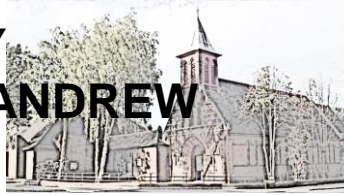




CHURCH OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE AND ST ANDREW

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



Mass Times
Saturday 6pm
Sunday 8.30am, 10.30am & 5pm
Monday – Saturday 10am
Exposition Thursday 7pm-8pm
Reconciliation Saturday 10.30am
during Exposition


Newsletter No 1832

30th March – 6th April 2019 – 4th Sunday of Lent – Year C

A prayer for Yemen Giver of life, who hears the cries from Yemen: of mothers choosing between medicine or food; of parents grieving children lost to starvation; of those who have given up everything in hunger. In your mercy, soften hardened hearts, change closed minds. Let people come before power. Let life be holy again. Let your justice and peace shape the lives of all people. Amen.

Ramblings for Reflection

A difficulty with Parables is trying to make them fit our understanding of right and wrong. If we ask why the father did not tell the elder son his brother had arrived, or, why he did not give his elder son something special to celebrate with his friends, suggests we believe that we could tell a better story. Jesus would have told this story many times. The context, the people present, would make a difference to the way he told the story and how the story was received. Luke puts the story in a particular setting, suggesting that the Scribes and Pharisees, who challenge Jesus, are like the elder brother. They have done everything right, lived in the way God wanted and are offended when God is presented as being all-merciful and overjoyed at the return of a *grave sinner*. Does the Shepherd in the story of the Lost Sheep not care about the 99 'good' sheep? Some have called this story the *Prodigal Father*. Might we not do better to reflect on whether the love of the father changed the outlook, purpose and future of the younger son? Whether he became a loving and forgiving person like his father? Concern about the perceived treatment of the elder son, who appeared only to be obedient for what he could get out of it, for the rewards, raises the question of whether we are followers of Christ for the rewards or whether we want to inherit the same prodigal spirit of mercy and love of the father?

 **Living simply & sustainably:** Alternative uses for weeds! The dandelion has many properties. The leaves and fresh buds can be used in salads and the roots, when dried, can be drunk as a coffee substitute. The plant is also a powerful detoxifier and diuretic.

Readings: Josh 5:9-12, Cor 5:17-21, Luke 15:1-3.11-32

Entrance Antiphon Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. Be joyful, all who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.

Psalm: Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Intercession: We pray to the Lord

Response: Lord, hear us!

Next week: Is 43:16-21, Phil 3:8-14, John 8:1-11



Many thanks for your generous contributions to the annual flower appeal last weekend. A total of £199.82 was raised.

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Thank you for your support and generosity at the recent Gardening Group coffee morning which raised £145.00.

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GATEWAY CLUB The proceeds from this Sunday's coffee morning will go to support the activities of the Gateway Club which has been meeting in the parish hall for over 20 years. The club offers a range of leisure pursuits and outings to adults with a learning disability and members come from a wide area. At present we are fund raising for a canal boat trip in June and would appreciate your support on Sunday after the 8.30 and 10.30 masses. Further information about the club from Pam Brannigan (01462 632587).

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6pm Benediction with prayer for those affected by Cyclone Idai which made landfall in central Mozambique, near Beira City, Sofala Province, leaving almost 90 percent of the city submerged in flood water. The cyclone also hit Zimbabwe and Malawi, destroying homes, roads, bridges, and vital crops, in its wake. Hundreds of people have died, and an estimated 2.6 million people are in need of vital humanitarian aid to survive the coming days and weeks ahead. We are asked to make contributions financially (next weekend) and with prayer. Please come to pray for the people affected.

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Offertory Envelope boxes are available in the Hall after every Mass this weekend.



UCM (Union of Catholic Mothers), Tuesday 2nd April 2019 8pm in the Lower Committee Room, Easter Meditation led by Fr. Euloge. **Reminder to bring items for the hampers.**

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We pray for Vincent Scott whose funeral is on Thursday 4 April 2019 at 2pm here at Our Lady's Church. May he rest in peace and rise in glory and may the Lord comfort his family.

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Klazina Hoffmann extends an invitation to her friends in the parish to come over for her "open house" & "house warming" in Bedford next Tuesday 2nd April from 11am-5pm, which also happens to be her 68th birthday! Anyone who wants to go please speak to Trish for her address.



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On **Good Friday** (19 April) we have our **Stations of the Cross** at 6.30pm - last year this was led by parishioners and we need help again this year.



Help is needed with reading and movement of props. Reading (**14 people** - more suitable for adults) Movement of props (**2 people**) Operating the lights (**1 person**)

If you are willing to help with any of this please let Trish know asap and come to the first rehearsal this Monday 1st April 7pm. Other rehearsals are Monday 8th April 7pm, and Sunday 14th April at 3.30pm.

