

## Parish Message for Ss. Peter and Paul

Dear Parishioners,

This past Wednesday, I celebrated three years of my Priesthood. There was great joy, but it was involved with a great deal of stress. Guests were arriving from the UK, the US, Europe, and even as far as my uncle who managed to come from Cuba. Surely there was a lot of preparation for the big day – from the Liturgy of the Ordination and First Mass and Receptions, my appointment to Bishop's Stortford, and even the time to spend with my family. I can remember the generosity, support, and prayers of so many people who have helped me over the years. I can also recall of the great generosity, support, and prayers for those who have supported me as priest here, especially when I celebrated my first anniversary.

You don't realise that many people are there for you until you see it:  
At the Cathedral:



My First Mass in  
The  
Annunciation,  
Burnt Oak:



And even the following day, meeting Fr. Peter and Debbie for the First Time:

But there was a greater preparation, even in a time no one expected. The clue is found in the First Reading from the Solemnity of the Nativity of John the Baptist (24 June – the day I was ordained):

‘The Lord called me from birth, from my mother’s womb he gave me my name. He made of me a sharp-edged sword and concealed me in the shadow of his arm’ (Isaiah 49:2-3)



The Lord had it prepared for me to become a priest. It took time (27 years of life and 9 years of seminary formation), it involved moments of joy and sorrow, preparedness and resilience, and certainties and fears – even seeing the protection of God in a car accident in Italy. I was encouraged by my family, friends, fellow seminarians, parishioners in the parishes I served previously as a layman, seminarian, and deacon. With what the Lord has given me, I am called to offer it with gladness, humility, and joy (though I’m sure that there have been moments that my weaknesses outshine my strengths).

Looking at these three years of priesthood (as of 23/06/2020) – 1074 Masses, 69 Baptisms, 9 Weddings, 146 Children prepared for First Holy Communion (and 74 more for this current year), 3 children for Reception to the Church, and many innumerable visits to the housebound, infirmed, families, couples in need, and so much more – I must say that I do not find myself worthy to boast about it, but rather humbled for the Lord to help, strengthen, and even use me to be his servant, his forerunner, his messenger of Good News.

I am sure that there won’t be a monument, a book, or some big display of who I am – in fact, I am not looking for that – but I see day by day how God uses this earthenware jar in order to give himself to those in need.

Encourage the call of the priesthood to your sons, grandsons, nephews, cousins, and friends. It’s true: the pay is not great and you’re not fixed to one place; but when you see the smile of a parishioner when their loved one is remembered at Mass or prayed for, receiving a Sacrament, being forgiven and absolved of their sins, blessing the exchange of vows at

Marriage, anointing and giving spiritual comfort in an hour of illness, or even consoling at the hour of a one or loved one's death and funeral – that is the wage of the labourer at the vineyard.

Although I will not always be here, I know that you are always there for me, as you have had for my predecessors at Bishop's Stortford. Pray for us priests and pray for vocations, that we may have the spirit of John the Baptist and Saints Peter and Paul, whom we celebrate this Sunday – to go with great zeal and announce the Gospel both in word and deed to those who need it.

St. John the Baptist, pray for me.

Ss. Peter and Paul, pray for me.

Fr. Carlos

## Parish Note Friday 26th June 2020 and the Sunday Message for St Peter and St Paul by Fr Carlos

Bishop's Stortford - St Joseph & The English Martyr <bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk>

Fri 6/26/2020 4:30 PM

To: Bishop's Stortford - St Joseph & The English Martyr <bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk>

 1 attachments (944 KB)

Message for Ss. Peter and Paul (Bishop's Stortford - St Joseph & The English Martyr).docx;

Good afternoon everyone

I hope that you are well. Another week seems to have flown by..

Please find attached the Sunday message for this week, also found on our web site, written by Fr Carlos, which contains some lovely memories and photographs looking back as he celebrated his 3rd year of Priesthood on Wednesday. We are very blessed indeed that Fr Carlos came to our parish and we continue to pray for him and for Fr Peter.

