

Sunday Message from Fr Peter on the Feast of Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

“The Feast of Christ the King always heralds the end of the Church’s year, which means, indeed, that the following Sunday IS the Church’s new year – the First Sunday of Advent.... So, in the world of our Catholic Faith it will be time for New Year’s resolutions; not just general things but specifically FAITH resolutions... Now that has got you thinking hasn’t it ?!?!

Just like “worldly” new year’s resolutions, it is probably best not to start with anything impossible or things you feel are beyond your abilities.. no, start simple, but truthful. What about reflecting, with your soul’s eye, on a sort of “Faith” M.O.T.? Just like with all the different parts of a car, seeing how they are all reliant on each other, go back to basics. E.g. Is there any petrol in the tank? Is there any petrol (Grace?) in your spiritual tank? Grace is God’s gift but we can always waste it or refuse it – perhaps there’s a sort of “leak” where God’s Grace is seeping out of my life – perhaps an urgent repair is needed? If so, thinking of my childhood, it may be that this is the time to get the “puncture kit” out of our saddlebag. It is a simple operation, it just takes a little effort and then we will be back on the road of our Faith; that repair is called “forgiveness” and God offers us an unending amount of it if we but ask.

So, spend some of this Sunday thanking God for the Kingship of Christ our Lord, and then spend some of the coming week preparing your New Year’s Faith resolutions, for example: more time in prayer (never too late to start); greater kindness to others (much needed at the moment); always remembering to say thank you” to God for all His blessings in your life, both obvious and sometimes, less obvious. BUT, above all else, at least TRY!!”

God bless,

Fr Peter

Parish Note Friday 20th November 2020 and the Sunday Message from Fr Peter

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

Fri 11/20/2020 5:21 PM

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

 1 attachments (15 KB)

Sunday Message from Fr Peter on the Feast of Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.docx;

Good afternoon

Please find attached the Sunday message from Fr Peter this week which contains very wise words on the Feast of Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. This message can also be found on the news section of our website.

This week, we have been working hard on our new website to hopefully launch it ready for the start of Advent, with Fr Antonio at the helm, utilising his expert media skills to full fruition. Fr Antonio, like Fr Peter, is very creative and has a good eye for attention to detail. As well as their spiritual guidance, we are very blessed indeed to benefit from the wonderful qualities and the gifts that both of our Priests bring and generously share with us all. Without being disrespectful, having our very own top of the range 'I-Priest' too is rather fabulous!

'First impressions' was a topic of conversation in the office the other day, mainly talking about the website and how we often make an instant decision or opinion about something, rightly or wrongly, when we 'judge a book by its cover'. I have also learned about the 'three click rule' which suggests that a user of a website should be able to find any information with no more than three mouse clicks. It is based on the belief that users of a site will become frustrated and often leave if they cannot find the information within the three clicks.

In the early 20th century, Dr. Edmond Locard, a forensic science pioneer in France, formulated the theory which states, "Every contact leaves a trace". This became known as Locard's exchange principle and is the basis for all forensic science as we know it today. It is also true of how we may possibly live our lives, not necessarily in a forensic way, but how we encounter others on a daily basis and the impression or feeling that we are 'left with', or leave others with, being either a positive or negative experience when we interact with them.

This time of year, when the shops are starting to stock all of the seasonal chocolates, I always remember 30+ years ago, the 'Ferrero Rocher man' (Nothing at all to do with the Milk Tray TV advert!) I really quite like the little gold covered, round chocolates of loveliness, which have a nutty coating that can be easily nibbled off in a mouse like fashion, if you so fancy. I didn't actually know the man in question by this name at the time that I met him, but we just happened to have a chance encounter(all above board, I assure you!). One morning, I was driving along, when I saw a car broken down by the side of the road with its hazard lights on and standing by it was a damp, disheveled man wearing a suit, looking rather distressed. Most other cars had driven past him and perhaps on any other day, I might have done that too, but for some reason, I decided to stop and see if he was ok. I think that I inherited this gene from my beloved late Father, who whenever we were on our only family day out of the year to the seaside at Frinton, would, without fail come across' the broken-down motorist' somewhere on the A120 and end up covered in engine oil trying to help them. This usually meant that by the time we eventually arrived at the beach, the tide had come in, so we always had to have our picnic on the grassy area at the top near the road!

The man desperately explained that he was on his way to a job interview some miles up the road, so, having made an impromptu decision, I simply told him to get in and that I would take him there. I wouldn't normally pick-up stray men in my car and haven't done so since, but I had to trust him and likewise having formed an instant impression, he had to trust me too, that, as strange as I may look, he was perfectly safe! We chatted

small talk along the way, I dropped him off and wished him luck, thinking no more of it. About one month or so later, a large parcel arrived at my place of work, not addressed to anyone in particular by name, but with a lovely hand written letter of thanks re-telling the story of what had happened when he had broken down. Inside the package was a huge box of Ferrero Rocher chocolates, as unbeknown to me, the man who I helped, had been successful in his interview earning himself a new job as a ' Ferrero Rocher salesman...

