



Parish Website

OUR LADY OF LOURDES HARPENDEN

17TH DECEMBER 2023

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)

(GAUDETE SUNDAY)



© Chloe Le Tissier

Parish Priest Canon Anthony Dwyer

Presbytery: 1, Kirkwick Avenue, Harpenden AL5 2QH Tel: 01582 712245

Email: anthonydwyer@rcdow.org.uk

Parish Administrator Mrs Melanie Armitage

The Parish Office is open Monday to Thursday 9.30am to 12.30pm.

Telephone: 01582 712245 or email: harpenden@rcdow.org.uk

Website: www.catholicchurchharpenden.org.uk

twitter: https://twitter.com/rc_olol?lang=en

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/OLoLHarpenden>

Parish Safeguarding Representative Mrs Brigid Brennan

Email: harpensg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk Tel: 07881 785 299

Parish Pastoral Council ppc@catholicchurchharpenden.org.uk

On this Third Sunday of the Advent season, the message is "Rejoice!" And so, this Sunday has come to be known as "Gaudete Sunday". In the past, Advent was a penitential season - there were four fast days during this period - and the celebrant of the liturgy, wears vestments with the penitential colour of purple or violet. The atmosphere was deliberately sombre and penitential.

So, in the middle of it all, people needed to be reminded, of what they were preparing for - the very joyful occasion, of the birth of Jesus. In the midst of all the penance and fasting, this Sunday was conceived, as a window of joy and brightness in anticipation of what was to come. On this day, too, the violet vestments in many churches, give way to a less penitential colour, usually described as "rose".

And why should we be rejoicing? Because we are soon to remember, that the Son of God, Jesus the Christ, came to live among us, and be one of us. Further, we rejoice because he the Lord brings such good news. The First Reading quotes, from the prophet Isaiah, a text which Jesus, in Luke's Gospel, will apply to himself: "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me".

We are to be joyful, we can be joyful, because the Lord is coming. The Lord chooses to share our lives, at every level. He is coming to share all that weighs us down, all that is a burden for us. He comes to do that willingly and gladly. It can be easy to say, what we don't have, but we also need to be aware of the blessings that come our way, from time to time, we need to count our blessings. In these days of Advent, let us take a moment to do that, and then we will see many reasons to be joyful.

CHRISTMAS TIMES

Details of all the Masses, and other celebrations, taking place over Christmas, will be found in the Advent/Christmas leaflet. If you haven't yet collected one please do so today, and take note that there are some changes to Mass times on both Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

TWO MASSES

As Christmas day this year, falls on a Monday, the Church asks us to attend Mass on two days, on both Sunday and Monday. This what is called an 'obligation', hopefully though we attend Mass because we want to, not because we have to. Don't forget that in addition to the vigil Mass on Saturday at 6.00pm, there are just **two Masses on Sunday (Christmas Eve), at 9.00am and 11.00am.**

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.



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, **tomorrow, 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.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

The Parish Carol Service will be taking place next Friday, December 22nd, at 6.00pm. Please note that it is not as usual, on the Sunday before Christmas. The Carol Service provides an opportunity to stand back, for a little while, at least, from those pre-Christmas tasks, and allows us to reflect on the Christmas Story, through music and the scriptures. After the service there will be mulled wine and mince pies in the Undercroft. This service will be livestreamed via Zoom.

Zoom Code 845 3642 6001

CHILDREN'S NATIVITY PLAY

On **Christmas Eve, at 5.00pm**, there is the children's Nativity Play, this is for all children in Reception Class and above. More angels, and shepherds are needed! To date, we have very few volunteers. There are no lines to learn, as the story will be read by an adult. 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**, your child does need to be at this rehearsal to take part on Christmas Eve, please Contact Ginny St John Glew at 01582 620322 or email ginny.sjg@gmail.com)



CHRISTMAS FAMILY MASS

The Christmas Family Mass, take place on **Christmas Day, at 9.45am.** Children are invited to come to Mass dressed as nativity characters. For those without nativity outfits, there will be paper crowns available, 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.

ALTAR SERVERS

Altar Servers will be needed to play their part in our Christmas Liturgies. Those who can assist are asked to indicate their availability, by signing the sheets in the Sacristy. Tuesday 26th December is the feast of St Stephen, the first deacon, and patron saint of Altar Servers. Servers are invited to attend the 10.00am Mass that day, and renew their commitment.

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.

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.

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.

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!



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 holydays of obligation.

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.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY 2024

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

MASS INTENTIONS

<p>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>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 Zoom Code 883 7014 5568</p>	
<p>Monday 18th December</p> <p style="text-align: right;">9.15am 7.30pm</p>	<p>Advent feria</p> <p>Michael & Maurice Rochford RIP (Anniversary) Advent Penitential Service</p>	
<p>Tuesday 19th December</p> <p style="text-align: right;">9.15am</p>	<p>Advent feria</p> <p>James & Agnes Kelly RIP (Anniversary)</p>	
<p>Wednesday 20th December</p> <p style="text-align: right;">9.15am</p>	<p>Advent feria</p> <p>Bridie Cooper RIP (Anniversary)</p>	
<p>Thursday 21st December</p> <p style="text-align: right;">11.00am</p>	<p>Advent feria</p> <p>Mary Rafferty RIP (Anniversary)</p>	
<p>Friday 22nd December</p> <p style="text-align: right;">6.00pm</p>	<p>Advent feria</p> <p>Carols by Candlelight Service Zoom Code 845 3642 6001 followed by Refreshments in the Undercroft</p>	
<p>Saturday 23rd December</p> <p style="text-align: right;">10.00am - 12.30pm</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Vigil Mass 6.00pm</p>	<p>Advent feria</p> <p>Rehearsal of Children's Nativity</p> <p>4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) Mike Gaire RIP (Anniversary)</p>	
<p>Sunday 24th December</p> <p style="text-align: right;">9.00am 11.00am 5.00pm</p>	<p>4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)</p> <p>People of the Parish Teresa Newham (Special Intention) Zoom Code 883 7014 5568</p> <p>Children's Nativity</p>	

CONFESSIONS - SATURDAYS

10.30AM - 11.00AM & AFTER THE 6.00PM VIGIL MASS