This week, I ventured into my loft, which is more like an Aladdin's cave of 'things' which I have kept, 'just in case' it may be of use to someone. If I am truly honest, probably a lot of the items remaining, having already given a lot of things away, consist of my simple 'treasures and memories', which were special to me and are of no monetary value or real use to anyone else. I need to be more 'ruthless' and have a good sort out, which I will do.. eventually. As a child, I had a 'memory tin' which I was quite excited to discover that I still had in one of the many cardboard boxes upstairs. Inside I found various shells, stones, a shriveled up 'winning' conker on a piece of string, swimming badges, a silver jubilee coin and a signed photograph and letter dated 1976 from the late Roy Castle and Norris McWhirter. They presented a TV programme called 'Record Breakers' on such facts like, who the tallest person in the world was, or the fastest animal etc. I remember writing a letter to them at the tender age of 7 1/2 years asking what the world record was for French knitting, as at the time I had a 'wooden dolly' with four pins attached on which you wound wool around, somehow producing a long skinny knitted sausage rope and my effort was about 2ft long. I felt a bit disappointed when I discovered that the world record at that time was actually 1 1/2 miles in length, but carried on regardless until I eventually ran out of wool, making it at least 2 1/2 ft(!) The other night, out of curiosity, I googled the current world record and discovered that it was now 19 miles and the record holder was a man from Kent ( probably the same person who robbed me of a title all those years ago!) This got me looking at other records listed but those with a religious theme and I discovered the following..

The world's largest Christian denomination is the Roman Catholic Church, which in 2011 had approximately 1.1 billion members ( lots more now I'm sure!)

The oldest Pontiff at the time of his election was Clement X (Italy, b. Emilio Altieri 13 July 1590) who became Pope on 29 April 1670 at the age of 79 years 290 days and ordained on 11 May that year. He died on 22 July 1676.

The largest collection of stamps featuring Popes is 1,580 and was achieved by Magnus Andersson (Sweden) and counted at the public library in Falun, Sweden on 16 November 2010.

The longest serving Altar boy was Peter Reilly (RIP) (UK, b 11 Feb 1915) who served for 91 years at St Mary's RC Church, Saltcoats, UK, as verified on 11 February 2015.

Peter served at his last Mass on his 100th birthday. He received Apostolic Blessings from Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis noting his service to the Church - an amazing achievement and real dedication.

**From Fr Carlos** -Here are the hymns for the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul (6pm Sat and 11am Sun Mass)

**Entrance Hymn: 379 - O Peter, You Were Named by Christ**

Words: Please see below

The Melody will be to that of 'All People that on Earth do Dwell'

O Peter who were named by Christ  
The guardian-shepherd of His flock,  
Protect the Church He built on you  
To stand unyielding, firm on rock.

Your weakness, Christ exchanged for strength,  
You faltered but He made you true.  
He knew the greatness of your love  
And gave the keys of heav'n to you.

Apostle of the gentiles, Paul,  
The greatest witness of them all,  
You turned to Christ, the risen Lord.  
When out of light you heard him call.

You journeyed far and wide to tell  
That Christ has risen from the dead;  
That all who put their faith in him  
Would live for ever, as he said.

Unseen, eternal Trinity,  
We give You glory, praise Your name,  
Your love keeps faith with faithless men,  
Through change and stress You are the same.

**Communion Hymn: 663 - Sweet Sacrament Divine**

Words and Melody: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dIYY3tComqY>

**Recessional Hymn: 380 - Into a World of Darkness Since the Fall**

Words: Please see below

The Melody will be to that of 'For All the Saints'

Into a world of darkness since the fall,  
New light has dawned, two champions heard the call:  
Peter the rock, and Paul once known as Saul.  
Alleluia, alleluia.

First Peter stared in wonder at the sight,  
Jesus, transfigured, clothed in glorious light,  
Then heard God praise his Son from heaven's height.  
Alleluia, alleluia.

Beside a desert road a different sign,  
Saul saw a blinding light in splendour shine  
And Jesus told him, 'These you hurt are mine!'  
Alleluia, alleluia.

On each a lifelong mission was conferred,

'Go tell the nations all that you have heard  
Of God made known through Christ, th'incarnate Word.'  
Alleluia, alleluia.

Their work accomplished, called to their reward,  
One crucified, one martyred by the sword,  
Their deaths bore witness to the risen Lord:  
Alleluia, alleluia.

**Zoom** - Thank you again to John and the 9am Music Group for your kindness and generosity in sharing your time and talents. We Zoom again this Sunday..

Topic: Family Mass via Zoom during lock-down (music starting at 8:45am)

Time: 08:30 AM London

Every week on Sun, until Jul 26, 2020, 5 occurrence(s)

Jun 28, 2020 08:30 AM

Jul 5, 2020 08:30 AM

Jul 12, 2020 08:30 AM

Jul 19, 2020 08:30 AM

Jul 26, 2020 08:30 AM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89508074176>

Meeting ID: 895 0807 4176

Link to Calendar invite is parishioners want to add it to their diary.