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 (Thank you to everyone who is helping to Steward and Clean!)

Sunday 22nd November between 2pm – 4pm

PRIVATE PRAYER TIME AT ST JOSEPH'S

Monday 23rd November- 10am -10.30am

Tuesday 24th November- 8am-9am

Wednesday 25th November- 8am-9am

Thursday 26th November -8am-9am

Friday 27th 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.

THE FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING - The Church in England and Wales this weekend, celebrates National Youth Sunday. On this day, we celebrate the young people in our parish and community and all the gifts and talents they share with us. The theme for this year's NYS is 'Together'. Normally on NYS, young people would be involved in the Liturgy. Whilst the Parish Community can't be together physically as we were, we are united together in prayer. This weekend especially, we pray for the young people of our Parish.

Follow @NationalYouthSunday and for more information, please go to: www.nationalyouthsunday.com

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 again we hope 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. Thank you to Dom and Dave who played last week - it was FAB!

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

Time: November 22 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 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

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>

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 uploading 6 different designs as 'Parish E- Christmas cards' which will be advertised this week. Thank you to our creatives, Fr Peter, Mike Carroll, Martin Curran and Monica Jacobs for kindly donating their designs and to Fr Antonio and Sophie Sullivan for helping to choose the final 6 cards.

PPC MEETING - The Parish Pastoral Council met last week and an overview of the minutes of the meeting can be found on our website.

CHRISTMAS IN A BAG - Most Holy Redeemer have donated £200 and along with the local Churches of Sawbridgeworth and High Wych have joined together to make and give away a special gift for local people in supporting 'Christmas in a bag'. Christmas in a bag contains a selection of treats from chocolates to decorations aimed at making Christmas that little bit more special. If you know someone that would appreciate a bag, or would you like one please contact office@secchurch.org.uk or call 07549 006 777. If you can donate any mince pies, biscuits, Jaffa cakes, chocolate oranges, crackers, decorations etc., please deliver them to the Congregational Church, London road CM21 9EH 1.30pm - 3pm 30th November to 4th December

JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM -Holy Cross is exploring the possibility of having a virtual Journey to Bethlehem for younger children in the run up to Christmas - further details to follow.

THY KINGDOM COME- PRAYER FOR THE NATION -

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/sites/default/files/2020-11/PftN%20Booklet.pdf>

Throughout the month, Christians are encouraged to pray daily for a specific area of national concern, wherever they are, culminating into a collective moment of prayer at 6pm each evening, with cathedrals and churches across the country invited to ring a bell at this time.

Christians are encouraged to follow a simple seven-day prayer cycle, praying for a specific area each day including the NHS and frontline workers, the bereaved, and those struggling with physical and mental ill-health, and for children and young people. Prayers and other resources will be shared on social media with the hashtag #PrayerForTheNation.

THE GIVING TREE 2020 - as with previous years we are supporting the St Francis Family Centre in Poplar, East London. Due to the current restrictions, an online 'Wishlist' with Amazon is available on https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/1JAV7LGOSOR8N?ref_=wl_share Once on the wish list, please choose your gift, add to basket and head to the checkout in the usual way. When choosing your delivery address please choose Giving Tree Margaret Wilkinson's Gift Registry address. Thank you very much!

PARISHIONERS OF THE WEEK - This week, the award has to go to the entire amazing team at the St Elizabeths Centre, who have continued to tirelessly care for the residents and support their families at a very difficult time of further lockdown. The selflessness, care, love and devotion that has been shown by the four Sisters, Sr Annette, Sr Gillian, Sr Mary and Sr Pat, as well as the Leadership team, Trustees, Care staff, Teachers, Nurses, Admin Team, Volunteers and all, has been truly heartwarming. Thank you all VERY much!

To finish this week, I will reflect back on 'Every contact leaving a trace' and first impressions. Since opening the Church early in the morning for private prayer over the last two weeks, we have received several visitors which has been really great. One person however, who will never really know or actually read this newsletter, because they do not worship in our Church and are not even a Catholic, made a huge impression on me personally. This person just happened to walk past the Church and upon seeing the doors wide open, the lights on, with our Tabernacle in full view and our 'open for prayer' sign outside, made a decision to come inside to rest, sit quietly and pray. It transpired that this person was having a really bad day, having suffered a personal bereavement the night before and felt truly lost. They used the words, 'I hope you don't mind, I'm not a Catholic, but your Church looked so welcoming, something just made me stop and I wanted to come in'...

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
Most Holy Redeemer, Sayesbury Road, Sawbridgeworth*

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

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

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