



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 2039

18th – 25th March 2023 – 4th SUNDAY OF LENT - 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 Sam 16:1-6-7,10-13, Eph 5:8-14, John 9:1-41
Entrance Antiphon: Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. Be joyful, all who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.
Psalm: **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**
Intercession: We pray to the Lord
Response: Lord, hear us!
Next Week: Ez 37:12-14, Rom 8:8-11, John 11:1-45

Ramblings Being seized by the Spirit, as David was, being a light that illuminates others as St Paul tells us along with the blind man receiving his sight from Jesus, are powerful and uplifting themes this week. We call this Sunday **Laetare Sunday**, a day for rejoicing, to which these themes bear testimony. Although not often mentioned, joy is a major theme of Lent, we are preparing for Easter so that we will benefit more fully from the celebration of the resurrection of Christ. Joy changes the way we perceive everything. It helps us experience the goodness in others, all their positive attributes and to see their generosity and selflessness. Joy, like a light, shows up their true character of a person as a reflection of the character of Jesus. The real sadness of the Pharisees in the Gospel is their complete lack of Joy. Without joy they could not celebrate the fact that a man had been given back his sight and the joy that brought to all those he knew. We have been seized by the Spirit so that we might be a light for others and help them see the joy in those around them, the joy in their everyday experiences and encounters.

Let us think of God's mercy as a wet wipe and may it bring you JOY???

Wet Wipes. (Mike Bullock)

If you're going camping for any length of time, the weather may be grotty or even quite sublime. Whichever it turns out to be, there's always something there to dull your odours personal and leave you time to spare.

Wet wipes are a gift from God! They cleanse away your sin.

Always there to help you out whatever state you're in.

Life may get quite heavy; your sin may pong a bit. Reach for holy wet wipes, see the stain of darkness quit!

Diary Dates

Sun 19 March



Coffee Morning after 8.30am and 10.30am Masses is provided by the **One World/Live Simply Group.**

Proceeds will go to support Baghita House, a charity which offers emergency support to victims of human trafficking. Cakes, preserves and books will be on sale. All are welcome.

Mon 20 March St Joseph

6pm Beavers & 7.15pm Cubs Scout Hall

Tues 21 March

10.30am "Tuesday Chat" Hall

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2pm Craft Circle LCR

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7pm FHC Session 10 Hall

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7pm Scouts Scout Hall

Weds 22 March



10am Funeral Mass of James Gildea May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

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4.30pm FHC Non Faith Schools Hall

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6pm Feed Up Warm Up Scout Hall

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7pm RCIA EC

Thurs 23 March

6.30pm Brownies Scout Hall

Fri 24 March

10am-4pm **Warm Spaces** Hall includes coffee after morning Mass. Do pop in.

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2-4pm Hitchin Pantry Scout Hall

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2.30pm Scripture Fr Andrew Christopher House

Sat 25 March Annunciation of the Lord

10.30am FHC Session 11 – Confession Hall

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1-3pm 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** UCR

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

This Sunday the Fairtrade stall will be available after both Masses for all your needs.



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The revised plans for the proposed Replacement for Scout Hut are available in the hall after all Masses this weekend. There will be a further presentation with members of the Pastoral Parish Council and the Finance Team to report back on the practical comments made by Parish members and Stakeholders during the previous presentation.

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KISS Coffee Morning - thank you to all those who prepared, baked, helped, and supported last Sunday's KISS Coffee morning which raised £180.00.

An amazing turn-out of support and a special thank you to those parishioners who, on the day, donated gifts as raffle prizes. Again, we are so blessed to be supported with the generosity of you, our parish community. Thank you to all those actively involved in the raffle, tidying up and clearing away tables. See you again in October!

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Thank you to all who supported the recent Coffee Morning in aid of Our Lady's Special Support Group. £96.52 was raised.

