



Contactless  
Giving

# OUR LADY OF LOURDES HARPENDEN

15<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2026

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (A)



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This Fourth Sunday of Lent has a special name in the Church's tradition: **Laetare Sunday**. The word *Laetare* comes from the Latin for "Rejoice," taken from the opening words of the Mass: "*Rejoice, Jerusalem.*" In the midst of our Lenten journey, the Church pauses for a moment of encouragement and hope.

Lent is often marked by a quieter, more penitential tone. We are invited to prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as we turn our hearts back to God. Yet the Church, like a wise guide, reminds us that Lent is not simply about sacrifice; it is about moving toward the joy of Easter. Laetare Sunday offers a glimpse of that joy.

You may notice a few small differences at Mass. The vestments are rose, in colour, rather than the usual Lenten purple. The prayer, and possibly the music, can be slightly lighter in tone. These are gentle signs that Easter is drawing nearer.

The Gospel for this Sunday tells the story of Jesus giving sight to the man born blind. It is a powerful image for Lent. Christ not only heals physical blindness but also opens the eyes of faith. The man who receives his sight gradually comes to recognise who Jesus truly is, while others, who believe they can already see clearly, remain spiritually blind.

Lent invites us to ask a simple but profound question: where do we need Christ to open our eyes? Perhaps we need to see more clearly God's presence in our daily lives, or to recognise the needs of others around us. Laetare Sunday reminds us that the journey of Lent leads to light, healing, and joy. Easter is approaching, and Christ is already at work opening our eyes and leading us toward new life.

## LENT 2026

### YOU CAN START AGAIN!

This Sunday is the mid Sunday of Lent. Hard to believe that we are half-way through this special season. Most people start off with good intentions, and many keep to whatever they have committed to. But it can also be true that we can sometimes not be as committed as we intended, and, at such times, our temptation may be to forget about whatever we had planned to do. And if we do decide not to continue that is a temptation, a temptation to draw us away from following the Lord, from drawing closer to him. If our Lenten intentions have not worked out as we planned, then it's not too late to start again, to pick up where we left off. On his way to Calvary Jesus fell three times, but each time he got up again, he continued the journey. If we've struggled on our Lenten journey, then we can be encouraged by the image of Jesus, as he doesn't give up, but continues to get up, and continue the journey.

### STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The Stations of the Cross are a long-established practise, which lead us through the last, momentous and sad events of Our Lord's life. **Each Wednesday of Lent, at 7.00pm**, the Stations take place in church. Do think about participating, and of being reminded of the journey that Jesus made to Calvary, out of love for every one of us.

### LENT REFLECTION GROUPS 2026

The groups have started, but it's not too late to join. This year we will be following the programme 'Enlarging the Space of Our Tent'. As in past years, these will be friendly, faith sharing groups following a shared theme. Please contact Teresa Newham or myself, Julia Roche, if you would like to join a group.

[email:-juliaandnigel057@gmail.com](mailto:juliaandnigel057@gmail.com) OR [marbretherese@googlemail.com](mailto:marbretherese@googlemail.com)

### LENTEN ALMS

It is customary during Lent to donate, what is saved by self-denial, to the Lenten Alms. As in recent years, the Lenten Alms will be donated to our Diocese. Any funds donated will be used to support key areas of the Diocese' Mission, such as Youth and Evangelisation, Social Action, Education and Family Life. Contributions can be made via the box, to the right of Our Lady's altar. Envelopes, for contributions, will be found in the porch, and can be returned to Parish Office.

### FEAST DAYS

- There are two special feast days this coming week. On Tuesday we celebrate the feast of St Patrick. Mass is at 9.15am on Tuesday.
- On Thursday is the solemnity of St Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mass will be celebrated at 11.00am.

### CAFOD LENT FAMILY FAST DAY

Thank you for your contributions, for CAFOD, so far, £1,180 has been donated. If you haven't done so it's not too late to make a donation. Donations can be handed into the Parish Office. If you wish to 'Gift-Aid' your donation, please use one of the CAFOD envelopes.

## HAPPY MOTHERS DAY

As we celebrate Mother's Day so we wish a 'happy Mother's Day' to all who are celebrating today. We give thanks for the gift of our mothers, those still with us, and those who are in heaven.

## PRAY FOR PEACE

Operation Epic Fury and the Iranian fight-back are truly disturbing. As ever in the Middle East, events can easily spiral out of control, with more and more countries becoming involved. At his Angelus address on Sunday, Pope Leo said: "Stability and peace are not built with mutual threats, nor with weapons, which sow destruction, pain, and death, but only through a reasonable, authentic, and responsible dialogue." Lent is a time of prayer, self-denial and charity. This week, let us pray to the Holy Spirit, yes, for peace, but especially that as many innocent people as possible are spared and that there will grow up a renewed desire for diplomacy and dialogue.

## ALTAR SERVERS Please sign up

As usual, during Holy week, we will need Altar Servers to assist at the different liturgies. There are lists in the sacristy for the different celebrations, Altar Servers are asked to check what events they can attend, and to sign the sheets.

