



# 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](mailto:bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk) • Website: <http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/bishopsstortford>**  
**Live streaming from St Joseph's: [www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford](http://www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford)**  
**Diocese of Westminster Charity No. 233699**



**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2019 - 3<sup>rd</sup> 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

**Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December-Advent feria**

**St Joseph and the English Martyrs:**

9.30am Mass - Teresa Mc Anespie Intention

**Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December-Advent feria**

**St Joseph and the English Martyrs**

9.30am Mass - Harry Stalley RIP

12.45pm Requiem Mass Yvonne Joan Teresa Newton RIP

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December-Advent feria**

**St Joseph and the English Martyrs:**

9.30am Mass - Dave Pike Intention

7pm St Mary's School Carol Service

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December-Advent feria**

**St Joseph and the English Martyrs:**

9.30am Mass - Michael Cassidy RIP

4.30pm Requiem Vigil - Eric Robert Foster RIP

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December - Advent feria**

**St Joseph and the English Martyrs:**

9.30am Requiem Mass- Eric Robert Foster RIP

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> December-St Peter Canisius, Priest & Doctor**

3pm 'Journey to Bethlehem' at Holy Cross

**St Joseph and the English Martyrs:**

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

6pm Mass - John and Kathleen Treanor Intention



**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December - 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**

**St Joseph and the English Martyrs:**

9am Mass - Mary Sullivan RIP

11am Mass - Peter Intention

6pm Mass - Chris and Maria Sze 35<sup>th</sup> Wedding anniversary

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

9am Mass - Keith Powell RIP

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

11.15am Mass - People of the Parish

6pm Carol Service & Blessing of the Christmas Tree

**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](mailto:companyatchristmas@gmail.com)

**VACANCIES AT ST MARY'S** - for a Science technician, 22hrs a week term time only. Also required are a Business manager, various Teaching positions and Examination Invigilators.

Visit <http://www.stmarys.net/about-us/vacancies/>

**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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 has 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 21<sup>st</sup> December at Holy Cross

**CAROL SERVICE AND BLESSING OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE**- At Holy Cross - Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December at 6pm

**HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE**- There are now 6 places open for our parish pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The cost is £1333 for 7 nights in a shared room accommodation with a return flight from London Luton Airport. If you are still interested to join, please see Fr. Carlos or contact the Parish Office in order to receive a Booking form and Brochure

**HOUSE BLESSINGS DURING CHRISTMAS** - It is traditional in some countries for the Priest to visit and bless homes. If you are interested, please contact the Parish Office in order to leave your details for Fr. Carlos

**ST JOSEPH'S SVP**- Thank everyone for their support during this year



**GAUDETE SUNDAY** - is the third Sunday of Advent in the Roman Catholic calendar of the Church year. The term is derived from the Latin opening words of the introit antiphon, "Rejoice (Gaudete) in the Lord always." The theme of the day expresses the joy of anticipation at the approach of the coming of Our Lord at Christmas, reflecting a lightening of the tone of the traditional Advent observance. This is why the Celebrant of the Mass can choose to wear rose-coloured vestments on this day instead of the deeper violet vestments typically worn during Advent. Please pray for Joan Masters in whose memory the vestment worn by Father at St Joseph's this weekend was presented. This Sunday was also known as "Rose Sunday" and that is why we also have a pink or rose-coloured candle among the four candles in our Advent wreath.

**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 £1080.07. This weekend is the last collection for donations so that we can send our final amount to the Night Shelter before Christmas. Thank you very much for your support.

**THANK YOU** to Parishioners at Holy Cross who kindly collected £89 for the Night Shelter last weekend.

**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.

**GIVING TREE 2019** -Thank you to everyone that has supported us again this year with your generosity providing Christmas presents for the children that attend the Catholic Children's Centre in East London. Please contact Mandy on 07985 111 235 if you haven't managed to return your gift this weekend,

**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 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at 8pm in the WCC will discuss Prayer; the Heartbeat of a Christian.



*"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say rejoice. Indeed the Lord is near"*

**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

**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 Jumbulance) Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> 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's 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 Jumbulance) - Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at St Joseph's School - details to follow...

**ALPS (Across Lourdes Pilgrims and Supporters)** will be meeting for coffee after Mass in the Parish Centre on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every month, starting on **Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> January**. If you've been to Lourdes with Across, want to know more or wish to support the work of Across do come along and join us for coffee and a catch up. We'll be meeting from 10am so do pop in and find out more. If you have any queries call Alison Jones on 01279 755792.



**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 8/9 Dec 2019 Loose Coin & Envelopes Nov D/D**

**St Joseph and the English Martyrs:**

Collection: Loose- £ 690.24 Envelopes- £512.00 D/D £7,162.34

**Holy Cross**

Collection: Loose- £ 25 Envelopes-£0 D/D £1,015.00

**Most Holy Redeemer:**

Collection: Loose- £ 144.69 Envelopes-£ 25 D/D £1,129.33



**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 3

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.  
Indeed, the Lord is near.

### COLLECT

O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### FIRST READING Isaiah 35:1-6.10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

Let the wilderness and the dry-lands exult, let the wasteland rejoice and bloom, let it bring forth flowers like the jonquil, let it rejoice and sing for joy.