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for your wonderful generous response to the appeal for the Asylum seekers. To date the donations have been £2779 for Hitchin Pantry (at £5.50 per week per family that represent 36 weeks) and £1635 for uniforms and shoes. Also the uniform that has been donated has been so helpful. Liz Wills and her volunteers have been working hard to ensure all families have been visited, their children are kitted out with uniform and they can access Hitchin Pantry for food which they will cook in the hall kitchen throughout the week. I think we will need containers for them to transport the food back to their hotel. If you have any spare larger

plastic containers for cooked food to be transported can you please leave them in the porch in the same box as for the uniform.

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The next gardening group session is on **Saturday 25th March**. All volunteers welcome to join this friendly group with any time you have to spare between **9 and 12am**.



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Next Sunday 10.30 is a children's Mass. Please bring your children to hear the liturgy in a different. Children sit at the front with Father who talks directly to them. Music making at the end!

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Next Sunday 26th March 3pm Let's Talk about... Reconciliation. The next in our synodal journey discussions. This is a follow up from our session in February looking at **Sin and Evil**. With input from Fr Adams and Fr Tom and discussion from all. Please join us in the Lower Committee room.

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Monday 3rd April 7.30pm Passover Meal in the Church Hall. To celebrate Passover is to do what Jesus did with his disciples at the Last Supper. It is a chance for us to understand more deeply our Jewish roots and our Christian Eucharist. The Passover Meal is a family occasion and children form an integral part of the proceedings, so all are very welcome.



You need to bring a number of things with you: **a baked potato for each person, cooked and wrapped in foil (to keep warm), sufficient wine for 4 toasts, soft drinks/water, cutlery, plates and glasses for each person**. Roast lamb is provided. (You can bring salad and toppings for the potatoes as well – to share with those around you, if you wish.)

It is a wonderful way to begin Holy Week. All ages welcome. **Please sign up on the board in the porch** as we need to know numbers by **27th March** so that we can order the meat.



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We welcome **Hannah Abbott** and **Heath Baker** into the Family of the Parish, through the Sacrament of Baptism. We pray for them and their families as they start this important time in their lives – the life of Faith.

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We pray for Linda Jude whose funeral is on Monday 27 March 2023 at 2pm and for Mary Gill whose funeral is on Thursday 30 March 2023 at 11.30am. May they rest in peace and rise in glory and may the Lord comfort their families.



We still need help with fogging the church after 8.30 and 10.30 Masses on Sunday. This helps to ensure the church is a germ free as possible and with covid still very much in evidence we want to continue this for a while longer. Very simple and takes only 10 mins more. Trish will show you what to do. Just let her know after Mass if you are able to help. **Please help.**

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Date for your diary It is the 60th anniversary of ordination of Fr Andrew O'Dell on Tuesday 25th April. We will be having a Mass of celebration and thanksgiving for his years of Priesthood at 7pm followed by a bring and share supper. **Please sign up to come on the sheet in the porch.**

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For those planning to get married in the next year our next marriage prep course is Saturday 22nd April 10am-4pm in our church hall. Cost: £75 to register please click here: [Marriage Preparation](#)

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Stained Glass Windows resiting



Thanks to a generous donation from a parishioner, we are now able to fund work on a long-standing 'wish list' Parish Project to move the three Stained Glass Windows and put them in backlit frames. The windows are by the celebrated local artist, craftsman and parishioner Theodore Kern and depict Jesus and the Sacred Heart, St Joseph and the Sacred Heart and Our Lady. During the next week we will have full size pictures up in the church to give an indication of location and we would welcome your comments on the location. There will be a comments book on a table near to the pictures. Thank you

Other Dates

22nd March 7 pm at Catholic Church of Christ the Eternal High Priest, Brentwood Road Gidea Park RM2 6DH

Do this in memory of me

Jesus said to the disciples at the Last Supper: Take and eat, take and drink, and do this in memory of me. In this talk, designed especially for catechists and Holy Communion parents, Fr Adrian Graffy explains the words of St Paul and

of the gospel writers about the Eucharist and traces the understanding of Holy Communion through the centuries, concluding with Pope Francis.

