**CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION & SAINT JOSEPH**

**23 ST JOHN’S STREET, HERTFORD SG14 1RX**

[**https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hertford**](https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hertford) **Email:** **hertford@rcdow.org.uk** **Tel: 01992 582109**

**Parish Priest: Monsignor Séamus O’Boyle**

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT ‘Laetare Sunday’– 9th /10th March 2024**

Prayers & Readings for this Sunday’s Mass can be found on p. 162 in the Parish Mass Book.

Please note that there is a Loop system in the Church.

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**View from the Presbytery**

**On this ‘Mothering Sunday’ a very happy Mother’s Day to all the Mums in the Parish. I hope your children spoil you! This special day actually grew out of a tradition in this country dating from the Middle Ages of people going to visit the Church where they were baptised – their ‘Mother Church’. In later times domestic servants were given the day off to do this – and often made a day of it by visiting with their own Mothers and family members. I’m not too sure when it became a more ‘secular’ celebration of Mothers and Motherhood. It always falls on this Fourth Sunday of Lent – also known as ‘Laetare Sunday’ or ‘Rejoicing Sunday’ because we have passed the half-way point of Lent and Easter is fast approaching. We’re allowed to relax the Lenten mood by putting flowers in the Church and maybe baking a special cake. I have to admit that I am not a great lover of marzipan – which constitutes much of the traditional ‘Simnel Cake’ sometimes made for today. My Mum – God rest her – loved marzipan. As children my sisters and I would always take the marzipan layer from under the icing on a cake and give it to Mum. She particularly loved Battenberg Cake. Oddly, after she suffered a major stroke she just completely lost the taste for marzipan – try as we might to give her slices of her once favourite cake. Make the most of your Mums being around. And for those of you – like me - who have lost your Mums, remember them fondly today.**

**Just to let you know that we have now sent off the money collected for the Latin Patriarchate in Jerusalem – it amounted to almost £1700. Thank you for your great generosity. Next weekend I will put together a sheet with the times of the Holy Week and Easter Services. Not long now!**

***Fr Séamus***

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS:** each Saturday during Lent at 5.15pm.

**ST JOHN PASSION:** As part of our Lenten devotions, Westminster Cathedral Choir will perform J.S. Bach's retelling of the St John Passion. The event will take place on Thursday 14th March 2024 at 7.30pm at Westminster Cathedral. This is a wonderful chance to hear the Cathedral’s superb choir performing one of the greatest pieces of Easter music ever written.

Discounted tickets are available at the following link, using the password **SJP30**

<https://www.ticketmaster.co.uk/event/1F00602BD7A81B4F?did=sjp30>

**LENT LUNCH:** Friday 15th March at 1pm. Please sign the clipboard at the back of the Church if you would like to share this simple meal.

**ST PATRICK’S DAY:** there are cards and gifts for St Patrick’s Day available in the shop at the back of the Church.

**THANKSGIVING FOR MATRIMONY:** The Cardinal invites all couples who are celebrating 5th, 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th, 60th, and 60+ wedding anniversaries during this year to a special Mass of Thanksgiving on Saturday 25th May at 2.30pm in Westminster Cathedral. If you are a couple celebrating one of these milestones and you would like to attend the Mass, please let me know. The easiest way to do so would be to send an email with your details to the Parish email address: hertford@rcdow.org.uk

**PRAYERS ASKED PLEASE –**

**FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:** Elizabeth Barnes, Ursula Partner, Jan Kracinski, Stephen Carey, Paul Cox, Malcolm Gilbert, Enzo Andrean, Miriam Matthews, Ruth Featherstone, Stephen Judd, Mary Ward, John Sweeney, Pam Gates, Juliet Davis, Phyllis Read, Jo Black, Robbie Robinson, Fr Terry, Angela White, Manuel Lopez, Linda Abeysundera, Julia Rochford, Eugene Martin.

 **FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY:** Lyn Carroll, Martin Ratcliff (son of Fee Ratcliff), Lynette Mary Skrebels, Christine Shears (*a former parishioner – her Funeral will be at Sacred Heart, Ware at 10am on 18th March*). May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

**POPE FRANCIS’ PRAYER INTENTION FOR MARCH**

***For the new martyrs***

*We pray that those who risk their lives for the Gospel in various parts of the world inflame the Church with their courage and missionary enthusiasm.*

**MASS INTENTIONS:**

**Saturday 9th March**

**6.00pm:** People of the Parish

**Sunday 10th March** *IV Lent ‘Laetare’*

**8.30am:** Bernadette Euseden RIP

**10.30am:** Angela Gonsalves RIP

**Monday 11th March**

**10.00am:** Eugene Martin Int.

**Tuesday 12th March**

**NO MASS**

**Wednesday 13th March**

**10.00am:** Richard Crossingham RIP

**Thursday 14th March**

**CHURCH CLOSED**

**Friday 15th March**

**NO MASS**

**Saturday 16th March**

**6.00pm:** People of the Parish

**Sunday 17th March** *V Lent*

**8.30am:** Bridget Peters (Anniv)

**10.30am:** John Pearson RIP