

## Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on 33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

Most of us have read the parable of the talents many times, and more likely than not we think of the talents referred to as representing our own gifts or abilities and that we should use them not for our benefit but for the good of others. A less common interpretation — equally valid and arguably more profound — is that the talents represent the priceless gifts of mercy and love that God so readily gives to us. And those gifts of mercy and love grow and multiply the more we use them and not when we hide or grow indifferent towards them.

We can understand this better with the aid of the first reading from the book of Proverbs about the "worthy wife". She is like the servant in the parable of the talents who doubled his five talents by using them. She works busily within her household and does so "with loving hands" (Proverbs 31:13). Instead of stopping there, she goes on to "reach out her hands to the poor, and extends her arms to the needy" (31:30). In other words, she does not bury the love and mercy that she receives from God. Instead, she gives them away to anyone who needs them.

God's precious gifts of mercy and love are given to everyone. This means that we all have the responsibility to open our hands and hearts to give them away to those around us. We receive love and so we should give love. We are shown mercy and so we should show mercy. And we should never think that we have given away enough love or mercy. We must keep sharing these gifts so that our circle of influence will grow larger and larger, just as the two men in the parable multiplied their talents by trading. Let us be inspired by Saint Teresa of Calcutta. She never tried to eradicate poverty, at least not by herself. The mission she set herself was to be with one person at a time. And, as we all know, her circle of influence affected the whole world, inspiring countless others to spread the gifts of love and mercy.

*Fr Antonio*

## Parish Note Friday 13th November 2020 and the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

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

Fri 11/13/2020 5:09 PM

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

 1 attachments (15 KB)

Sunday Message from Fr Antonio on 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time.docx;

Good afternoon

Please find attached the Sunday Message from Fr Antonio, for this week, the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, which tells us about the Parable of the Talents. This can also be found on the news section of our website.

This week, despite the lockdown, we have been able to safely open St Joseph's and Holy Cross for private prayer. It has been wonderful to continue to welcome back everyone and in particular, some of the younger members of our parish who have dropped in to say a morning prayer on their way to school between 8am - 9am on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. We have missed you and it is great to have you back!

The 'Microphone man' has been working in St Joseph's over the past couple of days to install a new microphone in the Choir loft and also to improve our speaker system. This has involved wires and cabling to be routed from the Sacristy, around the Church and under the floor via the circular grates, which needed to be lifted to allow easy access.

Whilst cleaning the Church and in an effort to assist, I lifted up the circular grate nearest to the Confessional boxes. There was a fair bit of fluff down there, but shining quite brightly through the dark, furry nest of downy deposits, I saw it... a one penny piece! Now, at a time when every penny really does count, I decided to fish the penny out of the hole, but it wasn't quite as easy as I had hoped. Having rolled up my sleeves and now being on my knees, I reached in with my hand, resembling a mechanical, seaside amusement grabber, feeling around the dusty cavern. Unfortunately, even at full stretch, I couldn't quite reach the penny, so, not wishing to be beaten, I lay face down on the now sanitised and well mopped, sterile floor, wearing my face mask and with my glasses now misted up on 'full sauna steam mode'. Going in the hole head first with my whole arm stretched out, I hoped that I would not become wedged. My mind momentarily raced back to 1988, when I witnessed an equally well-proportioned lady who had been delving in the bottom of the chest freezer in 'Bejam' in Watford, who unfortunately became stuck, wrestling with the frozen turkeys, eventually requiring the assistance of the fire service to get her out...

Thankfully... I managed to retrieve the penny and came back up to daylight. Having stirred up the fluff, I then saw another coin and this time it was a one-pound coin! The phrase 'in for a penny, in for a pound' struck a literal chord and so, in I went again and retrieved the 'confessional coffers', feeling rather chuffed, that the parish was now £1.01 up on the deal...

### UPDATE RE THE NEW LOCKDOWN RESTRICTIONS

Unfortunately, due to the further COVID-19 restrictions and lockdown, we are **no longer able to gather for public worship from Thursday 5th November until 2nd December 2020** however...

Fr Peter and Fr Antonio Mass will continue to celebrate a daily and weekend Parish Mass at St Joseph's behind 'closed doors' albeit without a physical congregation being present. Mass will be live streamed on <http://www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford> so please do join us 'virtually'. **Regrettably Mass will not be celebrated at Holy Cross or Most Holy Redeemer.**

## **MASS TIMES AT ST JOSEPH'S VIA THE LIVESTREAMING**

Monday- Friday Mass will be broadcast live at 9.30am

Saturday Vigil Mass will be broadcast live at 6pm

Sunday Mass will be broadcast live at 9am and at 11am with music and Cantor.

All of the Masses will be recorded and can be viewed at any time after the time of broadcast.

