



OUR LADY OF LOURDES HARPENDEN

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Gaudete Sunday) (B)
13TH DECEMBER 2020



Parish Priest Canon Anthony Dwyer

Presbytery: 1, Kirkwick Avenue, Harpenden AL5 2QH Tel: 01582 712245
Email: anthonydwyer@rcdow.org.uk

Parish Administrator Mrs Melanie Armitage

The office is presently closed, but the Parish Priest and Administrator can be contacted by telephone: 01582 712245 or email: harpenden@rcdow.org.uk
Website: parish.rcdow.org.uk/harpenden twitter: @RC_OLOL
Facebook: Our Lady of Lourdes Harpenden

Parish Safeguarding Representative Mrs Brigid Brennan

Email: harpendensg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk Tel: 07881 785 299

Last week we were introduced to John the Baptist as part of our Advent journey. We hear his story again but this time from the fourth Gospel. Light and darkness is a key theme of the fourth Gospel and in its opening verses proclaims that this light has always shone in the dark; the darkness cannot overpower it. The evangelist goes on to tell us that John the Baptist's mission is that he has been sent by God to 'speak for the light'. John is a light bearer, he is not the light, but he points to the light. He is a witness to the light of God in our world, a light that cannot be put out.

We celebrate this light today on Gaudete Sunday, Gaudete which means 'rejoice'. We light the pink candle and we celebrate with joy. As our world continues to battle this pandemic, there is much fear about. People might not feel like celebrating or being joyful. But nature shows us that Spring always follows Winter. Like John, we are called to be light-bearers. To carry Christ's love and light to those we meet in our daily lives. Our world needs light-bearers, especially in these Winter months. It might be a good opportunity to ask today 'Who have been the light bearers for me in these past months?' And also, 'To whom can I carry light to this week?' In this way we observe Christ's ongoing incarnation in the world today.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS 2020.

Details of everything taking place, in church, for the remainder of Advent and during the Christmas season, will be found in the Christmas leaflet. If you receive the newsletter by email, hopefully you have received a copy. If not, you can collect one in church, or a copy can be emailed, or posted, if you contact the parish office.



MASS TIMES

Masses are presently being celebrated, at these times: Saturday 5.00pm, Sunday 9.00am and 10.30am; Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at 9.15am. The Sunday 10.30am Mass, and the Masses on Tuesday and Thursday, will continue to be live-streamed. If

you wish to attend any of these Masses please let us know. Up to two people can request a place, via the parish website:

parish.rcdow.org.uk/harpenden

For three, and upwards, please email or telephone the parish office.



DON'T FORGET

When you come to Mass, you are asked to:

- Wear a mask, or face covering
- Follow the stewards' instructions
- Sanitise your hands on entering and leaving the church
- Observe social distancing of 2m
- Follow the one-way system around the church
- Sit in a pre-allocated seat
- Avoid touching surfaces
- Limit interactions with anyone you are not attending church with.

CHRISTMAS MASSES

For all of us Christmas will be very different this year, in so many ways, and that will include what happens in church. The brief survey, thanks to those who completed it, indicates that many of you are hoping to attend Mass at Christmas; while it is good to see that desire, at the same time, it also presents a problem, as it is likely that there will not be room for everyone, even though there will be additional Masses. Masses will be celebrated as follows:
Christmas Eve: 5.00pm, 7.30pm, and 10.00pm, and on

Christmas Day: 9.00am, 10.30am and 12noon. If you would like to attend one of these Masses, please let us know in the usual way. For up to two places you can do so via the parish web-site:

parish.rcdow.org.uk/harpenden for three and more, please email or telephone the parish office. If you are in the same Christmas "bubble" with another family, or friends, please mention this when you request your seat/s, "as you may be able to sit together in the church and so create more available space for others.



PARISH CAROL SERVICE

Next Sunday the Parish Carol Service takes place, at 6.00pm. Unfortunately, the current regulations limit the numbers that can gather in church. However, the Choir and Readers will be in church, and the service will be live-streamed.

It will still be a lovely opportunity to reflect together, through words and music, on the story of Christmas. We hope that you will be able to participate. **Zoom Code 883 0772 7862**



CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

This weekend there will be another opportunity to donate to the second collection for flowers so that the Church can be decorated for the Christmas season. If you are watching Mass via livestreaming and would like to contribute to the Flower Collection please post your offering marked 'Christmas Flowers' through the Presbytery Letterbox. Thank you in advance for your generosity.



RECONCILIATION

At the present time it isn't possible to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the Confessional. Canon Dwyer is available for the celebration of the sacrament by individual appointment. On Saturdays 12th and 19th December, Confessions will be heard between 11.00am and 12noon in the undercroft. Arrangements will be in place so that the penitent and priest are safely distanced, confidentiality ensured; those attending should wear masks.



