



# 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 1870

21-28 December 2019 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent – Year A  
with the gospel according to Matthew

### Mass Times

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



**Parish Prayer:** Lord Jesus, when you rose from the dead you sent your followers to go and 'make disciples of all nations'. Through our baptism you send us, too. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit to help us share our faith, in what we say and do. May we bring light and life to the world, in your name. May all people hear the good news of your love and mercy and come to know it for themselves. This we ask in your name. Amen

**Readings:** 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 glorv.

**Intercession:** Lord in your Mercy

**Response:** Hear our Prayer!

**Next week:** Ecc 3:2-6, 12-14, Col 3:12-21, Matt 2:13-15, 19-23



**Ramblings** Why are people wary of Obedience? Is it because they fear failure? Afraid too much will be asked of them? Or do they perceive it as giving up freedom? Religious will tell you that they take vows of poverty, chastity and obedience "In order to be free!" Paul asks for the obedience of faith and Joseph, the husband of Mary, shows this obedience concretely. The challenges Joseph faced in welcoming Mary into his home were on a par with the challenges Mary faced in accepting to be the mother of Jesus. Their obedience set them on a path that filled them with a joy and a suffering that only those who truly love and are faithful can experience and also brought forth a joy and a hope that is universal. The obedience asked for in marriage is not about doing the will of the spouse no matter what but the true response to love; a desire to give of the best and fulfil the deepest desire of the spouse. God's love in giving us Jesus, his son, is a response to our deepest desire to let God live in and through our actions, prayers and life. No wonder that our response is one of great joy and exultation at the trust God has in us to let the light of Christ shine in the world through us. Pope Francis: "The Christmas story invites us to set out on a spiritual journey, drawn by the humility of the God who became man in order to encounter every man and woman. We come to realize that so great is his love for us that he became one of us, so that we in turn might become one with him."

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Thank you all for your kind donations to CAFOD. A total sum of £208.70 was raised.

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We pray for Michael Mansi whose funeral Mass is at 11.30 on Mon 23 Dec. **There is no 10:00 Mass.** We also pray for Ida Bellamy whose

funeral will take place at North Herts Crematorium at 2pm on Thurs 9 Jan 2020. May they rest in peace and rise in glory and may the Lord comfort their families.



### Diary Dates

Sun 22 December			
<b>Coffee Morning – OLSSG</b>			
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<b>6.15pm Service of Christmas Carols and readings by candlelight - Church</b>			
Mon 23 December			
Parents & Toddlers Hall	End of Term	Beavers Scout Hall	End of Term
Christian Meditation Grp	11.30am EC	Cubs Scout Hall	End of Term
Tues 24 December			
Morning Prayer Church	9.40am	Scouts Scout Hall	End of Term
No Bethany Club		No Eucharistic Service	
<b>4pm The Christmas Story – Church</b>			
The Christmas Story for families with primary age children: through readings, carols and action we relive the First Christmas Night. If children wish they can bring a present of a food item for the foodbank to take to the crib. <b>This NOT a Mass</b>			
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<b>9pm Carols, Readings and Vigil Mass - Church</b>			
Wed 25 December <b>Christmas Day</b>			
<b>Masses: 8.30am and 10.30am</b>			
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<b>10am-5pm – "Somewhere to Go" - Hall</b>			
Thurs 26 December <b>St Stephen's Day</b>			
<b>10am Mass for the Guild of St Stephen</b>			
No Italian Club		Christian Meditation Grp	6.30pm EC
Brownies Scout Hall	End of Term	No Choir	
<b>10am-5pm – "Somewhere to Go" - Hall</b>			

Fri 27 December			
Parent & Toddlers Hall	End of Term	Lectio Divina	2pm EC
10:00 am Mass in church			
Sat 28 December			
10am Mass followed by Reconciliation and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament until 11.15am			
Sun 29 December Solemnity of the Holy Family			
Coffee Morning – Diapalante			

**Carol Service Sun 23rd at 6.15pm**

Led by the younger ministers of the word and the choir we invite you to a service full of our favourite carols and readings. This is followed by mince pies and mulled wine in the hall.



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Many thanks to you all for your support at the recent One World Group/Live Simply Group Coffee Morning which raised £103.82. The proceeds will go to the Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT) – a charity which provides support for Prisoners and their families.

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This Christmas, our Crib Offering will be donated to the Catholic Children’s Society to support their work with disadvantaged children and families. This will help provide mental health services, family support and emergency grants for vulnerable children in our Diocese.



The team of Mental Health professionals work in over 80 schools supporting children with issues such as bereavement, abuse, neglect and family breakdown. This year, we will not be placing a donation basket on the altar as we have done previously. Your donations may be put in the box marked “Crib Collection” on the wall by the Church doors. Many thanks to you all.

*“The Catholic Children’s Society brings God’s message of hope and love to disadvantaged children and families”* – Cardinal Vincent Nichols, President of the CCS.

