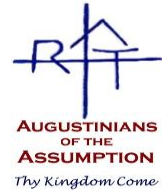




CHURCH OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE AND ST ANDREW

16 Nightingale Road, HITCHIN, SG5 1QS
(In the care of the Augustinians of the Assumption)



Newsletter No 1619

21st – 28th February 2015 First Sunday of Lent (Year B)



Mass Times

Saturday anticipating 6pm
Sunday 8.30am, 10.30am and 5pm
Monday – Saturday 10am
Reconciliation Saturday 10.30am

Contacts

Parish Priest Fr Michael Lambert	E-mail: michaellambert@rcdow.org.uk
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Parish Safeguarding Representative

Trish Bonnett Telephone: 01462 459126 (Parish)



If you are going into hospital please take a copy of the leaflet in the church porch and notify the RC Chaplain on **07884 187463** directly, as the Hospital is not able to pass on the information to them. If you are in Pinehill Hospital, please contact the parish directly. When you come out of hospital or if you are ill and housebound please ring the parish office so we can minister to your needs if required.



If you have a need for prayer, please contact Trish on 07801752141 and let her know your prayer intentions.



Diary

Sunday 22nd	Coffee Morning – EDAID
Monday 23rd	Parent & Toddler Group Hall 9.30 – 11am
	Meditation Group LCR 12 – 1.30pm
	Sacramental Preparation Hall 8pm
Tuesday 24th	Morning Prayer Church 9.30am
	Bethany Club Hall 10.30am
	Eucharistic Service Church 7.15pm
Wednesday 25th	Rosary Group for All (Small babies welcome) Hall 9.30am
	Sacramental Preparation LCR 4.30pm
	RCIA Church 7pm
Thursday 26th	Rosary Church after Mass
	Mission & the Family UCR 10.45am
	Italian Club Hall 1pm
	Meditation Group Pastoral office 6.30pm
Friday 27th	Lectio Divina Pastoral Office 2pm
	Mission & the Family UCR 7pm
Saturday 28th	Bereavement meeting
Sunday 1st March	Coffee Morning – Bereavement Group
	6pm Church Confirmation
	Stations of the Cross practice

Readings: Gen 9:8-15, 1 Peter 3:18-22, Mark 1:12-15

Entrance antiphon: When he calls on me, I will answer him; I will deliver him and give him glory, I will grant him length of days.

Psalm: **Your ways, Lord, are faithfulness and love for those who keep your covenant.**

Intercessions: We pray to the Lord.....

Response: Who has given us New Life!

Next week: Gen 22:1-2.9-13.15-18, Rom 8:31-34, Mark 9:2-10

Parish Prayer Heavenly Father, we offer you our Parish of Our Lady and St Andrew. May all who seek love, solace and security in our midst find them through the Christ who is in us. May His Spirit move us to proclaim the Gospel joyously: in our homes, in our town, in our country and to our world. May Your Spirit guide and inspire us in all that we do to promote your kingdom every day. Amen.

Faith Development Helpline

If you (or someone you know) needs to chat about your faith or have been feeling lost ring

07582 648433

Tues/Wed/Thurs 8pm-10pm.



If someone close to you has died our Bereavement Team is specially trained to help. You can contact them through the Parish Office on 01462 459126.

This Weekend: we are delighted to receive the "Getting to know you" visit by Bishop John, who will preside and preach at the 10.30am Mass. He will be pleased to see you after the Mass, in the Hall. He is unable to stay too long with us, as he is taking part in the Rite Of Acceptance for the Candidates for Baptism or Reception into the Church at the Cathedral at 3.00pm. He will be welcoming our own Parish Candidates at the Service, which is always so impressive to see so many people coming forward with their Sponsors and Catechists. We pray for them as they make this final step of preparation for the Sacraments.

Next Sunday March 1st 3pm our Quarterly Service of Healing. All are welcome, we shall offer the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing, for those who wish to avail themselves of the Lord's love for us in these ways.



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Baptism Preparation: The next course will be on Sundays 10th and 24th May. Please see the signup sheet to register and for details of the times. There will be a short ceremony of welcome after the session on 24th May at the 5pm Mass.

