

## Message for the Sixth Sunday of Easter

Dear brothers and sisters,

We usually sing *Alleluia! Sing to Jesus* during the Easter Season. There is, in fact, a verse in which is fitting for this time:

Alleluia, not as orphans  
are we left in sorrow now;  
alleluia, he is near us,  
faith believes, nor questions how;  
though the cloud from sight received him  
when the forty days were o'er,  
shall our hearts forget his promise,  
'I am with you evermore'?

The Solemnity of the Ascension of Our Lord will take place this Thursday. It seems that Jesus wishes to leave his apostles in sadness. Perhaps the apostles felt they needed more than 40 days to witness the risen Christ, but the Lord has not left them completely. He promises the Advocate – the Holy Spirit – a promise even mentioned before his Passion. The apostles knew what they had to do – Pray and, at Pentecost, proclaim their witness of the Risen Christ, even if he's no longer physically present.



The time of the pandemic and lockdown has perhaps made this question spring up before us: 'Where is God?' We could imagine of 1,001 ways in which God could have resolved the pandemic; but it hasn't happened. Instead, what has the pandemic brought upon us? A rediscovery of our own humanity, a yearning for service, a recognition that there is another, etc... Fundamentally, a rediscovery or deepening of our relationship of love between God and neighbour. Families spend time with their children; neighbours are attentive of each other; the elderly have regained a precedence in society; and, even in the midst of the horror of death, we discover to appreciate life as a gift from God every day.

Perhaps it is interesting that we may have a 'hidden' God, even in the midst of distress, but doesn't forget his promise:

'I am with you evermore'.

Sincerely,  
Fr. Carlos

## A Note from the Parish Office and the Sunday Message for the Sixth Sunday of Easter from Fr Carlos

Bishop's Stortford - St Joseph & The English Martyr <bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk>  
Fri 5/15/2020 4:40 PM

 1 attachments (168 KB)

Message for the Sixth Sunday of Easter.docx;

Good afternoon everyone

I hope that you are well.

Please find attached this week's Sunday message from Fr Carlos for the Sixth Sunday of Easter.

This week, preliminary work began in St Joseph's for the installation of the underfloor heating project in accordance with HM Government guidelines. The contractors have so far, disconnected the old oil tank in the basement, demolished a wall and made a start on lifting the wooden parquet floor in the Church. The first job however was to move all of the heavy wooden pews which Fr Peter had skillfully calculated would fit beautifully in the Baptistry area, standing on their ends. He had also been busy unscrewing a large shelving unit in the basement, used to house boxes of candles and advised me that he had removed by hand and counted 283 screws in total!

The other evening I watched a television programme about 'Portmeirion', a tourist village in North Wales, which I have visited in the past. It was also the location where Patrick Mc Goohan filmed the spy drama, 'The Prisoner' where he uttered the famous line, 'I am not a number'. This must have played in my sub conscious mind as following this and the previous conversation had with Fr Peter about the number of screws he had removed, got me thinking about the significance of numbers... so, probably, having spent a little too much time in the sun(!) for some strange reason, I decided to look up everything to do with the number 283 and discovered the following facts..

**283** - is a prime number, the year when St Gaios became a Catholic Pope, the estimated number of pieces of chewing gum found stuck on the underside of the upturned pews in the Church - this story will be saved for another week (!), the number of calories in 100g of Tiramisu ( probably a good couple of spoonfuls) the number given to a fast Chevy car engine designed by JT Gonzalez, the number for the Ohio telephone area code, 283 - the section of the Catechism of the Catholic Church which relates to origins of the world and of man in the catechesis of creation, the BA flight number from London to Los Angeles and hymn no 283 in the Laudate hymn book is entitled 'The day of resurrection!..

Photographs of the work to date have been uploaded to our web site.. just to keep you all updated with the progress.

**Zoom** - Last week we were joined by Sophie and Mike O' Sullivan from Zimbabwe which was great. This week John is again kindly hosting another Zoom meeting with the 9am Music Group. The details are as below. For the future we are also looking into the feasibility of how to ' telephone' in to a Mass via Zoom ( for those without a computer or internet) so that we can include more Parishioners but first need to research the practicalities and cost of the call.

### How it works:

- \* Different members of the 9am Music Group will lead different hymns before and after Mass.
- \* We will start the Meeting about 8:40am to allow people to join and get technology working.

- \* Our hymns will start about 8:50am. At the end of Mass we will play a Communion and Exit Hymn.
- \* We ask everyone to stay muted during the Mass otherwise your audio will affect others ability to hear the Priest.
- \* Feel free to join with or without video! But if you are on video, we ask that you be appropriately dressed!
- \* After the hymns at the end of Mass we will unmute everyone so you can say hello and have a chat about your week.