On **Maundy Thursday** (18 April) we have the **Mass of the Last Supper** where there are the following roles to be filled:

Apostles to have their feet washed during the telling of the Gospel (**12 people**)

Members of the congregation having their feet washed in the pews (**8 people**)

2 people associated with the Medical industry to take up the Oil of the Sick

1 person to take up the Lenten alms

4 people to take up the gifts of bread and wine

So across the 2 days we have a need of 44 different people. If you have done any of these roles before please feel free to volunteer again. If you have never been involved before please let this be the first time. In this most important week of our liturgical year to offer to serve the parish by helping with these liturgies is a great way to show love for Our Lord who gave his life for us. Please speak to or email Trish if you can help.

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The next Marriage Preparation course in this parish will be held on Saturday April 13th 2019. Registration is at 9:30am and the course will run until approximately 4pm. To book a place please

email catholicmarriageprep@outlook.com with your full names (both parties). We are able to take 25 couples on this course. We ask you to bring food for a shared lunch on the day. The fee is £60 per couple.

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We will be holding a second collection next weekend – 6th/7th April - for the CAFOD Emergency Cyclone Idai Appeal. Please support our parish retiring collection for this appeal. Your donation will give food, clean water and healthcare to people in desperate need. Gabriele, our expert working with the Church in Mozambique at this time, tells us: "We know that Idai has wiped out crops and livestock, damaged water supplies and wrecked sanitation facilities, leaving vulnerable families even more exposed. With the support and generosity of the Catholic community, we can reach the people who really need urgent emergency aid."

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Diary Dates

Sun 31 March			
Coffee Morning – Gateway Club ††††††††††			
3pm Baptism Course Hall ††††††††††			
6pm Benediction with prayer for those affected by the cyclone in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi ††††††††††			
6pm Confirmation Session 10 Hall			
Mon 1 April			
Parents & Toddlers Hall	9.30am	Beavers Scout Hall	6pm
Christian Meditation Grp	11.30am EC	Cubs Scout Hall	7.15pm
2.30pm Mass at Gosmore. All welcome. 7pm Church rehearsal for the Stations of the Cross.			
Tues 2 April			
Morning Prayer Church	9.30am	Scouts Scout Hall	7pm
Bethany Club	10.30am	Eucharistic service	Church 7.15pm
8pm – UCM – LCR Lenten talk by Father Euloge in the Lower Committee Room			
Wed 3 April			
Rosary Church	9.30am	RCIA EC	7.30pm
11am Mass at Elmside. All welcome. 6.30pm Feed Up Warm Up Scout Hut			
Thurs 4 April			
Italian Club Hall	1pm	Brownies Scout Hall	6.30pm
Christian Meditation Group	6.30pm EC	Choir Practice	Church 8pm
10am St Pio Mass			

Fri 5 April			
Parents & Toddlers Hall	9.30am	Lectio Divina EC	2pm
Sat 6 April			
Sun 7 April			
Coffee Morning – UCM ††††††††††			
3.30pm Baptism Course Hall			

Other items of interest



Recycling good news: This Lent there are now set-up three extra recycling streams that will enable us to continue to raise funds for chosen charities, they are:

1) **KP snacks Recycling:** We are collecting any brand of **crisp bags** and also **any brand of nuts, pretzels, popcorn, and hula-hoops packets**. These can be placed together with the crisp bags already being collected. **NB:** In order to recycle this waste stream properly, please empty all packaging of ALL food content. **(Waste NOT accepted: any Meat snack bags)**

2) **Hovis Type-4 LDPE loaf plastic bags:** We can start collecting: Any **BREAD packaging bag made from type-4 or LDPE plastic** **(Waste that is NOT accepted: Any other bread packaging which isn't LDPE plastic, including but not limited to; bread rolls, baguette, pretzel, crumpet, garlic bread & fruit loaf packaging)**

3) **RB® Hygiene Home Recycling:** A recycling programme for specific dishwashing, cleaning and fragrance flexible packaging. We are collecting ONLY: **Finish dishwashing tablets doypacks, Air Wick fragrance twin pack plastic sleeves, Vanish Stain remover powder doypacks.** Please make sure all leftover product has been removed from the packaging, and place them in a box.

New reference sheets have been made available in the Link, please take a copy to ensure that only the correct items are brought for recycling via these schemes.

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Join us from across Hitchin in making ... Eco-Bricks!

Bring all the eco-bricks you have made and collected with friends along to [Walsworth](#)



[Road Baptist Church](#), Saturdays 10am-12pm and do this at the latest by the end of June 2019. For full details of what to do and why to do it pick up a leaflet [EcoBrick Hitchin Project Outline](#) from the porch on the blue notice board. **If you have**

spare bottles can you bring them to Our Lady's church porch so those of us who do not have any can fill one too.

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Monday 1st April 12.30-2.30pm

Talking Elephants A drop-in gathering of people who have been bereaved for coffee/tea and conversation at Walsworth Road Baptist Church. Members of our bereavement team went in March and it was welcoming and friendly and people seemed to find it helpful. If you want to go and would like a member of the bereavement team to go with you let Trish or Antonietta Tinney know.

