



ST. BONIFACE



Bringing Christ to the people and people to Christ

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November 5, 2023 –THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Calling the Fathers: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time: Though they were Moses’ successors, the Pharisees and scribes exalted themselves, making their mastery of the law a badge of social privilege. Worse, they had lorded the law over the people (see [Matthew 20:25](#)). Like the priests Malachi condemns in today’s First Reading, they caused many to falter and be closed off from God. In a word, Israel’s leaders failed to be good spiritual fathers of God’s people. Moses was a humble father figure, preaching the law but also practising it—interceding and begging God’s mercy and forgiveness of the people’s sins (see [Exodus 32:9–14](#); Psalm 90). And Jesus reminds us today that all fatherhood—in the family or in the people of God—comes from the Father in heaven (see [Ephesians 3:15](#)). He doesn’t mean we’re literally to call no man “father.” He Himself referred to Israel’s founding fathers (see [John 7:22](#)); the Apostles taught about natural fatherhood (see [Hebrews 12:7–11](#)), and described themselves as spiritual fathers (see [1 Corinthians 4:14–16](#)). The fatherhood of the Apostles and their successors, the Church’s priests and bishops, is a spiritual paternity given to raise us as God’s children. Our fathers give us new life in Baptism and feed us the spiritual milk of the Gospel and the Eucharist (see [1 Peter 2:2–3](#)). That’s why Paul, in today’s Epistle, can also compare himself to a nursing mother. God’s fatherhood likewise transcends all human notions of fatherhood and motherhood. Perhaps that’s why the Psalm chosen for today includes one of the rare biblical images of God’s maternal care (see [Isaiah 66:13](#)). His only Son has shown us the Father (see [John 14:9](#)) coming to gather His children as a hen gathers her young (see [Matthew 23:37](#)). We’re all brothers and sisters, our Lord tells us today. And all of us—even our spiritual fathers—are to trust in Him, humbly, like children on our mothers’ laps.

Making Disciples and Forming Apostles – Sherry Weddell reminds us that 21st century Western Christianity bears some surprising resemblances to the early Church. The early Church was a minority group in a sea of religious and cultural pluralism with many different local expressions. In the same way, Christianity is now much less concentrated within traditional Christian countries and has spread all over the world to every country. In 1900, 95% of all Christians lived in majority Christian countries. But in 2022, only 53.7% of Christians lived in majority Christian countries. By 2050, it is estimated that a slim majority of Christians (50.4%) around the world will live in non-majority Christian nations. Only 25% of all Christians and Catholics will live in the West. Consider the experience of St Francis Xavier, the great Jesuit missionary to Asia. When Francis was living in Rome, he was living in the heart of Christendom and could reasonably expect that the vast majority of the people he met in the course of his daily life had more or less absorbed a set of basic Christian assumptions, ideas, values, language, and images just by living in that Christendom setting. Some were still “bad” Catholics and did not really believe or live the Faith. But they were all culturally Catholic at a basic, bone-deep level. If Francis Xavier said the word “Jesus”, everyone would know who he was talking about, and everyone presumed that Jesus was a man who had really lived. Christendom rules applied, and Xavier was used to evangelizing and ministering within the framework of those norms of communication. But when he first set foot on the shore of Japan, he entered a world where only one other man besides himself was Catholic, and where there was no trace as yet of Catholic concepts, values, categories or language. Xavier was starting from absolute zero – he did not speak the language, he was not familiar with their way of life, their values, their mental categories or their manner of speech. The most basic attempt at communication was going to be a long, difficult process as he attempted to decipher both the language and the mindset of the Japanese. He could not go about his mission in Japan the way he had in Rome. Today in the UK we can meet people who do not know Jesus. We need to be spiritually alert and ready for the shift into mission territory and rules because it is going to be a regular component of almost all our lives in the 21st century. We need to prepare ourselves to enter Missiondom settings and have Missiondom conversations with a confidence in God that understands that even though communication and relationship is going to be tricky, this is the conversation of our generation to which God has called us. He is already there ahead of us, speaking to each person in his or her heart language, which we ourselves do not yet know. We must trust that the Holy Spirit has gone before us, preparing the way. As disciples of Jesus today we are called to be apostles. Through discipleship we seek a deeper, personal relationship with Jesus in the midst of the Church. As apostles we are sent by Christ to share his message of truth, love and mercy. In Christendom settings, Catholics historically thought of lay-people as the recipients of the ministry of the ordained and religious, not as people anointed by Jesus for mission at baptism. But whenever and wherever the Church exists outside an intact Christendom, the immense value and importance of lay apostles always comes to the fore. Times of genuine revival and transforming mission are always the fruit of a wide variety of apostles – lay, religious and ordained – who were each dynamic catalysts and creatives in their own areas, and who simultaneously encouraged and supported other disciples and apostles. As we get closer to Jesus in friendship and love, we pray that we may have the courage to bring Jesus to the people in our own neighbourhoods.

