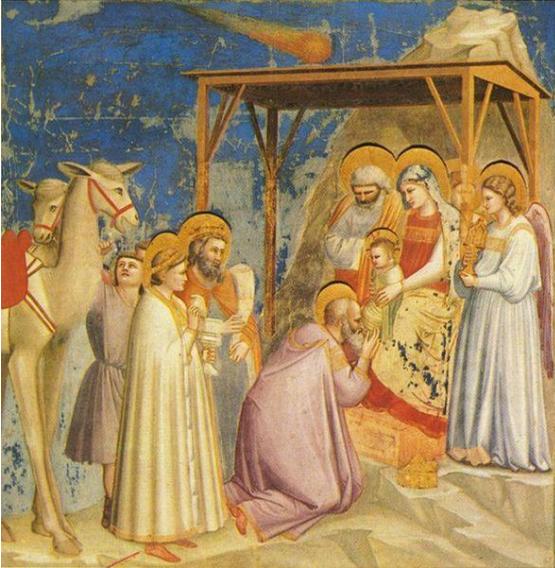


## EMMANUEL – GOD IS WITH US



Epiphany is the season when we remember the visit of the wise men. Recognising the infant Christ as God, they fall on their knees and worship Him, presenting costly gifts, fit for a King and a priest. Giotto's fresco from the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua depicts this familiar scene. All of this is perfectly correct: God has come among us, and we should respond with worship and adoration. But there other messages in the incarnation: for not only is the child God, but God is also a child.

As a new-born baby, Jesus has all the human needs with which we are so familiar: the need for shelter, for clothing, for food, for protection. These are not needs that he can fulfil for himself: Mary and Joseph must provide these things for him. Titian's picture of the Holy Family as they rest on the flight to Egypt depicts this other side of things. Here Mary does not offer her child for worship, but cradles him in her arms, offering her love and protection..

And what of today, now Christ has risen? Remember that Emmanuel means not God **was** with us, but God **is** with us. We pray that we may dwell in Christ and that he may dwell in us. It is through us that Christ still has the human needs that he had as a baby, and it is through us that these



needs must be met. We meet the risen Christ today in the hungry, in the thirsty, in the stranger and in the sick, in the poor and the prisoner. and it is in them that we must meet his needs. For whatever we do for the least of his brothers, we do for him.