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Once more, we are in the debt of our Maintenance Team: John Scott, David Wilson, John Chamberlain, David Whittaker and Philippe James, as they spent a lot of last Saturday morning and afternoon

removing a drain pipe on the Hall wall and recreating a soak-away, for the rain water, as the old one had been filled by roots and the backed up water was coming out of the first join of the pipe and damaging the wall. It was a long job, quite back breaking, but as always carried out cheerfully and willingly. Any volunteers to join this Team would be made mostly warmly welcome.

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Your help is needed with a student's dissertation, please. Helen Cooper (our administrator's daughter) is looking for people to participate in research for her dissertation. If you are willing to answer a questionnaire on Marketing and Social Media, please contact Helen at i7267930@bournemouth.ac.uk or leave your contact details with Carol in the Office. Many thanks.

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Urgent appeal We still need help counting the extra money items on a Monday morning. It takes about an hour and would be once every 3 weeks. Please speak to Trish or Fr Michael if you can help.

John Henry Newman School: has received a letter from the DfE praising the achievement of the School in raising the performance of Key Stage Four Students consistently for the past three years, which puts in the top 90 Secondary Schools, which are fully comprehensive and financed by the State, in the country. A wonderful and encouraging message as to the value of our School for the young people that it serves.

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We are once more in the debt of David and John for replacing the temporary handrail to the Hall with a metal one, which is so much more firm and supportive. We are also in a similar situation with relation to Helen, who spent several hours over the last weekend in pruning our trees and clearing undergrowth. We are grateful for the fact that she loves gardening...!!!

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Looking ahead: the Blessing of the new headstone for the Assumptionist Family grave will take place on Monday 2nd March, the first Anniversary of Fr Christopher's death. The Blessing will follow the Mass at 10am, at St John's Road Cemetery. Parishioners are most welcome to come along and pray for a well-loved priest who served our Parish for 46 years.



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Excess Baggage - Greg Hewitson has collected an amazing 14 suitcases as result of the recent appeal for suitcases to be filled with items to be taken to KISS Uganda in the summer. If you do have suitcases you wish to donate and do not need, please contact Greg through the Parish Office.


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Covenant of Marriage Preparation Day: Saturday 18th April from about 9.30am (to meet and greet and begin to get to know the other couples) and lasting till 3.30/4.00pm, Participants should bring food to share with others and there is a fee of £30 per couple. Engaged Couples looking to celebrate their Wedding need to give at least six months notice for the necessary preparation to take place and everything organised as is needed for each couple. Please contact Eve Krol, who is Sacramental Administrator, via the Parish Website, to supply details of names, addresses and phone numbers, to register for the day, which is limited to 20 couples on a first come basis.



Women's World Day of Prayer is being held this year in Hitchin Christian Centre at 1.30pm on Friday 6 March. This year the material for the day has been prepared by Christian women in The Bahamas. All welcome to come along to join in this service of praise and prayer celebrated worldwide. Refreshments will be served afterwards.


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 Help is needed taking collection at Mass – we need 3 people ideally at each Mass to help take the collection and count the numbers attending. There is no formal rota but if you are at Mass then please get up to help at the time of the collection. If you need more details please speak to Trish.

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Please see noticeboard for a Statement by His Grace Bishop Angaelos, General Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church in the United Kingdom following the brutal murder of Coptic Christians in Libya. You are asked for your prayers at this tragic time.

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 **Fairtrade reminder:** Hitchin is a Fairtrade town and we are a Fairtrade parish. Could all groups providing tea and coffee please use Fairtrade products, tea, coffee, sugar etc. These are available in the parish on the third Sunday of the month in the hall from the Fairtrade stall as well as at your local supermarket. Thank you.

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The Call, the Journey and the Mission - An Invitation from the Bishops of England and Wales to Reflect on the Gift of Marriage and Family Life. We are arranging three meetings to enable us to reflect on the different stages of marriage and family life: falling in love, engagement, the celebration of marriage, the early years; children, joys and sorrows, teenage children, alone as a couple, the elderly years. Fr Tom invites you to come along to let him know what he's been missing all these years. The meetings are offered during the day and in the evenings to allow as many people as possible to attend.



Thursday mornings 10.45-12pm on 26 Feb, 26 March, 23 April

Friday evenings 7-8.15pm 27 on Feb, 27 March, 24 April

The materials for this meeting are in the porch and on the parish website. Please read and prepare before attending.