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**Cheques for Christmas Collections.** It would be appreciated if cheques for the Christmas collections are made out to the Parish – i.e. *Our Lady’s Church* and **not** to the Order. This will make accounting more straightforward. Please be assured that all such donations will end up in the right place !

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**Feed up Warm up ARE TEAMING UP WITH “SOMEWHERE TO GO”**



this Christmas in Our Lady’s Church Hall.

**Join Us:**  
**Christmas Day 10 - 5pm**  
**Boxing Day 10 – 5pm**  
**1 Jan 10 - 5pm**

Nowhere to go this Christmas? Then you will be most welcome to join us for Christmas Food, Festive Fun and Good Company – no charge.

For more info contact: Leigh - <mailto:leigh.smith123@yahoo.co.uk>  
 Or 07931 833838 or Liz - [elizabethwills@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:elizabethwills@rcdow.org.uk)

They still need the following items to be donated for their celebrations;

- Soft fizzy drinks
- Christmas crackers
- Christmas pudding
- Cartons of custard

These can be left in the box in the porch.

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Thank you for your generosity. At time of writing we only have 31 logs to meet our need for 150 and I expect we will have them by the end of this

weekend. They will be put into hampers on Monday for distribution to needy families in the town.

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Christmas is nearly here and last order dates are fast approaching! Don’t forget to use Easyfundraising to help raise funds for Our Lady’s Church when you buy your last-minute gifts online. 4,000 shops and sites like Debenhams, Argos, Iceland, Groupon, Very, FatFace, ASDA, M&S and many more will donate, so you can raise when you buy toys, jewellery, gadgets, experiences, beauty products, or anything else.

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We are receiving a number of Christmas Cards to and from parishioners of the Parish. We have put the cards in a box on the table in the porch. Please do look through this box between now and Christmas. Many thanks.

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There are a number of items that are awaiting collection in the wooden tray in the Parish Office. If any of these are yours, please come to the Parish Office to collect. Many thanks.

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We are once again trying to reunite lost property with their owners. Please could you look through

the Lost Property box in the porch to see if anything belongs to you. Many thanks.

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Two years ago we supported the Mexican earthquake appeal and the money has finally made its way to the area of need and we have received a letter of thanks from the Nuns who will be using it to rebuild the mission house and catholic school in Oxaca Mexico. God bless you and thank you.

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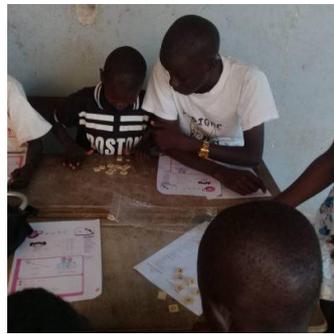


**Church Cleaning** We have a vacancy on a team for someone who can help clean the church on a Friday evening once a month. If you can give 1½ hours once a month to keep our church beautiful and get a lot of satisfaction doing it, please speak to or email Trish

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**Message from Liz Rice**

- I would like to express Diapalante's sincere thanks for the donation of £2,150 from money raised at the Michaelmas Fair. This generous amount is sufficient to fund the children's literacy



project at the Diapalante Community Education Centre in Senegal, West Africa for the coming year. This free project is attended by many 7-14yr old children who are keen to acquire the basic French language skills needed for school and later for employment or further education. Last year's district school results showed that this project significantly improved in the children's ability to learn at school, so your support will change lives. Liz Chandler, Diapalante.

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**The Comeback Prayer Group**

We need about 6 new members of our Comeback Prayer group to make sure that every day of every month there is someone in the Parish who will pray for those family members or friends who have for any reason fallen away from the practice of the faith.

You are provided with a prayer book and picture to help as a focal point in your own home. You can pray for as little or as long as you wish on

your allocated day for people who have fallen away from the faith that they will find their way back or will be led back by the Holy Spirit. If you would like to be part of this group please give your name to Trish, Mike Edwards or Father Tom.

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Many thanks to you all for your very generous contributions to our second collections throughout 2019.

<i>Catholic Communication:</i>	£ 51.95	<i>Poor Box Payments Out</i>	£1555.00
<i>Catholic Education Service</i>	£ 293.94	<i>Holy Places:</i>	£ 244.55
<i>Lenten Alms:</i>	£ 653.22	<i>Peters Pence:</i>	£ 100.00
<i>Racial Justice:</i>	£ 243.88	<i>Sick &amp; Retired Priests:</i>	£ 724.39
<i>Priests Training Fund:</i>	£ 225.07	<i>Day for Life:</i>	£ 177.86
<i>Pax Christi:</i>	£ 306.52	<i>Sri Lankan Appeal</i>	£ 406.50
<i>Apostleship of the Sea:</i>	£ 593.95	<i>CAFOD:</i>	£2406.14
<i>Crib:</i>	£ 99.98	<i>Mission Appeal:</i>	£ 201.89
<i>KISS Coffee Mornings:</i>	£1300.00	<i>SPUC:</i>	£ 170.92
<i>White Fathers</i>	£1362.04	<i>Missio:</i>	£ 788.40

