

Sunday Message on 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Part of the Gospel this weekend relates the son of the owner of a vineyard whom, when asked by his father to go and work in the vineyard blatantly says “No”, but....” **afterwards thought better of it**” ... How often have we found ourselves doing that? – frequently, I hope. The grace to climb down and realise that I have got something wrong, sometimes, badly wrong, is a great grace to receive from God, and we should welcome it when we become aware of it. I say “aware of it” because sometimes there is still a residual unwillingness to follow God’s will and we can lose the chance to embrace his mercy.

Growth involves change, as St John Henry Newman tells us in His Essay on the development of Christian doctrine: ‘to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often’. At the moment the Government and Public Health England are asking us, yet again, to change, so it’s not just in our spiritual life that this is called for.

Let’s make an effort this week to be willing to change both in our spiritual and public lives, so that we might seek the perfection that God holds for us in heaven.

God bless,
Fr Peter

Fr Peter Harris
Parish Priest of Bishop’s Stortford
St Joseph and the English Martyrs, Bishop’s Stortford
Most Holy Redeemer, Sawbridgeworth
Holy Cross, Much Hadham
Dean of the Lea Valley Parishes
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Parish Note Friday 25th September 2020 and the Sunday Message from Fr Peter on the 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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

Fri 9/25/2020 3:42 PM

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

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Sunday Message on 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time.docx;

Good afternoon everyone

I hope that you are well and have enjoyed a good week.

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

This week we heard on the news that it has been forty-five years since Dougal Haston and Douglas Scott stood as the first Brits on the summit of Everest, and the first ever team to climb the south-west face. There have been many remarkable records of people climbing Everest over the years, with the oldest person scaling the 8,848 metre mountain being an 80-year-old gentleman. The list includes the fastest woman, the youngest child, the first disabled summiteer and many more. Shockingly, it also records the highest number of deaths in one day, being tragically, 22 climbers on 25 April 2015. It got me thinking about what really drives us all to want to challenge ourselves to achieve such goals?

I personally have always had a never ending 'things to do list' to help me focus on daily tasks, organising my life and so that I don't forget things. I have also always had what is known as a 'bucket list', things that I want to do, some slightly crazier than others! My desire to swim across the Atlantic or even the Channel, in my younger days however, unfortunately was scuppered, thanks to Mr Spielberg and his creation of the film 'Jaws'. Psychologically scarred from the imagery of the large rubber, man/ woman eating shark, I am only brave enough now to reluctantly shoe horn myself into a swim suit and dip my toes into the cool, shallow waters of Frinton - on - sea! My list also included, to be fired out of a cannon, jump out of an aeroplane, shear a sheep and drive a tractor and I actually did manage to achieve three out of the four!

The COVID-19 lockdown and restrictions have been difficult and will continue to be very challenging for many of us. If God has a bucket list for everyone and I am certain that he does have a specific plan, I wonder what would be on each individual one? I am sure that upon surveying my own, it really wouldn't involve being the human cannonball! With the current restrictions expected to continue for the next 6 months, perhaps a more focused and continuous review of my own personal relationship with God, would be time better spent, so that I continue to have a better understanding of His ways and trust the path that He wants me to follow, encountering my own 'personal Everest', one step at a time..

Pope Francis reminds us;

"In this period of crisis, today, it is important not to turn in on ourselves, burying our own talent, our spiritual, intellectual, and material riches, everything that the Lord has given us, but rather to open ourselves, to be supportive, to be attentive to others. ... Set your stakes on great ideals, the ideals that enlarge the heart, the ideals of service that make your talents fruitful. Life is not given to us to be jealously guarded for ourselves, but is given to us so that we may give it in turn." – Audience, April 24

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS- the family and friends of Paul Maxfield and Christopher Spalding who sadly died recently.

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen

THE BISHOPS' CONFERENCE DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE has released a statement on the development of a vaccine against COVID-19. It addresses ethical matters surrounding the development and distribution of a vaccine such as cell-lines which have their origin in tissues taken from human foetal tissue, as well as issues that may arise from testing, consent and justice.

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/09/Covid-19-Vaccination-240920.pdf>

PARISH GARDENING GROUP - Looking for a different form of exercise, socially distanced in the open air? This group meets once a month (March - November) for one hour only, to keep the surrounds of the WCC in reasonable order. The original group of five has been reduced to just three. A few more volunteers (not limited to age) would be most welcome as Cardinal's Walk also needs some attention on a regular basis. Please contact B/S 652060 for more information.

