

# 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, 5pm  
Monday – Saturday 10am  
Reconciliation Saturday 10.30am  
during Exposition. All Masses are  
livestreamed [Livestream Mass](#)

Newsletter No 2079

23<sup>rd</sup> December – 30<sup>th</sup> December 2023 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Advent - Year B



## Prayer for those seeking sanctuary

Lord Jesus, we pray for those members of God's family who come here to escape oppression, poverty, persecution, violence, and war. Let them not meet with fear, doubt or suspicion from the local population. May those seeking sanctuary in our country receive a warm and generous welcome as they settle-in and commence their new life. Joyfully, we welcome the many gifts they bring to us. We make this prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

**Readings** Is 7:1-5,8-12,14,16, Rom 16:25-27, Luke 1:26-38

**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:** I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.

**Intercession:** Lord, hear us

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

**Next Week:** Gen 15:1-6,21:1-3, Heb 11:8,11-12,17-19, Lk 2:22-40

**Ramblings** Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene wrote the following song about the Annunciation:

*Mary, did you know that your baby boy would one day walk on water?*

*Mary, did you know that your baby boy would save our sons and daughters?*

*Mary, did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod?*

*Mary, did you know when you kiss your little baby, you kiss the face of God!*

*Mary, did you know that your baby boy is Lord of all creation?*

*Mary, did you know that your baby boy will one day rule the nations?*

*How could Mary know what was happening to her when the angel Gabriel came to her long ago?*


**Pope Francis:** *This is a long revelation that opens unprecedented possibilities. The Child that will be born to this humble girl from Nazareth will be called Son of the Most High. It is not possible to conceive of a higher dignity than this. And after Mary's question in which she asks for an explanation, the angel's revelation becomes even more detailed and surprising.*

*On the other hand, Mary's reply is short and does not speak of glory. It does not speak of privilege but only of willingness and service: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word". Mary does not exalt herself before the prospect of becoming the mother of the Messiah, but rather remains modest and expresses her acceptance of the Lord's plan. Mary does not boast. She is humble and modest. She always remains the same.*

*This contrast shows us that Mary is truly humble and does not try to be noticed. She recognises that she is small before God and she is happy to be so. At the same time, she is aware that the fulfilment of God's plan depends on her response, and that therefore she is called to accept it with her whole being. Thank you, Mary!*

## Diary Dates

### Sun 24 December

 **Coffee / tea** after 8.30am and 10.30am will be provided by two very kind parishioners who answered the call for help. If you can help Stephanie after the 8.30 Mass and Barbara after the 10.30 Mass that would be wonderful. It will just be simple with no cakes or raffle prizes. All are welcome.

### Mon 25 December **Christmas Day**

**Masses** at 8.30am and 10.30am.

### Tue 26 December

**10am** Mass for St Stephen's Guild. Please do come to this Mass of Celebration for all our MCs and Altar servers

### Weds 27 December

**6pm Feed Up Warm Up** Scout Hall

### Friday 29 December

**2-4pm Hitchin Pantry** Scout Hall

### Sat 30 December

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

## **Prayer diary**

Opportunities for communal prayer

**Tuesday** 11.30am **Meditation** Emmanuel Centre

**No Eucharistic Service** this week

**Wednesday** 9.30am **Rosary** Church

**No Charismatic Prayer** this week

**Thursday** 6.30pm **Meditation** Emmanuel Centre

**7 – 8pm Exposition** Church

*All are welcome for private prayer at any time in the church which is open 8.30am - 7pm*

Last Sunday's coffee morning run by the OWLS group raised **£140** which was donated to Camphill Village Trust. The second collection, in aid of Cafod, raised **£194**. Thanks to everyone who contributed.



This week we welcome into the family of the Parish, through the Sacrament of Baptism, **Joseph Ndou and Giulio Silitro**; we pray for their families as they start this important time in their lives – the life of Faith.

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Thanks to all who helped to put our crib together this week. It is absolutely beautiful. Thanks also to those who provided greenery.



**Prayer for Israel and Palestine** - there are copies of prayers for peace in the porch and they can also be found on the parish website alongside a Christmas Newsletter of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and a video about **Christ under the rubble** at [News from Israel/Palestine](#)

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We are delighted to say that a new Sacramental Co-ordinator has been appointed to replace Rob Hitchcock who leaves after our Carol service (6.30pm Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December). Ciara O'Reilly will take up the post on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

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Are you looking for a worthy New Year's resolution? How about cleaning the church once a month?



We have two vacancies for people to help keep the church clean. Please let [Trish](#) know asap if you can help on a Saturday morning for about an hour.

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**Asylum Seeker Update** We have been advised that Needham House Hotel no longer need any more clothing as they are having issues processing the clothing they do have and therefore have run out of space. It is best if we suspend all donations of any items for the time being and I will advise in the New Year if they have any particular needs then. Thank you for your generosity this year for all of the Sanctuary Seekers in our area.

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**Faith leaders call on Home Office to re-examine seven-day evictions practice** click [here](#) for details as this pertains to those seeking sanctuary.

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**Thanks from Frs Justin, Adams, Tom and Andrew to everyone who has helped to prepare our church for Christmas and the services.**

**Thanks to:**

- Crib builders
- Flower arrangers
- Church cleaners
- Choir and musicians & sound people
- Altar servers and MCs
- Readers and Eucharistic Ministers
- Anyone who has contributed in any way to making our Christmas celebrations beautiful and fitting to welcome Our Lord. Have a blessed Christmas and peaceful New Year.



The Assumptionist Eastern Mission (Eastern Europe). Bulgaria one community at Plovdiv. Before the communist period there was a thriving school here. The three Assumptionist martyrs were involved with this school. The present government has said that the three martyrs underwent a show trial.



**Amoris Laetitia the joy of love 365** Pastoral Perspectives - Proclaiming the Gospel of the Family Today Professionals with practical experience, help keep pastoral initiatives grounded in the real situations and concrete concerns of families.

**We are a Safeguarding parish** EduCare (now part of Tes) safeguarding leaflets can be downloaded from our website at <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/diocese/safeguarding-in-our-parishes/>  
**Safeguarding representatives: Trish Bonnett and Maria Greene via 01462 459126**



If you have a need for prayer, please contact **Mary** on **07759195487** with your prayer intentions

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<b>Asst Priest</b>	Fr Adams Tatsidjodoung 07438 408350	<b>Website:</b> <a href="https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin">https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin</a>
<b>Retired Priest</b>	Fr Tom O'Brien 07547 171570	<b>Parish Tel no</b> 01462 459126
<b>Administrator</b>	Cheryl Saunders cherylsaunders@rcdow.org.uk }	press 2
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