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 2196

22nd – 28th March 2026 – 5th Sunday of 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 Ez 37:12-14, Rom 8:8-11, John 11:1-45
Entrance Antiphon: Give me justice, O God, and plead my cause against a nation that is faithless. From the deceitful and cunning rescue me, for you, O God, are my strength.
Psalm: With the LORD there is mercy,in him is plentiful redemption.
Intercession: Lord in your mercy
Response: Hear our Prayer!
Next Week Is 50:4-7, Philip 2:6-11, Matt 26:14-27:66

Ramblings

I was there. I know Martha and Mary well — their home in Bethany was always a place of warmth, laughter, and faith. When Lazarus fell ill, word was sent to Jesus immediately: Lord, the one you love is sick. We were certain Jesus would come at once and were surprised when he didn't.

By the time Jesus arrived, Lazarus had been four days in the tomb. I watched Martha run to meet Jesus, her grief affecting us all, "If you had been here, my brother would not have died" she cried while Mary fell at Jesus' feet, weeping. And then — something that still fills me with wonder — Jesus wept too. Jesus wept with us.

But Jesus did not stop there. He walked to the tomb, and with a voice that seemed to reach into the very depths of the earth, he called out: "Lazarus, come out!" And, miraculously, Lazarus came out.

I have never recovered from that moment and never wish to.

Picture it this way: imagine a seed, buried deep in cold, dark soil. It seems lost. Gone. But then, slowly, something extraordinary happens — a shoot appears above the earth. What originally looked like an ending was, in fact, a beginning. That is what Jesus did for Lazarus and that is what Jesus promises to do for us.

Pope Leo XIV, wrote that Jesus reaches into the "waters of evil and death" to draw us upward — that in Jesus, God comes fully close to us, entering into our suffering, our grief, our tombs, in order to lead us forth into life.

Martha had said, "I know he will rise on the last day." Jesus gently corrected her: "I am the resurrection and the life." Jesus does not merely promise life in the future. Jesus is life itself, standing at the entrance of tombs that encase us, calling us by name: Come out!

Diary Dates

Sun 22 March



Proceeds from this Sunday's coffee morning will go to support **Diapalante's education centre** in Senegal. Cakes, preserves and books will be on sale. All are welcome especially new parishioners.

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5.45pm Confirmation Session, Hall

Mon 23 March

9.30am Parent & Toddlers Hall

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6pm Beavers & 7.15pm Cubs Scout Hall

Tue 24 March

10.30am Tuesday Chat Hall

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2pm – 4pm Craft Club LCR

Weds 25 March

4.30pm FHC RE class (for those who attend non-Catholic schools), Hall

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6pm Feed Up Warm Up Scout Hall

Thurs 26 March

1pm Italian Club Hall

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7pm RCIA Church (not LCR)

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6pm Brownies Scout Hall

Fri 27 March

2pm-4pm Hitchin Pantry Scout Hall

Sat 28 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

A card for **Trish Bonnett** will be out in the porch this weekend. Please do take the time to sign it and leave your message.

If you donate to the church via offertory envelopes, or have requested to have envelopes, these can be found in the porch ready for collection.

Thanks to all who supported the recent **OWLS** coffee morning. **£160** was raised for Herts Welcomes Refugees.

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**.

Upcoming Sacramental Preparation Courses
Baptism Course- Sun 19th April **Marriage Course**- Sat 9th May
If you are interested in signing up, please contact LJ or see parish website for more details.

RCIA- At the Easter Vigil, the Elect and candidates on our RCIA programme will become full members of the Body of Christ, the Church. Please keep them in your prayers as they partake in the 3rd scrutiny during Mass this Sunday.

Other dates

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.

Wintershall Passion of Jesus, Good Friday April 3rd, Trafalgar Square Free performances at 12pm and 3.15pm. A dramatic presentation of the Passion of Jesus which should not be missed. Get there early to get the best views in Trafalgar Square. Come prepared to sit on the ground in whatever the weather may be. You won't regret witnessing this extraordinary event. For those who cannot get to the Square it is also livestreamed: https://www.wintershall.org.uk/event/the-passion-of-jesus-2026/

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. 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.

Divine Mercy Sunday 12th April 2026
Program starts at 2.30pm. Exposition and Benediction with ongoing Confession, then 3pm Chaplet followed by The Holy Sacrifice of The Mass. After Holy Mass bring and share in the hall and dance to beautiful Christian music.

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



Prayers for our intercession: *We pray for people suffering from illness especially:* Diana Marshall, 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: William O'Reilly, Lesley Augustus, Agostino Persichillo, Freida Fern, Fr Michael Lee, Dorothy Stevenson, Luke Hobson and Wanda Dec. **If you have been bereaved and would like to talk with a member of our Bereavement visitors please ring 01462 459 126**

When did the Assumptionists come to Hitchin? According to our records Fr Evariste Buytears aa came here as parish priest in 1926. In the same year a number of priests were given responsibility as teachers at St Michaels College. Fr Evariste became headmaster of St Michael's in 1932 while Fr Wilfrid Manser moved to the parish where he remained for seventeen years.



Amoris Laetitia the joy of love 474 *Pastoral Perspectives – Casting light on crises, worries and difficulties.- The challenge of crises."* To know how to forgive and to feel forgiven is a basic experience in family life. Relatio Synodi 2014, 44.

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.