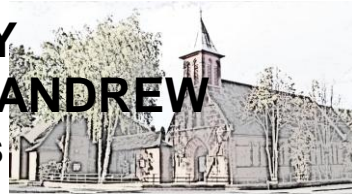


CHURCH OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE AND ST ANDREW

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



Our church is closed in the current coronavirus pandemic. **Daily Mass is posted as an audio file to the homepage of the parish website by 10am daily.**

All sacramental programmes have ceased at present.



Newsletter No 1884

28 March- 4th April – 5th SUNDAY OF LENT Year A – the gospel according to Matthew

Parish Prayer: Lord Jesus, as the world copes with coronavirus, help us to remember that you are always with us. Grant wisdom to decision makers and bless all health workers. Bring healing to the sick; give peace to the anxious and comfort those who are sad. Stir us to show your love and mercy most especially to the poor and weak. This we ask in your name. Amen.

Readings: Ez 37:12-14, Rom 8:8-11, John 11:1-45

Entrance Antiphon: Give me justice, O God, and plead my cause against a nation that is faithless. From the deceitful and cunning rescue me, for you, O God, are my strength.

Psalm: With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

Intercession: Lord, hear us

Response: Lord, graciously hear us!

Next week: Is 50:4-7, Philip 2:6-11, Matt 26:14-27:66



Ramblings – Lazarus

How closely is the present pandemic helping us enter more fully into the readings this week as Jesus makes his final journey to Jerusalem. Many among us can identify in some way with Lazarus confined to his tomb, unable to move, bound up and enclosed. We on the other hand are alive and many will have family around them although all of us are entombed in some way. Rather than looking back to the time of Lazarus, we are invited to look forward to the time when we will all be set free. It would be good if, when that moment comes, we hear the words of Jesus “Come forth and unbind him!” What joy will that experience be! It will be as if the words of the prophet Ezekiel have come true, that, like Lazarus, we will be set free from our enclosures of isolation and given new life – to live as we have been called to live: loving God and loving our neighbour with a renewed fervour. It will remind us more forcefully that we are truly made in the image of God or as St Paul reminds us, that Christ is alive within us. We will have learnt that we live in God’s way, not because he asks us to live this way, and not out of thanksgiving although that will be a strong element of our motive, but because deep down we will want to live this way out of joy. We will want to let Christ live within us and through us, as St Teresa of Avilla said: becoming his hands, feet, eyes, ears, mouth and heart; in fact, becoming truly alive like Lazarus. *“There is something you must always remember. you are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.”* - Winnie the Pooh. *“What we have once enjoyed deeply we can never lose. All that we love deeply becomes a part of us.”* – Helen Keller

Diary Dates

Wed 1 April

6pm – Feed Up Warm Up – Scout Hall



**Clocks Go Forward 1 Hour
at 1am Sunday March 29th 2020**



Re-dedication of England as Mary’s Dowry.

In 1381, in a world of political turmoil, King Richard II, having sought the assistance of Mary, Mother of God, dedicated England to Mary as a gift or ‘dowry’. This year, the Christians of England are invited to offer themselves as a personal gift to her, in one great Re-dedication of England as Mary’s Dowry.

The National Day of Re-dedication on Sunday 29th March 2020. We are invited personally to take part in The Re-dedication, through: The Angelus Promise – by which, in prayer, we say

“yes” in union with Our Lady through the words of the Annunciation.

Act of Entrustment - by which, as a community we renew the vows of dedication made to Mary by King Richard II, praying together the Act of Entrustment.


Both of these documents are attached to the email with this newsletter. We will aim to say these prayers at 12 noon on Sunday 29th March (ie tomorrow) so that we can be saying them as a community. But if this does not suit then please say them anytime during the day.

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The Passage is raising funds through the Big Give until 12 midnight Tues 31st March 2020 to support its work Helping Homeless People to move away from the street to during the present Coronavirus situation and to provide support to keep them off the street both immediately and in the longer term.. Double your Donation, Double your impact. This is a matched giving scheme for online donations. If someone (can be company, individual or trust) gave £10 online matched giving of £10 would bring the Gift up to £20 (and for individuals to £22.50 with Gift Aid with higher rate tax relief it may cost the donor less than £10). For more information ring Andrew Hollingsworth 020 7592 1886 andrew.h@passage.org.uk

Donate at <https://bit.ly/334RmGH>

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 Living simply: Get to know your flowers: sow a pinch of seed in a pot of compost. As the seedlings grow, check them against the ones emerging in the flowerbed and pull out the ones that don't match.

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All our recycling has currently been suspended as the church is now closed. Please try to save your items for when the current closure is lifted.



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Last Sunday at 7pm we sat with a candle in our window and prayed for the deliverance of our country from this current epidemic.

Churches Together in England have released the following statement

As our nation faces the unprecedented challenge of the coronavirus pandemic, Churches Together in England (CTE) is encouraging Christians across our nations to continue uniting in prayer, praying #PrayersOfHope in their homes at 7pm each Sunday evening.

Following the overwhelming response which the National Call to Prayer and Action received on Mothering Sunday, CTE has prepared a candle

poster for those who would like to place a permanent symbol in their front windows of Christ's light shining in the darkness.

Visit www.cte.org.uk/prayersofhope

This poster has been made available due to our awareness of the potential fire risk posed by lighting live candles, particularly on windowsills. We are keen to avoid adding any pressure to our emergency service personnel, particularly at this difficult time.

'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.' John 1:5

Please join us prayer at this challenging time.

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To remind you that we have a range of prayers and liturgy support on our website to help you and your families at home. Go to <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/prayers-and-positive-readings-and-liturgy-support-for-adults-and-children/>

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Good news stories

We have set up a page on the parish website for your personal good news stories. If you have a story please email it to trishbonnett@rcdow.org.uk and we will try to include it.

You can read the stories at <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/good-news-stories-in-a-time-of-epidemic/>

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The **Intercessions** for this week will also be emailed with this newsletter. Please do pray them at home and particularly remember those who are sick and need your prayers.



There are two notable anniversaries this week. Fr Michael Lee who was priest here for 17 years. (10 years as assistant and 7 as parish priest). Fr Maynard Haslauer who worked at Bethnal Green for many years and dedicated himself to the provision of a parish school. Even raising funds selling perfumed note paper.

**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 173

Our Daily Love - Conjugal Love - Joy and Beauty
The love of friendship is called 'charity' when it perceives and esteems the 'great worth' of another person. (St. Thomas Aquinas Summa Theologiae I-II, q 26, art 3)



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

Parish Priest Fr Tom O'Brien
07547 171570

Assistant Priest Fr Euloge Kasine
07424 004647

Parish 01462 459126
E-mail: hitchin@rcdow.org.uk
Website: <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/>

Parish Administrator Cheryl Saunders cherylsaunders@rcdow.org.uk
Pastoral Assistants Robert Hitchcock roberthitchcock@rcdow.org.uk
Trish Bonnett trishbonnett@rcdow.org.uk



This week's counting teams:
Sunday Team: 3 Monday Team: 2



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