



# 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 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

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> December - Advent feria**

*St Joseph and the English Martyrs:*

9.30am Mass - Marian & Michael Mc Gee Intention



**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December - Advent feria**

*St Joseph and the English Martyrs*

5pm Mass - People of the Parish

7pm - 2<sup>nd</sup> Vigil Mass of Christmas - People of the Parish

11.30pm - Carols and Readings

Midnight Mass - People of the Parish

**Most Holy Redeemer**

6.45pm - 7.10pm Confessions

7.30pm Carols and Readings

8pm Mass - People of the Parish



**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December - The Nativity of the Lord**

*St Joseph and the English Martyrs:*

9am Mass - Mary and Harry Matthews RIP

11am - People of the Parish

**Holy Cross**

11.15am Mass - People of the Parish

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> December - St Stephen, the First Martyr**

*St Joseph and the English Martyrs:*

10am Mass - Theresa and Mary Cannon RIP

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> December - St John, Apostle & Evangelist**

*St Joseph and the English Martyrs:*

9.30am Mass - Maggie & Sheila Intention

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> December - The Holy Innocents, Martyrs**

*St Joseph and the English Martyrs:*

5pm-5.45pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament &

Sacrament of Reconciliation

6pm Mass - Mark Goodfield RIP

## OFFERTORY COLLECTORS HELP NEEDED FOR ONE NIGHT ONLY!

For the three Masses held on Christmas Eve at St Joseph's at 5pm, 7pm and Midnight, we need 6 volunteers for each Mass to help with the Offertory collection please. It is anticipated that the Masses will be well attended, so if you are able to help to take charge of and pass a collection basket around the Church, it would be most appreciated. There is a sign-up sheet for each Mass in the Sacristy. Thank you very much

**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.

**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

**VACANCIES AT ST MARY'S** - for a Science technician, 22hrs a week term time only. Also required are an Assistant Head, Head of DT (Expansion posts) a Business manager, various teaching positions and Examination Invigilators. Visit <http://www.stmarys.net/about-us/vacancies/>

**LOURDES PHOTOGRAPHS** - If you ordered any photographs following the recent Lourdes Pilgrimage, they are ready for collection in the Sacristy.

**THANK YOU FROM THE FOOD BANK** - We have received a letter of thanks on behalf of the Trustees & team of volunteers at the Food Bank. *'Because of the fantastic donations made by your Church and others, we know that we will be able to make sure that people in crisis have enough to eat and show them they are important and valued. Perhaps more important than the food itself, is the message that you send to us that in doing God's work and in demonstrating His love for the poor, we are supported by your prayers'*



**GIVING TREE THANK YOU** - *'Thank you so very much for all the wonderful presents that, yet again you have sent. It really does make such a difference to our families. So from the bottom of our hearts thank you to all that organise it and all the amazing parishioners'* Regards - Catholic Family Centre



*Fr Peter, Fr Carlos and the Pastoral Council and Committees of our three Churches, send you their thanks for the past year and every prayer and good wish for a Happy, Blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year!*

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

**CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES** - Please do take a leaflet, one per household advertising our Christmas Mass times along with a blessing for your Christmas tree and Crib at home

**ADVANCED NOTICE RE REFRESHMENTS** - Unfortunately due to a booking in the WCC St Joseph's Hall, there will be **NO** refreshments served on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2020

**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 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at 8pm in the WCC will discuss 'The Fountain of Life, The Word of God and Scripture'

**PENNY COLLECTION** - Thank you to everyone in the Parish who supported the 'Night Shelter'. A cheque for £1309.63 has been sent to Holy Trinity

**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



## PARISH OFFICE OPENING HOURS OVER CHRISTMAS

25<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Day - Closed  
 26<sup>th</sup> December - St Stephens Day - Closed  
 27<sup>th</sup> December - 8am-2pm  
 28<sup>th</sup> December - Closed  
 29<sup>th</sup> December - Closed  
 30<sup>th</sup> December - 9am-3pm  
 31<sup>st</sup> December - 9am-3pm  
 1<sup>st</sup> January - Closed  
 2<sup>nd</sup> January - 9am-3pm  
 3<sup>rd</sup> January - 9am-3pm