THANKYOU VERY MUCH - to Marie, Maureen and Yvonne who this week gave their time to tidy the grounds around the WCC. You did a great job!

ADVANCED NOTICE FOR YOUR DIARY OF A SYCAMORE 'ADVENT COURSE' - A Catholic Formation Course

www.sycamore.fm A 4-week course starting on Wednesday November 28th at 7:30pm via Zoom.

Session 1: THE SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS Wednesday 28th November, 7:30pm

Session 2: A GOD WHO SPEAKS? Wednesday 2nd December, 7:30pm

Session 3: THE BIBLE Wednesday 9th December, 7:30pm

Session 4: THE POWER OF PRAYER Wednesday 16th December, 7:30pm

More details will follow....

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR MIGRANTS - The World Day for Migrant and Refugees will be celebrated on 27th September. You can find Pope Francis' letter for this day at

http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/papafrancesco_20200513_world-migrants-day-2020.html

WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER - Marriage Encounter are excited to announce a new Online Experience for marriage enrichment. For the past 50 years Worldwide Marriage Encounter has been offering marriage enrichment retreats all around the world. Focused on couples who want to enrich their relationship and gain a deeper understanding of the Sacrament of Marriage, it offers a unique experience to explore your relationship at a deeper, more intimate level, regardless of how long you have been together. During the Coronavirus pandemic our residential retreats have had to be cancelled so we are reaching out to couples who want to deepen their relationship by offering a newly energised video conference retreat. The next Marriage Encounter Online Experience is 26 & 27 September 2020, why not find out more at wwme.org.uk or contact us on 0845 260 2016

MARRIED SINGLES LIFESTYLE - The Married Singles Lifestyle describes couples that may have lost a sense of closeness they once had as marriage partners and are living more like roommates. 'Retrouvaille' teaches couples how to survive times like these in their marriages. This programme has helped thousands of couples experiencing difficulty at all levels of marital distress from disillusionment to deep misery. There is no group therapy or group work

For confidential information about 'Retrouvaille' or to register the next programme commencing with a Virtual weekend on 12th -15th Nov 2020, Call or text 0788 7296983 or 0797 3380443 or Email retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com - or visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk

MARRIAGE PREPARATION - Instead of the next Engaged Encounter weekend which has been cancelled because of the Covid 19 situation, there will be a 'virtual' online course run over four Saturdays online and anyone looking for marriage preparation is welcome. The dates of the four Saturdays will be October 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th. For further info please visit:

www.engaged-encounter.org.uk

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AND FASTING FOR LIFE-On Monday 28th September, please pray and fast for the end of abortion and euthanasia in this Country. Your prayer and fasting is urgently needed as last year this country saw the highest number of abortions ever. For details of our live saving work see www.GoodCounselNetwork.com

MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT - Daniel Robinsons & Son will be distributing free tea, coffee and cake for a donation of your choice outside their premises on South Street on Saturday 26th September 2020 between 10am -1pm to raise funds for Macmillan Cancer Support

ZOOM - Our 9am Sunday Zoom session continues this week . Thank you to everyone who so generously gives their time and talents to make this happen each week.

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

Time: September 27 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

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

'THE GOD WHO SPEAKS' will be the theme of BBC Radio 4's Daily Service between 28 September – 9 October. The Daily Service programme is broadcast on BBC RADIO 4 LW every Monday – Friday from 09:45 – 10:00. It offers a space for spiritual reflection with a Bible reading, prayer and a range of Christian music. On Monday, 28 September the Most Reverend George Stack, Archbishop of Cardiff will lead the service reflecting on The God who speaks – through the incarnation. *Reading: John 1: 1-5*
If you miss the live broadcast, you can catch up online here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006wzfs/broadcasts/upcoming>

IRISH DANCING -O'Connor and Hennigan Irish Dance Academy. Classes on Thursday and Saturday in Bishop's Stortford. Classes on Tuesday in Sawbridgeworth. Contact Mandyh@hotmai.co.uk for more details.

CONTINUED THANKS - to our lovely Choir members, who accompanied by Duncan, have taken a turn each to sing solo at our 11am Mass at St Joseph's in line with current restrictions.

PARISHIONER OF THE WEEK - This week the award has to go to the very lovely Mary Crake, who for some years now has sung in the Choir, helped to run the Magellans Toddler group and made tea/ coffee after Mass amongst other things (pre Covid-19). Mary is always the first to offer her help and assistance and continues to support and care for others in the parish. Thank you, Mary, for everything that you continue to do x

Hope that you all have a very happy and healthy week.

Best wishes

Debbie