We have opened St Joseph and the English Martyrs Catholic Church and Holy Cross for private prayer, **initially during restricted hours to start with, which may be subject to change.**

A Steward/s will be in attendance to ensure that our Churches continue to remain COVID secure. Please observe the social distancing measures in place, using hand sanitiser and wearing a face covering ( unless exempt) when visiting the Church. We ask you to respect also the capacity limits of 38 individual persons from separate households at any one time at St Josephs and 32 persons at Holy Cross. **Our track and trace measures will continue, but there is no requirement to book a place for private prayer at this time.** We have a QR Code on display already for those with a phone app or we will politely ask for your name and contact details upon arrival, so that individuals can be notified in the event of any suspected Covid-19 case.

Your details will be securely kept for 21 days to enable us to provide details to the trace & test system should an outbreak occur.

Full details of the Privacy Notice can be found at <http://www.rcdow.org.uk/privacy-policy>.

## **PRIVATE PRAYER TIME AT HOLY CROSS**

Sunday 15th November between 2pm – 4pm

## **PRIVATE PRAYER TIME AT ST JOSEPH'S**

Monday 16th November- 10am -10.30am

Tuesday 17th November- 8am-9am

Wednesday 18th November- 8am-9am

Thursday 19th November -8am-9am

Friday 20th November- 10am -10.30am

**Most Holy Redeemer Catholic Church is NOT open for private prayer currently**

Thank you for your patience, prayers and understanding at this time.

**SYCAMORE ADVENT COURSE-** A Catholic Formation ' Advent Course '. A 4-week course starting on Wednesday November 25th at 7:30pm

**Session 1: THE SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS**

Wednesday 25th 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

If you are interested in attending the course, please contact: John Wright (johncharles.wright70@gmail.com) or David Wilkinson (wilkinsondavid@mac.com) or the Parish Office to register and get the Zoom login details.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 2021 MEETING** - Unfortunately, there will be a delay to the start of the programme until January due to the new lockdown, so, the date of the First Holy Communion session is currently planned for Saturday 9th January 2021

**ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS 2021-22** - If your child was born between 1st September 2016 and 31st August 2017, you can apply for a Primary School place to start in September 2021. The application process opens **2nd November 2020** and closes on the **15th January 2021**.

**CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE**- Applicants for St Joseph's School for RECEPTION places in 2021/22 should download an application for a Certificate of Catholic Practice which can be found on our Parish website. 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. No personal collection of the certificate is permitted. The School deadline is 15/1/2021

**ZOOM** - Our 9am Sunday Zoom session still continues this week. Izzy will be kindly singing from 8.45am and then from this Sunday there will be music streamed live from the Church during the Mass. Thank you to everyone who still continues to generously give their time and talents to make this happen each week.

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

Time: November 15 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 BIBLE TIMELINE COURSE** - an online version of the course will be running from 4th November. It's free, and will be presented by London-based evangelist Mauro Iannicelli. Further details and registration can be

found here: <https://comeandsee.org>

**JOURNEYING WITH THE BIBLE** - Now online, Fr Javier Ruiz-Ortiz PhD and Sr Monica Cardona PhD are running a series of talks for the Year of the Word on the Bible. The next date and topic is Poetry & Wisdom in the Bible on 10th November from 7pm to 8.30pm. Please register at [catadmin@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:catadmin@rcdow.org.uk)

**THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSE NEWSPAPER** -are offering a 1 yearly digital subscription for £20. Visit their website for more information

<https://thecatholicuniverse.com/>

**CARDS FOR GOOD CAUSES** -There will be no 'Cards for Good Causes' presence in Bishop's Stortford this year. The Water Lane United Reformed Church has reached the difficult decision that they could not offer the space again this year. St Joseph's J & P group are normally part of the volunteer group which help with this charity, through Christian Aid. Gifts and cards can be purchased online

<https://www.cardsforcharity.co.uk>

**REDEMPTORIST PUBLICATION ADVENT EXTRA MAGAZINE** - The distribution of the Advent Extra magazine cannot be sold from Churches this year. Copies can be bought from Redemptorist Publication online.

**CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S SOCIETY CHRISTMAS GIFT APPEAL** - Each December our Supporters generously donate food and Christmas gifts which we distribute to disadvantaged families. This year we would be very grateful if you could donate gift vouchers instead. This will ensure we can continue to provide this vital support for children who would otherwise go without at Christmas. [www.cathchild.org.uk](http://www.cathchild.org.uk)

**OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD** - Operation Christmas Child is a project of Samaritan's Purse, a Christian international relief organisation. Our mission is to provide local partners around the world with shoeboxes filled with small toys, hygiene items, and school supplies as a means of reaching out to children in their own communities with the Good News of Jesus Christ. We ship these simple gifts outside the United Kingdom to children affected by war, poverty, natural disaster, famine, and disease.

