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

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

website: https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/oldhallgreen **website:** https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/buntingford

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Bishop's Stortford Parish Office: Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 3:00 pm ☎ 01279 654063

The Epiphany of the Lord 7 January 2024

Mass Times for the Week commencing 6 –14 January 2024

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

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

Saturday 13 January 2024
Vigil Mass Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
6.00pm: The People of the Parish

Sunday 14 January 2024
The Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
9.15am: The People of the Parish
11.00am: The People of the Parish



PEACE SUNDAY 14 JANUARY 2024

The work of Pax Christi is based on the gospel and inspired by faith. The theme chosen by Pope Francis for Peace Sunday 2024 is 'Artificial Intelligence and Peace'



REFRESHMENTS AFTER MASS

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



The opposition in the theme between darkness and light continues to be presented in today's liturgy of the Word. This contrast involves the whole world and the lives of all of us, implying the need for each of us to make the free choice of placing our lives either at the service of darkness or at the service of light.

It is striking to imagine that all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, from Herod onwards, are all enveloped in the darkness of "turmoil" when they are informed by the Wise Men of the birth of the King of the Jews (cfr. Mt 2:3). This fear triggers the stress of a competitive lifestyle, to want to keep oneself in first place at all costs by aggressively proving to be stronger than others; it is the fear of the other, seen as a potential enemy to be eliminated; it is the disturbance in wanting to show outwardly interest and respect for the child when instead his heart was like a wild beast ready to seize and devour its prey. In other words, it is the disturbance of human selfishness, when one decides to invest one's life only to save oneself and one's interests.

Today we are invited not to fix our gaze on the darkness and turmoil that feed our discouragement, resignation, depression, despair, and pessimism. But, rather, we are invited to contemplate the light that comes to overcome the darkness of the world and has the power to dominate our selfishness, because the root of evil resides in the heart of every human being.

Kneeling and adoring the Child Jesus today means taking on in our daily lives the luminous relationship between Mary and Jesus. Our worship today takes the form of choosing to live, like Mary, for Christ, with Christ, and in Christ.

To live for Christ, like Mary, means to make the choice to come out of the defensive attitude of our selfishness, entrusting ourselves only to our human strength and our abilities, leaving attachment to material goods and money, allowing Christ, to become the center of our lives, the Lord of our lives. The offering of incense, made by the Magi of the East, can signify the divine perfume that envelops us, that is, the perfume of the Holy Spirit capable of overturning all situations of darkness, also caused by our selfishness.

To live with Christ, like Mary, means to care for our communion with Christ, who is present in the gift of the Word, of the Eucharist, and in the flesh of the poorest and most suffering. The offering of myrrh, made by the Magi of the East, can signify the dignity of caring for one another, the beauty of remaining united, and our courage to live reconciliation after every conflict, at the cost of the sacrifice of our self-giving.

To live in Christ, like Mary, means to make Christ live in us to such an extent that makes us available to serve joyfully in our community so that the Father's kingdom of peace and justice may take place in history, going against the dominant culture of the exaltation of selfishness, hedonism, and materialism. The offering of gold, made by the Magi of the East, can signify the beauty and value of those who put themselves at the service of others with humility.

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 ls Yours. Your love for me is my hope and my trust. Hear me and grant that I may never leave You. Amen