



The Catholic Parish
of Bishop's Stortford



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📍 3 Windhill, Bishop's Stortford, Herts CM23 2ND

Parish Office: Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Administrator/ Safeguarding: Mrs Debbie Jackson | **Catechetical Co-ordinator:** Mrs Sophie Sullivan

www.rcstortford.org.uk

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

29 December 2024

Our priests are:

Fr Peter Harris (*Parish Priest*)

Fr Marco Lazzaron (*Asst Priest*)



ADORATION AND CONFESSION

Come and join us at St Joseph and the English Martyrs Church for Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation each Saturday, 3:00 to 4:00 pm.

**BAPTISM PREPARATION
COURSE**

The next two-part baptism preparation course will be on 13 and 27 January 2025 at 8:15pm via Zoom. You are required to attend a course before you arrange a date for your child's baptism. Please contact the parish office to book.

**POVERTY IN LONDON
HELPING THE POOR**

Men's clothes, small toiletries (shampoo, shower gel, tooth paste, tooth brushes, razors, shaving foam, Roll on deodorant), and new underwear are being collected by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, St Fidelis Friary, Killip Close, Canning Town, E16 1LX. Telephone 0207 4740766. If you have spare clothing that you no longer need and are able to get to them, please consider donating to their cause. Thank you.

CONTACTLESS QR code
↓ PARISH OFFERINGS ↓



This Sunday we celebrate the feast of the Holy Family which reminds us of the beauty and importance of the family. "The family is the first school of peace and love, and children will bring that into the society in which they live" (Saint John Paul II).

From this Sunday's Gospel we want to grasp two further aspects: fulfilling the Father's will and keeping beautiful things in one's heart.

Jesus, to Mary's question "Why have you done this to us", places the importance of doing the Father's will above all else: "Did you not know that I must concern myself with my Father's affairs?" From this answer, it is clear that Jesus' vocation is to be at the service of the heavenly Father (Cardinal G. Ravasi). This should also be our greatest wish. Family ties, however important, must not hinder the fulfillment of our mission, that plan that God has had for us since eternity, in which our happiness and that of others lie. Many live not to disappoint "mom and dad", but there's more! There is a Father who loves us and entrusts us with a mission, many times different from what our parents intended for us. God "bets" on each of us, he has assigned a specific task to each of us, a well-defined service.

After Jesus' difficult response, it is written that his mother kept all these things in her heart. Mary connects the events, takes possession of them and keeps them in her heart. The heart is the area of faith, the area of the relationship with God. Here, we have a place to live, compare, preserve, treasure the work of God, that is the place of the relationship with Him.

But all this is incomplete, there is a deeper area often not inspected by the majority of people: it is the spiritual dimension, where the relationship with God takes place which is in the deepest part of our heart. In the parable of the merciful Father, the prodigal son at a certain point is written that "he came to himself". Where was he before? Outside of himself! He was outside of his heart. Now we too, for many reasons, are often out of our hearts, we live on the surface. So to find ourselves, to return to the good origin, to meet the Lord, we need to make this internal journey, we need to return to ourselves! Our happiness is when we are guided by the deepest and most beautiful part of us! In this too, Mary is a model for us, she is always in connection, with the deepest part of herself.

Fr Marco Lazzaron

THANK YOU!

Fr Peter, Fr Marco and the Parish Team send their sincere thanks to 'everyone' who generously gave their time and helped over the Christmas period as well as continuously throughout the year. We are blessed to have so many willing volunteers in our parish from those who clean the church, read, sing, play music, serve, create beautiful flower arrangements, run groups, organise, visit the sick, look after the repositories, make tea, hand out hymn books, collect & count money, the list is endless..! They would also like to thank everyone for the kind gifts, cards and good wishes gratefully received and extend their prayers and every good wish to you for a Happy, Blessed and Prosperous New Year!