



Parish Website

OUR LADY OF LOURDES HARPENDEN

10TH DECEMBER 2023

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)



© Chloe Le Tissier

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At this time of year, it seems that there are so many things in the media, the lights on the streets, the decorations, that are all trying to catch our eye, to get our attention. In the gospel, John the Baptist, is trying to do the very same thing; he too is trying to get our attention, because he has a message for us, as we take another step on our Advent journey.

John came with a new message, in a new place. Normally people went to the temple, or the synagogue to hear the word of God. But John is in neither of these places. He appeared and spoke in the wilderness of the desert, and, as the gospel tells us, everyone in Judea, and Jerusalem, made their way to him. Through John, God is proclaiming a new message in a new way. As the Prophet Isaiah reminds us, Yahweh says, 'look I am doing something new, it is already happening. Can you not see it? I will make a path in the wilderness.'

What is this new thing God is doing? Through the words and actions of Jesus, God breaks into our world, and lives in a new, life-giving and personal way. Our God is a God of surprises, and God's ways are not our ways. John asks us to, 'prepare a way for the Lord and make his paths straight.' What does this mean for us today? When the people heard John speak, 'they were baptised and confessed their sins.' An important aspect of our Advent journey and preparation, is acknowledging, that there are parts of our lives, that need straightening!

Perhaps one way, we could prepare a way for the Lord, during these weeks of Advent, is to consider celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation. As we focus our attention, on so many other things, during the lead up to Christmas, let us not forget, to prepare a place in our hearts, to welcome Jesus.

SEASON OF ADVENT



CHRISTMAS TIMES

Details of all the Masses, and other celebrations, taking place over Christmas, will be found in the Advent/Christmas leaflet. Please collect a copy today, and take note that there are some changes to Mass times on both Christmas Eve and New Years Eve.

WAITING IN JOYFUL HOPE

Advent Reflection, led by Sr. Regina at the convent, 18 Kirkdale Road on Tuesday 12th December, 2pm - 3.30pm



ADVENT CALENDAR

Once again, we have our Advent Calendar in the courtyard of the Church, please stop and take a look. Each day during Advent a new door will be opened, revealing, reflections, information on active groups within the Parish, and donation items needed for Noah, Keystage Housing, the Hygiene Bank & the Food Bank.



SING FOR CHRISTMAS! PERFORMANCES:

Wednesday 13th December - Catenians Christmas Dinner.

PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS

An important part of our preparation for Christmas, is celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation, going to Confession. In addition to the regular confession times, there will be the **Advent Penitential service on Monday 18th December, at 7.30pm**. Amidst all that needs to be done, in the coming weeks, do add this important celebration to you 'to do' list.

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT -

Friday 22nd December at 6pm, we have our Parish Carol Service. A traditional service of carols and readings, by candlelight, followed by mulled wine and mince pies in the Undercroft.



CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Thank you to everyone that donated for the Christmas Flowers, if you missed the collection last weekend there is still time.

There will be another chance for you to donate to the collection so that the church can be decorated for the Christmas season. The collection will be at the end of Mass, and you can also donate by using the Card Machine, select Christmas Flowers.

Or drop your donation into the Parish Office or Presbytery letterbox.

Thank you as always for your generosity.



IF YOU ARE SICK

For parishioners who are unwell, and unable to attend Mass, we are very happy to arrange for Holy Communion to be taken to you. Anyone who would like to receive Holy Communion, at home, should contact Canon Dwyer, in the first instance, via the Parish Office.

