



# OUR LADY OF LOURDES HARPENDEN

1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 2026

4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)



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The prophet Zephaniah, in the first reading, speaks to a people unsettled and uncertain, yet his words are surprisingly tender. He does not call first for strength, achievement, or clever solutions. Instead, he turns our attention to *the humble of the land* — those who know their need of God, those who do not rely on themselves alone. Humility, in Zephaniah, is not weakness. It is truthfulness before God. The humble are those who seek the Lord, who desire what is right, and who are content to place their lives into God's hands. They are not loud or self-promoting; they are steady, faithful, and quietly attentive to God's ways.

In the closing verses, Zephaniah offers a beautiful promise: *"I will leave among you, a people humble and lowly."* This remnant does not deceive or harm; they live without fear, resting in God's care. It is a vision of a community shaped not by power, but by trust. This humility can become a model for our prayer. True prayer does not begin with fine words or perfect thoughts. It begins by standing honestly before God, acknowledging our limits, our dependence, and our hope. To pray humbly is to say, often without words: *"Lord, I need you. Guide me. Stay with me."*

In a world that prizes confidence and self-assertion, these readings gently remind us that God draws close to those who make space for him. When we pray with humility, we allow God to act — not on our terms, but on his. Perhaps this week we might ask ourselves: do I leave room for God in my prayer, or do I try to manage everything myself? Like the humble of the land, may we learn to seek the Lord quietly, trust him deeply, and rest in the peace he alone can give.

## PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

Tomorrow, Monday, we celebrate the last of the Christmas Feasts, The Presentation of the Lord. On this day we recall Mary and Joseph presenting the Child Jesus, in the Temple, where he is received by two people of Faith, Simeon and Anna, who had lived their lives in the hope of meeting the Messiah. Mass tomorrow is at 9.15am.

## ST BLAISE

Next Tuesday, as well as being the feast of SS Laurence, Dunston & Theodore, it is also the feast of St Blaise. On this date it is traditional to receive the blessing of St Blaise for the healing of throats. The blessing will take place at the 9.15am Mass.

## NEW ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER

On the 19th December 2025, it was announced that Pope Leo has appointed Bishop Richard Moth to be the next Archbishop of Westminster, replacing Cardinal Vincent Nichols. He will be formally installed and enthroned as the twelfth Archbishop of Westminster on the 14th February. Please pray for Archbishop-Elect Moth and Cardinal Nichols during the time of transition.

- **As there were no requests, from parishioners, for the tickets for the Vespers, the evening before, or for the Mass of Installation, the Parish will not be represented at these Diocesan events.**

There will be a Thanksgiving Mass at Westminster Cathedral for Cardinal Nichols, next Thursday 5th February at 5.30pm. All are welcome to attend the Mass as we give thanks to God for the Cardinal's sixteen years of service in the Diocese of Westminster.

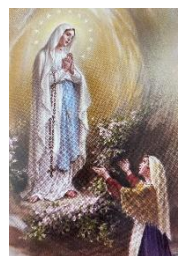
## PROTECTING LIFE

The House of Lords will debate the amendment related to abortion up-to-birth, on the last day of the Committee Stage either on 27th January 2026 or 2nd February 2026. This is a very worrying development. Please write to members of the House of Lords and ask them to fight the extreme abortion up-to-birth amendment. This was not in any party's manifesto. It was passed after just forty - three minutes of MPs' backbench debate. For more information on how to contact a member of the house of Lords, please visit:

<https://spuc.org.uk/campaign/abortion-decriminalisation>. This online tool brings up a suggested Peer for you contact either with instructions on posting it to the Peer or emailing it to him/ her. Alternatively you can send a physical letter written in your own words. These are the most impactful. The address is simply ( Name of Peer,) House of Lords, London, SW1A OPW.

## SATURDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY

### MASS FOR ANOINTING OF THE SICK NEXT SATURDAY



Our Lady of Lourdes is the Patron of Parish, and her feast day is February 11<sup>th</sup>. This year we will be celebrating the feast next Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> February, with mass, at 11.00am. During Mass the Anointing of the Sick will be administered. This Sacrament is 'for those who are chronically sick, and of advanced age'. Everyone is very welcome at this Mass, and we hope that many will come and honour Our Lady, on this special day for our parish, everyone is welcome.

### **Quote (from Leo XIV):**

God will ask us if we have cultivated and cared for the world that he created for the benefit of all and for future generations, and if we have taken care of our brothers and sisters - what will be our answer, my dear friends?

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

### **SING FOR – 13 REHEARSAL DATES:**

**In the Undercroft 7.30pm – 9.00pm**

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February

### **CONCERT DATE:**

Next Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February at 3.00pm

### **PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL**

The question is sometimes asked:  
'Who is on the Parish Pastoral Council?'

These are the present members:

#### ***Appointed in November 2023, for 3 years:***

Dominique Peséz, Katie Metcalfe,  
Caroline Rosser-Smyth, Jane Rose.

#### ***Elected in June 2025 for 3 years:***

Paul Holland, Marcia Davies,  
Mike Delaney, Sinead Dineen,

#### ***Appointed in June 2025 for 3 years:***

Andrew Belderbos (Secretary),  
Anna Painter, Michael Hessey (Chair)  
Genevieve Cox.

The PPC poster will be updated shortly,  
complete with photographs.

