



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 2097

27th April – 4th May 2024 – FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER - 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.

Ramblings Every time we come to the table of the Eucharist and receive Holy Communion, we make the bold assertion that we have no being, no life apart from Christ. We say to Jesus "Live on in me, as I do in you."

The picture of the vine and the branches speaks of an essential relationship between Jesus and us. In the Middle East, Jesus would be regarded as a Patron on whom we depend utterly. This means that our relationship with Jesus must be single-minded and single-hearted since our life depends upon it. Obviously, we can never repay the beneficence of Jesus but in our gratitude, we can tell others about the goodness, love and life with which Jesus blesses us abundantly. This is a way of honouring and glorifying him.

The image of the vine shows us the important link we have with nature. It is an image Celtic spirituality promotes. The graces of God flow in and out through each of us, just like a vine, the more branches there are the more powerful the flow of grace between us. Hence the importance of coming together to worship. The ecosystem of the planet is an intricate network of power and, if allowed to function, would heal the harm we have done to it. Unfortunately, we are whittling away at the ecosystem making it impossible for this to happen. In the eucharist we recognise our dependence on God, a loving dependence filled with gratitude, knowing that in this way we can bear the fruit of good works, helping and supporting others, offering kindness and forgiveness, showing tolerance and forgiveness, and in many other ways that help and strengthen a community to grow and be strengthened. In Christ the vine let us be the wine that gives strength and life to others and to the creation placed lovingly in our hands!

Readings: Acts 9:26-31, 1 John 3:18-24, John 15:1-8

Entrance Antiphon: O sing a new song to the Lord, for he has worked wonders; in the sight of the nations he has shown his deliverance, alleluia.


Psalm: You, Lord, are my praise in the great assembly. Alleluia!

Intercession: Lord, in your Mercy

Response: Hear our Prayer!

Next Week: Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48, 1 John 4:7-10, John 15:9-17

Diary Dates

Sun 28 April	
	Coffee Morning proceeds after 8.30am and 10.30am will go to support Dementia UK. All are welcome.
Mon 29 St Catherine of Siena	
9.30am Parent & Toddlers Hall *****	
6pm & 7.15pm Beavers/Cubs – Scout Hall	
Tue 30 April	
10.30am Tuesday Chat Hall *****	
2pm Craft Circle LCR *****	
7pm Confirmation Session 3 Hall *****	
7pm Scouts – Scout Hall	
Weds 1 May St Joseph the Worker	
4.30pm FHC Non Faith Schools Hall *****	
6pm Feed Up Warm Up Scout Hall	
Thurs 2 May St Athanasius	
NHDC LOCAL ELECTIONS ALL DAY Hall *****	
6.30pm Brownies – Scout Hall	
Fri 3 May Sts Philip and James	
2pm-4pm Hitchin Pantry Scout Hall *****	
2.30pm Scripture Fr Andrew Christopher House	
Sat 4 The English Martyrs	
10am-4pm Marriage Preparation Hall *****	
1pm-3pm Hitchin Pantry Scout Hall	

Prayer diary

Tuesday 11.30am Meditation Emmanuel Centre
7pm Eucharistic Service Church
To Zoom click on [Eucharistic Service](#)

Wednesday 9.30am Rosary Church
12pm Charismatic Prayer LCR

Thursday 6.30pm Meditation Emmanuel Centre
All are welcome for private prayer at any time in the church which is open 8.30am - 8pm

Many thanks to all those who supported the recent OWLS coffee morning. £146 was raised for 'Street Talk', a charity which helps trafficked women.

We welcome into the Family of the Parish, through the Sacrament of Baptism, **Isabella McDonald-Payne**; we pray for her Family as they continue this important time in their lives – the life of Faith.



We pray for **Christine Sweeny** whose funeral is on **Friday 3 May 2024 at 10am**. May she rest in peace and rise in glory and may the Lord comfort her family.

The funeral of Grace McDonald RIP will take place on Wednesday 8 May 2024 at **11am**. Please note that this will be the Mass of the Day – i.e. **NO 10am Mass** that day.

Please note that the **Charismatic Prayer** group held on a Wednesday between 12noon and 1pm is now held in the **Lower Committee Room**.

