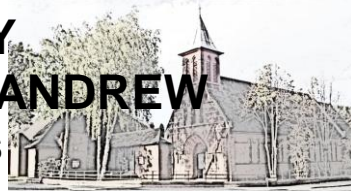


# CHURCH OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE AND ST ANDREW

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 livestreamed at 9.30am on <https://www.facebook.com/trish.bonnett> and posted as an audio file to the homepage of the parish website by 11am daily.**



## Newsletter No 1891

16-23 May 2020 – 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter – 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:** Acts: 8:5-8, 1 Pet 3:15-18, Jn 14:15-21

### Entrance Antiphon:

Proclaim a joyful sound and let it be heard; proclaim to the ends of the earth: The Lord has freed his people, alleluia.

Psalm: **Cry out with joy to God all the earth. Alleluia!**

Intercession: Lord hear us

Response: **Lord, graciously hear us!**

**Next week: Acts 1:12-14, 1 Peter 4:13-16, John 17:1-11**



**Ramblings** Acts gives the impression that grace was being flung around like nobody's business, benefitting whole communities and reshaping their future. There was a great sense of newness of life in those early days and also of great hope to be shared with *courtesy and respect* as St Paul says. At the same time, an abundance of love flowed out of every word that Jesus spoke and every gesture he made. And, what is more, he promised to send the Holy Spirit, the Advocate. It is almost too much! Yet, these blessings were key to the growth of the early Church and, given our present semi-incarceration, we are in special need of these gifts today. Take time to read through today's readings as though they were written for you. Feel the warmth, energy and encouragement that comes from them. This is certainly what Jesus wants for you. Although hugging has been sidelined of late, this is exactly what Jesus is doing to each one of you today (*and every day*). It is not so much *feel the force* but **feel the warmth** because it is a warmth that gives life, that energises, that lifts one spirits, that promotes the feeling that it is good to be alive. And this is precisely what we do in the love we offer others. The Spirit comes to enhance and multiply your love. Isn't this why we hug people: so that the love of Christ will come alive in them?

### The Hug!

It's wonderous what a hug can do.

A hug can cheer you when you're blue.

A hug can say, "I love you so,"

Or, "Gee, I hate to see you go."

A hug is, "Welcome back again."

And, "Great to see you! Where've you been?"

A hug can soothe a small child's pain,  
and bring a rainbow after rain.

The hug! There's just no doubt about it - we scarcely could survive without it!  
A hug delights and warms and charms.  
It must be why God gave us arms.  
A hug can break the language barrier,  
and make your travels so much merrier.  
No need to fret about your store of 'em,  
the more you give, the more there's more of 'em.  
So, stretch those arms without delay  
and give someone a hug today!  
– Author Unknown-

### Diary Dates

**Wed 20 May**

**6pm – Feed Up Warm Up – Scout Hall**

**Thurs 21 May Ascension**

The Mass today has music from Greg and Collette Hewitson and readings from Tim, Sophia and Henry, our ministers of the word.

**Sunday 24 May**

The Mass for this Sunday is a children's Mass and Greg has chosen hymns that your children should know so do encourage them to join in.



We are also going to include some children's hymns/songs at about 9.20am on a Sunday morning before the Mass so that children can have a sing of things they are more familiar with.



### Churches together in Hitchin prayer intentions this week

We pray for the clergy, ministers and all who lead worship in the member churches of **Churches Together in Hitchin**, giving thanks for the new initiatives they are taking to help congregations offer prayer and praise.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales has responded to the government's document released today, 11 May, titled ['Our plan to rebuild: The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy'](#)

**Statement**

The timing and the manner of the opening of churches touches profound sensitivities and spiritual needs. The Government's document and statements fail to recognise this.

The Government's position, established today, includes these steps aimed at opening churches as soon as possible: the establishment of a task force for places of worship, to work closely with 'stakeholders' in ensuring that premises are COVID-19 secure; and heeding the experience of other countries in which churches are already open for worship.

In dialogue with the Government, the Catholic Church will continue its engagement in this process and has already submitted a detailed plan, in full accordance with public health guidelines, for churches to be opened for private prayer.