## Sacramental Preparation



**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



Collections 15/16 Dec 2019 Loose Coin & Envelopes Nov D/D  
**St Joseph and the English Martyrs:**  
 Collection: Loose- £ 749.47 Envelopes- £601.95 D/D £1,162.34  
**Holy Cross**  
 Collection: Loose- £ 48.50 Envelopes- £10 D/D £1,015.00  
**Most Holy Redeemer:**  
 Collection: Loose- £ 138.14 Envelopes- £ 30 D/D £1,129.33

**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.

**TEACHING** - Harlow and Epping Teacher Training Partnership are hosting a 'drop-in' recruitment event for university graduates and final year students, at Harlow Study Centre, CM16 6BWJ on January 7<sup>th</sup> 2020, between 4.30 - 7pm. This event will answer any questions and help find the right route into teaching. Graduates will be able to discuss the application process and received support from a 'Get into Teaching' advisor.

**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 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)

*Loving mother of the Redeemer,  
 gate of heaven, star of the sea,  
 assist your people who have fallen yet strive to rise again,  
 To the wonderment of nature you bore your Creator,  
 yet remained a virgin after as before,  
 You who received Gabriel's joyful greeting,  
 have pity on us poor sinners.*



# Sunday Message

22 DECEMBER 2019

4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## THE WORD

Year A • Psalter Week 4

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Drop down dew from above, you heavens,  
and let the clouds rain down the Just One;  
let the earth be opened and bring forth a  
Saviour.

### COLLECT

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,  
your grace into our hearts,  
that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ  
your Son  
was made known by the message of an Angel,  
may by his Passion and Cross  
be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.  
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of  
the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

### FIRST READING

Isaiah 7:10-14

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

The Lord spoke to Ahaz and said, "Ask the  
Lord your God for a sign for yourself coming  
either from the depths of Sheol or from the  
heights above." "No," Ahaz answered "I will  
not put the Lord to the test."

Then Isaiah said:

"Listen now, House of David:  
are you not satisfied with trying the patience  
of men  
without trying the patience of my God, too?  
The Lord himself, therefore,  
will give you a sign.  
It is this: the maiden is with child  
and will soon give birth to a son  
whom she will call Emmanuel,  
a name which means 'God-is-with-us'."

The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

### PSALM

Psalms 23

Response:

Let the Lord enter!  
He is the king of glory.

1. The Lord's is the earth and its fullness,  
the world and all its peoples.  
It is he who set it on the seas;  
on the waters he made it firm. (R.)
2. Who shall climb the mountain of the  
Lord?  
Who shall stand in his holy place?  
The man with clean hands and pure  
heart,  
who desires not worthless things. (R.)
3. He shall receive blessings from the Lord  
and reward from the God who saves him.  
Such are the men who seek him,  
seek the face of the God of Jacob. (R.)

### SECOND READING

Romans 1:1-7

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

From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus who has  
been called to be an apostle, and specially  
chosen to preach the Good News that God  
promised long ago through his prophets in  
the scriptures.

This news is about the Son of God, who,  
according to the human nature he took, was  
a descendant of David: it is about Jesus  
Christ our Lord who, in the order of the  
spirit, the spirit of holiness that was in him,

was proclaimed Son of God in all his power  
through his resurrection from the dead.  
Through him we received grace and our  
apostolic mission to preach the obedience  
of faith to all pagan nations in honour of his  
name. You are one of these nations, and by  
his call belong to Jesus Christ. To you all,  
then, who are God's beloved in Rome, called  
to be saints, may God our Father and the  
Lord Jesus Christ send grace and peace.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a  
son  
and they will call him Emmanuel,  
a name which means "God-is-with-us".  
Alleluia!

### GOSPEL

Matthew 1:18-24

A reading from the holy Gospel according to  
Matthew.