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Youth Event 2 April 6.30-8.30pm. Throne Room, Archbishop's House, Victoria, London. Join an evening of refreshments and prayer, as young adults from across the Diocese of Westminster get the chance to spend an evening together at Archbishop's House with Bishop John Sherrington, who will be talking about the youth synod and the role of young people and vocation. To register go to <https://dowym.com/events/post-synod-reflections-with-bishop-john-sherrington/>

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Monday 8th April 2019 #Teamseraph

Calling all Walkers be that with Dog or just a stroll! Let's Make this happen for Seraph Help help is needed . King George's playing field, Old Hale way Hitchin. Meet at 9am or 4pm at Tennis courts. If you can't make the date & would like to Donate £10 text Seraph to 70085 Raffle, cakes & Tea!

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The Cardinal has sent two short notes that touch on matters of current relevance.

The Cardinal writes:

1. Day of Prayer for Survivors of Abuse, Friday 12 April 2019

In February 2016, Pope Francis asked each Bishops' Conference to establish a Day of Prayer for Survivors of Abuse. In response, the Bishops of England and Wales designated the Friday of the Fifth Week of Lent to be observed as this Day of Prayer. This year, therefore, the Day of Prayer is Friday 12 April. I ask that this Day of Prayer is observed in all our parishes and chapels. It is important that we do so. Day by day, the pain of those who have suffered abuse, and its lasting corrosive impact, are brought more fully into the light. The pain of that betrayal of trust is all the more profound when the abuse took place within the community of the Catholic Church. We also see so clearly the failures in leadership in the Church that have exacerbated the sufferings of

those who have been abused. We have plenty of reasons to pray. We pray for those who bear this pain. We pray for their strength and perseverance. We pray for those who have been caught up in the circles of mistrust, silence and complicity which emanate from this abuse. We seek repentance and renewal for all who have failed in their duty to protect and respond to the victims of these crimes. We pray for a renewal in the life of our Church that has become a lodging place for this evil. We pray in confidence that the Lord does not abandon His Church but constantly calls us to purify our ways of life.

We pray with Mary, our holy Mother, and finest expression of our Holy Mother, the Church. I ask you to respond to this earnest request in the ways you judge to be best, and to use this message as you think fit. The prayers provided on the website of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors may be helpful to you: http://www.protectionofminors.va/content/tuteladeiminori/en/resources_section/day-of-prayer_page.html. For my part, I will keep the day with extra simplicity and self-denial and will celebrate the 5.30pm Mass in the Cathedral with these prayers constantly in my heart.

2. Knife Crime

At the recent meeting of the Deans, attention was brought to the dramatic rise in knife crime in London, to the number of its victims and to the fear that is spreading in some communities. On Saturday 6 April 2019, I will be taking part in a Rally in Trafalgar Square under the heading 'Standing Together'. The Rally runs from 2.00-4.00pm. It will focus first on the tragic consequences of knife crime, sharing a lament with those who have suffered the loss of life of a loved one and now carry a burden of great sorrow. Then it will proclaim the goodness of so many young people and give forth a voice of

hope, much needed at this time. I would be grateful if notice of this event could be given, especially in the London parishes, so that those who might think of joining in this public act of witness are encouraged to do so.

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The London-based Catholic charity Fellowship & Aid to the Christians of the East (FACE), which supports Eastern Christians in the Middle East, is recruiting a Fundraising Manager to oversee and lead its development in the UK. The post offers an exciting opportunity for an individual who has been nurturing and growing donor relationships in an established charity to take on the development of fundraising and voluntary support in an international charity. The post would suit someone who has a broad grasp of charity fundraising, with specialisation in Trust and Foundations, and who aspires to a significant leadership role; and/or an experienced fundraising executive who seeks a more flexible working week and stability. Starting salary: £ 35,000. To obtain a detailed recruitment pack, please contact facecharityuk@gmail.com Closing date for applications: 7th April 2019.

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Cardinal's Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony, Westminster Cathedral, Saturday 8 June 2019 at 3pm.

The Cardinal will be inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese who are celebrating their **5th 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60)** wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2019. If you are celebrating an anniversary, please give your parish clergy the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number, if no email). Please note, date for names and details to be submitted has been extended to **Monday 29 April 2019**

If you have a need for prayer, please contact **Mary** on **07759195487** and let her know your prayer intentions

Faith Development Helpline

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

07398821315

Tues/Wed/Thurs 8pm-10pm.

Confidential service provided. No need to identify yourself

AMORIS LAETITIA - THE JOY OF LOVE 122

Our Daily Love - Love forgives When we accept



God's love for us is unconditional, THEN we become more capable of showing boundless love and forgiving others when they have wronged us.

THEN (it is a process over time) our family life may become a place of understanding, support and encouragement, rather than one of constant tension and mutual criticism.

Contacts for email details see <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/contact/>

Parish Priest Fr Tom O'Brien
07547 171570

Assistant Priest Fr Euloge Kasine
07424 004647

Parish Administrator Cheryl Saunders
Pastoral Assistants Susanna Hawksley
Trish Bonnett

Parish no E-mail: hitchin@rcdow.org.uk
01462 Website: <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/>
459126



This week's counting teams:
Sunday Team: 5 Monday Team: 2



If you are going into hospital please notify the Chaplain on Tel: **01438 285519** or Email: spiritualcare.enh-tr@nhs.net