The glory of Lebanon is bestowed on it, the splendour of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, the splendour of our God.

Strengthen all weary hands, steady all trembling knees and say to all faint hearts, "Courage! Do not be afraid.

"Look your God is coming, vengeance is coming, the retribution of God; he is coming to save you."

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf unsealed, then the lame shall leap like a deer and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy, for those the Lord has ransomed shall return.

They will come to Zion shouting for joy, everlasting joy in their faces; joy and gladness will go with them and sorrow and lament be ended.

The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

### PSALM Psalm 145

Response:  
Come, Lord, and save us.  
or Alleluia!

1. It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever, who is just to those who are oppressed. It is he who gives bread to the hungry, the Lord, who sets prisoners free. (R.)
2. It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind, who raises up those who are bowed down, the Lord, who protects the stranger and upholds the widow and orphan. (R.)
3. It is the Lord who loves the just but thwarts the path of the wicked. The Lord will reign for ever, Zion's God, from age to age. (R.)

### SECOND READING James 5:7-10

A reading from the letter of St James.

Be patient, brothers, until the Lord's coming. Think of a farmer: how patiently he waits for the precious fruit of the ground until it

has had the autumn rains and the spring rains! You too have to be patient; do not lose heart, because the Lord's coming will be soon. Do not make complaints against one another, brothers, so as not to be brought to judgement yourselves; the Judge is already to be seen waiting at the gates. For your example, brothers, in submitting with patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia! alleluia!

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor. Alleluia!

### GOSPEL Matthew 11:2-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

John in his prison had heard what Christ was doing and he sent his disciples to ask him, "Are you the one who is to come, or have we got to wait for someone else?" Jesus answered, "Go back and tell John what you hear and see; the blind see again, and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised to life and the Good News is proclaimed to the poor; and happy is the man who does not lose faith in me."

As the messengers were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the people about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the breeze? No? Then what did you go out to see? A man wearing fine clothes? Oh no, those who wear fine clothes are to be found in palaces. Then what did you go out for? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and much more than a prophet: he is the one of whom scripture says: Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way before you. I tell you solemnly, of all the children born of women, a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is."

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

May the sacrifice of our worship, Lord, we pray, be offered to you unceasingly, to complete what was begun in sacred mystery and powerfully accomplish for us your saving work. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We implore your mercy, Lord, that this divine sustenance may cleanse us of our faults and prepare us for the coming feasts. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## ARE YOU THE ONE? (MATTHEW 11:2-11)



In today's Gospel, we learn that John the Baptist has been thrown into prison. He has heard about Jesus' activities and wonders if Jesus is the one who is to come.

Matthew presents Jesus as offering evidence that he is the Messiah (the Christ) through his works of power in healing. These show God's power breaking through into human life, where that life is impaired or endangered, and this is the coming of the kingdom. Not everyone will accept the evidence of their own eyes and Jesus will be rejected by many members of the religious establishment and of his own family, and he pronounces a blessing on those who do not lose faith.

John is in prison probably because he was attracting key figures in the service of Herod Antipas, the ruler of Judaea, such as soldiers and tax officials: Herod would perceive him as becoming a rival focus of influence and hence a threat to his authority and rule. Some people would see the Messiah as a political/military figure who would provide precisely such leadership: Matthew shows that Jesus as the Christ would not conform to such worldly expectations, hence the list of healings which he gives as signs that the kingdom of God has arrived.

However important John the Baptist may have been, his era is now over, and the least in the kingdom is greater than he is. He is, in a sense, the last of the prophets, one who remains steadfast to his beliefs and the ultimate witness, and it is for that reason that the Church honours him as a saint in the Christian tradition for his part in the Gospel story of Jesus. ■

### DO

Consider celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation as part of your preparation for the feast of Our Lord's Nativity.



### LEARN

Christ is a Greek term meaning anointed.

Messiah is a Hebrew term meaning anointed.

In popular thought, the Messiah would be a military hero who would liberate the people of Israel from Roman rule.

### REFLECT

There seem to have been differing ideas as to what kind of person the Messiah would be. Today's Gospel presents Jesus as revealing the presence of the kingdom of God through healing and the proclaiming of the Good News. This is the mission which he will entrust to the disciples later in the narrative.

The miracle stories in the Gospel illustrate the kingdom breaking into human life. The mission to proclaim God's love and concern for human beings did not end with the immediate disciples of Jesus but has been given to his disciples down through the ages. We, the members of the Church, are called upon to be missionary disciples wherever we find ourselves. It is perhaps easy to see the Church as a fortress under siege; but the picture of the kingdom is rather one of going on the offensive, of attacking those situations where people are suffering, whether it be through sickness, injustice or prejudice, anywhere that human life is less than it should be. Maybe we should think of being redeemed or saved in a wider context than individual, personal sin: the Bible thinks in terms of being a member of a group, the people of Israel or one of the disciples of Jesus. Being a disciple of Jesus brings responsibilities towards our brothers and sisters. ■

### SAY

The least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John the Baptist.

(see Matthew 11:11)



Stained glass in Catholic church in Dublin showing John the Baptist