VISITS TO THE CRIB

Usually around Christmas it is possible to leave the church open and, whoever wishes, can come and visit the crib. This year, that is not possible.

However, in order to allow individuals and families to make such visits, the church will be open, outside of Mass, on three occasions. Please see the Christmas leaflet for details.



CHRISTMAS OFFERING

As many of you will know priests who work in parishes, are supported, in the main, by the offertory of Christmas Day, along with that of Easter Sunday; they also receive the stipends that are donated for Masses, Baptisms, weddings and funerals. Last Easter, as we were in lockdown, the collection was significantly less than usual. Those who support the parish, using the planned giving envelopes, will find a 'Christmas offering envelope', amongst their envelopes.

Parishioners who support the parish in other ways, may wish to use one of the Christmas envelopes that will be found in the church porch.

Contributions will be collected at the Christmas Masses, and can also be dropped into the presbytery letter box.



WE'VE REACHED 100!

Last weekend a significant milestone was reached - 100 videos posted on the parish YouTube channel, which is pretty impressive considering that 7 months ago we didn't have a YouTube channel and, 9 months ago we had never entertained the idea of live-streaming Mass! Huge thanks of course must go to our dedicated tech team - Peter Metcalfe and John Saliot, without whom this would not be possible.

FIRST COMMUNION 2021

At last we are now in a position to begin to register children, in year 3 and above, for First Holy Communion in 2021. If you would like to register your child you will find the form on the parish website, alternatively you can request a form by contacting the parish office. **Completed forms should be returned no later than, tomorrow, Monday December 14th.** Dates for preparation, and First Communion celebrations, have still to be decided, and will be advised, with further information, during January.



CATHOLIC PAPERS

For quite sometime the sale of the weekly Catholic Papers has steadily decreased, and now only three or so parishioners are purchasing a copy. Although, those who read these papers, pay for them, there are other expenses, as we are required to take a certain number, all of which we don't sell, but have to pay for. So, from January we have decided not to stock these papers. We know that this will be disappointing for the regular readers, but the papers can be ordered directly, and will be posted free of charge from 'The Universe'. Please click:



<https://thecatholicuniverse.com/product-category/subscriptions/> to place an order.

WESTMINSTER YEAR BOOK

The Diocesan Directory for 2021 has now arrived. This contains details of all the parishes and priests in the Diocese, as well as other useful information. As the repository is closed, if you would like a copy, price £4.50, please contact the parish office.

STAYING IN TOUCH

During the first lockdown, a number of dedicated volunteers attempted to make contact with as many parishioners as possible. This was very successful, and much appreciated. With the second lockdown now coming to an end, and with Christmas approaching, we are very conscious that it is likely that there will be some parishioners, who find themselves leading very solitary lives. It goes without saying that if you are in need of support, or just a chat, do please let us know, and we will put you in touch with someone. There's nothing wrong in asking for a little support. In the meantime, our original volunteers, and a few more, are going to start telephoning round again, over the next few weeks. We hope our data base is up to date, if you don't receive a call, do let us know.



RECEPTION REFERENCES

Parents who need the Certificate of Catholic Practice (CCP) completed, are asked to drop the form into the presbytery, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope. Canon Dwyer will complete the forms, as appropriate, and, will as necessary, make contact by telephone or virtually. A copy of the CCP can be provided but, for it to be completed, parents will need to provide the full name, address and date of birth of the child. Although the closing date for applications is January 15th, it would be very helpful if parents could send the CCP for completion as soon as possible.



COVID-19 VACCINATION – CALL FOR LOCAL VOLUNTEERS.

The Harpenden Trust has just been asked by the local GP Federation to coordinate volunteer support for them during the forthcoming Covid-19 vaccination programme across the local Harpenden community. This will take place at a central Harpenden location with effect from Monday 21st December, requiring two outdoor marshals, six indoor patient support volunteers and four administration support personnel each day, for up to six days per week. The programme will be stretching into Spring next year. Viewed in "half days" – it is anticipated that 100 and approaching 150 volunteers will be needed each week to support our local community Covid vaccination programme.

There is some immediate time pressure, as it needs to be established if this volunteer workforce can be established. If you feel able to help, please respond to this message by EITHER emailing vaccine@theharpendentrust.org.uk OR by telephoning the main Harpenden Trust office (01582 460457 weekdays between 10am and 1pm).

MASS STIPENDS

The question is sometimes asked: what the appropriate amount to donate is, when requesting a Mass to be offered? In Westminster Diocese, the guidance is that the suggested offering is £10. The offering, contributes to the upkeep of the priest, who celebrates the Mass, but doesn't receive a set salary. In earlier times, the Mass Stipend was seen as keeping a priest for a day.

