



# ST. BONIFACE



Bringing Christ to the people and people to Christ

Parish Priest  
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## January 28, 2024 – FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

**The King's Authority: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time** - Last week, Jesus announced the kingdom of God is at hand. This week, in mighty words and deeds, He exercises His dominion—asserting royal authority over the ruler of this world, Satan (see [John 12:31](#)). Notice that today's events take place on the sabbath. The sabbath was to be an everlasting sign—both of God's covenant love for His creation (see [Exodus 20:8–11](#); [31:12–17](#)), and His deliverance of His covenant people, Israel, from slavery (see [Deuteronomy 6:12–15](#)). On this sabbath, Jesus signals a new creation—that the Holy One has come to purify His people and deliver the world from evil. “With an unclean spirit” is biblical language for a man possessed by a demon, Satan being the prince of demons (see [Mark 3:22](#)). The demons' question: “What have you to do with us?” is often used in Old Testament scenes of combat and judgment (see [Judges 11:12](#); [1 Kings 17:18](#)). And as God by His Word “rebuked” the forces of chaos in creating the world (see [Psalms 104:7](#); [Job 26:10–12](#)), and again rebuked the Red Sea so the Israelites could make their exodus (see [Psalm 106:9](#)), Mark uses the same word to describe Jesus rebuking the demons (see [Mark 4:39](#); [Zechariah 3:2](#)). Jesus is the prophet foretold by Moses in today's First Reading (see [Acts 3:22](#)). Though He has authority over heaven and earth (see [Daniel 7:14, 27](#); [Revelation 12:10](#)), He becomes one of our own kinsmen. He comes to rebuke the forces of evil and chaos—not only in the world, but in our lives. He wants to make us holy in body and spirit, as Paul says in today's Epistle (see [Exodus 31:12](#)). In this liturgy, we hear His voice and “see” His works, as we sing in today's Psalm. And as Moses tells us today, we should listen to Him.

**Called & Gifted** – This past Thursday marked the completion of the Called & Gifted programme here at St Boniface. This does not mean that the work is done. A number of parishioners took part in this programme with great fruit. They were able to identify charisms the Lord has bestowed upon them for the good of the parish. They have been experimenting with these charisms over the past few months and will now continue to exercise these charisms for the glory of God and the growth of the parish community. God is asking each one of us to be an living member of His Church by taking an active role in contributing to the growth of the Church. If you are interested in learning how you can better discern what God is asking of you, please contact Fr Tom for more information.

**News from our own CAFOD rep: Danielle Green, who writes,** “Dear St Boniface parishioners, as I am moving to the US to get married, I will sadly no longer be able to serve as St Boniface's CAFOD volunteer. I am searching for a new CAFOD rep for our parish. I would describe this role as low commitment, but high impact and very rewarding. We usually raise around £1000 every fast day to contribute towards CAFOD's important work on international development! Please do get in touch with me if you would be interested in serving, I am happy to provide more information: [Danniegee23@gmail.com](mailto:Danniegee23@gmail.com); 07588226658. Thank you and best wishes, Danielle.”

**Preparing for the Holy Year 2025** – Bishop Philip Egan writes: “As we embark on the new year 2024, the Holy Father has invited us to prepare for the Jubilee Year of 2025, entitled ‘Pilgrims of Hope’. In his letter promoting the Jubilee Year, Pope Francis recalls the suffering and hardships that many of us experienced during the pandemic. In a time where many countries also suffer the effects of war and the climate crisis, Pope Francis sees the Jubilee Year 2025 as an opportunity to restore hope, a time of renewal and rebirth. The Jubilee Year will begin on **24th December 2024**, with the opening of the Holy Door at St Peter's Basilica and will draw to a close on the **feast of Epiphany, January 2026**. In preparation for the Jubilee Year, the Pope has proclaimed this **year 2024 to be a year of prayer in preparation**. It will focus on that prayer given to the disciples, the ‘Our Father.’ The Our Father not only reminds us that God is our Father but also reminds us of the union we share as brothers and sisters in Christ. During this coming year of prayer, let us also (re)consider the Spiritual Works of Mercy. Just as Jesus was attentive to the practical needs of those He encountered in His ministry, the spiritual works of mercy call us to reach out to our neighbour and attend to their spiritual needs too. The seven-spiritual works of mercy are: counselling the doubtful, instructing the ignorant, admonishing the sinner, comforting the sorrowful, forgiving injuries, bearing wrongs patiently, and praying for the living and the dead. In the parable of the sheep and goats, Jesus commends the ones who show mercy to those who are suffering and marginalised (Matthew 25:31–46.) Mercy is a virtue in which one is called to have compassion for another, and if possible, to alleviate their suffering. At a time when the Church focuses on forgiveness and reconciliation, the spiritual (and corporal) works of mercy are about helping those on the journey of faith and those who are searching to be reconciled with God, the Church and

with others. So, as we begin this year of prayer in preparation for the Holy Year 2025, let us daily contemplate the 'Our Father' and extend that prayer in practice through performing the seven-spiritual works of mercy.

