



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 2024

3rd – 10th December 2022 – SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT - Year A

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: [Is 11:1-10](#), [Rom 15:4-9](#), [Matt 3:1-12](#)

Entrance Antiphon: O people of Sion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations, and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart.

Psalm: **In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails.**

Intercession: We pray to the Lord

Response: Lord hear us!

Next Week: [Is 35:1-6.10](#), [James 5:7-10](#) [Matt 11:2-11](#)

Ramblings Don't give up hope and the Lord will always come to help you said St Paul. Advent invites us on a journey of Hope as we prepare to welcome the Lord of Hope. Despite the negativity we receive through the media and international News, the call for hope is all the louder this year. However, if we look back through history properly, we would see that the hopes of the world were not only fulfilled and with abundance. All the failures were followed by resurrections which were far more beneficial to life than could ever have been expected. The present economic situation will impose difficulties on us all but, if we work together to help and support each other, we will come through it better people and a stronger and healthier community. Our faith will have been strengthened both by the Holy Spirit and the Fire of concern and compassion for others. It will make HOPE concrete in action.

Fire of Advent (Edward Hays)

“Advent, like its cousin Lent, is a season for prayer and reformation of our hearts. Since it comes at winter time, fire is a fitting sign to help us celebrate Advent... If Christ is to come more fully into our lives this Christmas, if God is to become really incarnate for us, then fire will have to be present in our prayer. Our worship and devotion will have to stoke the kind of fire in our souls that can truly change our hearts. Ours is a great responsibility not to waste this Advent time. We are called to be God’s witnesses by the love we extend to others; precursors of his justice by our unfailing commitment to what is right and good; lamps reflecting the light of God’s Christ in our forgiveness, mercy and compassion; harvesters of souls through our humble and dedicated servanthood.”

Diary Dates

Sun 4 Dec

Coffee Morning after 8.30am and 10.30am Masses’ Proceeds from this Sunday’s coffee morning will go to support the activities of **Our Lady’s Special Support Group**. Cakes, preserves, books and Christmas cards will also be on sale. All are welcome.

3pm Healing and Wholeness service

Parishioners who feel the need for these gifts are invited to share in this time of prayer, during which the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing will be celebrated.



Monday 5 Dec

6pm Beavers & 7.15pm Cubs Scout Hall

Tuesday 6 Dec

10.30am Coffee Morning Hall

2pm Craft Circle LCR

7pm Scouts Scout Hall

Wed 7 Dec **St Ambrose**

6pm Feed Up Warm Up Scout Hall

7pm RCIA EC

Thurs 8 Dec

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

1pm Italian Club Hall

6.30pm Brownies Scout Hall

Fri 9 Dec

10am-5pm Warm Spaces Hall

2-4pm Hitchin Pantry Scout Hall

2.30pm Scripture Group Lower committee room.

Sat 10 Dec

2-4pm Hitchin Pantry Scout Hall



🙏 **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
2pm **Charismatic Prayer** Church
 - Thursday** 6.30pm **Meditation** Emmanuel Centre
- All are welcome for private prayer at any time in the church which is open 8.30am - 7pm*

Thanks to all who supported the Bereavement Coffee morning last Sunday. Particular thanks to Pam for her support and all the cakes and prizes provided by many people. £145.16p was raised for Bereavement support activities.

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CONGRATULATIONS!!! Our Selection box collection IS COMPLETE!!!! 200 packs collected by 2nd December for



Christmas hampers. Thanks so much for your generosity.

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Applications for the **Confirmation 2023 programme** are now open please find more details [here](#). The sessions will commence in January, they are open to anyone who is school year 9 and above. Any questions please do get in touch. Please note: as part of the application process, you will need to upload a copy of your Baptism Certificate if you were not baptised here at Our Lady's.

+++++ **Cheques for Christmas Collections.** It would be appreciated if cheques for the Christmas collections are made out to the Parish – i.e. Our Lady's Church and not to the Order. This will make accounting more straightforward. Please be assured that all such donations will end up in the right place.

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The Fairtrade stall is open after 8.30 and 10.30 Masses next weekend. Get your Fairtrade items and maybe some Christmas shopping or order items from Frances. This is a cash or

cheque stall!