One tap mobile:

+442030512874,,89508074176# United Kingdom

Dial-in by phone:

0203 051 2874

The numbers are standard rate numbers (not free unless you have inclusive minutes), but they are not premium numbers.

**Most Holy Redeemer** - It was exciting to be able to once again open the door for private prayer on Thursday at Most Holy Redeemer. Fr Peter and Fr Carlos welcomed in our parishioners, assisted by John Hodgson, who kindly gave up his time to act as a Steward. We will open again next Tuesday and Thursday between 12pm - 1pm

**Holy Cross at St Andrews, Much Hadham** - We are very pleased to announce that from this Sunday and each subsequent Sunday until further notice, Holy Cross will open its doors for private prayer between 2.30pm - 4.30pm. We are very grateful to Reverend Steve Bates and the Parishioners at both St Andrews and Holy Cross who have volunteered and helped to make this happen.

**St Joseph's** - remains closed at this time until further notice, as we still have workers in the Church fixing the underfloor heating system. Next week ' Carel' our heating system will be connected to the 3 Phase electricity meter and tested. Following this, work will then start on the floor covering itself. Daily Mass times will revert back to 9.30am from Monday 29th June via our live stream as usual.

**Windhill Churches Centre** - Please be aware that the Windhill Churches Centre is not yet open for Parish groups or individuals to use the hall, kitchen, toilets or upstairs rooms and is kept locked and alarmed. As with the opening of our Churches, there will be a requirement for a Diocesan risk assessment to ensure that

the premises is COVID-19 secure and also to follow government advice on gatherings. As we share the Centre with St Michael's Church and have a joint management committee, this will be subject of further discussion to ensure a joint approach.

**Update** - Last week we told you about the lady who had collapsed near to St Joseph's and who was helped by workers using our defibrillator. Earlier this week we received an amazing update from the lady's daughter who wrote, '*Over the weekend Mum has made even more remarkable steps and is getting stronger. She has spoken to us all on the phone and even face timed my son last night. She has sat up in a chair and been eating some meals. It is truly a miracle. They are hoping to move her out of intensive care today and onto the cardiology ward. I listened to the Sunday Mass and heard the prayer for Mum. This means so much*'.

**Baptism Preparation Course by Zoom** - For those parents who were unable to attend the last Baptism preparation course on 12 March before lock down and for any 'new' parents who have not yet attended a course or those who last attended 2+ years ago and wish for their Child to be baptised, Fr Carlos will be running a 'Zoom Baptism Preparation Course' on Monday 6th July 2020 at 7.30pm. Unfortunately, we are not yet permitted to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism itself, but, by being prepared, this is one step closer to when we are able to do so. If you would like to attend the course, please email the office with your name, your Child's name and their age and we will send you further details along with the Zoom link when available. If you would also like to receive a Baptism application form, we can email one to you.

**First Holy Communion 2021** - Applications are now open for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion 2021 for those Children who live in the parish, which will take place on Saturday 8th May 2021 at St Joseph and the English Martyrs and on Sunday 9th May 2021 at Most Holy Redeemer and Holy Cross. The preparation programme is only for those children who will be receiving the Sacrament within the parish and not elsewhere. It will start between November 2020 - May 2021 and will consist of 10 separate sessions. There will 3-4 sessions for Parents. The Children are expected to attend each session and the 9am Mass that Sunday. **Children should be 8 years old on or before 31 August 2021.**

### **What do I need to do to register my Child for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion 2021?**

- Firstly check that your Child qualifies under the above conditions i.e. they will be 8 years old on or before 31st August 2021, that you live in the parish and your Child will be receiving the Sacrament in the parish and not elsewhere.
- Email the parish office on [bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk) requesting a First Holy Communion application form **for your child only** giving the **FULL NAME** and **DATE of BIRTH of your CHILD**.
- A personalised application form containing your Child's name and date of birth will then be emailed to you as a PDF document.
- Please print off the PDF form, fill in the remaining details requested on both sides of the form, sign and post back the hard copy in an envelope to 3, Windhill, Bishop's Stortford, Herts CM23 2ND
- When you have submitted the 'hard copy' of the form, please then email [fhcstjosephs@gmail.com](mailto:fhcstjosephs@gmail.com) so that the First Holy Communion Catechist can send you an acknowledgment email and keep you updated of proposed sessions.
- The Cut off date for the hard copy of all forms to have been received at 3, Windhill is **Tuesday 1st September 2020 with no exceptions..**
- If your Child has any special needs, requirements, medical conditions or needs additional support, please ensure that your form is submitted as soon as possible. This is to ensure that we can contact you early and have plenty of time to better understand what support may be required and also make any necessary arrangements.
- If you have any questions re the application process please contact the Parish office - Thank you

