



# ST. BONIFACE



Bringing Christ to the people and people to Christ

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## September 24, 2023 –TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

**First and Last: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time:** The house of Israel is the vine of God, who planted and watered it, preparing the Israelites to bear fruits of righteousness (see [Isaiah 5:7; 27:2-5](#)). Israel failed to yield good fruits, and the Lord allowed His vineyard, Israel's kingdom, to be overrun by conquerors (see [Psalm 80:9-20](#)). But God promised that one day He would replant His vineyard and its shoots would blossom to the ends of the earth (see [Amos 9:15; Hosea 14:5-10](#)). This is the biblical backdrop to Jesus' parable of salvation history in today's Gospel. The landowner is God. The vineyard is the kingdom. The workers hired at dawn are the Israelites, to whom He first offered His covenant. Those hired later in the day are the Gentiles, the non-Israelites, who, until the coming of Christ, were strangers to the covenants of promise (see [Ephesians 2:11-13](#)). In the Lord's great generosity, the same wages, the same blessings promised to the first-called, the Israelites, will be paid to those called last, the rest of the nations. This provokes grumbling in today's parable. Doesn't the complaint of those first laborers sound like that of the older brother in Jesus' prodigal son parable (see [Luke 15:29-30](#))? God's ways, however, are far from our ways, as we hear in today's First Reading. And today's readings should caution us against the temptation to resent God's lavish mercy. Like the Gentiles, many will be allowed to enter the kingdom late—after having spent most of their days idling in sin. But even these can call upon Him and find Him near, as we sing in today's Psalm. We should rejoice that God has compassion on all whom He has created. This should console us, too, especially if we have loved ones who remain far from the vineyard. Our task is to continue labouring in His vineyard. As Paul says in today's Epistle, let us conduct ourselves worthily, struggling to bring all men and women to the praise of His name.

**Becoming Intentional Disciples** – Last week we introduced Sherry Weddell's thoughts on what she calls the five thresholds of conversion. We mentioned the first threshold of conversion – Initial Trust. This week we will speak of the second threshold – **Curiosity**. Sherry Weddell shares these key thoughts: Our ultimate mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ, so we must first arouse curiosity about Jesus himself. To do that, we have to talk about Jesus. We must help each other and those outside the Church to fall in love with Jesus Christ. The threshold of curiosity is a time to explore that a personal God exists and that you can have a personal relationship with God. The three basic stages of curiosity are: 1) Awareness – you become aware that there are more possibilities in life than you have imagined or experienced; 2) Engagement – take concrete steps to make friends with a Christian, read about Jesus, etc.; 3) Exchange – move from mere listening to actively asking questions and exchanging ideas. Jesus asked His disciples 2,000 years ago and He asks us today: "Who do you say that I am?" (Mt 6:15). Jesus welcomes and cultivates curiosity. One powerful way to rouse curiosity is to tell stories. Jesus was masterful in His use of parables and stories. Jesus wanted His listeners to begin actively thinking. As Catholics we are called to "live curiously", i.e. to live lives of such inexplicable joy, love, faith and peace that all the normal categories by which nonbelievers try to classify us won't work. This requires that we think and act in Kingdom-oriented and countercultural ways in our daily lives. Forgiving and asking forgiveness of those who have betrayed and abused us are perhaps the most countercultural things we can do. Speaking the truth in love, honouring others with our words, living in healthy relationships, caring for the poor, sharing possessions freely, praying for healing and provision, and even simple family prayer times can be startling countercultural witnesses. A prayerful life that springs from the supernatural power of the Eucharist and the sacraments and issues in the corporal and spiritual works of mercy such as feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, and praying for the living and the dead can be a powerful sign of contradiction that creates the curiosity that calls a soul to Christ. This curiosity is the threshold individuals must cross before they can truly become intentional disciples, who know and experience Jesus as Lord and Saviour and who begin to put the charisms they have received from God at the service of others. The big question we need to ask ourselves is: Are we curious enough to get to know Jesus more deeply?

