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 2195

14th – 21st March 2026 – 4th Sunday Lent Year A

A Parish Prayer for Peace 2026 Lord, send us the gift of peace. Change the hearts of those who choose violence and wage war. Turn them away from persecution and lead them towards peace. Transform hatred into understanding, anger into compassion, and fear into hope. Through your love, heal what is broken. Fill us with your Spirit, so that with one voice, we may cry out together, throughout the world: Lord, send us the gift 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: Lord hear us…
Response: Lord, graciously hear us!
Next Week Ez 37:12-14, Rom 8:8-11, John 11:1-45

Ramblings

There he sat, as he had sat for years, wrapped in the familiar darkness that had become almost a companion. Yet on that day something shifted. A Presence stopped beside him. A breath of kindness moved the air. Before a word was spoken, Light was already on its way.

He felt the touch of mud upon his eyes, cool as early morning earth, tender as a hand searching gently for a lost child. He was sent to wash, and as the water flowed over his face, another kind of river flowed within him. The man who had known only night opened his eyes to a world he had never seen: colours blooming, faces unfolding, the sky stretching out like a song waiting to be heard.

But there was more than sight. There was also insight. The kind that stirs when truth finds a home in us. The kind that awakens compassion, or steadies us in sorrow, or summons us toward a courage we did not know we had. This is the sight that heals the heart: the hidden seeing that comes when God steps quietly into our story.

On Laetare Sunday, we rejoice with this man who walked from darkness into dazzling morning. His joy becomes our joy, a reminder that God's grace often arrives unannounced, turning our ordinary paths into places of revelation.

And we also pay special tribute to our mothers. Those who gave us our first glimpse of love, the warmth of security and belonging, and the abiding sense of being valued. It was the wisdom of our mothers who helped us see beyond ourselves. It was the steady presence of our mothers that became a lamp on our way. May the gentle light of this Sunday rest upon them, honouring the many ways they opened our eyes to life's deeper beauty.

Diary Dates

Sun 15 March



.Proceeds from this Sunday's **One World Live Simply** coffee morning will go to support Herts Welcomes Refugees, a group which helps newcomers to our community. Cakes, preserves and books will be on sale. All are welcome especially new parishioners.

Mon 16 March

9.30am Parent & Toddlers Hall

6pm Beavers & 7.15pm Cubs Scout Hall

Tue 17 March

10.30am Tuesday Chat Hall

2pm – 4pm Craft Club LCR

Weds 18 March

6pm Feed Up Warm Up Scout Hall

Thurs 19 March

11:30pm – Funeral of Joseph Darby

1pm Italian Club Hall

7pm RCIA LCR

6pm Brownies Scout Hall

Fri 20 March

1:00pm – Funeral of Graham Felton

2pm-4pm Hitchin Pantry Scout Hall

Sat 21 March

1-3pm Hitchin Pantry Scout Hall

Prayer diary 🙏

Tuesday **11.30am Meditation** Emmanuel Centre
Wednesday **9.30am Rosary** Church
Thursday **6.30pm Meditation** Emmanuel Centre
Friday **9.30am Rosary** Church
Saturday **10.30 Exposition & Reconciliation**

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

KISS Tea & Coffee Morning Thank you to all those who prepared, baked, helped, and supported last Sunday's KISS Coffee morning which **raised £232.00** – and for helping clear away the hall. Your generosity is so much appreciated.

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Stations of the Cross will be on Friday after the 10am Mass every week until Good Friday evening. **Reconciliation is available after every Sunday Mass during Lent**.

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Upcoming preparation courses in our parish: **Baptism**- Sun 19th April, **Marriage**- Sat 9th May. If you are interested in signing up for either course, please contact LJ or see parish website for more details.

- **FHC Session 5** - Saturday 14th March at 9.30am, Hall
- **RCIA 2nd Scrutiny** - Sunday 15th March at Mass
- **RCIA** – Thursday 19th March at 7pm, LCR

The **First Holy Communion** children will be attending Reconciliation together on **Sat 14th March**, please be aware that it may be busier than usual. We will have all priests in attendance to ensure this runs as smoothly as possible.

Funerals
Joseph Darby 19th March at 11:30am
Graham Felton 20th March at 1pm at North Herts Crematorium.