The Church is ready to play its full part in the task force, understanding that this includes the possible earlier use of churches for private prayer, as a first safe step towards their use for public worship.

The interview with Cardinal Vincent on Radio 4 about this can be heard at <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/coronavirus-information-and-updates/>

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We ask that we remember in prayer the young people who were due to be confirmed on May 16<sup>th</sup> as this service has been postponed. Rob has plans in place to help them continue to prepare for this sacrament. As

Susanna writes 'These young people already have the gifts of the Holy Spirit – still in development, but there nevertheless. They have wisdom, understanding and knowledge; they use them every day, almost without knowing. They know how to exercise right judgment; they have courage – being tested now in a new way; they have reverence for holy things – not just things connected with the Church: they know, deep down, what is sacred. And they have the gift of wonder and awe, too. They are filled with God's life, God's grace, already and when it is safe to do

so, we will have an overdue celebration of this heart-lifting fact, as Bishop Paul anoints and confirms them as the extraordinary young people they are.

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**Food to families – new Parish Pantry**



Caritas Westminster in partnership with FUWU want to thank



everyone who has been supporting their efforts to feed people in our community. Our hall is now being used to store the many gifts you have given.



Beginning this **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May** they are opening a **Parish Pantry** for those in the parish who are in need of food. They provide 'best before' fresh food including bread, croissants, fruit, potatoes and tinned and dried food like tuna, beans, rice and pasta. You are welcome to come and help yourself to what you need on **Monday afternoons 12pm – 4pm.**

Come to the kitchen door of the hall. Social distancing measures are in place for the protection of all.

Parishioners who still want to donate food to this initiative can do so on  
Mondays 12pm-4pm  
Wednesdays 11am-7pm  
Thursday 11am-3pm

They particularly need the following items:

- Tinned corned beef
- Cheese
- Washing up liquid
- Washing powder
- Bleach
- Shampoo and conditioner

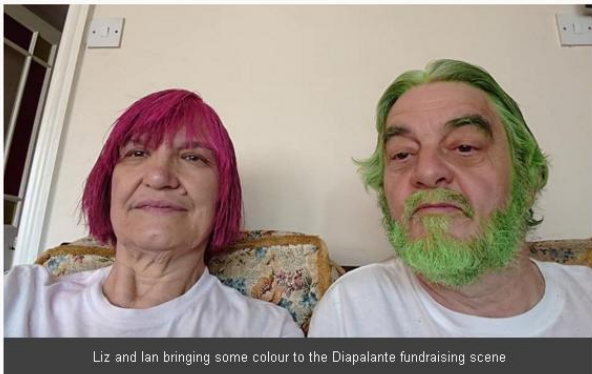
Bring all items to the hall kitchen door. Thanks for your generosity to help feed the people who need it most in our community. You are blessed indeed.



In these unprecedented times the Diapalante team sincerely hopes that you and your loved ones are keeping healthy and in good spirits. They send love and

strength to those battling the virus, those who know someone who is and to those who have lost someone to it. Full details of their newsletter and fundraising efforts can be found at <https://mailchi.mp/520aa16510cc/diapalante-newsletter-653466?e=a9ea49ac44>

It is worth clicking on this to read everything they are doing but in particular Liz and Ian Chandler who are often in our parish at coffee mornings have been fundraising in a colourful way!



Liz and Ian bringing some colour to the Diapalante fundraising scene

Diapalante trustees Liz and Ian have taken the plunge (into the hair dye) and given themselves a new look for lockdown to raise funds for Diapalante! Hats off to them. If these strong looks do it for you...

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fundraiser-display/showROFundraiserPage?userUrl=LizChandler2&pageUrl=1> Click here to sponsor them.



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**Family quiz** In the absence of the traditional annual Christian Aid quiz this year, Louise Selby, the Family Worker at Christchurch, has devised a family quiz for Saturday afternoon of 23rd May. She doesn't promise super-slick or intellectually challenging, but it would be great if some of the Christian Aid Quiz regulars and others could join in as its funds this year will be significantly down.

