



# 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 1987

19<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> March 2022 - 3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT - Year C

**Prayer for Ukraine:** God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine; for peace and the laying down of weapons. Give comfort to those who fear for tomorrow. Grant wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide those who have power over war and peace. Hold and protect your precious children, at risk and in fear. We pray in the name of Jesus, Prince of Peace. Amen.

**Readings:** [Ex 3:1-8.13-15](#), [Cor 10:1-6.10.12](#), [Luke 13:1-9](#)

**Entrance Antiphon:** My eyes are always on the Lord, for he rescues my feet from the snare. Turn to me and have mercy on me, for I am alone and poor.

**Psalm:** **The Lord is compassion and love.**

**Intercession:** Lord, hear us

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

**Next Week:** [Josh 5:9-12](#), [Cor 5:17-21](#), [Luke 15:1-3.11-32](#)

**Ramblings** It seems that a young fig tree can take up to four or five years before producing its first fruit. However, subsequently it can produce two crops a year and keep bearing fruit for up to 200 years. Fortunately, God is willing to wait for us to bear fruit and doesn't expect us to live 200 years!!

Lent is a time to prepare ourselves, with some pruning, to produce a healthier and better witness to the life Jesus won for us.

Referring to himself as *I AM who I Am* suggests that God only lives in the present. Lent encourages us, through prayer, fasting and works of charity, to become more aware of God's presence in each moment and in every event and encounter in life. These moments will be similar to the burning bush experience of Moses.

Such a moment happened taking communion to a new arrival in a care home in the parish. She greeted me with wonder and a radiant smile as bright as any burning-bush. It was as if God had come to her in person. She was awash with happiness and wonder and her radiant smile still shines brightly in my mind, indelibly burned with love into my heart. Just as God lives in the present that smile is not a memory but a smile that is present, along with all its graces and blessings. We believe in the real presence of Christ in the eucharist not because it is written in theology books but because God is present. When reading his story, Jesus becomes present to us in the here and now. True listening opens hearts to Jesus' presence offering an experience that is beyond explanation.

*Earth's crammed with heaven,  
and every common bush afire with God:  
but only those who see, takes off their shoes,  
the rest sit round it, and pluck blackberries,  
and daub their natural faces unaware....*  
(Elizabeth Barrett)

### Prayer diary

Opportunities for communal prayer

- Tuesday** 11.30am Meditation Emmanuel Centre  
7pm Eucharistic Service Church  
To Zoom click on [Eucharistic Service](#)
- Wednesday** 9.30am Rosary Church
- Thursday** 6.30pm Meditation Emmanuel Centre
- Friday** 10.30am Stations of the Cross Church
- All are welcome for private prayer at any time in the church which is open 8.30am - 7pm*

### Diary Dates

Sat 19 March	
<b>6pm Mass</b>	The first scrutiny for Rosalia, Matthew and Sian. We hold them in our prayers.
Sun 20 March	
	After 8.30am & 10.30am Mass Gardening Group Coffee morning in the hall
Mon 21 March	
10.30am	Lent Ecumenical group Hall *****
6pm	Beavers & 7.15pm Cubs Scout Hall
Tues 22 March	
10.30am	Coffee Morning Hall *****
7pm	Scouts Scout Hall *****
7pm	FHC Session 7 Hall
Wed 23 March	
6pm	Feed Up Warm Up Scout Hall *****
7pm	RCIA EC
Thurs 24 March	
6.30pm	Brownies Scout Hall
Fri 25 March	
<b>The Annunciation of the Lord</b>	
2-4pm	Hitchin Pantry Scout Hall

## Diary Dates cont

**Sat 26 March**

**9am Gardening session** at church.  
Everyone welcome to help. Lots to do.



**10am FHC Session for non-faith schools** UCR

**10am Marriage Course** Hall

**1-3pm Hitchin Pantry** Scout Hall

**7.30pm Orpheus Choir** Church

**KISS Coffee Morning** – a huge **THANK YOU** to all who came to support last weekend's Coffee Morning and gave so generously to the Disasters Emergency Committee via CAFOD. **£226.00** has been raised and sent to CAFOD to support their work in Ukraine. Thank you all so much!

We also have some spare dates in 2022. If you wish to host a Coffee Morning, please let Cheryl in the Parish Office know. The dates currently available are: 3 April, 24 April, 29 May, 12 June and July 31.