PRAYING TOGETHER

It has been good to hear from parishioners that they have taken up the invitation to pray together either individually, or as a family, every evening at 7.30pm, and, so for those unable to attend Mass, to still be united. Each Tuesday, at 7.30pm, this prayer is live-streamed. You might like to participate; it lasts no longer than 10 minutes. Apologies for the problems last Tuesday.

The Zoom link is: 845 3209 5805



KATHLEEN CALLINAN RIP

Please pray for the Repose of the Soul of Kathleen Callinan who died this week. Kathleen's Requiem Mass will take place on Tuesday 22nd December at 10am and will be family invited guests only, due to the current restrictions. We remember Kathleen's family in our prayers at this time.

LIVESTREAMING

Masses and Services will be live-streamed on Zoom, and YouTube this coming week:

DAY	TIME	ZOOM CODE
Sunday - Mass	10.30am	860 9226 9193
Tuesday - Mass	9.15am	880 6396 4591
Tuesday Praying Together	7.30pm	845 3209 5805
Thursday - Mass	9.15am	830 9683 2001
Sunday - Mass	10.30am	860 9226 9193
Sunday - Parish Carol Service	6.00pm	883 0772 7862

PARISH OFFICE

Melanie is, working from home for all Parish enquiries please email the parish office harpenden@rcdow.org.uk, or telephone 01582 712245.



ST DOMINIC SCHOOL - ENTRY TO RECEPTION CLASS SEPTEMBER 2021

The application process has begun. Due to constraints during the pandemic open mornings will not be possible this year. Please see the school website for details, and for further information about making an application <https://www.stdominic.herts.sch.uk/Our-School/Admissions/>

CHRISTMAS STAMPS

Christmas stamps are now on sale at the Post Office.

This year they are liturgical, featuring stained glass windows from various churches. While churches do not benefit from such stamps, it is nonetheless good to request the 'religious' stamps. If they are not purchased it may be the case that commercial, not religious, stamps will be produced, and a little opportunity to maintain the message of Christmas is lost.



FOR THE CHILDREN

With the obligation to attend Mass remains suspended, it falls to each, if we are not attending Mass, to do what we can, to nourish our faith. Parents may find the following links, useful to do something with the children, particularly on Sundays:



<https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Children-s-liturgy>

<https://rcdow.org.uk/faith/catechesis/childrens-liturgy/>

<https://www.facebook.com/colourandshapeonline>

CAFOD WORLD GIFTS

World Gifts, CAFOD's range of virtual gifts, make a real difference to families living in poverty across the world. While we have the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown here, we can still be good neighbours to

our sisters and brothers overseas by giving World Gifts as Christmas presents to family and friends. The Keep Clean Kit gift for £6 and the Vegetable Garden gift for £10 are just two gifts that will help vulnerable families affected by the pandemic to protect and feed themselves. Let's spread joy and hope around the world this Christmas.

Visit cafod.org.uk/worldgifts for more details and pick up a booklet from the Church Porch.

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

SATURDAY 12TH DECEMBER 11.00AM - 12.00NOON VIGIL MASS 5.00PM	Advent Feria Confessions in the Undercroft 3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) (Gaudete Sunday) Anne Harrison RIP (Anniv)
SUNDAY 13TH DECEMBER 9.00AM 10.30AM 12.00 Noon	3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) (Gaudete Sunday) People of the Parish Bridie Cooper RIP (Anniv) Zoom Code 860 9226 9193 Baptism
MONDAY 14TH DECEMBER	St John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor Michael Moloney RIP
TUESDAY 15TH DECEMBER 9.15AM 7.30PM	Advent Feria Tommy Doran (Spec Ints) Zoom Code 880 6396 4591 PRAYING TOGETHER Zoom Code 845 3209 5805
WEDNESDAY 16TH DECEMBER 9.15AM	Advent Feria Clifford Shackell RIP
THURSDAY 17TH DECEMBER 9.15AM	Advent Feria Peter Truland RIP Zoom Code 830 9683 2001
FRIDAY 18TH DECEMBER	Advent Feria
SATURDAY 19TH DECEMBER 11.00AM - 12.00NOON VIGIL MASS 5.00PM	Advent Feria Confessions in the Undercroft 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) John McKenna RIP (Anniv)
SUNDAY 20TH DECEMBER 9.00AM 10.30AM 6.00PM	4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) People of the Parish Peter Blessing RIP Zoom Code 860 9226 9193 Parish Carol Service Zoom Code 883 0772 7862



CONFESIONS - BY PRIOR ARRANGEMENT WITH CANON DWYER