

## Thought for the day: Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021

By Revd John Marshall

Holy Innocents!

Is not a long forgotten exclamation of Batman. In planning sermons and thoughts it is easy to skip the story of the children of Bethlehem. I mentioned consequences of the coming of the Magi.

“When Herod realised that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious and gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under in accordance with the time he had learned it from the Magi.”

Matthew 2.16.

Matthew includes it to remind his readers of similarities between Moses and Jesus.

I saw the brilliant Nativity at the Young Vic – when Joseph was warned to leave – he felt guilty as whether to warn other parents.

It is important that we remember these consequences – because throughout the world children are suffering and dying; from war or disease or famine.

As we remember the Holy Innocents we can focus on them in prayer and hopefully practically.

Heavenly Father,

Whose children suffered at the hands of Herod, though they had done no wrong: by the suffering of your son and by the innocence of our lives, frustrate all evil designs and establish your reign of justice and peace, through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever.

Amen

From the intercessions

We pray for the children of our world, that they may grow up knowing love and security.

We pray for all children who suffer physical or mental abuse.

We pray for all communities in our world who live with the memories of massacre and gross cruelty.

We pray for all who are corrupted by power and regard human life as cheap.

We pray for parents who have suffered the death of a child.

We pray for parents and guardians that they may be given the grace to care for the children entrusted to them.

As we celebrate the coming of the Christ child we rejoice in the fellowship of the Holy Innocents and commit the children of this community, our nation and the world to you, our righteous God.

Amen