### **LENT REFLECTION GROUPS 2026**

As **ASH WEDNESDAY is 18th FEBRUARY**  
this year, the groups will commence week  
**beginning Monday 16th February**. More  
details will follow in due course but for the  
moment we are asking for volunteers to  
host 5/6 people once a week up to week  
beginning 30<sup>th</sup> March. As in past years,  
these will be friendly, faith sharing groups  
following a shared theme, (to be  
confirmed in due course).

Please do let either Teresa Newham or  
myself, Julia Roche, know if you feel you  
could do this. Even if you feel that you  
can't host, please think of joining a group  
and let us know your 1st/2nd/3rd choice  
of day and time.

**FOR THE YOUTH OF THE PARISH**  
**The Next Youth Friendly Mass & Youth**  
**Group will be on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February**  
**at 6.00pm.**



### **ANNUAL MASS OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL, 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.



## FAMILY MASS MUSIC

Children at the 9:45am Family Mass are invited to join the music group for the final hymn.

After the **announcements**, **head to the back of the church** with your hymn book—helpers will hand out percussion instruments. First Holy Communion children should stay with their catechists and sing extra loudly!

Singers and instrumentalists are always welcome—regularly or ad hoc.

Speak to us after Mass or contact Catherine Roche:

[catherine2.roche@gmail.com](mailto:catherine2.roche@gmail.com).



## LOST PROPERTY

There is now a large amount of lost property in the box on the table outside the repository. If you believe any of these items are yours, please reclaim them as soon as possible as anything unclaimed will be given to charity.

## 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)



## GETTING MARRIED?

Couples intending to marry are required by the Diocese to give at least six months' notice. Pre-marriage preparation is an important opportunity to reflect on the lifelong commitment of marriage as well as practical arrangements. Anyone hoping to marry within the next year should contact Canon Dwyer as soon as possible, and please pass this notice on to any couples planning to marry.

### ST DOMINIC'S SCHOOL

#### NURSERY, YEAR 1 and YEAR2 - PLACES AVAILABLE

St Dominic Catholic Primary School has spaces available in the nursery, year 1 and year 2 Classes for the current academic year and welcomes enquiries from parents St Dominic's has recently been assessed by OFSTED and rated as OUTSTANDING.

#### NURSERY OPEN MORNINGS

Please contact the school office on 01582 760047, for more information or to book a place on the tours.

**Nursey applications open on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026 and close on the 2nd March 2026**

For more information please contact 01582760047 email:

[admissions@stdominic.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admissions@stdominic.herts.sch.uk)

## MASS INTENTIONS

<p><b>Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January</b></p> <p><b>Vigil Mass 6.00pm</b></p> <p><b>Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February</b></p> <p><b>8.30am</b></p> <p><b>9.45am</b></p> <p><b>11.30am</b></p>	<p><b>St John Bosco, Priest</b></p> <p><b>4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)</b></p> <p>Terry Newman RIP (Recently Deceased)</p> <p>People of the Parish</p> <p>Blessing Ufaroh (Thanksgiving)</p> <p>Gerry Maureen &amp; Geraldine Martin RIP (Anniversary)</p> <p><b>Zoom Code 883 7014 5568</b></p>	<p><b>PLEASE PRAY FOR:</b></p> <p><b>Recently Deceased</b> Terry Newman RIP Micheal O’Riordan RIP</p> <p><b>RIP Anniversaries</b> Gerry Martin RIP Maureen Martin RIP Geraldine Martin RIP Julian Greenwood RIP</p> <p><b>Prayer for the Faithful Departed</b> Loving God, we remember those who have died. Grant them the peace of Christ, and let Your perpetual light shine upon them. Comfort all who mourn and strengthen our hope in the resurrection. <b>Amen.</b></p>
<p><b>Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February</b></p> <p><b>9.15am</b></p>	<p><b>THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD</b></p> <p>Catherine &amp; Phil Plunkett (Special Ints)</p>	
<p><b>Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February</b></p> <p><b>9.15am</b></p>	<p><b>SS LAURENCE, DUSTAN &amp; THEODORE, Archbishops of Canterbury (ST BLAISE)</b></p> <p>Pat Dooley (Special Intentions)</p>	
<p><b>Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February</b></p> <p><b>9.15am</b></p>	<p><b>Feria</b></p> <p>Micheal O’Riordan RIP (Recently Deceased)</p>	
<p><b>Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February</b></p> <p><b>11.00am</b></p>	<p><b>St Agatha, Virgin &amp; Martyr</b></p> <p>Julian Greenwood RIP (Anniversary)</p>	
<p><b>Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February</b></p>	<p><b>St Paul Miki &amp; Companions, Martyrs</b></p>	
<p><b>Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February</b></p> <p><b>11.00am</b></p> <p><b>3.00pm</b></p> <p><b>Vigil Mass 6.00pm</b></p> <p><b>Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> February</b></p> <p><b>8.30am</b></p> <p><b>9.45am</b></p> <p><b>11.30am</b></p>	<p><b>Feria</b></p> <p>Mass with Anointing of the Sick</p> <p>Sing for 13 Concert</p> <p><b>5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)</b></p> <p>Maria Pesez RIP (Anniversary)</p> <p>Patricia Foley RIP (Recently Deceased)</p> <p>People of the Parish</p> <p>Rita Jordan &amp; Family (Special Intentions)</p> <p><b>Zoom Code 883 7014 5568</b></p>	

## CONFESSIONS

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