THINKING AHEAD

Although November is now over, it is the time when we remember our departed family and friends. Inevitably too, it may prompt us to think about how we would like the end of our earthly life to be marked. Sometimes, very sadly, those left to make arrangements, do not do so in a way that is in keeping with the way the deceased has lived their life, respecting their faith and religious practice. If you would like to indicate your wishes, forms are available from the Parish Office, these can be left with family, executor or parish, or even all three.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

In every parish, the offering on Christmas Day, is personal to the Parish Clergy. Alongside the Easter Offering, Mass Stipends, and donations for baptisms, marriages and weddings, this provides for the personal upkeep of priests. Envelopes, for your contributions, for this fund are attached to the Christmas service leaflet, and will be found in the porch. You can also donate via the 'Christmas Offering' link, on the card machine. Please note that donations made by standing order cannot, according to Diocesan guidance, be included in the Christmas offering.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Tickets are now on sale for the annual Christmas Celebration in our Cathedral at Westminster; two concerts which celebrate the mystery of Christ's Incarnation in carols and readings performed by the world-famous Westminster Cathedral Choir, orchestra, and celebrity readers, on 19 and 20 December at 7.30pm. It is advisable to purchase tickets, sooner rather than later, as these popular events sell out quickly. Tickets can be purchased from the Cathedral Gift Shop or directly from Ticketmaster; go to www.ticketmaster.co.uk and type in Westminster Cathedral when prompted.

DEVELOPING WORLD GROUP UPDATE

The Developing World Group want to share their wonderful news that thanks to the great generosity of the parishioners, we have raised nearly £5,000 from the two latest fundraisings events alone: The Quiz and the Tring Auction of our "Lolly in the Loft". This puts us well on track for the latest project, supplemented by your generous regular donations, building a borehole for the Kyangala community in Kenya. Grateful thanks to you all and please do consider joining us; you will be very warmly welcomed.



PARISH CHRISTMAS FAIRE



Thank you to everyone that supported, helped and donated at the Christmas Faire last Saturday, we raised £2,270 and that will be split between CAFOD Holy Land Appeal and the Parish Building Fund.

MISSIO RED BOXES

Please bring your Red mission boxes to Mass for emptying. Either take to the Sacristy or alternatively take to the Parish Office. Boxes will be emptied and then left at the back of the church for collection. Thank you

ST DOMINIC'S SCHOOL ADMISSIONS



It's that time of year again. Reception Admissions for children starting in September 2024. Applications close 15th January 2024. For more details [St Dominic Catholic Primary School - Admissions](#)

If you still have a form to be signed, and missed the session last week. Please contact the Parish Office to make an appointment. Please note, the purpose of the CCP is to confirm that the applicant, and their family, are practising Catholics, that is, attend Mass every Sunday and on holidays of obligation.

FOR THE YOUTH OF THE PARISH

This Saturday, 9th December at 6pm will take place the next Youth friendly mass for Young people from Year 7 to Year 13, and beyond. All very welcome to join and take an active role in this mass: Readers, Welcomers, Musicians, Altar Servants. Contact the parish office if you'd like to take part.

LOL YOUTH GROUP:

Year 9 Confirmation Candidates & Year 10 and beyond Save the date:
Saturday 9th December 7.00pm to 8.30pm

'WEAR YOUR CHRISTMAS JUMPER OR ACCESSORIES FOR A FESTIVE YOUTH GROUP ON SATURDAY 9TH DECEMBER'



Join us for our Parish Youth Group at 7pm in the Undercroft, and pizzas are on the menu! Once a month, we will meet after the 6pm Youth Friendly Mass for some food, some fun and some faith sharing time together.

FUTURE DATES

13th January, 10th February, 17th March 10am - 3pm, 13th April, 11th May, 8th June & 13th July.



CHILDREN'S NATIVITY SERVICE - CHRISTMAS EVE 2023



We are pleased to say that we will be having a Children's Nativity again this year. The service will be at 5.00pm on Christmas Eve, and is a lovely reminder to the children about the reasons for celebrating this great feast. This year we are dramatising the story "The Not-So-Wise Man" which will be read by an adult, but we do need a cast of many - (shepherds, angels, wisemen, townsfolk etc.) So, if you would like your child to take part please come to the rehearsal in church on Saturday 23rd December at 10:00am to 12.30pm, when we will be reading the story to the children and asking for them to take various parts (There are no speaking parts!) Your child does need to be at this rehearsal to take part on Christmas Eve. We have some costumes, but if you have anything suitable then they would be most useful.

