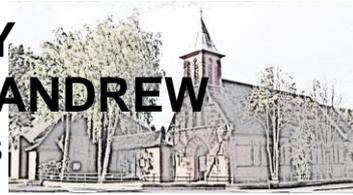




CHURCH OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE AND ST ANDREW

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



Newsletter No 1919

Daily Mass at 10am is open to the public from Dec 2nd and is livestreamed on [Livestream Mass](#) and posted to the homepage of the parish website by 11.30am daily. If you can come another day please leave Sunday for those who can't.

28th November – 5th December 2020 – 1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT Year B the gospel according to Mark



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: This week: [Is 63:16-17; 64:1.3-8](#), [Cor 1:3-9](#), [Mark 13:33-37](#)

Psalm: **God of hosts, bring us back; let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.**

Next week: [Is 40:1-5.9-11](#), [2 Peter 3:8-14](#), [Mark 1:1-8](#)

Ramblings The previous liturgical cycle ended with a call to be awake and aware of the coming of Christ at the end time. Advent begins with the same call to be awake and be aware but for the coming of Christ in our time, here and now. We find Christ present in the great feasts, especially Christmas when we welcome a new born child who will change us, our families, our society and our world. The real challenge is to find Jesus present in the least likely places, in the unexpected. Susanna M. Kawolics says *Jesus was born into a world facing disorder, oppression, and fright as well. People then, as now, longed for a Messiah who would save them, bring them wholeness and healing . . .* and don't we need healing! Our Advent begins with the Good News that churches will be allowed to open for worship again soon. Jesus' healing is already at work; there is the promise of a vaccine in the near future and a return to health and wholeness. HOPE is the theme of the 1st Sunday of Advent. What are your hopes? What do you hope Christ will bring you this Christmas? What kind of Christ, Messiah, do you expect? Your answers will make all the difference to the preparation you make this Advent. We welcome the arrival of the Advent wreath that speaks of life, speaks of never-ending love, whose berries remind us of suffering and pain. Its five candles are waiting and hoping to be lit. A reminder that we too search for light in our lives, knowing that that light has everything to do with Jesus' birth.

- Yet soon a star will shine. Look up! Keep watch and wait. Then hear within a new-born's cry the love that conquers hate.
- That love, whose light becomes the dawn of God's new day when peace and justice will prevail and sorrows flee away.

- With ev'ry passing day as sunlight disappears,
- the dusk descends and prayers ascend for strength to calm our fears.
- Uncertain is this time when rancour seems to reign; and illness leaves within its wake such sadness, grief, and pain.

Diary Dates

Sunday 29 November
3pm Advent Service livestream via Livestream Advert Service Available as a video later on the home page of the parish website. An opportunity to prepare for the coming of the Lord. Thanks to all who sent in reflections and to those who have recorded them for this service. All the reflections submitted can be found on our Advent page on the website. Advent Resources
Sun 29 November – Tues 1 December
10am Mass in the church. Private prayer from 10.40am on Sunday and 10.30am til 11.30am Mon – Sat. Communion will be available for the first 15 mins.
Wed 2 – Sat 5 December
10am Mass is now open to the public The church will be open from 9.30am for 10am Mass. The procedures for Mass prior to lockdown resume today.
Wed 2 December
6pm – Feed Up Warm Up – Scout Hall

The good news we are allowed back to Mass on December 2nd at 10am. We are



open daily from 9.30am for Mass at 10am as before the lock down. Again we ask that you come to a Mass on Monday- Saturday if you are able and leave Sunday Mass for those who are not able to attend any other day because of work/school commitments,. We will try to have more Masses on a Sunday as soon as it is clear the demand is

there. Numbers were picking up before the lockdown so hopefully that trend will continue.

Message from the Bishops

Following a meeting of the Places of Worship Task Force yesterday, I can confirm that communal worship will be able to restart **from 2 December** in all Local Restriction Tiers. The officials from the MHCLG (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) noted that the past month has been an intensely challenging time for all of our communities and they hope that this will be welcome news. They are aware of the importance of worship for many people.

This is a return to the covid-secure protocols that existed in our churches at 5th November 2020.

