



Contactless  
Giving

# OUR LADY OF LOURDES HARPENDEN

22<sup>ND</sup> MARCH 2026  
FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT (A)



© Chloe Le Tissier

Parish Priest Canon Anthony Dwyer

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

Email: [anthonydwyer@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:anthonydwyer@rcdow.org.uk)

Office Administrator & Bookkeeper 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](mailto:harpenden@rcdow.org.uk)

Website: [www.catholicchurchharpenden.org.uk](http://www.catholicchurchharpenden.org.uk)

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

Parish Safeguarding Representative Mrs Brigid Brennan

Email: [harpendensg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk](mailto:harpendensg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk) Tel: 07881 785 299

Parish Pastoral Council [ppc@catholicchurchharpenden.org.uk](mailto:ppc@catholicchurchharpenden.org.uk)

Communications Team: [comms@catholicchurchharpenden.org.uk](mailto:comms@catholicchurchharpenden.org.uk)

The Gospel today presents the moving story of the raising of Lazarus. It is one of the most human and tender moments in the Gospels. We see friendship, grief, tears, and hope all woven together.

Martha meets Jesus with words that are both a lament and a confession of faith: *“Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”* Many of us know that feeling. There are moments in life when God seems late, silent, or absent. We carry our disappointments, our losses, and our unanswered prayers.

Yet Jesus leads Martha beyond her immediate sorrow to a deeper truth: *“I am the resurrection and the life.”* Notice that Jesus does not simply promise resurrection in the distant future; he speaks of it as a living reality found in him. Faith in Christ means believing that even in the midst of darkness, God is already at work bringing life.

The Gospel also gives us the shortest verse in Scripture: *“Jesus wept.”* These tears reveal the heart of God. Jesus is not distant from our suffering; he stands beside us in it. Our grief matters to him.

Finally, standing before the tomb, Jesus calls out, *“Lazarus, come out!”* What seemed final and sealed is opened. Death does not have the last word. Life does.

As Lent draws toward Holy Week, this Gospel prepares us for the mystery of Easter. It invites us to reflect on the “tombs” in our own lives—places of fear, despair, or spiritual stagnation. Christ still calls us by name, inviting us to step out into new life.

The question Jesus asked Martha is also asked of us: *“Do you believe this?”* Lent is the time to renew that faith and to trust that God can bring life even from what seems lost.

## LENT 2026

### ENTERING THE PASSION

These coming days, we are invited to turn our hearts more deliberately toward the approaching mystery of the Lord's Passion. The days ahead are not simply a remembrance of past events; they are a privileged time of grace in which we are invited to walk more closely with Christ. In the Gospel we see Jesus moving toward Jerusalem, toward the suffering that awaits him. He does so freely and out of love. During these final weeks of Lent, we are invited to accompany him with renewed attention and openness of heart. It can be tempting to let these days pass as just another part of the busy year. Yet the Church gently encourages us to slow down and enter this sacred time wholeheartedly—through prayer, through reflection on the Passion, and through small acts of sacrifice and charity. If we walk with Christ in his Passion, we will be ready to share more deeply in the joy of his Resurrection. These days are a gift; let us receive them with grateful and attentive hearts.

### 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. Dates and times of the rehearsals have been emailed to Parents.

### 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.

### 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 Dioceses' 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.

### 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.



### **PALM SUNDAY**

Next Sunday, Palm Sunday, we commence our Holy week journey. Palms will be blessed and distributed at each Mass.

- If you are attending the 9.45am Mass, don't forget that it will commence at 9.30am on Church Green, with the blessing of palms, with parishioner's, from St Nicholas's, followed by the processions to our respective churches.

### **HOLY WEEK & EASTER LEAFLET**

Details of everything that is happening in Holy Week, and Easter Week, will be found in the Holy week and Easter leaflet. Don't forget to collect one as you leave Mass today.

**EASTER PREPARATION** Celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation, going to Confession, needs to be a regular part of our lives, and particularly as Easter approaches. On Monday 30<sup>TH</sup> March, at 7.30pm, the Parish Penitential Service takes place. Please note the date and time, and do try to take up this important opportunity.

### **EASTER OFFERING**

The offering on Easter Sunday, is one of just two collections in the year that contributes to the stipend that priests in parishes receive, and assists in their personal upkeep. Recent guidance, from the Diocese, indicates that the contributions received on Easter Sunday, by standing order, cannot be included in the Easter offering. If you normally support the parish in this way, but wish to contribute to this collection, you can do so via the 'Easter Offering' envelopes, or the card machine. Contributions given by Easter envelopes, as well as the 'loose' collection, are included in the Easter Offering.

