



Contactless
Giving

OUR LADY OF LOURDES HARPENDEN

20TH SEPTEMBER 2026

24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)



© Chloe Le Tissier

Parish Priest Canon Anthony Dwyer

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The Gospel we hear today is not always an easy one to hear. It could be asked 'where is the fairness?' 'Where is the justice?' Those who worked all day receive the same payment as those who arrived at the very last hour. From a human point of view, it hardly seems fair. Surely those who worked longer deserve more? Yet Jesus is inviting us to look beyond our usual understanding of fairness and to recognise something about the generosity of God. The landowner does not take anything away from those who worked all day. They receive exactly what was agreed. The difficulty arises because they compare their reward with what others have received.

How easily we can fall into the same trap. We look at another person's life and wonder why they seem to have been given more opportunities, more success, more happiness or fewer difficulties than we have. We can even begin to measure God's goodness according to what we think we deserve.

But God's love is not a reward that we earn by putting in more hours. It is a gift. The person who has followed Christ faithfully for many years and the person who turns to God at the very end of life are both welcomed with the same generous love. There is no limit to God's mercy.

The final words of Jesus are a challenge: *"The last will be first, and the first, last."* They remind us that the Kingdom of God does not operate according to our calculations and comparisons. This Gospel is an invitation to us to stop comparing ourselves with others, and instead give thanks for the generosity of God. We have each received far more than we could ever earn, let alone deserve. The response God seeks is not jealousy, but gratitude – and a willingness to share that same generosity with others.

FOR THE YOUTH

It's good to say that the 'Youth Friendly' Mass, and the Parish Youth Group are resuming! The next Youth Friendly mass will be on Saturday the 3rd October at 6.00pm. Young people who plan to attend, are invited to participate in the different ministries, such as welcoming, collecting, reading or bringing up the gifts. Anyone who would like to assist, should contact the Parish Office.

AFTER MASS: The Youth group, which is aimed at the youth of the parish aged between 13 and 18, are welcome to the Undercroft. This will include a faith sharing session, activities and pizza and will finish at 8.30pm.

ALTAR SERVERS

Some of you will have noticed that we are in need of more Altar Servers. Our servers carry out a very important role in assisting with the celebration of Mass. Boy and girls who have made their First Holy Communion are welcome to come and be trained, and there is no upper age limit. Anyone interested in taking on this role, please contact Canon Dwyer.



SAFEGUARDING TRAINING – FACE TO FACE SESSIONS

As hopefully most of you will remember from a previous newsletter, to help keep everyone safe, the Diocese is requiring all parish volunteers to complete safeguarding training. This applies to every volunteer, whether or not your role requires a DBS check. Please be reassured that this does not mean all volunteers are being asked to have a DBS check. The aim is simply to raise safeguarding awareness across the whole parish community.

Many volunteers have completed an online safeguarding course during the past year but some have said they would prefer to attend in person training.

Brigid will be presenting two sessions, the first on the 23/9/26 at 7.30 pm and also 10.30 am on the 7/10/26, both in the Undercroft. All are welcome to attend whether or not you volunteer.

The online option is still available if you would prefer.

NB If your role requires a DBS certificate then you will need to do the online training as the in-person sessions will not satisfy the Diocesan requirements. You are still most welcome to come to the in-person sessions of course.

If you help out in the Parish in any way but have not heard from Brigid can you please contact her – her details are on the front of the newsletter

PROTECTING THE GIFT OF LIFE

Last Friday MP's debated, and voted on the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill. The narrow defeat – with 286 votes against and 270 for – reflects the particularly tense nature of the issue. This is understandable given the powers that would have been granted under the Bill, legalising assisted dying for those expected to die within six months. Ultimately, Catholic Social Teaching reminds us that every human is made in the image and likeness of God, encouraging us to strive towards policies which honour dignity for all. As is to be expected there have been passionate arguments on either side of the assisted dying debate, including from those with lived experience of disability. Our challenge does not end here, as Government policy continues to undermine dignity in other ways, through inhumane legislation for

migrants, or inadequate support for families experiencing poverty who cannot afford the essentials.

Thank you to everyone who made the effort to contact their MP, and so uphold the innate dignity of life, from the moment of conception to its natural end.

MAGNIFICA HUMANITATIS

Do you want to find out more about Pope Leo's recent letter to the church? If so, there is an opportunity to do so on Saturday 17th October when Sr MaryAnne Francalanza fcl will lead a day of reflection, prayer and discussion centred on the themes raised in Magnifica Humanitatis. Time: 11am-4.45pm. Venue: St Alban & St Stephen, 14 Beaconsfield Road, AL1 3RB. Cost: Donations welcome. Refreshments available: tea, coffee, soup & roll. To register: Please email stalbans@rcdow.org.uk

FIRST COMMUNION & CONFIRMATION 2027

Preparation for First Communion and Confirmation will be commencing in the next few weeks. Registration is now closed. Information about this year's preparation will be sent shortly.

CONFIRMATION CATECHISTS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to join our Confirmation Catechist team. This is a wonderful opportunity to support and encourage the young people of our parish as they prepare to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

No previous experience is necessary – just a willingness to share your faith and be part of a friendly, supportive team. If you feel you may be able to help, or would like to find out more, please speak to Canon

Dwyer. We would be delighted to hear from you.

EAGERLY SOUGHT

A brain of a mildly technical bent, with attached anatomical configuration, to undertake the occasional task of running the Sunday Zoom/YouTube session at the 11:30 mass. Full enlightenment in the everyday and the unexpected foibles of the system for any interested parties. Please contact John Saliot on 07980537791 or at 11:30 Mass.

FROM THE PARISH OFFICE

The Parish Office will be closed from 14th – 23rd September for annual leave. Any notices for the Newsletter during this time please email the Parish office by lunchtime on Wednesdays.



