



# CHURCH OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE AND ST ANDREW

16 Nightingale Road, HITCHIN, SG5 1QS



(Augustinians of the Assumption)



Newsletter No 1935

Daily Mass at 10am is open to the public 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.

20<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> March 2021- 5<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT - 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:** Jer 31:31-34, Heb 5:7-9, John 12:20-30

Psalm: A pure heart create for me, O God.

**Next week:** Is 50:4-7, Philip 2:6-11, Mark 14:1-15:47

**Ramblings** The law of God written in our hearts is the law of love: love of God and love of neighbour. God is love and we are made in God's image. We focus on our failings, our sins, our omissions in Lent, to discover through God's mercy how much God loves us as well as the inner beauty with which we have been made. Macrina Wiederkehr writes: *All too often we bemoan our imperfections rather than embrace them as part of the process in which we are brought to God. Cherished emptiness gives God space in which to work. We are pure capacity for God. Let us not, then, take our littleness lightly. It is a wonderful grace. It is a gift to receive. At the same time, let us not get trapped in the confines of our littleness, but keep pushing on to claim our greatness. Remind yourself often, "I am pure capacity for God; I can be more."* Macrina adds: *O God, help me to believe the truth about myself, no matter how beautiful it is. St Paul puts it like this "When I am weak then I am strong!" (2 Cor 12:10); only in weakness do we allow God free reign in our lives. Lent invites us to visit all the seasons of our hearts and lives and discover how God has been present in them all; present most especially in Jesus' dying and rising again: The seasons of my heart change like the seasons of the fields. There are seasons of wonder and hope, seasons of suffering and love, seasons of healing. There are seasons of dying and rising, seasons of faith.*

Sorrow is a central theme of Lent: *There's nothing like sorrow to get your attention. It is almost as though sorrow pulls presence out of you. In the midst of sorrow there's nothing to do but be there and celebrate the hurt. We celebrate the hurt through holy screams. Holy screams come from the heart. They are screams that people often, in their ignorance, try to smother. Don't let them take your screams away too early. Holy resignation comes only after holy screams.*

## Diary Dates

Sun 21 March – Sat 27 March

10am Mass in the church.

Wed 24 March

6pm Churches Together in Hitchin Lent

**Prayers** based on 'Invitations from the Cross' by Krish Kandiah, the guide for this year's CTH Lent Bible study groups, will be led by the Rev Chris Bunce of St Mary's on the theme 'My God, why have you forsaken me?'

Zoom joining instructions are as follows

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84078666759?pwd=eVovOHBWUkJFYTCydXhlcTNnRGdRUT09>

Meeting ID: 840 7866 6759

Passcode: 768859

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6pm – Feed Up Warm Up – Scout Hall

## Mass attendance over the past week

Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
35	52/20*	15	26	35	14	25

\*online

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We pray for:

**Pamela Dorothy Batchelor** whose funeral is on **Tuesday 23 March**

**Flavia di Salvo** whose funeral is on **Friday 26 March**

**Peter Dominic Docherty** whose funeral is on **Wednesday 7 April**

**Valerie Burkin** whose funeral is on **Friday 9 April**

**John Smith** whose funeral is on **Wednesday 14 April**

May they rest in peace and rise in glory. May the Lord comfort their families.

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**Holy week services and how to book.** We are delighted that this year we are open for our Holy week services remembering the deprivation of last year. We have arranged our liturgies for Holy Week and because of the

continuing restrictions it is necessary for everyone wishing to attend to book. Those arriving without a booking may not be able to attend if the church is fully booked.

The services you need to book for are as follows:

**Palm Sunday 10am Mass**

**Palm Sunday 12pm Mass**

**Maundy Thursday Mass of the Last Supper 7pm**

**Good Friday Service 3pm**

**Easter Vigil Saturday 7pm**

**Easter Sunday 10am Mass**

**Easter Sunday 12pm Mass**

**Morning prayer is at 10am on:**

Maundy Thursday

Good Friday

Holy Saturday

**No need to book for these.**

### **Good Friday private prayer with led stations of the Cross**

The church will be open from 11-2 and 4-6 for private prayer with a Stations of the Cross led by Ann Milner being projected every hour. You just need to use the NHS app and the QR code or sign your name and number for track and trace purposes. Sit where you like in the church and place an **X** where you sit so no-one else will sit in that place. We will be cleaning the church before the 3pm service.

### **The information we require from you when you book is;**

- your name
- contact telephone number (for track and trace)
- the number in your household attending
- the services you would like to attend.

We will do our best to give you your choices.

You can book in the following ways

1. Email [hitchin@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:hitchin@rcdow.org.uk)
2. Leave a message on the parish phone **01462 459126**
3. Text Trish on **07801 752141**
4. Complete a booking form available from the stewards when you come to Mass

You can assume you have your bookings. We will contact you if we are not able to fulfil all your choices.