Fr Adrian Graffy is parish priest of Gidea Park, a Scripture scholar, and Member of the Pope's Biblical Commission.

This is an in person event. Coffee available from 6.30 pm. Easy access on Elizabeth Line, three minute walk to church. The event is also available on live stream free of charge at www.whatgoodnews.org No prior booking necessary. A recording of the talk will be available subsequently on the same website.

Other items of interest



Hitchin Pantry Update

Total visits made by families/individuals since opening in Nov 2021 = 3421

There are 321 approved members registered on our database (only one person per household registers)

- 127 Those living in private rented
- 40 Those living in owner occupied/mortgage
- 5 Those living with a relative
- 110 Those living in social housing /local authority
- 4 Those rough sleeping/sofa surfing
- 18 Other
- Total 321**

- Current membership fee is £4.00 from the 1st April price increase to £5.50 to cover the increase in food costs
- Food donations are very low. The membership fees go straight back into buying food particularly meat & dairy which is very expensive
- Food is also collected by volunteers from the Parish from Fareshare, Felix Project, M&S, Aldi and Tescos – best before food and supermarket waste
- 14 new asylum-seeking families will be joining the Pantry next week, donations from local charities and parishioners will cover the cost of their membership fees. These new members will be using the church kitchen on a rota basis to cook their food.
- 18 current volunteers – 8 are parishioners

More volunteers needed for Saturday shifts and driver shifts during the week to pick up from supermarkets. If you are able to help please contact Liz Wills at elizabethwills@rcdow.org.uk

All are invited to join the Diocese of Westminster's annual Pilgrimage to Lourdes from 21st to 28th July 2023, led by HE Cardinal Vincent Nichols. Book now to avoid disappointment as places are limited via the [Tangney Tours portal](#). If you have previously indicated 'St Frai Pilgrim' on an Expression of Interest Form, or know of someone with significant medical and mobility needs who intends to come to Lourdes, contact the Pilgrimage Office on 0207 798 9173 immediately, so the Medical Team can look into assisting with requirements and care. Similarly, all individuals or groups intending to travel independently to join Westminster in Lourdes, by making their own travel and accommodation arrangement, must confirm this in writing to the Pilgrimage Office by 30th April 2023 as well as submit payment towards the Pilgrims' Levy at £35 per pilgrim. Visit the [Lourdes Pilgrimage web page](#) or contact Elizabeth at the Pilgrimage Office on 0207 798 9173.

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Love the Stranger is a new publication by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales' Department for International Affairs which articulates our Christian duty to look beyond labels and see the person who has left their homeland in search of a better life. In 2023, people making dangerous journeys across the Channel to reach the UK are called by various names: 'refugees', 'asylum seekers', 'migrants', and often by more derogatory terms. Migrants and refugees are human beings not just statistics, says Bishop as Bishops' Conference releases new publication. See [Love the Stranger](#) for the full document. This is very pertinent with your very generous response to the families in Hitchin.



Another stream of recycling now available. The Food Storage Container and Reusable Bottle Free Recycling Programme: (placed in the blue bin with home hygiene packaging) - All brands of (rigid) plastic food storage containers and lids & All brands of reusable plastic water bottles and caps

Waste that is NOT accepted:

- Glass containers and lids
- Glass bottles and caps



 Christ is the one who gathers us together. We live in community in the spirit of St Augustine, 'Live in a household of perfect harmony, having but one heart and one mind intent on God' (Rule of St Augustine). We strive to lead a fraternal life which is characterised by frankness, cordiality and simplicity. Our common prayer is that of the Church Through it the community celebrates its faith and opens itself to the Spirit for its mission.

 **Amoris Laetitia the joy of love 327** *Love made fruitful - Being sons and daughters* The Church cannot and does not want to conform to a mentality of impatience, and much less of indifference and contempt towards old age. This presents a challenge to families and to communities.

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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