



CHURCH OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE AND ST ANDREW

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



Mass Times
Saturday 6pm
Sunday 8.30am, 10.30am
Monday – Saturday 10am
Reconciliation Saturday 10.30am
during Exposition. All Masses are
livestreamed [Livestream Mass](#)

Newsletter No 1974

18th December – 25th December 2021 – 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT - Year C

Prayer: We pray for the healing of creation: God, source of all goodness, we call you Creator; you have made our wonderful world out of nothing and constantly keep it alive. Help us to be full of care and grateful for our home received from you as a gift. May we work to keep this, our common home, filled with peace and justice. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings : [Micah 5:1-4](#), [Heb 10:5-10](#), [Luke 1:39-44](#)

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

Intercession: We pray to the Lord

Response: Lord hear us!

Next Week: 1 Sam 1:20-22,24-28, 1 Jn 3:1-2,21-24, Lk 2:41-52

Ramblings On a visit to India, I arrived with a fellow Assumptionist at a convent at 2.30 in the morning after a five-hour drive from the airport. The sisters greeted us by placing a spot of red powder on our foreheads and a wreath of flowers around our necks. When asked why, they said it was a Hindu custom that when strangers arrived at a house they were to be greeted like God's with honour, reverence and respect – a truly wonderful tradition. It helps us understand Elizabeth's greeting of Mary seeing her as a bearer of God. But each of us are God-bearers. We too should greet strangers with honour, reverence and respect because they are bearers of God, even if they do not know it. Similarly, we ourselves are God-bearers to those whom we visit. This is even more real for ministers of the Eucharist bringing communion to the sick and housebound. It is good to be reminded that we live the Gospel that we read every day.

"We are called to be God's witnesses by the love we extend to others; precursors of his justice by our unflinching commitment to what is right and good; lamps reflecting the light of Christ in our forgiveness, mercy and compassion; harvesters of souls through our humble and dedicated servanthood."

"A novice master, when asked about a life lived in Christian authenticity, said that to be a Christian was not to know the answers but to begin to live in the part of the self where the question is born.... He was speaking of an attitude of listening, of awareness of presence, of an openness to mystery." He could have been talking about our synodal sharing?

Diary Dates

Tues 21 Dec	
10.30am	Coffee Morning after Mass Hall. +++++
11am	Assemble crib in church. Grateful for all help. +++++
2pm	Craft Circle Scout Hall +++++
7pm	Eucharistic Service – Please join us to consider the readings for next Sunday and share communion. To Zoom click on Eucharistic Service
Wed 22 Dec	
11.15am	We pray for Eileen (Shirley) O'Mahony whose funeral is today. May she rest in peace and rise in glory. May the Lord comfort her family. +++++
6pm	Feed Up Warm Up Scout Hall +++++
6.30pm	Carol service in church. All welcome to sing and celebrate with the Christmas readings.
Thurs 23 Dec	
11am	Cleaning the church ready for Christmas – your help needed. See item below.
Fri 24 Dec	
2-4pm	Hitchin Pantry Scout Hall
Sat 25 Dec Christmas Day	
Merry Christmas from us all. See below for Mass times and details of booking.	

CHRISTMAS MASSES

All Masses this Christmas need to be booked.

24th December 5pm Fully booked

24th December 9pm Vigil Mass

25th December 8.30am and 10.30am

Note there is no evening Mass on Christmas day.

To book please email
christmas_OLIASA@outlook.com

with your **name** and **contact details** and the number of people you want to book for.

Please also state if you want the front rows (not taped off), back rows (still distanced) or no preference. This is important for seat allocation. We will endeavour to meet your request.

If you are not able to book using an email please give your details to Cheryl (01462 459126)

Applications for the Sacrament of Confirmation are open please



click on the link below for the application. Please note if your child was not baptised here in the parish, you will be asked to upload a copy of their Baptism certificate.

The first session will start on Tuesday 11th January 2022. Arrivals from 6.45 for a 7pm start. The sessions will be every other week

<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/sacramental-prep/confirmation/>

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Tuesday 21st Dec 11am we meet to put up the crib in the church. Please come to lend us a hand. With enough of us it should not take longer than 2 hours.



We also need greenery to decorate the back drop - fir tree greenery is most helpful. Please leave this outside the back door of the church by Tuesday morning.

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We need help with cleaning in three different ways.

1. It would be good to get the church nicely

cleaned before Christmas, dusted, vacuumed and washed. We invite people to come at 11am on Thursday 23rd December. Please let Trish know if you can come. The more who come the quicker it will be.

2. We are compiling the new rota for fogging the church after every mass. It doesn't have to be done immediately after that Mass but certainly before the next service so there is some flexibility. We need people to fog each day after the 10am Mass and then after the 6pm on a Saturday evening, and after the 8.30am and 10.30am on a Sunday. It takes about 10 minutes and is very important to keep our parishioners safe. If you can help on a rota basis maybe once every 3-4 weeks please let me know asap which day(s) you can help on.

3. As more people are coming (Thank the Lord) the church is getting dirtier and we need to reinstate the Saturday morning cleaning from 8.30am - 9.45am so that the church is fresh for our weekend services. This includes dusting, vacuuming and washing the porch floor in a team of ideally 3 people. Can you do this on a monthly basis? Let me know if you can.

Other items of interest

CAFOD is combining efforts with the DEC to launch the Afghanistan Crisis Appeal. In Afghanistan, 8 million people are on the brink of famine because of drought, collapsing economy, food shortages, conflict, and COVID. CAFOD is supporting sister Caritas agencies to reach communities most in need with food, clean water, and fuel. During Advent, when we open ourselves to the needs of others, let's do all that we can to save lives. You can donate on the CAFOD

Focus on past Assistant Priests Fr Paschal Casserly had spent all his young priesthood teaching in France. He was already sixty when appointed to Hitchin to undertake an apostolate which was a real challenge. He was assistant priest here from 1971 until his death in 1995. He is buried in Ireland.



AMORIS LAETITIA THE JOY OF LOVE 262 *Love made fruitful - Welcoming a new life.* If a child comes into this world in unwanted circumstances, the parents and family need to do everything possible to accept that child as a gift from God and accepting them with openness and affection

Safeguarding reminder EduCare (now part of Tes) leaflets can be downloaded from our website at <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/diocese/safeguarding-in-our-parishes/>



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 roberthitchcock@rcdow.org.uk	Trish Bonnett trishbonnett@rcdow.org.uk	} 01462 459126 press 4 }
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website: [Afghanistan Appeal](#) and please pray for the people of Afghanistan.