**Shoebox Appeal:** Carole and Tom Olding have been organizing the Shoebox Appeal for the last 23 years. It's a wonderful initiative and very easy to do. You simply take a shoebox available in the church porch home with you and fill it with Christmas gifts that will then be delivered to children in the Ukraine (the target country of this year's initiative). In this simple way you can bring joy to a young boy or girl in this war-devastated country. Imagine his or her joy when he or she receives the box and opens it up with joy and excitement on Christmas day. Your generosity will make those children feel very special. We thank Carole and Tom for organizing this once again. In the shoebox you will find clear instructions on how to prepare your box. There are suggestions for suitable gifts. **Please return the box to the church hall before the 6.30pm Saturday vigil Mass on 14 October; or before the 9am, 11am and 5.30pm Mass on Sunday 15 October.**

**List of November Names 2023!** The parish office is now open to accept submission for the names of the deceased. Please email names directly to the office: [office@st-boniface.org.uk](mailto:office@st-boniface.org.uk). Or give names to any Priests to pass on to the office if you attend weekend Masses. Or hand in the names to the office if you only attend weekday Masses. If the submissions are handwritten ones, please make sure that the names are written in CAPITAL LETTERS for maximum clarity.

**New St Boniface Parish Toddler Group!** A new Baby & Toddler group is starting! Meetings will be in St Boniface Parish Hall 9:30am -11am on alternate Tuesdays of school term times only; and so for this Autumn term of the year it is starting on September 26; and then October 10 & 31; November 14 & 28; and December 12 – the last session before Christmas. The fee is only £1 per family. For more details contact [catholicmotherssoton@gmail.com](mailto:catholicmotherssoton@gmail.com) Non-St Boniface parishioner families welcome!

**The Diocese, in Partnership with the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales** is hosting an online seminar on Tuesday 21 November, at 6 pm, led by Evangelist Sherry Weddell, for Catholics wishing to bring people closer to Christ. Tickets are £10 per person from [Engaging the Disengaged \(How to Accompany Non-religious persons\) Tickets, Tue 21 Nov 2023 at 18:00 | Eventbrite](#)

**Thanks to All Parishioners** who co-operated in the recent **Fire Drills** at the Sunday Masses 9/10 September. It is very important on future drills, and real emergencies, that everyone leaves the Church immediately **in a calm manner** without collecting personal belongings. Please do not try to drive away from the car park until the drill is over as this could endanger the large number of people standing outside the church. Best wishes, Fire Drill Marshall.

**St Boniface Parishioner Database Needs Updating!!!** “Hello, if you’re new, or *newish* to us, it will be most helpful if you can pick up a parishioner registration form from the church porch, fill it in and hand it to any Priests, or hand it to the Parish Office; or you can do so via our website: [www.st-boniface.org.uk](http://www.st-boniface.org.uk). It is very important that you’re formally & accurately accounted for. It also means that you will get a lower hire rate when you book our venues for your functions. Thank you”.

Please leave some room in your diary for a special **Citywide Ecumenical Prayer Event** taking place at St Boniface on **Sunday 1 October, at 7.30pm**. Fellow Christians from various denominations throughout the city will be joining us to pray and focus on God’s presence among us and to celebrate what unites us in our Christian faith. There will be prayers, songs of worship and a moment of witness.

**CAFOD Family Fast Day Appeal Friday 6 October:** “Dr Nasha’s mobile medical clinic gets lifesaving help to where it’s needed most, fast – so when her team arrived in Meera’s village in Pakistan after it had been destroyed by flooding, Meera rushed to the clinic to get her children the treatment they needed. Donate to CAFOD today so that more families can get the expert help they need. Use the envelope in church or give online at [www.cafod.org.uk](http://www.cafod.org.uk)”

**Note: St Boniface CAFOD Soup Lunch in the Church Hall from Midday on Family Fast day!**

**Urgent News! A Part-time Caretaker at Springhill Catholic Primary School is Needed!** For full details please visit the school website: <https://www.springhillcatholic.co.uk/> or call the school office on 02380 333954. Thank you.

We welcome enquiries for Baptism here at St Boniface Church, just complete the form on the Parish website [www.st-boniface.org.uk](http://www.st-boniface.org.uk). Please note that we’re no longer using paper application forms. If this is a problem, visit the Parish Office.

**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 Collection for this Sunday is for St Boniface Building & Maintenance on 24 September – please give generously. The optional collection is for CAFOD Harvest, on Sunday 8 October.**

Presbytery: St. Boniface House, 413 Shirley Road,  
Southampton SO15 3JD Tel: 023 8077 0277  
Parish website: [www.st-boniface.org.uk](http://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  
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Safeguarding Officers: Sarah Studzinski/  
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