## MUSIC FOR LENT

The Cathedral Choir and the Britten Sinfonia will perform a concert of reflection on the ancient Marian hymn, *Stabat Mater*, contemplating the sorrow of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the foot of the Cross. Two musical pieces will be performed: MacMillan's *Stabat Mater*, and Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*. The concert will take place next **Wednesday 18 March at**

**6.45pm in Westminster Cathedral.** To include as many as possible from parishes in the Diocese, the Cathedral is offering tickets at a discount of **50%**. Discounted tickets are available in Sections A, B and N at the following link, using the password below:

<https://www.ticketmaster.co.uk/event/1F00638BCD835BA6?did=50off> Password:

**WCSBDO.** The performance will begin with Sir James MacMillan in conversation with Fr Patrick van der Vorst, the Cathedral Precentor, and founder of [Christian Art](#).

## ST PATRICK'S DAY LUNCH.

All tickets have now been sold. Thank you to everyone who has purchased a ticket.

## EASTER FLOWERS COLLECTION

This weekend and next there will be collections for the flowers that will decorate our church for Easter.

If you would like to remember a loved one, you are also invited to purchase a lily (£5 per lily, one per family) in their memory. Please place the cash in an envelope and write the names of the deceased family members in CAPITAL LETTERS on the front.

These names will be written in the Book of Remembrance, which will be placed in the Easter Garden.

Donations can also be made contactlessly by scanning the QR code.

Thank you for helping to make our church beautiful for the celebration of Easter and for remembering those who are no longer with us.



**DEVELOPING WORLD GROUP AND  
LIVE SIMPLY 'SPRING CLEAN'  
'Tool and Equipment Collection'  
Sunday 19th April**

**At Lourdes Hall Between  
12 Noon And 4.30pm.**

Enjoy A 'Spring Clean' And Help to Empower Young People in Africa. Details of the wanted items are listed in our church entrance and attached to last weekend's Newsletter email. These items will be refurbished by WORKAID and sent to Africa to help with the vocational training of young people. If an item is too large for you to transport we can come and collect it. Please email [Elizabeth.hines@gmail.com](mailto:Elizabeth.hines@gmail.com) or phone/text: 07905 797729



**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/>**

**MARRIAGE THANKSGIVING MASS  
Takes place at Westminster Cathedral,  
on Saturday 23rd May 2026 at 2:30pm.**



The Archbishop is inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese, who are celebrating their 5th 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60) wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2026. If you are celebrating an anniversary, please give your parish office the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and contact email (or telephone number, if no email), by 19<sup>th</sup> April. Closer to the time, the Agency for Evangelisation will send out an invitation from the Archbishop.

**FROM THE PARISH OFFICE**

Any notices for the Newsletter please email the Parish office by lunchtime on Wednesday  
Thank You.



**NEW PARISHIONERS**

If you are new to the Parish You Are Very WELCOME. If you would like to register with us please click on the link and complete the registration form  
<https://www.catholicchurchharpenden.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Parishioners-Registration-Form-2025.pdf>  
Completed forms can be emailed or posted into the Parish Office.  
[harpenden@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:harpenden@rcdow.org.uk)

## MASS INTENTIONS

<p><b>Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March</b></p> <p><b>Vigil Mass 6.00pm</b></p> <p><b>Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March</b></p> <p><b>8.30am</b></p> <p><b>9.45am</b></p> <p><b>11.30am</b></p>	<p><b>Lent Feria</b></p> <p><b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (A)</b> People of the Parish</p> <p>May Doyle RIP (Anniversary) Tony Taylor RIP (Anniversary) Teresa Metcalfe RIP</p> <p><b>Zoom Code 883 7014 5568</b></p>	<p><b>PLEASE PRAY FOR:</b></p> <p><b>Recently Deceased</b> Sheila Cronin RIP John Henehan RIP Margaret Regan RIP</p> <p><b>RIP Anniversaries</b> May Doyle RIP Tony Taylor RIP Con Cronin RIP</p> <p><b>Prayer for the Faithful Departed</b> Loving God, we remember those who have died, especially those whose anniversaries we honour. Comfort the grieving, grant peace to the souls of the faithful departed, and bring us all to the joy of eternal life with You. <b>Amen.</b></p>
<p><b>Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March</b></p> <p><b>9.15am</b></p>	<p><b>Lent Feria</b> Alan &amp; Gillian Clube RIP</p>	
<p><b>Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March</b></p> <p><b>9.15am</b></p>	<p><b>ST PATRICK, Bishop, Patron of Ireland</b> Con &amp; Sheila Cronin RIP (Anniversary)</p>	
<p><b>Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March</b></p> <p><b>9.15am</b></p> <p><b>7.00pm</b></p>	<p><b>Lent Feria</b> John Henehan RIP (Recently Deceased) Stations of the Cross</p>	
<p><b>Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March</b></p> <p><b>11.00am</b></p>	<p><b>ST JOSEPH,</b> <b>Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary</b> Margaret Regan RIP (Recently Deceased)</p>	
<p><b>Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March</b></p>	<p><b>Lent Feria</b></p>	
<p><b>Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March</b></p> <p><b>Youth Friendly Mass</b></p> <p><b>Vigil Mass 6.00pm</b></p> <p><b>Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March</b></p> <p><b>8.30am</b></p> <p><b>9.45am</b></p> <p><b>11.30am</b></p>	<p><b>Lent Feria</b></p> <p><b>FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT (A)</b> People of the Parish</p> <p>Kathleen Malone RIP (Recently Deceased) Jean White RIP (Anniversary) Sean Gilroy RIP (Anniversary)</p> <p><b>Zoom Code 883 7014 5568</b></p>	

### CONFESSIONS

**SATURDAYS 10.30AM – 11.00AM & AFTER THE 6.00PM VIGIL MASS**