This weekend at Mass will see two reintroductions:

① The children's **colouring** box will be back in the porch. Please feel free to take a pack for your child during the Mass and they can colour in a sheet which relates to the Gospel. Please take the coloured sheet home with you to display and return the pack to the box in the porch.

② The offertory procession will return at the 10.30 Mass. Families will be taking the gifts up for the Celebrant to receive. There are a small group of families who have offered to help. If you would like to be involved too please let Trish know.



**Marriage Preparation course** If you are thinking about getting married anytime in the next year it is not too late to enrol on our next marriage preparation course (essential if you want to be married in the Catholic Church) this Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March 10am – 4pm

in the parish hall (starts in the upper committee room. **To book a place please email [catholicmarriageprep@outlook.com](mailto:catholicmarriageprep@outlook.com) with your full names (both parties).** The fee is £60 per couple.



**Orpheus Choir 26<sup>th</sup> March 2022 7.30pm first concert in 2 years in our church! Tickets are £5 each** from the parish office. **Your help is needed so please let Trish know if you can:**

- Act as steward (1 person needed) and show people to seats from 6.50pm on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March. (please note that there is no allocated seating - seats are on a first come basis and we still want space between groups along the pews)
- Bring cakes for us to serve as refreshments to be brought anytime on the Saturday.

**One World/Livesimply Group Lenten Meditation, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 10:45.** You are invited to our 2022 Lenten Meditation which will be an opportunity to pray and meditate on the theme of 'Commitment'. It will take place in the hall and will be followed by a simple Lenten lunch. We look forward to seeing you.

### Welcome to our new arrival in the car park

During the Pandemic our food parcel delivery service and FUWU were very blessed to be able to use the LC to store food to support the Community. Hitchin Pantry (social supermarket) opened in November to support local families and individuals struggling with food poverty. The Pantry is a huge success and is currently supporting over 300 people a week! It is a space for people to shop in a dignified way and to save money to help with growing bills. With the rising costs of living we all can agree this service is a lifeline for many. The Pantry needs to store growing quantities of food in a larger area than the Scout Hut can offer.



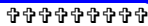
The Pantry is now using the Storage Container in the car park which will soon have a living roof which will encourage our Catholic belief of caring for our environment & creation. The Parish will also gain use of the Lower Committee room (after redecorating) again for Parish groups to enjoy and use.

## Parish Pals-YOUNG ADULTS SOCIAL

What- an opportunity to pray in front of the Blessed Sacrament and socialise  
When: Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March @ 7pm  
Where : Church  
Why-you get to meet likeminded people  
Who-(YOU) open to all 18+



**Responding to the crisis caused by the war in Ukraine** Our parishioners have responded generously to the needs of refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine by providing goods and financial donations. Now we turn our minds to hosting Ukrainian refugees who come to the UK. Click here for details. [Ukraine Refugee Help](#)



At the recent Pastoral Parish Council meeting it was agreed that the Parish would sign up to **The Plastic Free Pledge**



We have to remove at least three single-use plastic items from our day to day activities in the parish. Please come forward with your ideas as to how we can achieve this aim.

You can sign up to this in your homes with your families. Please take a poster above from the porch to show your commitment.

## Other Dates

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March, 9.30am - 12noon**

### Mindfulness: Overcoming Obstacles

Online: including meditation, talks on mindfulness practice at the current time, overcoming obstacles and an open time for questions and answers

Please register your interest by replying to this email or using the Register button on the website: <https://www.mindful-worklife.com/half-day-retreat>



**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> April Lent 10.30am-6.30pm**

**Retreat for Young Adults (aged 18-30s)** with the Assumption Sisters in Kensington. Young people are invited for a day retreat to prepare for Holy Week and Easter, with talks, workshops, prayer, Stations of the Cross, time for confessions and mass. Venue: Milleret House, 23 Kensington Square W8 5HN. Donations only. Register by emailing:

[tramy@assumptionreligious.org](mailto:tramy@assumptionreligious.org)



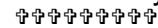
**Wednesday 13th April at 7pm, A Meditation**

**for Lent** St Hugh of Lincoln Church, Letchworth Garden City. Haynd's Passion - The Seven Last Words performed by the Jubilate Chamber Choir. Musical director: John Edwards.