Other dates

A Day with Mary is taking place at Westminster Cathedral on Saturday 14th March 2026 (9.45am to 5:00pm). Further information is available at **https://www.adaywithmary.org/** or **https://eventcatholic.com/**

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15th March at 3pm The Healing and Wholeness Service has been cancelled this Sunday.

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PASSOVER MEAL Monday 30th March 7pm 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.
Please see the sign-up sheets on the board in the porch for more info.

Good Friday united service Churches Together in Hitchin is once again holding a united service for Good Friday - 3rd April, 11.00 am in Market Place. It will be led by ministers of local churches, the preacher will be the Rev Jane Robson of Tilehouse Street Baptist Church just before she retires from her ministry here on Easter Day, and the hymns will be accompanied by the music group from The New Testament Church of God. As each year, we invite you to come in groups from your own churches, carrying symbols of your faith. - and once again we hope for a gathering that fills the square on this sacred day. For further information, contact John Richardson on 07505 426876.

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17th-24th July 2026 Westminster Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes. Registration is now open at **Pilgrimage** or via the Pilgrimage Office **on 0207 798 9173**.

Other items of interest

Lenten Appeal 2026 As we continue our journey through Lent, thank you to everyone who has already supported the Lenten Appeal. The priorities of the appeal touch the lives of parishioners every day: families seeking support, young people shaping the future, individuals facing difficult circumstances, and parishes responsding with care and compassion. This special Appeal provides a meaningful way for people to contribute to our shared work. I invite you to pray, to reflect, and to give as you are able, so that together we may continue this vital work of faith, hope, and love across our Diocese. To donate today please visit www.rcdow.org.uk/LentenAppeal.

Alternatively envelopes are available in the porch. Thank you for your support and helping our diocesan family to continue this vital work.

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The Saint John Henry Newman Catholic School has recently been inspected by the Catholic Schools Inspectorate and received Grade 1 (Outstanding) judgements across all areas.
https://www.jhn.herts.sch.uk/391/inspection-reports
The school community is grateful for the continued support of its parish partners, whose involvement plays an important role in nurturing faith, belonging and shared mission.

Need for prayer? Contact *Mary* on *07759195487* with your request



Prayers for our intercession: *We pray for people suffering from illness especially:* Diana Marshall, Angelo Persichillo, Pauline Lanaway, the Fennell families, Stella Paterson, Antoinette Fernandes, Vincent Turner, Paul O'Reilly, Pauline Phillips, Steph Dias, Glennice Burlison, Michael Burke, Evie Roberts, Michael Flatley, Ken Buck, Elizabeth Donnelly, Jim Brookes and the Sheldon family.

We pray for those whose anniversary is about now*:* Edith Marjorie Dean, Joan Dalton, Linda Dalton, Jon Marshall, Douglas Slater, Kathleen Gobbons and Maureen Brack. **If you have been bereaved and would like to talk with a member of our Bereavement visitors please ring 01462 459 126**

Faith is a gift; it is God who makes the first move. We cannot enter the supernatural sphere except by faith and by the submission of our intellect to the truths of the faith. Such is God's gift. In a sense this is what the teaching of the Holy Spirit is, "Cum autem venerit ille Spiritus veritatis, docebit vos omnem veritatem—When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you to all truth" (Jn 16:13). Faith is not going to show me the whole truth in an explicit way, but faith will render me capable of absorbing it. (11th Meditation, Spiritual Writings, Emmanuel D'Alzon)



Amoris Laetitia the joy of love 473 *Pastoral Perspectives – Casting light on crises, worries and difficulties.- The challenge of crises."*

Some families break up when spouses engage in mutual recrimination, but 'experience shows that with proper assistance and acts of reconciliation, through grace, a great percentage of troubled marriages find a solution in a satisfying manner.

Parish Safeguarding representative: Maria Greene via **01462 459126**

Parish Priest	Fr Adams Tatsidjodoung 07438 408350	**E-mail:**	hitchin@rcdow.org.uk
Retired Priest	Fr Tom O'Brien 07547 171570	**Website**:	https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin

Parish Tel no 01462 459126	**Sacramental Co-ordinator** L J Ross	ljross@rcdow.org.uk	press 5
	Administrator Siobhan Morgan	hitchin@rcdow.org.uk	press 2

Please note that the Administrator's working hours are Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri (9am-2pm). The Administrator works from home on Mondays, but is contactable by email.