The children need to be primary school age and if they are taking part in the nativity they will need to be in church at 4.30pm on Christmas Eve. Please let me know as soon as possible if they would like to take part, in the Nativity Service

(contact Ginny St John Glew, 01582 620322 or email ginny.sjg@gmail.com)

Christmas Day Family Mass: 9.45am

Children are welcome to come dressed as a nativity character or take a paper crown on arrival



If your child would like to be involved in the Mass (reading, acting, helping in some way), contact Michelle on
07841 098 591

LOST PROPERTY

There is quiet a collection of lost property, in a box, near to the repository at the back of the church. If you have lost something, do please take



a minute to look and see if it is there. Any items remaining, will be taken to a charity shop at the beginning of the new year.

NOTEBOOK LEFT IN THE UNDERCROFT

We have also found a Brown notebook/journal which has been left in the kitchen of the Undercroft, please contact the Parish Office if it belongs to you.

THE NOODLE BOX

From Tuesday 28th November "The Noodle Box" will be available inside the church for anyone who needs a hot snack . The box is full of pot noodle/pasta cups and instant soups and take away cups . They are free to take ! Please spread the word, especially as the cold weather is upon us . This is just a start to the project and we can place boxes where needed as we go along !



CHRISTMAS GIFT PACKS

Keystage Housing are organising Christmas gift packs for their service users. They need 100 Chocolate oranges and Matchmaker chocolate boxes and new Men's socks! Please could we help them achieve this. All donations can be placed in the Yellow Collection bin located in front of the Church



LORETO COLLEGE CHANGES TO THE ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

The Governors of Loreto College (St Albans) have recently agreed to propose some changes to their admissions criteria for 2025/2026. The full detail is available on the website. <https://www.loreto.herts.sch.uk/Admissions/Admissions-Consultation-2025/>

Written comments are welcomed by the closing date of the formal consultation, 9am on 31st January 2024 - these should be emailed to swilliams@loreto.herts.sch.uk

CHRISTMAS VOLUNTEERING 2023 AT NOAH

Christmas is an incredibly busy period at the Welfare Centre, and we work hard to provide a warm and welcome space for our clients to spend the holiday. Each year, we are blessed to receive a number of requests for volunteering over the Christmas period. This year, we are unable to accept any requests for the 24th-26th December, however anyone wishing to volunteer is very welcome to join us between 2pm and 4pm, from the 18th - 22nd December at our Christmas volunteering sessions! Roles will include greeting and hosting clients, organising kind donations of gifts, clothing and food, supporting the kitchen staff to meet the increased need, and keeping the Welfare Centre a clean and safe place to be. There will be hot drinks and Christmas goodies to keep you in high spirits 🎄 You will need to attend ONE induction day prior to your volunteering session, which are organised for Tuesday 12th (2pm-3pm) and Wednesday 13th (3pm-4pm) at our Welfare Centre, LU1 3HG. If you are interested in getting involved, please email grace.galbraith@noahenterprise.org with your availability 💕 deadline for registering interest is 8th December.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY 2024

The Banish the Blues Supper will be held on Saturday the 27th of January with Lulu and the Hullabalooos. There will be a two-course supper during the interval.