Diary

Monday 23 February

8pm: The second Session of Preparation for the Reception of Reconciliation in March, is being held for the parents. It is a particularly important Meeting as Parents will be asked to "sign up" for the Family Chats, with Jane and Fr Tom, to see how the children are progressing and seeing if any further help is needed.



Tuesday 24 February

4.15pm: Meeting between Fr Michael and the Senior Leadership Team, to review policies and concerns that have been picked up since we last met and how the ongoing concerns are going.

7.00pm: Meeting at John Henry Newman School to share with parents about the recent OFSTED and what we might be able to do to have the situation reviewed.

7.15pm Eucharistic Service in church. Reflect on the word of God and pray for your needs and those of others.



Saturday 28 February

2pm: There is a Time of Prayer and Support for bereaved Parishioners in the Hall. Everyone is welcome to share in this time, which will also provide light refreshments.

Feb 27 7pm The Westminster J&P commission invites us to "An evening to Celebrate Fairtrade!" at St John Vianney Parish Centre, 4 Vincent Road, London N15 3QH (Nearest tube Turnpike Lane or Buses 41 and 67). With guest speaker: Dr Mark Hayes (Author of 'Fairtrade is still a Rich Harvest', and Reader at St Hilda in Catholic Social Thought in Department of Theology and Religion) also a fellow and director of studies in Economics at Robinson College, Cambridge. Mark is a strong supporter of Fairtrade, with years of supporting small businesses in developing countries. Other attractions: 1) Test what you know about Fairtrade in team quizzes! 2) A chance to meet with Fairtrade Representatives in your area. 3) Fairtrade Stalls, Food and drink. Please support this event, please support Fairtrade!

Lent Events

Churches together in Pirton present 'Issues of Life and Faith'

A series of Lent talks on 'hot potato' issues. All meetings at Pirton Methodist Chapel from 7.30-9.30pm, beginning with a talk 45mins-1hour, with light refreshments afterwards and a time for questions and more open discussion.

Tuesday 24 February: 'Building God's Kingdom on Earth' – the Christian's role in politics' : Rt. Hon. Peter Lilley, MP for Hitchin and Harpenden

Tuesday 3 March: War – the Christian attitude/presence : Bishop Stephen Venner, former Bishop to the Armed Forces

Tuesday 10 March: End of Life issues – elderly care, living wills, palliative care, assisted dying : Reverend Fizz Gibbs, former Hospital and Hospice Chaplain

Tuesday 17 March: Human Sexuality : Reverend Elizabeth Bunker, Associate Priest St Paul's Walden and Preston

Tuesday 24 March: Internet, a force for good or evil : Reverend Sally Jones, Youth Chaplain St Albans Cathedral

Wednesdays in Lent please join the RCIA group in the church from 8pm until 9.30pm for reflections on the Sunday readings (Year A)

We will look at the Transfiguration, the encounters of Jesus with Samaritan Woman and the Man Born Blind and the raising of Lazarus. All welcome

Wanted – More Companions for the Journey, message from Ann Milner

In 2012 I led a series of Meditations for Lent asking parishioners to accompany me on my Lenten Journey. Now three years later I am making the same request. Whereas before I was actually there, in Hitchin, participating in the actual sessions, this time I will be present in spirit because we are now physically separated by a distance of thousands of miles - not to mention several time zones! (For anyone who is unaware, I am currently based in Chongqing, China, teaching English to a very enthusiastic group of first year

University students.)

The theme of the series is "Bringing about the Kingdom of God by developing our relationship with Jesus". I will use material from a variety of sources including CAFOD, Pray-As-You-Go, Sacred Space/Living Space. In addition I will call on our great Catholic writing heritage that stretches from the Evangelists through the Early Church Fathers right up to our current Pope, Francis. Also be assured that our live simply principles will be firmly embedded throughout.

There will be five different sessions over the Lenten period, each lasting between 45 and 60 minutes. Each session will consist of a 'slideshow' comprising music, pictures, silent reflection and meditation as well as spoken prayer.

We have been called to a New Evangelisation by our Holy Father, well this is my answer to his request. Please join me!

Two sessions will be offered **Monday evenings 7.30-8.30pm** and **Tuesday afternoons 1.30-2.30pm**. Please do take the time to come and spend some time with our Lord this Lent.

