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 Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time 4 February 2024

Mass Times for the Week commencing 3-11 February 2024

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

Saturday 3 February 2024
Vigil Mass of the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
6.00pm: The People of the Parish

Sunday 4 February 2024
The Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
9.15am: The People of the Parish
11.00am: The People of the Parish

Saturday 10 February 2024
Vigil Mass of the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
6.00pm: The People of the Parish

Sunday 11 February 2024
The Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
9.15am: The People of the Parish
11.00am: The People of the Parish

YOUR PARISH NEEDS YOU!
Please consider joining the 9-15am Sunday Mass Readers' rota.
Speak to Ged Giblin after Mass if you are interested or email him at gerard.giblin@btinternet.com
Thank you



Thank you very much to everyone who donated to the Gaza collection last weekend.
£626.53 was raised and is on its way to assist the work of the Latin Patriarch in Gaza City



We hear of the first healing miracle in Mark's Gospel. Jesus chooses to heal a woman (Peter's mother-in-law), with a fever (not a big deal some may say!) and he heals her inside the house, with few people present there but every healing is an invitation to look beyond the sign, to see its meaning. From the smallness and irrelevance of the miracle, we sense that we must look elsewhere if we want to seek eternal life.

This miracle is for service, it is not to prove something or to convince or to make people believe. Jesus did not want to capture or seduce people with miracles. Miracles are always signs to build faith. In his life, Jesus will heal to give back to every sick person the ability to love by serving because loving is the only reality that makes us like him.

In the text two expressions help us to grasp the symbolic value of this event: "he approached and made her stand up by taking her by the hand" (but we should have translated "he made her resurrected") and "she served them". Jesus heals the hand which, from being closed, becomes capable of making a gift. Now the woman can live as a risen woman. We don't know what they said or what happened. We only understand that Jesus took the initiative, he went to her and slowly approached her and spoke to her.

The hand of Jesus is "contagious", the woman begins a new life thanks to Jesus' contagious love. It is Christ who does the bulk of the work. We always think of reaching God through religious performances to deserve salvation, but Christianity is letting ourselves be reached by God who saves us for free. We think we are free when we don't need anyone. You have to let yourself be helped, let yourself be loved, let yourself be carried, let yourself be resurrected.

Prayer has the power to "raise those who are lying", and to give a new sense to our lives. Prayer is not asking to solve a problem but not letting the problem dominate you anymore. We know very little about Jesus' prayer, what he said, what words he used. One thing is certain: prayer is not a list of requests to God, or worse, telling God how to be God. We do not pray for a certain reality to go differently, but so that through prayer we can change the way with which we face reality. Most of the time events will not change, because the course of life follows its own internal logic and we can't do anything about it, not even God. The difference is in the way I live and deal with that reality. Even Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane will not change reality but will find the strength for his definitive and total "Yes".

Fr Marco Lazzaron

"The saints do not waste energy complaining about the failings of others; they can hold their tongue before the faults of their brothers and sisters and avoid the verbal violence that demeans and mistreats others."
Pope Francis

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