Details are on the scroller on the Christchurch Homepage - Just click through for a link to sign up. <https://christchurchhitchin.org.uk/> or go to <https://cc-quiz.eventbrite.co.uk>

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**Polestar Pottery Fundraiser for Foodbank Pottery Fundraiser lockdown project!** To raise funds for Letchworth Foodbank a local potter is selling handmade pottery. 'I've been a hobby potter on and off for many years but have recently set up my own

studio at home, and now have more pots than I know what to do with. Everything is handmade in Letchworth and is unique' To see the fabulous vases, jugs, plates, tea light holders, plant pots and more made at Polestar Pottery go to <http://www.facebook.com/PotteryFundraiser> Purchase by donation direct via the Facebook link, local delivery can be arranged.



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**The Passage's work to feed London's Homeless** have

created a new campaign called **Donate Your Dinner**. Now at the time of our greatest need they should be truly grateful for the support of your parish community. Could you get involved and help spread the word about **Donate Your Dinner?**

See <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/news/> for details of how to help.

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The Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv is looking for tutors to hold **one-to-one conversation** with their summer school students between June 22nd and July 18<sup>th</sup>. Their students are a mixture of lay from their university and sometimes other local higher education institutions and seminarians (both Ukrainian Greek Catholic and Latin rite). Ukraine time is BST + 2 (so we're 2 hours behind them)

20:15-21:00 (3 slots)	Evening tutoring	Evening tutoring
21:30	Taize prayer	Taize prayer

Should you be interested you could e-mail the Administrative course director direct: Ivanna Mohylyak [ivanka@ucu.edu.ua](mailto:ivanka@ucu.edu.ua) English isn't a problem for her! Ideally they'd like to know number of available teachers by 20<sup>th</sup> May



COME TO OUR NEXT ONLINE EVENT!

## Why does helping people overseas matter? The importance of UK Aid

"Charity begins at home - why should we help people overseas?"

Good question. The UK government provides aid to countries all around the world living in extreme poverty, mainly via our world respected aid agency, the Department for International Development. But do we really need this? What good is it doing around the world?

Through this event we'll be talking about what UK Aid really means, what it does, why we do it and we'll be joined by two incredible speakers, Lucy and Jenni, sharing two different and inspiring stories about the impact of volunteering overseas. And all from the comfort of your own home!



Sat 30th May  
10:30am - 12pm



Join us ONLINE  
via Zoom  
Register:  
<https://bit.ly/HitchinOnline>



The Diocese have told us of a social media campaign, **#FaithInLockdown**, leading up to **World Communications Day, Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> May**, and beyond. This campaign is inspired by the Message from Pope Francis for World Communications Day. In this he invites us to share our stories, and particularly this year to share stories of how we are keeping our faith alive during the lockdown. The campaign, starts now and needs your help to share stories of faith and use the hashtag **#FaithInLockdown** on Twitter and Instagram or send to Trish by email and she will forward them to Simeon Elderfield from the Communications Team. It would be wonderful to have some stories from our parish particularly from our children!



To register go to <https://bit.ly/HitchinOnline>



It is easy to forget how, not so many years ago, the Church was persecuted under countries in Eastern Europe before the fall of the Communist Regimes. Mgr Methode Stratiev was a Bulgarian Assumptionist who was imprisoned for eleven years and condemned to hard labour. After his release he was appointed auxiliary bishop spending much of his time working with Bulgarian Catholics in exile. He was also noted for his work in ecumenism which he promoted at Vatican II.



The age of Nations is passed. The task before us now, if we would not perish, is to shake off our ancient prejudices, and to build the Earth.  
*Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, 1881–1955, French philosopher, Jesuit priest*

### 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 179

Our Daily Love - Conjugal Love - Joy and Beauty  
The aesthetic experience of love is expressed in that 'gaze' which contemplates other persons as ends in themselves, even if they are infirm, elderly or physically unattractive. A look of appreciation has enormous importance.



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](mailto:hitchin@rcdow.org.uk)  
Website: <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/>

**Parish Administrator** Cheryl Saunders  
**Pastoral Assistants** Robert Hitchcock  
Trish Bonnett

[cherylsaunders@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:cherylsaunders@rcdow.org.uk)  
[roberthitchcock@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:roberthitchcock@rcdow.org.uk)  
[trishbonnett@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:trishbonnett@rcdow.org.uk)

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



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)