SING FOR FIFTEEN IS STARTING THIS SEPTEMBER

Four Tuesday evenings 7.30pm - 9.00pm in the Undercroft - Everyone welcome and no previous singing experience needed. Concert on Saturday 10th October at 3pm. All money raised goes to NOAH charity supporting homelessness in Luton and KeyStage Housing. The fee for the whole course is £40 and payment details will be given once you are signed up and ready to start! If you have not tried this before then please give it a go. Bring a friend! It is a short commitment and great for your wellbeing and especially for those who benefit from our fundraising - over £8000 so far since Sing For One started a few years ago. Please email Katie Metcalfe katiemjack@yahoo.co.uk to sign up and we look forward to seeing you .



CHORISTERS AND ADULT CHOIR

CHORISTERS Year 4 to Year 13 are welcome to join from September. There is a schedule of rehearsals and Masses published each term and full training is given. Serving as a chorister is a commitment so please consider this carefully as attendance at Thursday rehearsals and Sunday 11.30am Masses is required as per the schedule. Extra Masses such as First Holy Communion and Confirmation are also part of the life of a chorister and all dates are given in advance to help the family diary. It is a choral experience that develops many skills and our choristers go on to continue their musical journey at university and conservatoires at the highest levels. More, and most, importantly it fosters a space of community, faith-sharing and lifelong friendships. Please email Katie Metcalfe or ask at the parish office.

ADULT CHOIR SATB, non-auditioned choir. Meets every Thursday 8-9pm during term time and full training given. Many opportunities for singing at Mass, at weddings, funerals and in concerts performing some epic choral works - most recently Mozart's Requiem, Hayden's Nelson Mass, Vivaldi's Gloria and Unconditional Love, a cantata by Howard Goodall. Please email Katie Metcalfe for details and to chat if considering joining.

DEVELOPING WORLD GROUP QUIZ NIGHT



Join our QUIZ Night on Saturday 17th October at Lourdes Hall. 7.00pm for 7.30pm start. The proceeds of this very popular annual Parish event will help a community in Eastern Uganda become more self-sufficient by providing five 'Village Savings & Loan Schemes' and a 'Regenerative Agricultural Training' programme. Come along and join a table or make-up a table of 8.

For tickets and payment details email Austen O'Hare at dwgquiz@gmail.com
Entrance is £25 per person including a Fish & Chips supper.

Bring your own drink and glasses and CASH for the Raffle!

Places are limited so book early.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please let the Parish Office know if you have moved/changed any of your contact details so we can keep our records as up to date as possible.

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

ST ALBANS & DISTRICT TALKING NEWS

A sound solution for those with limited sight. Do you know anyone who can't see well enough to read the local news but wants to keep in touch with their community?

We're here to help! A free weekly recording of news from the local press. Plus, features, interviews and more! Online or delivered free by Royal Mail.

If you or someone you know would be interested in our free service, please contact us on 01727 648 878 or sadtn.info@gmail.com
www.sadtn.org.uk

Leaflets are available in the porch.

for more information email
info@stalbandsdistrict.foodbank.org.uk
Website:
stalbandsdistrict.foodbank.org.uk/support-us/

THIS HARVEST, HELP A LOCAL NEIGHBOUR FIND HOPE

St Albans & District Foodbank is asking the local community to come together to support neighbours facing difficult times.

Many people who come to the foodbank never imagined they would be in the situation they are in. It can take just one unexpected event – ill health, job loss, a relationship breakdown – for someone to find themselves unable to afford the essentials.

In 2025, St Albans & District Foodbank provided over 13,000 food parcels to local people, with almost 40% going to children. There were over 600 new households referred to the foodbank for emergency food and additional help.

This Harvest, your support can provide more than food. It can give someone the welcome, connections and help they need to move forward.

Together, we can help ensure no one in the community faces hunger alone.

To support St Albans & District Foodbank, visit the website or scan the QR code, or

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday 19th Sept 12.00 Noon Vigil Mass 6.00pm Sunday 20th Sept 8.30am 9.45am 11.30am	Feria Thackery Family Baptism 25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A) Duncan Gallagher RIP (Anniversary) Roger Gregory RIP (Recently Deceased) People of the Parish John Skilton RIP (Recently Deceased) Zoom Code 883 7014 5568	PLEASE PRAY FOR: Prayer for the Newly Baptised Heavenly Father, bless this newly baptised child and guide them always in Your love. May they grow in faith, hope and love, surrounded by the care of family and friends. May they always know the joy of being Your beloved children. Through Christ our Lord. Amen. Anniversaries Duncan Gallagher RIP Recently Deceased Roger Gregory RIP John Skilton RIP Prayer for the Faithful Departed Loving Father, welcome those who have gone before us into Your peace. Comfort all who mourn, and keep us united in faith and hope until we meet again in Your heavenly kingdom. Amen.
Monday 21st Sept 9.15am	ST MATTHEW, Apostle & Evangelist Eamon McNamara (Special Intentions)	
Tuesday 22nd Sept 9.15am	Feria Dorcus Jackson (Special Intentions)	
Wednesday 23rd Sept 9.15am	St Pius of Pietrelcina, Priest Private Intentions	
Thursday 24th Sept 11.00am	OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM Margaret Sinfield (Special Intentions)	
Friday 25th Sept	Feria	
Saturday 26th Sept 12.00 Noon Vigil Mass 6.00pm Sunday 27th Sept 8.30am 9.45am 11.30am	Feria Kiely & Leakey Family 26TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A) People of the Parish Matthew Franklin (Special Intentions) Sarah Cullinane RIP (Anniversary) Diane Clark RIP (Anniversary) Zoom Code 883 7014 5568	