**Catholic Faith Formation** – Since October last year, a group has been meeting fortnightly on Monday evening at St Boniface to explore the teachings, beliefs, and practices of the Catholic Faith. The programme is called **RCIA: Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** and is open to anyone who desires to be received into Full Communion with the Catholic Church. The programme is open to people who have not been baptised and to Christians of other denominations who now wish to join the Catholic Church. The programme is also very helpful to Catholics who may have been away from the church for some time and now wish to come back to practise their faith. Now those who are coming since October last year are now being asked to decide whether they wish to go further in their Journey of Faith and be received into the Catholic Church at the forthcoming Easter vigil, this year. Please keep them in your prayers. We have potential six individuals who are seriously considering making this step, so your prayers will be most timely. Thank you.

**Ten-Year Mission Plan** – As announced last year, Bishop Philip Egan has initiated a Ten-Year Mission Plan to bring our central focus back to Jesus, putting Him at the centre of everything we are and do. True renewal and growth are not simply the fruit of organising meetings and forging plans. It is first and foremost the fruit of being very close to the Lord. At the Last Supper Jesus used the image of the vine and the branches: "Abide in Me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:4-5). Those are some pretty powerful words! Apart from the Lord we can do nothing. But with Him nothing is impossible. This is why Bishop Philip Egan urges us to deeply renew our prayer life and our sacramental life. Without prayer and the Sacraments, which are the channels God Himself has given us so that we may abide in Him and He in us, not even the best of plans can bear fruit. The six holy habits, which our Bishop strongly recommends, are simply an invitation to renew our prayer life and sacramental life. Representatives from the six parishes of our pastoral area have been working hard on consolidating our efforts around three key areas identified by the Bishop – 1) becoming a more Christ centred Church (through prayer, liturgy and ongoing faith formation); 2) becoming a missionary Church (through outreach and evangelisation); 3) becoming prudent stewards of Christ's Church (through wise administration). Please continue to keep this intention in your prayers.

With great sadness we announce that **Tom Vickers**, a parishioner of St. Boniface since the early 50's, died after a very brief illness on Sunday 21st January. Funeral details to follow. We are anticipating having the funeral at St. Boniface in the next couple of weeks. We are meeting with the Undertaker and are hoping that Father Tom can take the service as he took the service for our late mum Ann Vickers not long ago. Thank you. Margaret Smith"

**Next Soup Lunch** is on Friday 2 February, in the St Boniface Church Hall. All are welcome.

**Friday Soup Lunches: Soup-makers** are urgently needed to make vegetarian soup on a rota basis. Any help or support would be most welcome to ensure that this venture, which helps to bring the parishioners of St Boniface together on a regular basis, can continue. Please contact Catherine Keogh by emailing [catherine.keogh@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:catherine.keogh@hotmail.co.uk) Thank you.

**St Boniface Parish Toddlers' Group** meets every other Tuesday morning (school term times only). Their next meeting is on **6 February, 9:30am**, in our Hall. A donation of £1 per family is welcome.

**Knit & Natter:** this group meets every Monday morning, 10am to 12 noon in the St MC Room. All are welcome.

**Lenten Retreat 2024: an Advance Notice from St Vincent de Paul RC Church:** "At St Vincent de Paul, we are organising the Lenten Retreat scheduled to take place on **Saturday 16 March 10am- 4pm in our Church**, to be led by the Dominican Sisters. The Day's donation is £10 per head with light refreshments provided. If anyone is interested in obtaining more information, please get in touch with the parish administrator at: [sypoffice@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:sypoffice@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk) All are welcome!

**The Sunday Second Collection this weekend is for St Boniface's own's Building & Maintenance. Please give generously.**

**Mass Intention Offering** – Please be advised that offerings can be made by cash (in an envelope clearly marked "Mass Intention"), or by cheque payable to **CDP Oblates of the Virgin Mary**; or via a bank transfer using the details given here: Payee Name: **CDP Oblates of the Virgin Mary**; Branch Sort Code: **30-80-27**; Account Number: **36062268**; Reference: **Mass Intention**. Or simply give it to the Priest on the day of your Mass requested/attended.

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Parish website: [www.st-boniface.org.uk](http://www.st-boniface.org.uk)

Parish Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/stbonifacesouthampton>

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