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Eucharistic Ministers needed at 6pm Mass. If you regularly attend the 6pm Mass and are willing to be trained in this ministry to assist the Priest with the distribution of communion please contact [Trish](#). A training course will be arranged soon.

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Please support Our Lady Immaculate and St Andrew Church - Hitchin on #easyfundraising, you'll raise FREE donations with your everyday shopping. It's quick and easy to sign up! Plus,

once you've raised your first £10, easyfundraising will double it! Sign up now: [Easy Fundraising](#)

The easyfundraising Advent Calendar* has started

From today, you and your supporters have the chance to WIN a £100 gift card EVERY day.

Plus, you'll get an entry each time into our Christmas Day grand prize draw to win a £5,000 donation for Our Lady's RC Church Hitchin!

[Click here to enter](#)

Friday 2nd Dec was the start of a new Scripture Study Group with Fr Andrew. He started with an overview so that everyone was clear about the basics of how the gospels were formed. The next sessions before Christmas will look at the gospel readings focused on Christmas. In the new year he will begin with the Gospel of St Mark. Due to the popularity of this group it will now move to the Lower Committee room on Friday 9th Dec.

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Minutes scribe for the Pastoral Parish Council We are very grateful to Maria Greene who has been the minutes scribe for the Pastoral Parish Council for a number of years. She has decided to step down so we need someone else to help. We have 6 meetings per year. If you are willing to give 2-3 hours every 2 months to support the PPC please can you contact [Roger Hyde](#) Chair of the PPC.

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As the end of November is fast approaching, we can reveal that, at Our Lady's Church, a total of **£663.52** was raised from all the recycling products collected and sent to Terracycle between May 2022 and the end of October 2022. Most of this amount should be being paid directly into these charities accounts around the beginning of December.

Terracycle recycling funds raised for charity
1st MAY 2022- 30th OCTOBER 2022:

Total = £ 663.52

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Message from Greg & Mary Hewitson – Ukraine -Furniture 'A huge thank you to the Hitchin Parish! Our Ukrainian guests will soon be

moving into their own home, and we are overwhelmed by your generosity to help make this happen. Our final challenge is to find **curtains. The windows in the living room and one bedroom are 13 ft (4m) wide and the curtains need to be full length; the second bedroom window is 5 ft (1.5m) wide and standard length.** If you can help us, we would be so grateful. **We also need a living-room unit suitable for storage / display,** Otherwise, we are almost there – so, once again, thank you for your amazing response and support. Please contact Greg on 07850 273234 if you think you can help. Thank you. Mary & Greg.'

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Warm Spaces Started on 2nd December



In our church in a warm, friendly environment, with refreshments provided. Thanks to Mike Eltringham for sorting the heating in time. Thanks also to our volunteers who helped to greet people and offer them food. We had a number of people from the parish and outside the parish come in for a cuppa and a chat. **We still need volunteers to help support this service from 10am-1pm. Please speak to Trish asap if you can help for an hour or three occasionally.**

There are also leaflets and posters with the Warm Spaces details on in the porch. Could you please take a poster and display somewhere near you and also take some of the leaflets and pop through your neighbour's doors. We want to get the message out to as many people as possible. Thank you for your help.

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Community Garden needs your help



The community garden at the front of the church is just too much for our valiant gardening team to manage with the rest of the church gardens so we are appealing for some people who will look after this patch at the front and plant and maintain the vegetables which are for the community (eg Hitchin Pantry/Foodbank) If you are able to put your passion for growing vegetables for the benefit of the parish please let Trish know.