The decision of the Government to permit communal worship in all tiers under the covid-secure protocols that have been developed and approved for our churches is in recognition of the importance of people who have the right to attend communal worship and also of our active collaboration with the MHCLG and PHE (Public Health England) in creating the safe environments in our buildings, which must continue. Therefore it would be important to emphasise that there should be no easing off on the applications of this good practice and encouragement for people to fully engage with what is asked of them.

We are in Tier 2 in our area and the other good news is that collective worship can continue across all tiers so we are grateful that the government recognised the importance of this. What that means is that you can only sit in household groups in the church and that there is **NO socialising or interaction between different household groups whilst in church.**

All chatting will need to take place outside of the church premises and only in groups of no more than 6 people. **Thank you for your co-operation with this government restriction.**

For more details about the government restrictions and their effect on our churches go to [Corona virus updates](#) on our website.

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As a result of the new tier system and its restrictions Fr Tom has agreed that we should have a simpler nativity crib display this year. The

work involved in setting up the crib cannot be achieved within the restrictions so we will have display of the figures without the stable and backing. It will help to serve as a reminder of the simplicity of his surroundings when our Lord was born.

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Government Consultation on Faith Engagement

You are asked as individual Catholics to respond to this open consultation on the way Government engages with faith communities. The link to the online submission is:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/independent-faith-engagement-review-call-for-evidence>

This call for evidence aims to collect views to underpin the Faith Engagement Review. This call for evidence opened on 13th November and will run for a period of 4 weeks closing at 11:45pm on 11 December 2020.

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Join Herts Young Homeless for the Big Give Christmas Challenge 1st – 8th December.

For one week, donations between £5 and £5000 will be doubled for free. Please visit

www.hyh.org.uk/thebiggive from midday on 1st December.

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In previous years, many of you have contributed the Christmas Logs for the Christmas Hamper Appeal for individuals and families who are struggling. This

year due to Coronavirus, even more people are affected and need our support. Because of safely restrictions, the Christmas Community Team are fundraising to give food vouchers for Christmas fare instead of the hampers but also want to give a presents for each child.

We are asking your help to help fund these presents. We are working on the basis of £10 per present, but all donations however small will be very welcome to help us raise the amount needed to buy presents for in excess of 150 families and individuals with about 350 children between them.

If you would like to contribute please enclose offerings of cash or a cheque made payable to **Rotary Club of Hitchin Tilehouse**, in an envelope marked Children's Presents 2020. This can either be placed in a basket for the purpose in the link building when the church is open, or put through the church letter box.

Or, you can donate via this link [Just Giving Feed Hitchin](#) Thank you so much for your help. God bless you all.



HERTFORDSHIRE
CONSTABULARY



Disabled Badge holders Please be aware that there have been reports of two Eastern European males approaching Disabled Badge holders in car parks in Hitchin and asking them to scan their badge and payment card.

If you are approached by anyone in relation to this please do not engage and report the incident to the Police on 101.



Are launching a Helpline and need volunteers! The Anne Robson Trust Helpline will provide emotional support and help to anyone caring for a loved one who is in the last weeks of life. Through our work, setting up 'Butterfly Volunteer' teams with our 5 partner hospitals, we know that supporting a loved one as they die, is extremely challenging, both physically and emotionally.

We want to share our learning and experience and offer somewhere to turn to for more families and friends of people who are dying wherever they are being cared for- be it in a hospice, a care home, in hospital or in their own home.

No One Deserves to Die Alone or Lose A Loved One Alone

We are looking for our first intake of Helpline Volunteers

Are you comfortable talking about the subject of death and dying?

Do you have personal experience of supporting a loved one as they died?

Or do you have a professional background in nursing or counselling?

Are you a good listener, and able to provide compassionate support to callers who may be distressed?

If so we would love to hear from you.....