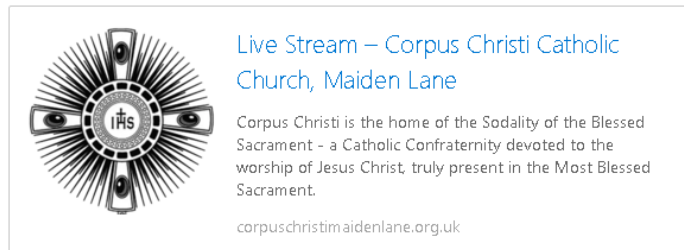
The church is being retaped to ensure we are still socially distanced by 1m+ which will increase our capacity. However we will still have to separate households which means that we have a capacity of 32 single spaces and 18 half pews for 2 or more for each service.

If you are aware of a family member, neighbour or friend who is not on email and does not get the

newsletter please can you let them know about the need to book for services this Holy Week.

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Last year there was a nationally- organised time of online watching on Maundy Thursday evening, at St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham. As the guidelines from the Bishops' Conference discourage Altars of Repose in individual churches, and no national focus is provided, the Cardinal thought it was important to provide a similar diocesan online resource this year too. **So from 8pm until midnight on Maundy Thursday, 1 April 2021**, everyone in our diocese is invited to join in prayer, paying a virtual visit to the Diocesan Shrine of the Blessed Sacrament at Corpus Christi, Maiden Lane: <https://corpuschristimaidenlane.org.uk/live/>



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Message from Bishop Paul

### **Diocesan Covid-19 Vaccination Confidence Event:**

With the support of Local Authorities Westminster Diocese is hosting a webinar on **Saturday 27th March 2021 10am-11.30am** to encourage confidence in COVID-19 vaccination among all our communities. There is concern that BAME communities are less likely than White-British ethnic groups to accept vaccination. A group of Catholic clergy from BAME communities and medical professionals will share information on health and wellbeing in the context of COVID-19 and vaccines. All are welcome. You do not have to register to attend.

### **Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://zoom.us/j/92895192155>

Meeting ID: 928 9519 2155

Password: 844612

Or join by phone

Tel: 0208 080 6591 (and use the meeting ID and passcode above)

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**Landings 'Catholic Listeners'** Reaching out to those who have become isolated during the pandemic and are looking at how to reconnect with the Church, Landings is setting up a telephone helpline service. For those who would like to find out more and training as a 'Catholic Listener', please contact Ruby Almeida, Project Manager at [landingsouth@gmail.com](mailto:landingsouth@gmail.com) or phone Landings UK on 020 7529 4802

This year, the **Census** takes place on **Sunday 21st March**. To complete the survey, please visit [www.census.gov.uk](http://www.census.gov.uk) and enter the unique access code received by your household at the beginning of March. Paper questionnaires can be requested if preferred. For more information, visit [www.census.gov.uk](http://www.census.gov.uk) or call 0800 141 2021.

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**Marriage Care Counselling Services** Marriage Care offers support from trained counsellors to couples and families who need help in coping with the pressures of lockdown. Find out more at <https://rcdow.org.uk/diocese/marriage-andfamily-life/news/marriage-care-at-75---we-are-here-for-you/>



**CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF ENGLAND AND WALES**

**Statement from the Presidency of the Bishops' Conference on the National Day of Reflection for COVID-19 Tuesday 23rd March 2021**

We welcome the designation of Tuesday 23rd March as a National Day of Reflection to mark the anniversary of the first national lockdown with a minute's silence at midday and doorstep vigils of light at 8pm. We ask you all to make this not only a Day of Reflection but also a Day of Prayer. In reflection we ponder on all that has taken place; in prayer we bring this to our Heavenly Father. For all who live by faith in God, reflection and prayer always go hand in hand. Prayer completes reflection. Reflection informs prayer. Prayer opens our life to its true horizon. Without prayer we live in a foreshortened world and are more easily swamped by its clamour and tragedy. Throughout this difficult year, so many have been inspired by prayer, so much effort sustained in prayer, in every place. So let us make the 23rd March truly a day of prayer. March 2020 was the first time our churches had to be closed. It is our hope that on this day, every one of our churches will be open. We invite everyone to enter a church on this day, to reflect and pray in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. We know this will involve an extra effort, but this can be part of our important contribution to a significant moment in the life of our country. Indeed, we ask that you might invite a friend, neighbour or colleague to come to church with you as you make this visit. There is so much on which to reflect and include in our prayer. We reflect in sorrow on all those who have died, whether family members, friends or those unknown to us personally. We pray for them, asking our Father to welcome them into their