JUBILIEE YEAR

Pope Francis has declared that the year 2025 will be a Jubilee Year, about which there will be more information, as we approach this time. Amongst other activities, in preparation, are an invitation to reflect, again, on the main documents of the 2nd Vatican Council. There will be two online talks, 'the Year of the Council', the first on 7th November, on 'Lumen Gentium': How the Church Looks at Herself, and the second on 28th November 'Gaudium et Spes': How the Church Looks at the World. The talks are on Tuesday Evenings, 7.30-8.30pm, given by Fr Brian

O'Mahony, and will be delivered via Zoom. To register: Please contact Warren Brown catadmin@rcdow.org.uk. Participants are invited to make a donation of £5 per talk: <https://rcdow.org.uk/donations/agency-for-evangelisation/> by adding 'Year of the Council' in the optional message box. For further information contact Anna, annadupelycz@rcdow.org.uk

CAFOD ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CRISIS APPEAL

CAFOD are working with local partners in Gaza and Israel to provide urgent humanitarian aid to those in need. We are supporting families with cash vouchers, essential supplies and counselling. Donate to CAFOD's Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal at cafod.org.uk/ipc or call 0303 303 3030 to support those affected and get funds to local trusted experts in Gaza and southern Israel who have been working alongside communities helping those most in need. Your donation will help support aid workers providing urgent humanitarian aid including food, water and emergency shelter to those in need. Thank you for your prayers.

UNIVERSE CATHOLIC WEEKLY

**THE UNIVERSE CATHOLIC WEEKLY
NEWSPAPER**

Is true to its mission of being "a light to guide the world, and a mirror to reflect it" Keeping Catholics informed about their faith and bringing them ever closer to God. In order to keep our high standard going and maintain a strong weekly Catholic voice at a time when it is much needed in the world, please consider taking out a PRINT or DIGITAL subscription.

We have an excellent website full of trustworthy articles and an online shop with all subscribers receiving a 10% discount.

Print Subscription:- 12 months £140.00, 6months £75.00 or 3 months £42.00

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If you want to subscribe to the Universe call:- Michelle on 0743 661 7650 or email:

michelle.jones@universecatholicweekly.co.uk

We invite you to submit articles/news and

celebrations about your local parish activities.

Below is the link to the latest edition of the

Universe Catholic Weekly:

<https://universecatholicweekly.co.uk/universe-weekly-newsletters/december-2023/Universe-01-December-2023.pdf>

LIVE SIMPLY

QUOTE

We need to strengthen the conviction that we are all one single human family. There are no frontiers or barriers, political or social, behind which we can hide, still less is there room for the globalisation of indifference. (Laudato si Ch1:VI:52)

MASS INTENTIONS

<p style="text-align: center;">Saturday 9th December 12.00 Noon</p> <p style="color: red;">Confirmation Enrolment Mass Youth Friendly Mass Vigil Mass 6.00pm</p>	<p>Advent feria Baptism Martins Family</p> <p>2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)</p> <p>Walter Nicholls RIP (Anniversary)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Sunday 10th December</p> <p style="text-align: right;">8.30am 9.45am 11.30am</p>	<p>2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)</p> <p>Maureen Bannon RIP (Recently Deceased) People of the Parish Kathleen Callinan RIP (Anniversary)</p> <p style="color: blue;">Zoom Code 883 7014 5568</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Monday 11th December 9.15am</p>	<p>Advent feria Pete D'Artois RIP (Recently Deceased)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Tuesday 12th December 9.15am</p>	<p>Advent feria Joan Ryan RIP (Recently Deceased)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday 13th December 9.15am</p>	<p>St Lucy, Virgin & Martyr Special Intention</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Thursday 14th December 11.00am</p>	<p>St John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor Louisa Phillips & Family (Special Intentions)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Friday 15th December</p>	<p>Advent feria</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Saturday 16th December</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Vigil Mass 6.00pm</p>	<p>Advent feria</p> <p>3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) (GAUDETE SUNDAY) People of the Parish</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Sunday 17th December</p> <p style="text-align: right;">8.30am 9.45am 11.30am</p>	<p>3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) (GAUDETE SUNDAY)</p> <p>Dermot Lawson RIP (Recently Deceased) Bernard St John Glew RIP Peggie & Jack Shaw RIP</p> <p style="color: blue;">Zoom Code 883 7014 5568</p>
<p>CONFESSIONS - SATURDAYS 10.30AM - 11.00AM & AFTER THE 6.00PM VIGIL MASS</p>	