Annual visit to Hollybrook cemetery on Sunday, 19th November at 2pm. We will meet at the grave of Canon MacDermot Roe. Almost the furthest point from the entrance at the hospital entrance.

St Boniface Social: Friday, 1 Dec : Poem and Pie Evening 6 – 8pm in the Church hall: “Calling all poetry fans, You’re invited to bring a favourite poem or two to share with the group, listen to others’ favourites, and enjoy some pie! No worries if you don’t have a poem to bring – feel free to simply come and listen and enjoy some pie! More details to follow and a sign-up sheet will be in the church porch shortly.”

St Boniface Funeral News – the funeral of the late Mr. Antonio Salvadico is on Saturday 11 November 1–4pm with the Holy Mass at 1–2pm. Viewings will be available just before the Mass and after the Mass. Refreshments will be available in the Hall from 2:30pm.

The Parish Intercessory Prayer Group will be meeting in the St Margaret Clitherow Room at 10 am on Sunday 26 November. If you feel called to pray for the needs of others please come and join us.

Please Support the Local Stella Maris Christmas Chocolate Appeal! Stella Maris, the Catholic charity that supports Seafarers, is planning to give chocolate treats to the crew members on board ships in ports along the south coast over Christmas. There will be many hundreds of seafarers passing through our ports and far away from home this Christmas. The Port Chaplains are asking for chocolate donations, e.g., tubs of chocolate sweets: Quality Street, Roses, Celebration, Heros etc. Please give your tub donations to the parish office by Monday 18 December; however, donations are also welcome after this date. The Southampton, Fawley and Portsmouth Port Chaplains will collect and deliver the treats to the ships. For more details contact: **Gregory Hogan** at: gregory.hogan@stellamarismail.org

St Boniface Calling Ministry – For the past three years, a group of volunteers, along with our priests, have felt that some of our housebound parishioners could be feeling isolated, anxious, and lonely. Keen to support these vulnerable parishioners we began to contact them to see if they would like someone to call them on a regular basis. And so the “Calling Ministry” was formed. A team of callers will ring, or visit, once every one or two weeks to keep in touch with, chat or pray with the parishioner so that they feel that they have not been forgotten by the parish community. Some request a visit from one of our priests or to receive the newsletter which we then arrange for them. If you would like to join us and be part of this worthwhile ministry, or know of anyone who would like to be called, please contact **Irena Sachrajda** by email: callingministry@st-boniface.org.uk or via the parish office.

St Boniface Parish Toddler Group is meeting in St Boniface Parish Hall 9:30am –11am on alternate Tuesdays of school term times only. The next meeting is on Tuesday 14 November. For more details contact catholicmotherssoton@gmail.com Everyone is welcome!

Parish Office Closed! The Parish Secretary will be away for three weeks: **9 – 29 November**, coming back on Thursday 30 November. In the meantime, if you have an urgent matter, please contact any of the Priests. It will not be possible to book the hall during this period, so please book before or after these dates.. Thank you for your great understanding.

St Bernard of Clairvaux comments on the reality of death: “How consoling it is to see a just man die! His death is good, because it ends his miseries; it is better still, because he begins a new life; it is excellent, because it places him in sweet security. From this bed of mourning, whereon he leaves a precious load of virtues, he goes to take possession of the true land of the living, Jesus acknowledges him as His brother and as His friend, for he has died to the world before closing his eyes from its dazzling light. Such is the death of the saints, a death very precious in the sight of God.”

“I Am Mark”: a one-man dramatic presentation of St Mark’s Gospel. To be performed in St Edmund’s at 7pm on Friday, 24 November (£5 per person: any ‘profit’ will go towards the Organ Fund). Listening to a gospel in its entirety in one sitting enables us to grasp the whole picture and message. The Eventbrite link to book is: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/i-am-mark-tickets711430175807?aff=oddttdcreator>

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.

The Second Collections for the Bamenda Sunday is on Sunday 5 November; and the St Boniface Building & Maintenance on Sunday 26 November. Please give generously.

Presbytery: St. Boniface House, 413 Shirley Road,
Southampton SO15 3JD Tel: 023 8077 0277

Parish website: www.st-boniface.org.uk

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

Parish Office opening hours: Mon to Fri – 9:30am to 12:30pm

Parish Secretary: Margaretta Livingstone
office@st-boniface.org.uk Tel: 023 8077 3640

Safeguarding Officer: Angela Braga
safeguarding@st-boniface.org.uk

Parish Pastoral Council: ppc@st-boniface.org.uk

Newsletter deadline 9.00pm on Wednesday for inclusion on following Sunday, space permitting. This Parish is within the Southampton Pastoral Area. Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Registered Charity: 1199568.