



OUR LADY OF LOURDES HARPENDEN

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)

6TH DECEMBER 2020



Parish Priest Canon Anthony Dwyer

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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

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The second Sunday of Advent turns our attention to John the Baptist. John was an interesting individual. We are told he dressed a bit strangely and spent a lot of time in the desert, 'the voice of one crying out in the wilderness'. Yet it seems he was very popular with 'all the people of Jerusalem' went out to hear him. John must have been a dynamic speaker and one in whom people found hope and inspiration. In John the Baptist's time, the people lived under the oppression of the Roman Empire and were waiting for someone who would liberate them. John points to one that is greater than he, he points the people to Jesus.

When Pope Francis released the encyclical Fratelli Tutti in October this year he noted that dark clouds hang over our world and he urged everyone to embrace a spirit of friendship, kindness, compassion and solidarity as we move forward, to help ensure the dignity of every person and a more sustainable world for all.

We have certainly experienced a type of wilderness this year as we continue to battle the effects of COVID19 and find a way forward. Our communities need messengers, like John, who bring good news, hope and a vision for the future, who point us towards a new way forward.

As we prepare to welcome Christ into our lives once more, let's make the most of this Advent time, the most of this waiting time. May we use this space to reflect on what type of world can be born out of this wilderness we find ourselves in. May we reach out to those who are crying out for hope during these difficult months, like John the Baptist, offering a positive vision for the future.

CELEBRATING MASS

Now that the second lockdown has ended, it's very good that we can, again, celebrate Mass together. Masses will continue to be celebrated at the same 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 places, 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.

CONFESSION

It has, for obvious reasons, been difficult to hear confessions, in recent months, although some have been managed. An indispensable part of our preparation for Christmas, is celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Having thought about this, Confessions will be heard for the next two Saturdays, December 12th and 19th, between 11.00am and 12noon, in the Undercroft, where we can maintain confidentiality, and observe appropriate distancing. Do think about taking this opportunity to prepare well for Christmas.



OFFERTORY ENVELOPES

Thanks to some very kind parishioners, all of the Planned giving envelopes have now been delivered. Although the parish still has the same overheads, since the first lockdown, the number of envelopes coming in has dropped considerably; and this is quite a worry. Now that the Church's new year has started, it would be a good resolution, if those who contribute by envelope, and are in a position to do so, could resume their support for the parish. For those not attending Mass, envelopes can be dropped through the presbytery letter box. Thank you to everyone who has continued with their support of the parish since the first lockdown.

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 under the light blue tab First Communion 2021, alternatively you can request a form by contacting the parish office. Completed forms should be returned no later than Monday December 14th. Dates for preparation, and First Communion celebrations, have still to be decided, and will be advised, with further information, during January. **NB if your child was Baptised in Our Lady of Lourdes Harpenden you do not need to send us a copy of their Baptism Certificate.**



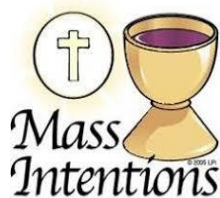
THINKING AHEAD

The question, understandably, is being asked: 'what is happening at Christmas?' Planning has been going on for some time, and now that we know that we can celebrate Mass, our plans are almost complete and, hopefully, we will let you know the main events next week, as well as the arrangements for requesting places. We understand that many will want to attend, while others, perhaps because of age, or health, will decide not to do so. However, it will be helpful to have some idea of those numbers, which is why you, hopefully, received a very short

survey during the week. It would be much appreciated if you could return this by tomorrow, Monday. Even if you don't plan to attend, your response would be helpful.

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.



Quite a number of Masses have been booked during the pandemic, but no stipend has yet been received. Stipends, stating the intention and date requested, can be placed through the presbytery letter box

PRAYING TOGETHER
It has been good to hear from parishioners that they have taken up the invitation to pray together as a family, every evening at 7.30pm, and, so for those unable to attend Mass, to still be united. It has been suggested that Canon Dwyer, and others, might lead this prayer once a week. This is now happening every Tuesday at 7.30pm. You might like to participate; it lasts no longer than 10 minutes. **The Zoom link is: 845 3209 5805**



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

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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

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.



CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Over the next two weekends as you leave the church there will be a 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.



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.

PARISH OFFICE

Melanie is, working from home for all Parish enquiries please email the parish office harpندن@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/>

GOVERNMENT & FAITH

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has called for individual Catholics to respond to an open consultation on the way Government engages with faith communities. This call for evidence aims to collect views to underpin the Faith Engagement Review, which will run for a period of four weeks closing at 11.45pm on 11th December 2020. This call for evidence will pose a series of questions around how those of all faiths, or none, perceive the government's engagement with faith organisations.

The link to the online submission is:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/independent-faith-engagement-review-call-for-evidence

JIGSAW FESTIVAL

We, and High Street Methodist Church, are working together to arrange this festival next June, with all the proceeds going to two local charities, Azalea and Workaid. The response from you, and Harpenden as a whole, has been tremendous, with 294 jigsaws made (at 17 November) and nearly 7 months to go! You can see some of the wide variety of completed jigsaws and read the stories behind them from their 'assemblers', on Facebook. NB You don't need a Facebook account to view the page, simply search for Facebook (Harpenden Jigsaw Festival). Please see Facebook, or our website (harpendenjigsawfestival.co.uk), or email us on



harpendenjigsaws@gmail.com, to find out more on getting involved by donating unmade jigsaws, making them etc. But a big thank you for what you have already done.

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>

ADVENT WREATH

We have our very fine Advent wreath in church, but how about having your own at home? This can be a simple drawing to colour, or make something more elaborate. The wreath is a sign of God's unending love for us and each candle represents stages on the journey to the light of Christmas.

To make your own wreath visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FOwLEzLxMHY/>

<https://www.pathwaystogod.org/resources/ignatian-insight/4-ways-celebrate-advent-home-your-family>



MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

<p>SATURDAY 5TH DECEMBER 11.30AM & 12.30PM</p> <p>VIGIL MASS 5.00PM</p>	<p>Advent Feria Baptisms</p> <p>Walter Nichollas RIP (Anniv)</p>
<p>SUNDAY 6TH DECEMBER</p> <p>9.00AM</p> <p>10.30AM</p>	<p>2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)</p> <p>People of the Parish</p> <p>Sadie Woods RIP Zoom Code 860 9226 9193</p>
<p>MONDAY 7TH DECEMBER</p>	<p>St Ambrose, Bishop & Doctor Renfold Evans RIP (Anniv)</p>
<p>TUESDAY 8TH DECEMBER</p> <p>9.15AM</p> <p>7.30PM</p>	<p>THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, Patron of the Diocese</p> <p>Jean Eldred RIP Zoom Code 880 6396 4591</p> <p>PRAYING TOGETHER Zoom Code 845 3209 5805</p>
<p>WEDNESDAY 9TH DECEMBER</p> <p>9.15AM</p>	<p>Advent Feria Padraig Moran (Spec Ints)</p>
<p>THURSDAY 10TH DECEMBER</p> <p>9.15AM</p>	<p>Advent Feria Margaret Foulds RIP Zoom Code 830 9683 2001</p>
<p>FRIDAY 11TH DECEMBER</p>	<p>Advent Feria</p>
<p>SATURDAY 12TH DECEMBER</p> <p>VIGIL MASS 5.00PM</p>	<p>Advent Feria</p> <p>3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) (Gaudete Sunday) Anne Harrison RIP (Anniv)</p>
<p>SUNDAY 13TH DECEMBER</p> <p>9.00AM</p> <p>10.30AM</p>	<p>3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) (Gaudete Sunday)</p> <p>People of the Parish</p> <p>Bridie Cooper RIP (Anniv) Zoom Code 860 9226 9193</p>



CONFESSIONS - BY PRIOR ARRANGEMENT WITH CANON DWYER