**NHS Test and Trace Scam** -Please be aware that scammers are posing as NHS Test and Trace contact workers.

The new Test and Trace system is being rolled out across the country, meaning contact tracers are now getting in touch with those who have had recent close contact with people who have had a positive COVID-19 test. However, it is important that people are aware that fraudsters are trying to take advantage of this process by posing as contact tracers and gathering personal information by deception.

The following information will help to identify if you are genuinely being contacted by the NHS.

**Genuine contract tracers will:**

- call you from 0300 013 5000
- send you text messages from 'NHS'
- ask you to sign into the NHS test and trace contact-tracing website
- ask for your full name and date of birth to confirm your identity, and postcode to offer support while self-isolating
- ask about the coronavirus symptoms you have been experiencing
- ask you to provide the name, telephone number and/or email address of anyone you have had close contact with from the two days before your symptoms started
- ask if anyone you have been in contact with is under 18 or lives outside of England.

Never disclose financial information, password information or further personal details to anyone over the phone. If you are concerned about the process, check the details of the scheme online here: [www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works)

**Contact tracers will never:**

- ask you to dial a premium rate number to speak to them (for example, those starting 09 or 087)
- ask you to make any form of payment
- ask for any details about your bank account
- ask for your social media identity or login details, or those of your contacts
- ask you for any passwords or PINs, or ask you to set up any passwords or PINs over the phone
- ask you to purchase a product
- ask you to download any software to your device or ask you to hand over control of your PC, smartphone or tablet
- ask you to access any website that does not belong to the Government or NHS.

If you have any concerns about a phone call, text message or email received, in relation to Test and Trace, check the website address being provided to you carefully. If possible, type the official address, which will be <https://contact-tracing.phe.gov.uk> followed by the unique characters given to you, directly into your browser. If you have been a victim of fraud or cybercrime, report it to Action Fraud at [actionfraud.police.uk](https://actionfraud.police.uk) Alternatively, you can contact [herts.police.uk/report](https://herts.police.uk/report), speak to an operator in the Force Communications Room via online web chat at [herts.police.uk/contact](https://herts.police.uk/contact) or call the non-emergency number 101. If a crime is in progress or someone's life is in danger, call 999 immediately.

**Parishioners of the week** - The Parishioners at Holy Cross are our shining stars this week. Many thanks indeed to Bill, Guy, Ishara, Juan, Olivia and Suzanne who have very kindly liaised with the parishioners at St Andrews to form a volunteer team of Stewards, enabling Holy Cross to open each Sunday between 2.30pm - 4.30pm. Thank you!

To finish and tentatively link in with the words of the theme tune from 'Record breakers' which was entitled, 'Dedication'. Unlike the lyrics of the song, it's not always about 'being the best or 'beating the rest', but, as we learn from what God did with St Peter and St Paul, He sees our potential and invites us to be our 'best selves', calling upon us to build up the community of our faith and giving us a second chance when we do make mistakes. I found a lovely prayer of dedication which I have added below.

*Prayer of Dedication and Commitment to God*



*Lord Jesus, I give you my hands to do your work.*

*I give you my feet to go your way.*

*I give you my tongue to speak your words.*

*I give you my mind that you may think in me.*

*I give you my spirit that you may pray in me.*

*Above all, I give you my heart that you may love in me your Father and all mankind.*

*I give you my whole self that you may grow in me, so that it is you, Lord Jesus, who live and work and pray in me.*

*Amen*

Fr Peter and Fr Carlos keep you very much in their thoughts and prayers. Please continue to pray for them too and give thanks for their dedicated devotion and service.

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

Best wishes

Debbie

### **Parish Administrator**

*(Mon- Fri 9am - 3pm)*

### **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*

3 Windhill, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 2ND

Telephone: 01279 654063

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

*<http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/bishopsstortford/>*

*Follow our Live streaming on [www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford](http://www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford)*

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