

Sunday Message from Fr Peter – 18th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Well, it's certainly been a busy week here at St Joseph's – we began by pushing the stonemasons hard to "get a move on" and they put all the benches back and did a high level clean after which our 15 or so volunteers came together. They were great and after a long morning, properly dressed and protected, they went home happy having made an enormous difference – thank you, so much. The church looks great, 'though I fear there is still quite a lot of dust high in the air that will take a week or two to settle down.

Then Debbie Jackson and Fr Carlos set to, organizing all the signage and routes etc. that need to be in place for our first public Mass which will be this Saturday night. I am so looking forward to seeing some parishioners back where they should be! All the precautions we will ask you to follow are sensible and part of the legal requirements. I am sorry but you can only sit in the place you are shown to – please God, in time to come when all this is relaxed you'll be able to go back to your own special nook in the church. You might be a bit confused finding it because all the radiators are now gone so you can't use them as a reminder!

Come Monday or Tuesday I will be going away for a few weeks to recharge my batteries that have become a little low. Contrary to what I had probably expected, these last 4 months have been very busy and, in fact, in many ways there has been little let up. Now at last I might get round to reading some of the books I thought I would have got through by now!

And what about you, how have you been getting on? There have been so many different experiences amongst our parishioners who live and love in so many different kinds of circumstances. I've been praying for you all, which is one of the duties of a Parish priest, but sometimes I have sat here wondering how a particular parishioner or couple or family have been getting through these strange times. It's where the telephone has come in very handy!

I strongly believe that we are not near the end of this particular journey yet, simply at another stage of it. But we should not be despondent about it. The fact is the good Lord has kept an eye on us and it's great to see each other when we can, on the street, in the shop and, now, for some of us, at Mass.

....Be sure that we will continue to pray for you as I know you pray for each of us, this special family of whom we are all a part.


God bless you, and pray for me as I pray for you.

Fr Peter

Parish Note Friday 31st July 2020 and the Sunday Message from Fr Peter

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

Fri 7/31/2020 3:16 PM

 1 attachments (15 KB)

Sunday Message from Fr Peter.docx;

Good afternoon everyone

I hope that all is well

Please find attached the Sunday message from Fr Peter this week which can also be found on the news section of our website.

This week, I have chosen to share a lovely poem written and very kindly sent in to Fr Peter and Fr Carlos by Veronica Taylor. Veronica was inspired by listening to a recent Homily on 'waiting', which seems very appropriate, as we eagerly await for the Church doors at St Joseph's to open once again this weekend to celebrate Mass and together experience the 'new normal'.

'They Also Serve'

*The Church doors are closed, live streaming is in place.
No more collective worship, no more face to face.*

*The pews have been abandoned, there is no choir to sing.
Every day is waiting, to see what tomorrow will bring.*

*And yet, this is an opportunity, to reflect upon the past.
Perhaps society, the rat race, was running too fast.*

*We have the chance to smell the flowers and look at the lovely blue sky.
We can appreciate the bird song and examine the question why.*

*We can offer our help to others and we can take more time to pray
We can cherish all the family contact at different times of day.*

*So waiting can bear many fruit and many flowers can bloom.
It's God's way of saying that they also serve, until a normal service can resume.*

Online Booking - The 'On line' Booking system to attend Mass at St Joseph's seems to be working well, so far(!) with some Parishioners able to make direct bookings via the web site and via the Parish Office(for 3 seats and above) . Advanced Bookings for the week ahead open every Friday which allows plenty of time to book your seat. **Please remember that if you have not booked and your name is not on the list, you will not be able to enter the Church.** Please understand that this is for your well being and that of others. Thank you.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at 5.15pm before the 6pm Mass will **not go ahead** each Saturday until further notice.

Sacrament of Reconciliation(Confessions) -The Confessional will be closed. The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) can be celebrated with Fr Carlos after weekday Mass (during August) between 10.15am –

10.45am only, and appointments will need to be booked via telephoning the office. Confessions will be heard outside and not inside the Church.

A reminder of what will happen when you arrive at the Church

- Entry to St Joseph's will be through the main doors ONLY (If you have parked in the car park, you will be required to walk around past Windhill House to the main entrance on Windhill, being mindful that cars may be entering the main car park gate. There is a strict One Way system in operation in the Church. Cardinals Walk and the doorway nearest to the external notice board and defibrillator will be for Exit Only) The central aisle is part of the One Way route.
 - Please try not to bring lots of bags, children's toys, belongings etc. with you as space will be limited in the Church.
 - **Please feel comfortable to wear a face covering in Church to help to protect yourself and others. Volunteer Stewards and Cleaners will be provided with gloves and masks.**
- **Please note that HM Government is adding museums, galleries, cinemas and places of worship to the list of places where face coverings should be worn in England. It is currently a recommendation, but will become law on 8 August.****
- You will be greeted by Volunteer Stewards who will have the 'Guest list' for that particular Mass. This list gives your name and the number of places booked only and not your contact number. As long as your name is on the list you will be invited into the church. If your name is not on the list you will not be able to enter the church.
 - You will be asked to 'sanitise' your hands with the hand gel provided upon entry and shown to your seat. It will not be possible to sit in a particular seat. People will be seated from the front of the church in the order in which they arrive. Each seat will be at a safe distance from the next.
 - There will be NO Holy water as you enter and NO hymn books provided as sadly singing is not permitted. We will also not be providing daily or weekly Mass sheets either. If you wish to print out your own Mass sheet, and bring it with you and take it home afterwards, this will be available on our website as it is currently. Please remember to take your printed copy home with you.
 - The Toilets will be closed. No Exceptions!
 - The Repository and Information Area will be closed.
 - The Confessional will be closed. The Sacrament of Reconciliation (confession) can be celebrated with Fr Carlos after weekday Mass (during August) between 10.15am – 10.45am only, and appointments will need to be booked via the office. Confessions will be heard outside and not inside the Church.
 - The Lady Chapel will be closed and there will be NO Candles
 - There will be NO requirement for Readers, Eucharistic Ministers or Servers to assist at Mass at the current time. The Sanctuary area and the Sacristy will be restricted and accessible only to Fr Peter and Fr Carlos
 - There will be NO physical sign of peace by shaking hands.
 - At the end of Mass, Communion will be distributed under one kind by Father into your hand only. Parishioners on each pew will be called up in turn. Please take all of your belongings with you at that time as immediately after you have received the Blessed Sacrament you will not be permitted to return to your place but will be requested to leave the Church following the signed one way system exiting down the side aisles and the side porches. The main doors are for entry only, however any Parishioners with mobility issues and who require the use of the ramp will be assisted out of these doors by the Stewards.