heavenly home, the destiny for which God first gave us the gift of life. We reflect with compassion on all those who have suffered during this last year, whether through illness, stress, financial disaster or family tensions. We pray for their ongoing resilience, courage and capacity to forgive. We reflect with thanksgiving for the generosity, inventiveness, self-sacrifice and determination shown by so many in this most difficult of times. We pray for them, thanking God for their gifts and dedication, whether they are scientists, politicians, health workers, public servants of every kind, community leaders or steadfast family members and friends who continue to show such love and compassion. We reflect in hope that, as the pandemic is controlled and we open up our lives again, we will gather in the lessons we have learned and build our society into a better shape, more compassionate, less marked by inequalities, more responsive to needs and deprivation. We ask for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen us in this endeavour, whether we are focusing on overcoming family breakdowns, economic recovery, or building political consensus. Christian prayer is, of course, centred on Jesus Christ, the one who is "lifted up" before us "so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him" (John 3.13). We pray with Jesus, in him and through him, for he is the one who carries us, and our prayers, into the embracing presence of his Father. He is our comfort in sorrow, our strength in the face of need, our rejoicing in the gifts we celebrate and our hope in the face of the weighty darkness of death. May Tuesday 23rd March be a great day of prayer that this pandemic comes to an end and that the gift of God's Holy Spirit will carry us all forward to a new and better life, both here and in the world to come.

+ Vincent Nichols

Cardinal Vincent Nichols  
President

+ Malcolm M' Mahon OP

Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP  
Vice-President

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**Annual Day of Prayer for Victims and Survivors of Abuse.** In England and Wales this will take place on Tuesday 4 May 2021. Further information and resources will be prepared and distributed in due course, but for now the Cardinal wanted to make sure that you had this date in your diaries.



**A big thank you to all those who are helping to Feed the Hungry** In the space of a week we had deliveries of all the items asked for plus £320 of donations which was spent on all the items requested. The Foodbank also very kindly gave several boxes of food also. It is not too late to bring items to church. This is an ongoing need. **The Food Provision team** are short of basic goods for their food parcels.

They now urgently need the following:


- Biscuits
- Tins of fruit
- Jelly
- Angel delight
- Tins of Custard
- Squash

Can you help with this please? If so there will be some plastic boxes outside the back door of the hall kitchen for you to drop off your donations.

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### **Novena to St Isidore of Seville 24<sup>th</sup> March – 1<sup>st</sup> April**

Almighty and eternal God, you invited us to seek all that is good, true and beautiful. Grant that, through the intercession of Saint Isidore, in our journeys through the internet you will direct our hands and eyes only to that which is pleasing to you and treat with charity and patience all whom we encounter. We pray for an end to the current pandemic and for the continued distribution of the vaccines across the world so as to reduce the loss of life. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. St Isidore pray for us



**THE 2021 LANDINGS LECTURE**


**Rebuilding the Church  
for a Change of Era: Pope Francis' vision  
in Fratelli Tutti**

**SPEAKER**






**Dr Anna Rowlands**  
Lecturer in Contemporary Catholic Studies and deputy director  
of the Centre for Catholic Studies, University of Durham

**23rd April at 7.00pm**

TO BOOK YOUR PLACE ON THIS COMPELLING ZOOM EVENT  
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-2021-landings-lecture-tickets-145306185713>  
with details to follow after booking

 **Landings**  
Welcoming returning Catholics

See events page on parish website for full details.

	The 'balance of power' politics ... is inconsistent with our increasingly interdependent world. ... On moral grounds alone there can be no justification for the 20th century level of killing. To settle disputes without violence must become the primary goal of foreign policy for every nation. <i>Robert McNamara, 1998, US Defense Secretary 1961-68</i>		
	Before the communist takeover of Eastern Europe the Assumption had a number of thriving communities. Today all this Eastern European Mission is much reduced. Even so there are still communities in Romania (2) Bulgaria (1) Russia (1).		
	<b>AMORIS LAETITIA THE JOY OF LOVE 223</b> <i>Passionate Love - The world of emotions</i> As true man, Jesus showed his emotions. He was hurt by the rejection of Jerusalem (Mt 23:27) and this moved him to tears (Lk 19:41).		
If you have a need for prayer, please contact <b>Mary</b> on <b>07759195487</b> 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>	Robert Hitchcock Trish Bonnett	<a href="mailto:roberthitchcock@rcdow.org.uk">roberthitchcock@rcdow.org.uk</a> } 01462 459126 press 4 <a href="mailto:trishbonnett@rcdow.org.uk">trishbonnett@rcdow.org.uk</a> }	
	This week's counting teams: <b>Sunday Team: Monday Team:</b>		 If you are going into hospital please notify the Chaplain on Tel: <b>01438 285519</b> or Email: <a href="mailto:spiritualcare.enh-tr@nhs.net">spiritualcare.enh-tr@nhs.net</a>