This Tuesday 30th April - Are you a teenager wanting to explore your faith and be part of the community? Then why not try our fortnightly Sycamore group on Tuesday nights at 19:00-20:30 in the Parish Hall? Sycamore is an informal course about the Christian faith and its relevance for life today. It gives you space to meet other young people, share ideas, explore your beliefs, and think about questions that really matter. Each session involves a short film and time for discussion. Everyone who is currently 14-18 years old is welcome. **Just turn up by 7pm.**

The next **Marriage Preparation** course in this parish is on Saturday 4th May 2024 10am until 4pm in the parish hall. If you have already registered for this Marriage Preparation course please email



ciaraoreilly@rcdow.org.uk

immediately, as due to IT issues we are not able to access the registration forms. To book a place please email the Ciara O'Reilly with your full names (both parties) to request a registration form. The fee is £80 per couple this is paid in cash on the day or electronically.

Our next Baptism Preparation Course is **Saturday 18th May 12-2pm** and **Saturday 25th May 9.30-11.30am** (Both dates to be attended) if you have been on a course within the past three years you do not need to attend. Please email Ciara O'Reilly ciaraoreilly@rcdow.org.uk if you wish to attend the next course.

Quiz Night Saturday 18th May 7pm

Back by popular demand, our parish quiz night will take place in the hall. Bring your own refreshments; tea and coffee provided. Admission £3, all proceeds to Cafod. You don't need to be in a team, we will make up teams on the night. Do come, we guarantee a good time. Further information from Pam Brannigan 07400669772.

Masters of Ceremony (MC) at 10.30 and 5pm Masses on Sundays and weekday Masses at 10am. We need more adults (young and old) to help with the Masses and support the Priest in setting things up before Mass and helping our altar server team during the Masses. Full training is available. Please do think about helping in this way. Please speak to Trish, Priest or MC after Mass if you want to find out more.

Calling all parish historians – does anyone have a copy of the 1952 'Golden Jubilee' issue of the Parish Magazine. We would love to see a copy and scan it for the parish archives. If you can help please let [Trish](#) know

Job Vacancy The Saint John Henry Newman School in Stevenage is looking for a Lay Chaplain from May 2024. Information can be found here – [Job vacancies](#) This is a part-time (term time only) job working 32.68 hours per week.

Thanks to everyone who made the work to repair the heating happen. This work is now complete and everything is functional. We did have a little glitch with a gas leak – nothing to do with the boiler pipework – but that has also been fixed. Great thanks go to **John Scott and Mike Eltringham** for arranging things and keeping an eye on procedures. We do have one more flushing of the system to take place but the heating will only be off for a day and hopefully by then it might even be warm enough to turn it off for the summer!!

giftaid it

We will shortly be submitting the tax rebate claim for money donated to the Church under the Gift Aid Scheme in the tax year ending April 2023/2024. If you have signed up for Gift Aid but no longer pay tax, please inform either David or Cheryl, our Parish Administrator, through the Parish Office so that we do not submit an inappropriate claim.

If you are not sure whether or not you have signed up for Gift Aid or whether you have paid enough tax to cover what we will claim, David or Cheryl will be able to let you know. Similarly, if you have not yet signed up for Gift Aid, but would like to do so, it is not too late and you should contact David or Cheryl who will make the

necessary arrangements for you. Also, can we take this opportunity to remind you that a Gift Aid donation must be made in the name of the person who pays the tax on the money that is donated; if that is not the case, please let us know and alternative arrangements can be made. Last but not least, can we again say a big "thank you" to all of you who have signed Gift Aid Declarations as the tax rebate plays such an important part in financing the running of the Church particularly in these difficult times.

Thanks to our amazing supporters, we're in the top 20% of causes like us on #easyfundraising! If you're not signed up yet, please join today and you can raise free donations for Our Lady Immaculate and St Andrew Church - Hitchin every time you shop online. All the big names like John Lewis & Partners, Expedia, Argos, Just Eat are ready to donate at no extra cost to you. Plus, join today and we'll get a £5 bonus! Sign up here:



[Easyfundraising](#)

Other dates

11th May 7.30pm Christian Aid Quiz night at Christchurch (SG5 1HF) Contact [Sue Covington](#) for tickets.



19th May 3pm Clifton Hughes Concert at Christchurch (SG5 1HF) followed by tea and cakes Contact [Sue Covington](#) for tickets.