- Please sanitise your hands again before you leave with the hand gel provided.
- Collection buckets will be provided near to each exit point for your weekly donations under the eye of the Stewards.
- Immediately, when the Church is empty, the Stewards / Cleaners will sanitise each pew, door handles, sweep and wash the floor. Disposable aprons, gloves and cleaning equipment will be provided.
- Collection money will be 'bagged' by the Stewards and given to Father to be kept in the safe for 72 hours before counting and banking.
- Any rubbish (including paper, gloves, masks and aprons) will be 'double bagged' and disposed of in the black bins in Cardinals walk.
- Any 'found property' left in the pews will be double bagged and if not collected will be disposed of.

As the current situation is anticipated to continue in the months ahead, we still need more new volunteers to make all this work, so as not to always have to rely on the same small group of people who always kindly make themselves available every time.

We will need more people to act as Stewards each time the Church is open, and also more people to help with the cleaning of the Church after each Mass. We have filled the rota for August but will be working towards September very soon.

If we cannot recruit enough people then we will not be able to open as often as we have said we wish to.

If you can help, please do contact the Parish Office. Thank you very much.

Stewards - Thank you VERY much to those Parishioners who have kindly agreed to ' Steward' at Mass. If you are attending on your own to help, there is no requirement for you to ' book' a place on our web site as we have a separate ' Volunteer Rota' which will be kept for Track and Trace purposes. If you are however coming with your family, they will have to book a place either via the web site (if 2 people or less) or contact the Office if more than 2 so that a ' Household pew' can be allocated, as Stewards will have their own separate designated seat in the Church. There will be a ' briefing' prior to each Mass so that everyone is aware and confident of what to do. A suggestion has been made to start a ' Whattapps group' for Stewards. If this is something which you would be interested in, please contact the office.

Zoom - The Zoom Group will continue every Sunday at 9am until further notice courtesy of John and the 9am Music group. Thank you very much.

Topic: Family Mass via Zoom during lock-down (music starting at 8:45am)
Time: Sunday 2 August, 2020 08:30 AM London

<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

World Day of Migrants & Refugees 2020- The 106th World Day of Migrants and Refugees will be celebrated on 27 September 2020. As the title for his annual message, the Holy Father has chosen "Forced like Jesus

Christ to flee". The message will focus on the pastoral care of internally displaced people (IDPs), who currently number over 41 million worldwide.

Envelopes - If you were unable to collect your donation envelopes before lock down and wish to do so, please contact the office to arrange a day/ time to collect them. I hope to continue to deliver those remaining to Most Holy Redeemer Parishioners personally next week. Apologies, if you have not yet received yours, but I ran out of time this week!

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** 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 fncstjosephs@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

Parishioners of the Week - This week the award has to go to the fabulous team of masked, gloved and gowned Volunteers who helped with the 'Big Clean' on Wednesday and scrubbed every nook and cranny of St Joseph's - Alison, Ann, Ben, Charlotte, Eva, Jonny, Magdalena, Maureen, Mark, Mary-Rose, Richard, Sam and Therese.

A very special mention must also go to our 'More experienced Parishioners', all of whom have celebrated their 'Second 35th birthday' or more and are frustrated at not being able to physically help due to the official guidelines. Many of you are already assisting in very special and important ways by keeping in contact and supporting other Parishioners which is invaluable. Thank you also for your continued support, guidance, telephone calls, emails, love and prayers. It is much appreciated.

Fr Peter and Fr Carlos - Please continue to keep in your thoughts and prayers our wonderful Priests, who we are very blessed to have in our parish. Fr Peter will soon be starting his long awaited holiday throughout August. He has worked extremely hard project managing the complex underfloor heating work, as well as celebrating Mass every day via the live stream in a 'building site' with Fr Carlos during lock down, whilst not forgetting all of his other countless 24/7 responsibilities both in the parish and outside. We hope that you have a well deserved rest knowing that the Parish is left in the very capable hands of Fr Carlos and look forward to seeing you fully refreshed in September.

It's been a really busy time and after a long patient wait, we are now finally ready, having ticked all of the risk assessment boxes and having enough hand sanitiser gel to probably bathe in(!) With only one more sleep to go, I am very much looking forward to seeing my fellow Parishioners back in St Joseph's to celebrate Mass together this Saturday evening.

Wishing you all a very happy and healthy week

Best wishes
Debbie

PS. I'll be the one in a mask and gloves!

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*

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Telephone: 01279 654063

email: bishopsstortford@rcdow.org.uk

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

Follow our Live streaming on www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford

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