Entrance is free but there will be a retiring collection in aid of Caritas Bakhita House to provide accommodation and support to women escaping human trafficking and modern slavery.



**2<sup>nd</sup> May 2pm Mass for Migrants** for Feast of St Joseph the Worker at Westminster Cathedral. Procession at 2pm followed by Mass at 2.30pm



**Saturday 14th May 2022 3pm Annual Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony**

Westminster Cathedral. The Cardinal is inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese, who are celebrating their 5th 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60) Wedding Anniversary of Catholic Marriage in 2022. If you are celebrating an anniversary, please give Cheryl Saunders the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number, if no email).



**Other items of interest**

**Renewed 2-9** is a quiet shared space where it's ok not to be ok. A place where you can simply be, with opportunities to share in hobbies, activities and chats. There is also a quiet space simply to rest. Location is Walsworth Road Baptist Church on Mondays 2-4pm and first Saturday of the month 10am-12pm. Please feel free to drop in at any point whilst they are open for as short or as long as you'd like.

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**The Caritas Deaf Service** is helping enable the full participation of Deaf people in our communities throughout Lent and Easter, with Signed Stations of the Cross each Friday afternoon at Westminster Cathedral, and all the Holy Week services at Maria Assumpta Chapel in Kensington Square. Find out more at <https://www.caritaswestminster.org.uk/deaf-service-events.php>

**Caritas Volunteering** If you want to start volunteering this Lent, the Caritas Volunteer Service is here to help. We aim to make volunteering as easy as possible for the Catholic community in London and Hertfordshire. Go to [www.caritasvs.org.uk](http://www.caritasvs.org.uk) to find the perfect opportunity for you.

**Mondays and Wednesdays throughout Lent**  
To help you 'spring into action' this Lent, the Caritas Volunteer Service offers a series of appointments for individual guidance for anyone interested in volunteering in London or Hertfordshire. You can choose between a 30 min phone call or a 'Zoom' online meeting, and slots are available on Monday mornings and Wednesday evenings throughout Lent. Find out more and register here <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/volunteering-1-2-1-tickets-254712601247?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

or by calling 07738183833 or emailing [cvs@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:cvs@rcdow.org.uk).

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**'The Passage, a Catholic charity working with homeless people** is raising funds through the Big Give a matched giving scheme from 12.00 noon on Monday 14 March. Every £1 donated online between 12.00 noon on Monday 14 March and 12.00 noon on Monday 28 March makes £2 and £2.25 if you are a taxpayer through Gift Aid. Please visit: <https://bit.ly/BigGiveMarch22> to support the campaign. The campaign 'It takes more than a house to make a home' focuses on the services we provide to people who have been homeless in their journey to being happily settled in a new home. The Passage would be very grateful for your support. For questions about the campaign or assistance making a donation please ring 020 7592 1856.'

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Are you now or have you ever self-identified as a Catholic woman? It is vital that feedback to the Synod includes the widest possible range of women's voices from different cultures and contexts. In collaboration with the University of Newcastle in Australia and the Catholic Women's Council, Catholic Women Speak is conducting an online survey—available in six languages—to gather feedback from women around the world.


**5 minute survey for Catholic women:** <https://catholicwomenspeak.com/>

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**Please be aware that Covid cases in the parish are rising. Please do wear a face mask at Mass for your protection and to protect others. Thank you.**

 The Little Sisters of the Assumption were founded in France in 1865 by Fr Etienne Pernet and Antoinette Fage. Their work is the nursing of the sick poor in their homes. This work is done gratuitously and without distinction of creed. In many countries in Europe this work is now done by the social services. The sisters have branched out into Africa and the Philippines.

 **Amoris Laetitia the joy of love 275** *Love made fruitful - love and pregnancy* Children are a gift. Each one is unique and irreplaceable. Catechesis (11.2.15).

**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

<b>Parish Priest</b>	Fr Tom O'Brien 07547 171570	<b>Assistan t Priest</b>	Fr Euloge Kasine 07424 004647	<b>Parish</b> 01462 459126 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		<a href="mailto:roberthitchcock@rcdow.org.uk">roberthitchcock@rcdow.org.uk</a> }	
	Trish Bonnett		<a href="mailto:trishbonnett@rcdow.org.uk">trishbonnett@rcdow.org.uk</a> }	