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born.  
His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph;  
but before they came to live together she  
was found to be with child through the Holy  
Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of  
honour and wanting to spare her publicity,  
decided to divorce her informally. He had  
made up his mind to do this when the angel  
of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, and  
said "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid  
to take Mary home as your wife, because  
she has conceived what is in her by the Holy  
Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you  
must name him Jesus, because he is the one  
who is to save his people from their sins." Now  
all this took place to fulfil the words  
spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a  
son  
and they will name him Emmanuel,  
a name which means "God-is-with-us".  
When Joseph woke up he did what the angel  
of the Lord had told him to do: he took his  
wife to his home.

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 Holy Spirit, O Lord,  
sanctify these gifts laid upon your altar,  
just as he filled with his power the womb of  
the Blessed Virgin Mary.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a  
son;  
and his name will be called Emmanuel.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Having received this pledge of eternal  
redemption,  
we pray, almighty God,  
that, as the feast day of our salvation draws  
ever nearer,  
so we may press forward all the more eagerly  
to the worthy celebration of the mystery of  
your Son's Nativity.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.  
Amen.



Stained glass window depicting the dream of St Joseph, in the Cathedral of St Rumbold in Mechelen, Belgium.

DON'T  
BE AFRAID,  
JOSEPH!

(MATTHEW 1:18-24)

### SAY

The maiden is with child and  
will soon give birth to a son  
(Isaiah 7:14)

### LEARN

Joseph was the legal, not the biological  
father of Jesus.

It is through Joseph that Jesus is the son  
of David.

The figure of Joseph in Matthew's Gospel  
recalls the Joseph of Genesis (he of the "coat  
of many colours").

### DO

Try to find a statue or picture of the sleeping  
Joseph: reflect on his call and then on  
your own.

The main character in Matthew's first two chapters, the part of the  
Gospel often called the birth or infancy narrative, is Joseph. It is to  
Joseph that the annunciation of the birth of Jesus is made, and Joseph  
is the focus of attention.

The text refers to Joseph as son of David, and it is through Joseph that Jesus inherits the  
title and the promises made to that king of Israel by God through the prophet Nathan. This  
happens because Joseph agrees to become the legal father of Jesus, and by naming him he  
accepts him as his own son and the promise passes to Jesus.

Matthew presents Joseph as the model Israelite: he knows that the Law prescribes a  
severe penalty for his fiancée, Mary, who is pregnant and not by him. However, he is also  
a compassionate person and decides to resolve the situation privately and not cause her  
public disgrace. The evangelist casts Joseph in the mould of the Joseph of Genesis, the  
master of dreams, thus recalling the person who saved his family by bringing them to Egypt.  
The Gospel hero has a series of dreams in which God directs his actions and so brings Jesus  
eventually to Nazareth. ■

### REFLECT

The role of Joseph has been greatly  
overshadowed by that of Mary,  
mainly due to later Christian piety.  
However, in Matthew's Gospel, he is the  
one who facilitates God's plan and who  
plays the major part in the story. It is  
through Joseph that Matthew introduces  
the theme which will run through his  
version of the story of Jesus, that of  
the Exodus. In himself, Jesus will relive  
the experience of Israel and will fulfil  
the meaning of that event, which we  
celebrate at the Easter Vigil.

We might ponder on a human level the  
experience which Joseph underwent in  
our episode today. Being asked to bring  
up someone else's child just before your  
wedding would be a challenge for any  
man. It became customary to depict  
Joseph as almost elderly in comparison  
to Mary, but he is more likely to have  
been of a similar age to his betrothed.

The name which the angel instructs  
Joseph to give to Jesus is symbolic:  
nowhere in the Gospel is Jesus ever  
called "Emmanuel". It means that  
whenever we think of Jesus, we should

remember that in him God is with us,  
and that at the end of the Gospel, Jesus  
promises to be with his disciples until the  
end of time. God has chosen to work in  
the world through human beings. That is  
one of the lessons of the mystery which  
we call the incarnation: like Joseph and  
Mary, we have our part to play in making  
God's plan a reality. We might remember  
that they had to give their free consent  
as well. We could keep in mind all those  
people who offer to adopt children and  
bring them up as their own: in this they  
have the example of Joseph who adopted  
Jesus as his own son. ■