<https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child>

This year, alternatively, you can pack and pay for an 'online shoebox' via the samaritans purse web site and they will fill it on your behalf.

**FOOD BANK REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR** - I'm sure many of you will have heard about a 'reverse advent calendar' – where you donate an item to a charity or a Foodbank in the lead up to Christmas. This is something the Food bank are really excited about doing...however they are going to start this from 1st November.

There are a few reasons for this...

1. If you collect all your wonderful donations throughout December and then come to donate to them on Christmas Eve...they won't be there and they wouldn't want all your hard work to go to waste.
2. They actually need your donations at the beginning of December, allowing time to sort, organise and donate them to who they need to go to.

So, with this in mind, they have put together a plan for November! This is just to give you a rough idea of the kind of items that they would love to receive. You do not need to stick to this list at all. So, grab a box and each day over the next month see if you can fill it with 24 items. See our web site for more details or visit the Foodbank Facebook page.

They will be putting a reminder out every day of what could be put in the Reverse Advent Calendar on their Facebook page <https://m.facebook.com/bsfoodbank/photos/a.1322254567921267/2361008490712531/?type=3&source=57>

**COMMUNITY MONEY ADVICE CONNECT** - Worried about money and debts? Free, friendly and confidential help from trained money mentors for people living in the Bishop's Stortford area. Phone or email for an appointment or more information. Tel: 01279 652523 [bsmoneyadvice@ntlworld.com](mailto:bsmoneyadvice@ntlworld.com) or visit [www.bs-money-advice-service.org.uk](http://www.bs-money-advice-service.org.uk)

**CITIZENS ADVICE EAST HERTS** -Whether it's advice on employment rights, benefit entitlements, money worries, housing concerns, relationship challenges, access to local support etc we're here for you. Whilst our

office is closed you can contact us for free and confidential advice in a number of ways. Call Message line anytime on 01920 459944 and one of our Advisors will call you back, or call our Herts Advice line( 10am -4pm) Mon-Fri on 03444 111444. [www.citizensadviceeastherts.org.uk/webadvice](http://www.citizensadviceeastherts.org.uk/webadvice)

**CLEANING VACANCY- ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL-** St Joseph's Catholic Primary School are looking for cleaners to join their team in January 2021, 7.00am to 9.00am and/or 3.30pm to 5.30pm weekdays, term time only with possible overtime during school holidays. Please contact Nicola McManus 01279 652576 sbmanager@stjosephs207.herts.sch.uk for an application form.

The school is committed to safeguarding children and young people. All post holders are subject to a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and two satisfactory references.

**PARISH E- CHRISTMAS CARDS** - Research shows that the UK spent over £200 million on Christmas Cards in 2018, which is higher than anywhere in the world. Once Christmas is over, one billion of those cards end up in landfill because they can't be recycled. This year, we're inviting everyone to help the environment by sending e-cards and consider donating the money they save to the parish instead. We are currently in the process of producing 6 different designs as 'Parish E- Christmas cards' which will be advertised next week.

**PARISHIONERS OF THE WEEK** - This week, I think our Musicians, Choir and ' Zoomers' of the Parish deserve a huge mention. Since the very first lockdown and still continuing, there have been some really creative ways to ensure that music has continued to be an important part of the liturgy. Those who have been bereaved have been supported by those who have been able to share their time and talent by singing or playing instruments at Requiem Masses, our First Holy Communion Children had the joy of music at their Masses too, those who have been on their own join in for a virtual cup of tea after Mass on a Sunday morning and with the skillful use of technology and inspirational editing ,socially distanced voices joined together as one Choir has been a real triumph. Music is an endless gift that keeps giving and it is a joy to have so many talented individuals in the parish who make such a difference each week and probably don't realise it. Thank you SO much!

To finish this week, I have been back delving in the buried treasure of the Parish magazine archives and came across an article from July 1985 all about the ' Parish Penny Collection'. It started on 12th October 1975 with the aim of helping Fr Gerard Rishton C.S.S.R to raise £1000 to build a Church in the Rustenburg area of South Africa, with the money being raised by 16th January 1977. Our Penny collection is still going, 45 years on.. with the beneficiary of the 2020 Penny Collection being the MEDAILLE TRUST. This is a charity with strong Catholic roots and connections which works to support victims of modern slavery, mainly young women who have been trafficked to work in, for example, nail bars. It provides safe houses in various locations around the country and works closely with law-enforcement authorities. So, if you have any spare pennies.. or happen to find one tucked somewhere that you least expected to.. please remember that collectively, pennies can become pounds and make a real difference to the lives of those in need..

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

Best wishes

Debbie

### **Parish Administrator**

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

### **Catholic Parish of Bishop's Stortford**

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Holy Cross, at St Andrew's, Church Lane, Much Hadham  
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*Follow our Live streaming on [www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford](http://www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford)*