



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 1713

17th December – 25th December 2016 4th Sunday of Advent



Mass Times	
Saturday anticipating 6pm	
Sunday 8.30am, 10.30am and 5pm	
Monday – Saturday 10am	
Reconciliation Saturday 10.30am	
Contacts	
Parish Priest Fr Tom O'Brien	07547 171570 E-mail: frtomaa@gmail.com
Fr Euloge Kasine	07424 004647 eulogeka@gmail.com
Fr Michael Lambert Pastoral Support	07958 575442 michaellambert@rcdow.org.uk
Pastoral Assistants Trish Bonnett	Tel: 01462 455577 trishbonnett@rcdow.org.uk
Susanna Hawksley Catechetics	susannahawksley@rcdow.org.uk
Parish Administrator Cheryl Saunders	Tel: 01462 459126 cherylsaunders@rcdow.org.uk
Parish Office Tel: Mobile: Website: E-mail:	01462 459 126 07547 171570 parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin hitchin@rcdow.org.uk
Parish Safeguarding Representative Trish Bonnett Telephone: 01462 459126 (Parish)	

Diary

Sunday 18th	Coffee Morning – One World Group Carol Service Church 6:15pm
Monday 19th Scout Hall Beavers 6-7pm Cubs 7.15-8.15pm	Parent & Toddler Group Hall 9.30 – 11am Christian Meditation Group UCR 11.45am
Tuesday 20th Scouts 7.15-8.45pm	Morning Prayer Church 9.30am Eucharistic Service Church 7.15pm Choir Practice Church 8pm
Wednesday 21st	Rosary Group Church 9.30am
Thursday 22nd Scout Hall Brownies 6.30-7.45pm	Italian Club Hall 1pm Christian Meditation Group Upper Committee room 6.30pm
Friday 23rd	Lectio Divina LCR 2pm
Sunday 25th	Happy Christmas!

Readings: Is 7:10-14, Romans 1:1-7 Matt 1:18-24

Entrance Antiphon: Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour

Psalm: Let the Lord enter! He is the king of glory

Intercessions: We pray to our Lord Emmanuel...

Response: **'God-is-with-us' always**

Next week Is 52:7-10, Heb 1:1-6 John 1:1-18

This week's counting teams:

Sunday Team: 3 Monday Team: 3



Copies of the **Counting Schedules for 2017** for both the Sunday (Offertory) and Monday (Non-Offertory) Counting Teams are now available on the Parish website and on the Notice Board in the Porch.

No cash for the collection? Just text Parish HITCH to 70800 to donate £5.

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.
Confidential service provided. No need to identify yourself



If you are going into hospital please take a copy of the leaflet in the church porch and notify the RC Chaplain Rev. Anthony Curran (Deacon) on Tel: **01438 285138**

Via text message: **07876 526935**

Email: chaplaincy.enhtr@nhs.net

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 Mary on 07759195487 and let her know your prayer intentions.



Parish Prayer Bless this parish, Lord. Let our community reflect your own communion of love. Help us to live peacefully and humbly, attending to the call of your Spirit and mindful of our duty to everything you have created. Strengthen the bonds of our families and friendships with patience and kindness. Make us joyful messengers of your kingdom and a source of comfort for those in need.



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.

Ramblings for Reflection

Virgin Birth! Where to begin? All birth is sacred, human birth being the most sacred of all: full of mystery, life, hope, joy, and excitement - a most holy moment in time. Circumstances surrounding a birth, however, can colour the way we receive this moment and react to it positively and negatively. The agony and ecstasy of the mother who gave birth to Jesus was like that of any mother giving birth, as was the period of gestation. It is the circumstances of this particular birth that affect the way we understand and receive it. God is involved and fully part of every human birth - we are all made in God's image as well as that of our parents - only in this case the agreement was not between man and woman but between God and woman, and the baby, human like every other human baby, was more than an image of God, he was God. He was Emmanuel – God with us. His birth deepened our understanding of the importance, value and sacredness of the gift of life we have been given, raising it to a level far beyond anything we can perceive, bringing us into a participation in the divinity and sacredness that only God can give. Mary's virginity expresses the total self-giving not just of Mary but of God. We see the evidence and value of this self-giving in the generosity of people over this Advent season, for it is a sharing of life, of love and of God and for a moment that birth of Christ lights up the world to a beauty far beyond description but no less breath taking.

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CAFOD collection will be taken after all Masses this weekend. Gift aid envelopes will be available in the porch or from collectors. So far this year we have collected £2,807:32 for CAFOD's work, £664.50 of this was Gift aided. Many thanks.

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CHILDREN IN NEED Proceeds from Sunday's One World Group coffee morning will go to the Christmas appeal to help child refugees displaced by war in the Middle East.

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With effect from January 2017, it has been agreed to increase Tea/Coffee and a Biscuit to 40p. As the Coffee Mornings are primarily run to raise funds for charitable causes, we thank you for your understanding. Also, there is one week to fill for next year – 6 August 2017...**Any takers?** Thank you.



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Please refer to the Christmas service sheet for services from 24th -31st December. Copies can be found in the porch and on the parish website and were also emailed out to all on the parish email group.

Summary for Christmas

24th Dec 4pm Children's crib service (not a Mass), **9pm** Christmas vigil Mass

25th Dec 8.30am, 10.30am Christmas day Masses (no 5pm Mass)

26th Dec 10am St Stephen's day Mass – all altar servers to attend

Daily Mass 10am thereafter.

Please note that children are invited to bring gifts to the crib service for the children at Family Matters, a new community based learning and nurturing group for children aged 0-9 years.

Dates for Diary

Monday 19 December

11am There will be Mass at Sue Ryder Stagenhoe. All are welcome.

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2pm Our Lady's School nativity in our church. Parishioners welcome. Reports say that the singing is angelic.

Tuesday 20 December

2.30pm There will be Mass at Milford Lodge. All are welcome.

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8pm UCM Social Evening in the Hall.

Thursday 22 December

7-8pm Exposition of the blessed sacrament in the church. We intend to do this for the next two weeks but it can continue if there are enough people who wish to come and pray with the Lord at that time.

AMORIS LAETITIA - THE JOY OF LOVE 11

Chapter 1 In the Light of the Word (continued)



Christ proposed as the distinctive sign of his disciples, the law of love and the gift of self for others (cf. Mt 22:39; Jn 13:34). He did so in stating a principle that fathers and mothers tend to embody in their own lives: "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (Jn 15:13). Love also bears fruit in mercy and forgiveness. We see this in a particular way in the scene of the woman caught in adultery; in front of the Temple, the woman is surrounded by her accusers, but later, alone with Jesus, she meets not condemnation but the admonition to lead a more worthy life (cf JN 8:1-11).