid,
calf and lion cub feed together
with a little boy to lead them.
The cow and the bear make friends,
their young lie down together.
The lion eats straw like the ox.
The infant plays over the cobra's hole;
into the viper's lair
the young child puts his hand.
They do no hurt, no harm,
on all my holy mountain,
for the country is filled with the knowledge of
the Lord
as the waters swell the sea.

That day, the root of Jesse
shall stand as signal to the peoples.
It will be sought out by the nations
and its home will be glorious.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 71

Response:

In his days justice shall flourish
and peace till the moon fails.

- O God, give your judgement to the king,
to a king's son your justice,
that he may judge your people in justice
and your poor in right judgement. (R.)
- In his days justice shall flourish
and peace till the moon fails.
He shall rule from sea to sea,
from the Great River to earth's bounds.
(R.)
- For he shall save the poor when they cry
and the needy who are helpless.

He will have pity on the weak
and save the lives of the poor. (R.)

- May his name be blessed for ever
and endure like the sun.
Every tribe shall be blessed in him,
all nations bless his name. (R.)

SECOND READING

Romans 15:4-9

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the
Romans.

Everything that was written long ago in the
scriptures was meant to teach us something
about hope from the examples scripture
gives of how people who did not give up
were helped by God. And may he who helps
us when we refuse to give up, help you all
to be tolerant with each other, following the
example of Christ Jesus, so that united in
mind and voice you may give glory to the
God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It can only be to God's glory, then, for you
to treat each other in the same friendly way
as Christ treated you. The reason Christ
became the servant of circumcised Jews was
not only so that God could faithfully carry out
the promises made to the patriarchs, it was
also to get the pagans to give glory to God
for his mercy, as scripture says in one place:
For this I shall praise you among the pagans
and sing your name.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight,
and all mankind shall see the salvation of
God.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Matthew 3:1-12

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Matthew.

In due course John the Baptist appeared; he
preached in the wilderness of Judaea and this
was his message: "Repent, for the kingdom
of heaven is close at hand." This was the man
the prophet Isaiah spoke of when he said:

A voice cries in the wilderness:
Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight.

The man John wore a garment made of
camel-hair with a leather belt round his
waist, and his food was locusts and wild
honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judaea and
the whole Jordan district made their way to
him, and as they were baptised by him in
the river Jordan they confessed their sins.
But when he saw a number of Pharisees and
Sadducees coming for baptism he said to
them, "Brood of vipers, who warned you to
fly from the retribution that is coming? But if
you are repentant, produce the appropriate
fruit, and do not presume to tell yourselves,
'We have Abraham for our father,' because, I
tell you, God can raise children for Abraham
from these stones. Even now the axe is laid
to the roots of the trees, so that any tree
which fails to produce good fruit will be cut
down and thrown on the fire. I baptise you
in water for repentance, but the one who
follows me is more powerful than I am,

and I am not fit to carry his sandals; he will
baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His
winnowing-fan is in his hand; he will clear his
threshing-floor and gather his wheat into the
barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that
will never go out."

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

Be pleased, O Lord, with our humble prayers
and offerings,
and, since we have no merits to plead our
cause,
come, we pray, to our rescue
with the protection of your mercy.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights,
and behold the joy which comes to you from
God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Replenished by the food of spiritual
nourishment,
we humbly beseech you, O Lord,
that, through our partaking in this mystery,
you may teach us to judge wisely the things
of earth
and hold firm to the things of heaven.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

REPENT! – YES! YOU!

(MATTHEW 3:1-12)

John the Baptist is a major
figure in the Gospel tradition: he
appears at the beginning of the
four accounts of Jesus' ministry.

Matthew presents him today in the light
of the biblical prophet Elijah, who was a
thorn in the side of the Israelite king Ahab,
and was an uncompromising preacher of
a somewhat fundamentalist interpretation
of the covenant Law. Here John is the one
who prepares the people for the coming of
Jesus, the one mightier than he is. John's
message is urgent and clear: the day when
God's power and presence will be revealed
is near and time is short. He warns those
who are smug and complacent in their
being members of the people of Israel,
children of Abraham: this is not sufficient –
they must repent, literally change the way
they think, adopt a new mentality. John's
baptism by water is a sign of willingness
to change: the baptism of the one coming
after him is more powerful, and his baptism
will be a cleansing one, involving the Holy
Spirit and fire. Fire and wind are symbols
associated with the biblical Day of the Lord,
which involves judgement. As the people
were baptised, they confessed their sins:
this refers also to God's readiness
to forgive. ■

REFLECT

It is a great temptation (and mistake) to
read the Gospel narratives as simply
historical accounts of Jesus' ministry
and the events and people associated
with it. They are addressed to us today
as the word of God which is alive and
active. John the Baptist's message,
uncomfortable as it is, is meant for us
today and directly. Abraham is the most
significant figure in the Hebrew Bible;
to be a child of Abraham means to be a
member of the chosen people, to have a
share in the covenant relationship with
the Lord. John the Baptist tells those who
come to him from Jerusalem that this
will be of no avail, that something more
is required, and they must change the
way they understand their religion. So it
is with us: we may think that because we
belong to a certain school of thought we

are acceptable to God. We may imagine
that because we follow a certain way of
life suggested by a spiritual leader, then
we are all sorted. Matthew is telling us
through John the Baptist that we are
wrong, and that we can be just as smug
and complacent as the Pharisees are
depicted as being. What matters in the
end is the kind of person we are and
how close is our relationship to God. The
practices of religion are no substitute for
a life of faith, and can even be a trap for
us, if we are not careful. That is why we
need to repent, to examine ourselves and
to change anything which prevents us
from allowing Jesus fully into our lives.
The people who came to John the Baptist
were willing to change, and in that they
are an example which we would do well
to follow. ■

LEARN

Metanoia is the New Testament word for
conversion, and is usually translated as
repentance.

Metanoia means literally to change the way
we think.

"Conversion" means to turn round, to
reorientate one's life: both terms have
the sense of profound and radical change.

SAY

Have mercy on me, God,
in your kindness: in
your compassion blot
out my offence.

(Psalm 51:1)