BLESSING OF THE CRIB *AT HOME*



Heavenly Father, bless us as we gather here
and bless this crib that we have prepared.
Let it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus,
Son of God and Son of Mary.

We thank you because you have loved us so much
that you sent your only Son to bring us eternal life.
We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.
Amen.



Fr Peter, Fr Marco and Deacon Paul send you their thanks
and every prayer and good wish for
a Happy and Blessed Christmas
and a prosperous New Year !

Christmas 2023

The Catholic Parishes of Buntingford and Old Hall Green & Puckeridge

This leaflet will give you details of our Christmas Masses and Services and much more ….



Today a Saviour has been born to us,
He is Christ the Lord.

A SIMPLE FORM OF BLESSING
THE CHRISTMAS TREE *AT HOME*

When the tree has been prepared, the household gathers around it. All make the sign of the cross.

The leader begins:

Blessed be the name of the Lord

Now and for ever.

The leader continues:

Two thousand and twelve years ago, amid signs and wonders,
Christ Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea. We will celebrate his birth on Christmas Day.
But even today the memory of his birth brings joy to our hearts and light to our minds.
We have decorated this tree in his honour. May we welcome Christ among us.
May the lights of this tree remind us of his perfect light.

Reader:

A reading from the first letter of St John:
God is light; in him there is no darkness.
If we walk in light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another,
and the blood of his Son Jesus, cleanses us from all sin.
The Word of the Lord **Thanks be to God.**

After a moment of silent prayer the leader might want to invite those gathered to offer prayers for those in special need at this time, for themselves and their families and friends. These prayers of intercession finish with the Lord's Prayer.

Then the Leader says the Prayer of Blessing:

Lord our God, we praise you for the light of creation:
the sun, the moon and the stars of the night.
We praise you for the light of Israel: the Law, the prophets,
and the wisdom of the Scriptures.
We praise you for Jesus Christ, your Son:
he is Emmanuel, God-with-us, the Prince of Peace,
who fills us with the wonder of your love.
Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we light this tree.
May the light and cheer it gives be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts.
May all who delight in this tree come to the knowledge and joy of salvation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

If you have lights on your tree then this is when you switch them on
The blessing continues with a verse of 'O Come, O come, Emmanuel'

All sing:

O come, thou dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadow put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

The leader concludes the blessing by making the sign of the cross and saying:
May the God of glory fill our hearts with peace and joy, now and for ever.
Amen.

St Richard's at Buntingford
4th Sunday of Advent



Sat 23 December (Vigil Mass of Sunday)

at **St Richard's at Buntingford at 6pm**

and also at St Joseph's, Bishop's Stortford

9am Sunday Mass 24 December



Christmas Day Mass

St Richard's* at *Buntingford at 9am

And the following weekend, Masses on ***SATURDAY 30 December and SUNDAY 31 December 2023*** *AS USUAL AT ST RICHARD'S*

Christmas Eve Masses in the Catholic Parish of Bishop's Stortford:

at Most Holy Redeemer *at Sawbridgeworth*

(Confessions from 6.45-7.10pm in the Tea Room)

Carols and Readings 7.30pm - Vigil Mass at 8.00pm

at St Joseph's, Bishop's Stortford

5pm ...Mass especially for families with younger children,

our children are invited to come dressed as Shepherds or Angels.

7pm 2nd *Vigil Mass of Christmas (priority seating for older parishioners)*

11.30pm *Carols and Readings* *followed by*

MIDNIGHT MASS *at* ***Midnight !*** *- Come early to get a seat !*

Christmas Day Masses

St Joseph's *at* ***Bishop's Stortford*** *MASS at 9am and 11am*

Holy Cross *at* ***Much Hadham*** *at MASS at 11.30am*