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Even though it is winter, the church gardens still need looking after – there is always lots to be done! You will have seen the appeals in the newsletter for helpers to meet up on a Saturday morning to keep the church



gardens under control and they will continue but there is an ongoing need for people to just pop in and do an hour or so whenever they feel like it. We have a garden manual which shows the various areas of the church grounds and what needs to be done when. If you can give an hour or two even monthly then please let Helen Bailey know on 07771 552058 who will show you where the sheets and gardening equipment is kept. This is important work which makes our church grounds look lovely and also helps keep our costs down by not having to employ a gardener. The Saturday sessions are also a chance for fresh air, exercise and a chance for a cuppa and chat to like-minded people!

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**Lister Hospital Chaplaincy volunteers:** The Chaplaincy really need some Sunday volunteers.... Is there anyone who could give up one Sunday morning a month to go round the

wards, tell patients there is a service (or ask if they would like to see a chaplain) and then go back and collect them for the service? You'd be occupied 9am -12am, once a month. Patients are SO grateful...and it might be you (or one of yours) in that bed, wondering how to cope....If you are at all interested, please contact Maeve Green [maeve@heavenlycakes.co.uk](mailto:maeve@heavenlycakes.co.uk)

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Meeting needs at Christchurch is a project run from Christchurch which aims to re-locate good quality items that are no longer needed to families in need who would be able to use them. If anyone can help please call me on 01462 816658 or email [stephaniefkirby@hotmail.com](mailto:stephaniefkirby@hotmail.com)

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**ALTAR SERVER**  
A JOB SO BIG ONLY A KID CAN DO IT

Are you the sort of person who notices what needs to be done? Do you ever wish you could be more active during Mass? Would you like to help the congregation and the priest in an important and unique task?

Why not join our altar servers?  
You would be fully trained.

You would learn about why things are done the way they are during the Mass and you would work as part of a team, assisting the priest in celebrating the Mass.

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Masters of Ceremony (MC) at 10.30 Mass. We need more adults (young and old) to help with the Mass and support the Priest in setting things up before Mass and helping our altar server team during the Masses. Full training is available. Please do think about helping in this way. Please speak to a pastoral assistant, Priest or MC after Mass if you want to find out more.

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Don't forget to continue to recycle and raise money for good causes. If you haven't already taken one please grab a poster with all the details from the porch and put it up where it will remind you to bring things when you come to church. A note about the collection of old pens; pencils and crayons cannot go into this collection but that Diapalante collects these items for sending to needy families so please bring them in whenever the One World Group or Diapalante have a coffee morning.



On 25th December 1845, Fr Emmanuel D'alzon made his first vows and founded the Augustinians of the Assumption. The year starting on Christmas Day is the first day of a year of prayer and reflection preparing for our 175th anniversary. It is true that much has changed in those years and the Assumption, which started with a handful of men in France, is now truly worldwide. Some projects have not brought much fruit, others are growing and expanding. Please continue to remember us in your prayers and join us in our thanksgiving to God for all his blessings as we work for the coming of his Kingdom.



War is as outmoded as cannibalism, chattel slavery, blood feuds and duelling - an insult to God and humanity. *Muriel Lester, 1885-1968, social reformer and pacifist*

**To donate to Our Lady's through text giving on your mobile phone !!**  
**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

**07398821315**

Tues/Wed/Thurs 8pm-10pm.  
Confidential service provided.  
No need to identify yourself



**AMORIS LAETITIA THE JOY OF LOVE 159**

*Our Daily Love - Growing in Conjugal Love*  
"Marriage as a sign entails 'a dynamic process, one which advances gradually with the progressive integration of the gifts of God.'" (John Paul II: Familiaris Consortio 1981, p90)

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

<b>Parish Priest</b> Fr Tom O'Brien 07547 171570	<b>Assistant Priest</b> Fr Euloge Kasine 07424 004647	<b>Parish</b> <b>01462 459126</b> E-mail: <a href="mailto:hitchin@rcdow.org.uk">hitchin@rcdow.org.uk</a> Website: <a href="https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/">https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/</a>
<b>Parish Administrator</b> Cheryl Saunders <a href="mailto:cherylsaunders@rcdow.org.uk">cherylsaunders@rcdow.org.uk</a>	<b>Pastoral Assistants</b> Susanna Hawksley <a href="mailto:susannahawksley@rcdow.org.uk">susannahawksley@rcdow.org.uk</a> Trish Bonnett <a href="mailto:trishbonnett@rcdow.org.uk">trishbonnett@rcdow.org.uk</a>	

This week's counting teams:  
**Sunday Team: 1 Monday Team: 4**



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