### **GOOD FRIDAY CHILDREN'S STATIONS OF THE CROSS 2026**

The children's Stations of the Cross will be at 11.30am on Good Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April, and will last about 45 minutes. We are looking for children to take part in the form of a tableau for each station. The children have to be from years 3 to 6, to take part. We need about 12 actors (no speaking parts), who will have to be in church from 9:30am on Good Friday. We will do the rehearsal, have a small break, and then perform our Stations of the Cross at 11.30am. This allows any other family members to join in The Walk of Witness in the town, and then join us in church. **If your child wants to be part of the Stations of the Cross please email Ginny ([gabby.sjg@gmail.com](mailto:gabby.sjg@gmail.com)) or phone 01582 620322 by Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March.** In the event of too many volunteers we will take the first names on the list.

### **WALK OF WITNESS**

Every year we join with members of other churches, on Good Friday, to publicly remember Christ's journey to Calvary, and to witness to him. Members of our parish act as marshals to simply guide the procession and ensure safe road crossing at various points. It would be good to recruit two or three new members to the team. We meet at 10am and finish just over an hour later. Full instructions are available so if you can help in this way, please contact the Parish Office.

## 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 recent Angelus address, 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.

## EASTER FLOWERS COLLECTION

This weekend there will be another chance to donate to the collection 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.



## ☘ A VERY BIG THANK YOU

to our Ladies Group and all who came to St. Patrick's Day lunch which raised £1,190. With three other generous donations the total is £1,950. This money will be used by Sr. Margaret to enable bright young people from poverty-stricken homes in Barcelona, South Africa, to fulfil their potential at college and university level. *Sr. Regina* ☘

**FOR THE YOUTH OF THE PARISH**  
The Next Youth Friendly Mass & Youth Group will be **THIS Saturday**  
**21<sup>st</sup> March at 6.00pm.**



## DAVID MERCER RIP

We remember David Mercer in our prayers who has gone home to the Lord. David's Funeral Mass will be on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April at 12.00 Noon.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to his wife Sheila.

## EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA!

Keystage Housing in Luton are collecting chocolate eggs for homeless individuals they support to give at Easter.

Donations very much appreciated. Please leave Easter Egg donations in the yellow bin outside the church at weekends. During the week please leave with the Parish Office. We will stop collecting Easter Eggs on: Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2026.



**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



*Or live simply*

**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-](https://www.catholicchurchharpenden.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Parishioners-Registration-Form-2025.pdf)

[content/uploads/2025/11/Parishioners-Registration-Form-2025.pdf](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 21<sup>st</sup> March</b></p> <p><b>Youth Friendly Mass</b> Vigil Mass 6.00pm</p> <p><b>Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March</b> 8.30am 9.45am 11.30am</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) <b>Zoom Code 883 7014 5568</b></p>	<p><b>PLEASE PRAY FOR:</b></p> <p><b>Recently Deceased</b> Kathleen Malone RIP James Caulfield RIP Josephine Purcell RIP</p> <p><b>RIP Anniversaries</b> Jean White RIP Sean Gilroy RIP Anna Whittle 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 23<sup>rd</sup> March</b> 9.15am</p>	<p><b>Lent Feria</b> Josephine Purcell RIP (Recently Deceased)</p>	
<p><b>Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March</b> 9.15am</p>	<p><b>Lent Feria</b> James Caulfield RIP (Recently Deceased)</p>	
<p><b>Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March</b> 9.15am 7.00pm</p>	<p><b>THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD</b> Stations of the Cross</p>	
<p><b>Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March</b> 11.00am</p>	<p><b>Lent Feria</b> Anna Whittle RIP (Anniversary)</p>	
<p><b>Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March</b></p>	<p><b>Lent Feria</b></p>	
<p><b>Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March</b></p> <p>Vigil Mass 6.00pm <b>*Clocks go forward*</b> <b>Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March</b> 8.30am 9.30am 9.45am 11.30am</p>	<p><b>Lent Feria</b></p> <p><b>PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD (A)</b> Mary Thomas RIP (Recently Deceased)</p> <p>Margaret Hughes RIP Meet at Church Green for Blessing of the Palms People of the Parish Michael Philippou (Special Intention) <b>Zoom Code 883 7014 5568</b></p>	

### CONFESSIONS

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