We will provide

- A 6 week in-depth training programme (delivered weekly via Zoom)
- The equipment you will need to receive calls during your shifts. With full training on how to use the software and telephone systems
- Individual emotional and practical support
- Team meetings and regular 1:1 wellbeing sessions
- Ongoing training

You will need

- A quiet room within your home to take calls
- A basic level of IT skills
- A computer or ipad
- Reliable internet access

Zoom Information Events 7th December 4-5pm & 6-7pm

If you are interested in applying to become an Anne Robson Trust Helpline Volunteer why not join our Director, Liz Pryor, and Helpline Manager, Paula Kerswell for an informative 1 hour group chat via Zoom

To register your interest in one of these sessions (and therefore receive a link to join the meeting) please email info@annerobsontrust.org.uk

For more information please visit our website www.annerobsontrust.org.uk



Nativity Winter Walk at Wintershall

From 18th December 2020 until

21st December 2020 10:00 am - 3:30 pm

Once again Trish will be at Wintershall – this time as a shepherd at their Nativity Winter Walk. (on Fri, Sat and Mon – in the parish on Sunday)

Nativity Winter Walk

Come and join Mary and Joseph travelling to Bethlehem at Wintershall this Christmas. Experience the real Christmas story, as you walk through the beautiful grounds of the Wintershall Estate. Meet the Shepherds watching their sheep, spot the Angel as you climb the hill and help the Wise Men find the star. A truly unique and magical experience for families.

With pre-booked timeslots, and following Covid 19 guidelines, immerse yourselves in the Nativity, while staying safe. At Wintershall, there is plenty of room at the Inn for Jesus to be born this December.

Please allow 1 ½ hours for your visit including a mile long walk through fields and woods across the hills at Wintershall. Free parking. Hot drinks and refreshments available.

Time-slots available from 1pm to 3:30pm 18 December and 10.00am – 3.30pm 19, 20 and 21 December, with the last tickets being sold for 3:30pm.

This is a socially distanced walk with pre-booked timeslots, following government guidelines on Covid-19.

Book now on our [website](#).

Please come and join us as a volunteer. Come and meet the cast and stewards behind the scenes and join our community for a couple of hours whilst helping and guiding others – [email](#) us to take part.


WINTERSHALL
Experience the story

NATIVITY

Winter Walk



FRIDAY 18 DECEMBER - MONDAY 21 DECEMBER 2020
WWW.WINTERSHALL.ORG.UK
Wintershall CIO, Charity Number 1167111


WINTERSHALL
Experience the story

NATIVITY

Winter Walk

A unique Christmas experience for all the family

Come and walk with Mary and Joseph on their journey to Bethlehem at Wintershall this Christmas. Experience the real Christmas story, as you walk through the beautiful grounds of the Wintershall Estate. Meet the Shepherds watching their sheep, spot the Angel as you climb the hill and help the Wise Men find the star.

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At Wintershall, there is plenty of room at the Inn for Jesus to be born this December.

Please allow 1½ hours for your visit. Free parking. Hot drinks and refreshments available.

Time-slots available:
 1.00pm - 3.30pm Friday 18th December
 10.00am - 3.30pm Saturday 19th December
 Sunday 20th December
 Monday 21st December

£35 per ticket which is for a family group of up to 6 people including any children.

Wintershall, Bramley, Surrey GU5 0LR



 Book tickets **now** on our website:
www.wintershall.org.uk
 or by calling 01483 892167






AUGUSTINIANS OF THE ASSUMPTION
The Kingdom Come

Fr Emmanuel Bailly was elected Superior General in 1902 just as the Order had to be reformed following expulsion from France of Religious in education. This led to new foundations in Europe, USA and South America. The outbreak of war in 1914 made communication difficult. Fr Emmanuel weathered the storm despite ill health until his death in 1917.


Living simply and sustainably - fix dripping taps. You could save over 5,500 litres of water a year.

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 206
 Growing in Conjugal Love - Dialogue Our way of asking and responding to questions, the tone we use, our timing and any number of other factors condition how well we communicate. We need to develop certain attitudes that express love and encourage authentic dialogue.


 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/
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Parish Administrator Cheryl Saunders	cherylsaunders@rcdow.org.uk	
Pastoral Assistants Robert Hitchcock Trish Bonnett	roberthitchcock@rcdow.org.uk	} 01462 459126 press 4
	trishbonnett@rcdow.org.uk	}


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


Hospital

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