17th May 7pm How Beauty Draws Us Closer to God St Patrick's Church, Soho Square, London. Fr. Patrick van der Vorst is a priest of the Archdiocese of Westminster, a former Director of Sotheby's Europe, and the founder of the evangelistic initiative [www.Christian.Art](#). Fr. Patrick will explore how beauty elevates us to encounter the Divine, how the Church has historically sought to create art that facilitates this meeting, and how this can happen in our visually overstimulated world. The lecture will be followed by a Q&A and then refreshments will be available.

25th May 10.30am Agenda for Change CARj's new plan of action to bring about greater equality and to create a racially just society. The Agenda for Change builds on the experiences and learning of the past 40 years and puts forward a strategy for bringing about greater equality and creating a racially just church and society, a goal which continues to elude us in the 21st century. **Venue: Amigo Hall at St George's Cathedral London SE1 7HY** Visit the CARJ website for more details and a program for the day [www.carj.org.uk](#)

3rd August Pilgrimage to Walsingham

Please join us to pray for the conversion of our culture at this time when the Elderly and the Pre-born are under further threat from medicalised killing, through misguided compassion. For details contact Bernadette on 07939 634696 or 01462 682910

Other Items of interest

The husband of a Parishioner has recently started his own gardening/landscape business. If you are considering this type of service, please contact them at pudenisampathlanka@gmail.com

PHASE has put together some Stress busting exam advice and techniques for our young people taking exams. Click [Exam stress-busting](#).

A Year of Encounter With a UK general election due sometime this year, politicians will be looking for our votes. We have a responsibility as Catholics to make sure that parties commit to tackling issues such as poverty and injustice. Raising our voices and contacting parliamentary candidates as a parish community will send a strong signal to those standing for election in our local constituencies. A Year of Encounter is a joint initiative between CAFOD and St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP), equipping Catholics to ask key questions of local candidates at the key moments. Please see cafod.org.uk/encounter for more information, including online sessions on Saturday 4th May to learn more.

CAFOD's Sudan Crisis Appeal

Millions of families in Sudan, forced to flee their homes amid conflict, now face yet another urgent crisis – extreme hunger. Please give to CAFOD's Sudan Crisis Appeal in church or at Your donation will help CAFOD's partners to support more families with food packages and emergency cash payments as well as rebuilding water pipelines so clean water can reach communities who need it. Thank you for your generosity and prayers.



You can also text Text CAFODSUDAN to 70450 to donate £10.

Texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message, and you'll be opting into hearing more from us. If you would like to donate but don't wish to hear more from CAFOD please text CAFODSUDANNOINFO instead.

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Prayers for our intercession We pray for people suffering from illness especially: Pauline Lanaway, the Fennell & Conetta families, Stella Patterson, Maria Victoria Lahitte-Martins, Regine Hallinan, Evie Roberts, Niall Heffron, Ann Milner, Ann Harte, Joe Darby, Antoinette Fernandes, John Clark, Greg Knight, Owen McFarlane, John McGill, Janette Duffy, Margaret Noel, Joseph Osborne and Betty Crawford.

We pray for those whose anniversary is about now: Daphne Barry, Mary Szpak, Alexander Rashkov, Guiseppe Maurello, Robina Tracey, Richard Wilson, Mary Skeet, Margaret Brooks, Gerardo Erdos and Sheila Richards. We also pray for Grace McDonald and for Fr John Michael Warnaby and Fr David John Williamson who died recently. We also pray for Christine Sweeny who died this week and whose funeral is on Friday.

Need for prayer? Contact Mary on 07759195487 with your prayer intentions.



Our prayer expresses praise to the Father for having revealed his love and thanks giving for all He accomplishes in us and in others. It prompts us also to beg forgiveness for the world and for ourselves and to ask for the strength we need to do His will. (Rule of life)



Amoris Laetitia the joy of love 382 Pastoral Perspectives - Preparing Engaged Couples for Marriage Couples - be encouraged to discuss what each of you expects from marriage, what each of you understands by love and commitment.

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

Parish Priest	Awaiting news	E-mail: hitchin@rcdow.org.uk
Asst Priest	Fr Adams Tatsidjodoung 07438 408350	Website: https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin
Retired Priest	Fr Tom O'Brien 07547 171570	Parish Tel no 01462 459126
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