Urgent appeal for help with Terracycle Recycling scheme mid-Dec 2022 to mid-Jan 2023



Deolinda and Michael Eltringham are appealing to parishioner to help cover 12th Dec – 15th Jan in maintaining a Terracycle recycling service to the parish and the town, to ensure we can continue to raise funds for the chosen charities. After 12th Dec, all supporters and contributors who use this recycling scheme, if you can collect your separated waste at home, and keep it with you, and only bring it to the parish from the weekend of the 14/15 Jan 2023 onwards, that would be a great help and much appreciated. We are also appealing for a couple of volunteers or so, to monitor the five Terracycle collection bins, so that they are emptied, the bin liners replaced, and the collected waste over the 4 weeks from mid-Dec 2022 to mid-Jan 2023 are stored in a safe dry space, until we get back, so it can be sorted, and sent for recycling. That way, we can avoid overwhelming the parish with waste delivered, and not lose its value for our chosen charities. Let's offer such a service as a Green loving present to the mother Earth and our community! And does anyone have lots of space in their garage for storage of the collected items? Please contact us on home phone: 01462 451359 or by email: rmdmelt@btopenworld.com

Other Dates

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
St Ippolyts Church
Nativity Crib
Festival ★ ★
Dec 3&4 11-5

Get into the spirit of Christmas.
 Come and see our fabulous display of
 Nativity Crib sets

Try and win a crib of
 your own.
 Enjoy a cuppa and a
 cake.

Entry £4.00
 Children are free



Raising funds for St Ippolyts Church

Dec 9th 3:30pm at Our Lady School **Christmas Fair and Raffle**. The whole parish is invited to attend! Raffle tickets are £1 each and are on sale after Mass. Prizes includes an Apple iPad and gift hampers. Mulled wine, cakes and more... including a visit from Santa himself! Look forward to seeing you there.



Dec 11th 4.30pm Carols in the Market Place
The Hub Church is arranging outdoor carols on behalf of Churches Together in Hitchin. All are invited to come and hear the Christmas message in music and word - and enjoy non-alcoholic wine and/or hot chocolate! If wet, it will go ahead in St Mary's Church House.

Dec 11th 6.30pm Hitchin Theological Society final meeting of the year is in St Mary's Church. The theme is Portraying God. Charmaine Sabey-Corkindale and Zoe Davis will lead reflections on how we describe/have described God, with special reference to the Christmas season. All welcome.

Dec 16th 10am - 11.30am, the Saint John Henry Newman School are holding a Senior and Older Adults Christmas Celebration at the school and extend a warm invitation to all members of the parish community who may like to come and join them.



Dec 18th Christchurch will be opening for viewing of the World Cup Final.

Other items of interest


It is now just nine months until the next World Youth Day celebration in Lisbon. As many of you know, World Youth Day takes place roughly every three years and brings together millions of young Catholics from all over the world with the


Holy Father, to be inspired in their faith and experience a deeper sense of the great communion that is the Church. We are only offering 50 spaces so we really encourage early sign up and preferably by 16 December 2022 when we will close applications. This is mainly because of significant further rises in fees and cost from January 2023. Find more information and booking forms here: <https://dowym.com/events/world-youth-day-lisbon/>

If you have any questions and would like additional information, we remain at your service. Just get in touch with Phoebe Prendergast at phoebeprendergast@rcdow.org.uk or Holly Cook at hollycook@rcdow.org.uk

The Letter: A Message For Our Earth is a film produced by the Vatican which is available to view on YouTube and is highly commended by Father Tom. The link is: <https://theletterfilm.org/>

Denise Garrell from Zeo Church works for Young Life International which "helps young people in the UK & Ireland find hope and purpose". Its Capernaum Ministry is especially aimed at "creating spaces of belonging for teens and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities." Denise wants to set up such a group to meet weekly in Hitchin. This would be openly a faith group where the gospel would be shared, and the young people enabled to grow in their faith and gifting as well as have the opportunity to build friendships. Main-stream young people would also be welcome as buddies to get alongside those for whom this group is set up. Zeo Christian Centre is a possible venue. Anyone interested in helping with this pioneering initiative or finding out more should contact Denise at denise.garrell@ntlworld.com

 Six hundred meters from the Mexican border at El Paso (Texas) is the parish of St Francis Xavier cared for by the Assumptionists. With the help of volunteers migrants are welcomed, provided with hot food and clothes as well as help and advice. Many of those arriving have gone through persecution and made their way through other countries to restart their lives with the help provided by the small Assumptionist community at El Paso.

 **Amoris Laetitia the joy of love 311** *Love made fruitful - An expanding fruitfulness*
Christian marriages enliven society by their witness of fraternity, their social concern, their outspokenness on behalf of the underprivileged, their luminous faith and their active hope.

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

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