The Roman Catholic Parishes of Old Hall Green, Puckeridge & Buntingford

(Established 1793: 2 Farm Ln, SG11 1DT) (Established 1914: 3 Station Rd, SG9 9HT)

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The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph 31 December 2023

Mass Times for the Week commencing
30 December 2023—7 January 2024

All Masses will take place in the parish church of St Richard of Chichester, Buntingford.

Saturday 30 December
Vigil Mass 6th Day in the Octave of Christmas
6.00pm: The People of the Parish

Sunday 31 December
The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph
9.15am: The People of the Parish
11.00am: The People of the Parish

Saturday 6 January 2024
Vigil Mass of the Epiphany

6.00pm: The People of the Parish

Sunday 7 January 2024
The Epiphany of the Lord

9.15am: The People of the Parish
11.00am: The People of the Parish



+Solemnity of Mary the Holy Mother of God
1 January 2024

Wishing everyone a very Happy, Healthy and Blessed New Year

REFRESHMENTS AFTER MASS

Parishioners are warmly invited to the hall between the two Sunday Masses for refreshments served from 10.15am



The Holy Family is caught today in the most intimate and happiest moment for every family: the one in which it is cheered and completed by the birth of the first child. Despite the climate of mystery in which the birth of their child took place, Mary and Joseph experienced the events of their lives in a way no different from that in which two normal poor spouses who love each other do so. They are the first to be surprised by what happens and is said around the child. They too live by faith and are led, moment by moment, to discover the will and plan of God. Everything, therefore, in the Gospel story is profoundly true and human; nothing is a recitation of a part already written and known.

With this celebration, the Church wants first of all to exalt and reaffirm the dignity of the family; it also wants to help us reflect as Christians on this reality within which we all live and to which we owe our life itself.

Some say that we priests do not know what family life is and that we should remain silent on this point, leaving every man and woman free to decide what is best. But if we don't know from personal experience what married and family life is like, we know how it should be because we find ourselves having to interpret the Word of the one who created the family, who redeemed it and consecrated it with a sacrament. The family is, in God's plan, the continuation of creation. In some way, it takes its meaning from creation. God creates and gives life because he is good, because he is love, and love tends to spread and communicate itself. In this light, the family appears to us as the reality desired by God so that life spreads, through love.

Is it possible to still see the family as the place of love, in an era in which it is so often under accusation, so often the scene of terrible events? We Christians must answer: Yes, it is possible, indeed it is necessary! It is precisely this testimony that believers are today called to give to the values of creation. It is this testimony that today's celebration aims to seek from us.

How do you acquire this love that knows how to forgive, that knows how to give in silence, and knows how to forget? It is not just the result of the right choice. It is above all the fruit of generosity; it is a victory against selfishness, the invisible but deadly enemy of love and, therefore, of the family. But also, and above all, the fruit of God's grace and help.

Therefore, let us pray together today to the Holy Family of Nazareth, that God may truly be welcomed into the homes that are open to receiving new Christian married couples and that God may return where his absence has been forced by the spouses.

Fr Marco Lazzaron

A Prayer Offering to the Holy Child.

0 Dear, sweet Infant Jesus. I offer You: my will, that You strengthen it; my mind, that You inspire it; my memory, that You fill it; my wishes and desires, that You cleanse them. I sacrifice to You: my intentions, that You guide them; my trouble and my labour, that You bless them; all my inner and outer activities, that You make them sacred. All I am and all I have Is Yours. Your love for me is my hope and my trust. Hear me and grant that I may never leave You. Amen