Thanks everyone and we hope you enjoy a brief sense of community while things are in lock-down.

God bless x  
9am Music Group

Zoom Meeting details...

**Topic:** Sunday 9am Mass via Zoom during lock-down

**Time:** May 17, 2020 08:30 AM London

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86759566633>

**Meeting ID:** 867 5956 6633

**Alison Gornall RIP** - On Thursday morning we received the very sad news that Alison Gornall from St Joseph's had died. Alison was a wonderful lady, kind, gentle, caring and generous with her time and talent in the parish. She was a loving wife, mother, daughter, sister and very good friend. Despite being ill, Alison was always positive and happy, a bundle of energy with the most beautiful smile and sense of fun. She was extremely well organised and a dedicated Eucharistic Minister, Reader, a Registrar, the Secretary of the parish social committee, a volunteer at Across and a former PA at St Mary's school. Alison's faith was very important to her and last October she arranged an evening mass of thanksgiving for her family and friends in the parish, which was very well attended. Alison was immensely popular and much loved by us all and we shall miss her terribly. Please keep Alison and her family in your thoughts and prayers at this time.

*Eternal rest grant unto Alison O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace.  
Amen*

**Churches Together in Bishop's Stortford** - Churches Together will be focusing on Christian Aid as with previous years ( 10-17 May ) but contributions this year can be made online. More details are on our web site. Every day a Noon day prayer is also added to our website compiled by the Churches Together in Bishop's Stortford which you may enjoy.

**SPA Group** - The Senior Parish Art Group have again been very busy creating paintings and drawings this week. Also, Susannah Croft, one of our Altar servers at St Joseph's made some very attractive biscuits, resembling famous well known books - photographic evidence of which is on the SPA Group page.

**The Monastery Gardens** - We received an email today from the Bishop's Stortford Town Council asking us to advise/ remind our Parishioners that the Monastery gardens and car park are private property and that no one should be using the grounds for 'exercise' or as a ' meeting place . It transpires that there have been reports of dog walkers, joggers and children playing using the site as a park in recent days with rubbish left in the Bandstand area. There is no evidence at all to suggest that any of our Parishioners are involved, but they wished us just to be aware as ' private property signage is being erected around the site.

**Phishing Attempts** - Both Interpol and Europol have warned of huge spikes in COVID-19 fraud. In mid-April, Google reported that in one week, it saw more than 18 million daily malware and phishing emails related to Covid-19 scams were sent via Gmail alone, in addition to the 240 million daily Covid-19 related spam messages Google saw. Please continue to be alert as this week a couple of our Parishioners received such an email purporting to be from Fr Peter Harris using a Gmail account asking for help. This was a complete hoax.

**Please do not respond to any such email but please consider forwarding on to Action fraud as a phishing attempt via the address below for their information.**

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report-phishing>

If such an email originates from Gmail and is sent to your Gmail account, it can also be reported to them also using the link below and you can add the address to your blocked sender list.

<https://support.google.com/mail/contact/abuse>

Any emails sent from Fr Peter, Fr Carlos or myself will always use an authorised and approved Diocesan email account which is monitored and kept secure by our ICT department in Westminster and **not** a Gmail account or similar.

If you are ever in any doubt that any email purporting to be from Fr Peter, Fr Carlos of the Parish office is not a genuine one, please contact the office to double check.

**World Communications Day - Sunday 24th May** - There is a new social media campaign #Faithinlockdown leading up to World Communications Day which is inspired by the message from Pope Francis. In this he invites us to share our stories, and particularly this year, to share stories of how we are keeping our faith alive during lockdown. If you use Twitter or Instagram please share your stories of faith and use the hashtag #Faithinlockdown. Don't forget to follow us @ RCStortford too!

**Parishioner of the week** - Mention this week is to Terry Grace, who very kindly called another Parishioner, who does not have access to watch Mass via the Live stream, placing his telephone receiver against his speakers, so that they were able to hear the Mass broadcast over the telephone. Thank you Terry!

And finally.. back to numbers and Hymn no 283, leaving you with the lovely words of the last verse..

*' Now let the heavens be joyful, and earth her song begin, the round world keep high triumph, and all that is therein; let all things seen and unseen their notes of gladness blend, for Christ the Lord has risen, our joy that hath no end'*

Fr Peter and Fr Carlos continue to keep you in their thoughts and prayers

I hope that you all have a very happy, healthy and holy week.

Many thanks

Best wishes

Debbie