



Parish Website

OUR LADY OF LOURDES HARPENDEN

4TH DECEMBER 2022

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A)



© Chloe Le Tissier

Parish Priest Canon Anthony Dwyer

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On this second Sunday of Advent, we continue to journey in the hope of receiving the fulfilment of God's promise through our ancestors in faith. This Sunday the church reminds us that while we are sustained by the great hope of the Lord's coming, we have to pay heed to the voice of the one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his path straight."

In the first reading, Isaiah prophesied the Lord's coming in unequivocal terms, the qualities and marks of this promised king. First, he shall be filled with the spirit of God. He shall be a man of integrity. He shall judge with equity and righteousness. He will not only fear God, but shall respect his people.

What a great hope the prophet brings us this season! Isaiah reminds us that the future is bright in Christ our Messiah. He promises that he shall be different from other kings, and that his reign shall bring us freedom from evil and oppression. It shall bring us peace with God, and with one another. It shall strengthen our unity in spite of our diversities.

The message of John this Sunday underscores the importance of this season. It is a time not just for material preparation. Rather, it is a time of deep reflection, on the mystery that God is about to reveal to the world. It is a time of cleaning up, and levelling the rough edges of our lives, with the hope of receiving our Lord in a wonderful state of mind and body. Therefore, let us strive to rid ourselves of everything that will hinder us from receiving Christ this season.

SEASON OF ADVENT & CHRISTMAS



ADVENT CAROLS

Last Sunday we had a wonderful start to the Advent Season, with the Advent Carol Service. We were treated to lovely Advent music, and scripture readings, which helped us to enter into the message, and wonder of Advent. Thank you to the Choir and Readers, and to all who participated.

ADVENT REFLECTION GROUP

A group will meet each week of Advent.

Subject:- The Hope of Christmas by Amette Ley. Using the words of Pope Francis, the author shows us the different ways in which hope is manifested in these weeks leading to the birth of Christ.

Dates of meetings:- Wednesdays 30th Nov/7/14/24th December

Time:- 2pm - 3:30pm

Venue:- 23, Sibley Avenue, AL5 1HF

Please respond to:-

juliaandnigel057@gmail.com

Please think of joining us even if you can't manage all four.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

On Sunday 18th December at 6pm, we have our Parish Carol Service.

A traditional service of carols and readings, by candlelight, followed by mulled wine and mince pies in the Undercroft.



WARM SPACES

As was mentioned, last week, along with some of the other Harpenden churches, we are hoping to be able to offer warm spaces, for those who may struggle to have sufficient heat, as the weather gets colder. The hope is that there can be at least one warm space available each day. The hope had been that we could play our part, and could offer such a space, possibly on a Tuesday between 12noon and 3.00pm. To date, however, we have just three offers to help with this project, so it's not promising that we will be able to play our part alongside the other churches. With the weather already very cold, the project needs to start very soon. If you would like to see this happening, your help will be needed. If you can assist, please contact the Parish Office.

PARISH CHRISTMAS FAIR

The parish Christmas Fair is next **Saturday 10th December at the new time of 12 noon to 3pm.**

A Hotdog Lunch deal will be on sale for all hungry Saturday Sports attendees, Mums and Dads.



We would be grateful for donations of bottles, books, gifts, toys, raffle and tombola prizes, bric-a-brac which can be left in the church porch or the parish office, and nearer the time, cakes. Raffle tickets will be on sale after all of the Masses from this weekend.

helpers are needed to set up on Friday evening, to run the stalls, and to clear up afterwards.

Please contact Marva if you are willing to help, even if just for a couple of hours, all volunteers greatly welcomed. Contact Marva@cpoauk.com or phone 07943 837277.



CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

This weekend there will be a collection for flowers so that the church can be decorated for the Christmas season. The collection will be at the end of Mass, you can also donate by using the Card Machine, select Christmas Flowers.



Thank you as always for your generosity.

FOR THE CHILDREN AT CHRISTMAS



CHILDREN'S NATIVITY SERVICE - CHRISTMAS EVE 2022

We are pleased to say that we will be having a Children's Nativity again this year. The service will be at 5.00pm on Christmas Eve, and is a lovely reminder to the children about the reasons for celebrating this great feast. This year we are dramatising the story "Leah, the Innkeeper's Daughter" which will be read by an adult, but we do need a cast of many - (shepherds, angels, wisemen, townsfolk etc.) So, if you would like your child to take part please come to the rehearsal in church on Thursday 23rd December at 10:00am to 12.30pm, when we will be reading the story to the children and asking for them to take various parts (There are no speaking parts!) Your child does need to be at this rehearsal to take part on Christmas Eve. We have some costumes, but if you have anything suitable then they would be most useful.

The children need to be primary school age and if they are taking part in the nativity they will need to be in church at 4.30pm on Christmas Eve. Please let me know as soon as possible if they would like to take part, in the Nativity Service

(contact Ginny St John Glew, 01582 620322 or email ginny.sjg@gmail.com)

CALLING ALL CHILDREN

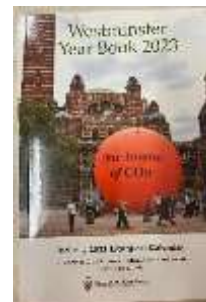
The 9.45am Mass on Christmas Day will be the Christmas Family Mass. So, children if you like dressing up, come to this Mass, dressed as a favourite Nativity character. There may be something for each of you as you leave Mass. If a child has a particular allergy please let the helpers know, who are distributing the goodies!

CHRISTMAS IN THE REPOSITORY

The repository has a wide selection of Christmas items, including Cribs, Christmas Tree decorations, Christmas candles, children's Christmas books, Advent calendars, and a selection of Christmas cards, both traditional and modern. Come and view the Christmas stock after Mass before we sell out!

WESTMINSTER YEAR BOOK 2023

The new Year Book 2023 has arrived. This is a very useful book and contains the Liturgical Calendar for 2023 along with full listings of Catholic Parishes, Priests, Schools and Societies the price is £5 and these can be found in the Repository.



CHRISTMAS CARDS

From Teresa Newham: Many thanks to those who bought Christmas cards from me this year, this has raised £190 for the church building fund.

SICK & RETIRED PRIESTS

Thank you for your contributions, in recent weeks for the collection for the Sick and Retired Priests of our Diocese. £2,354.20 has so far been donated, and will contribute to providing for the needs, and care, of the 66 retired priests of our Diocese. If you haven't yet contributed, you can still do so, but the Fund will be closing this weekend. By making a donation you can ensure that these priests, after a lifetime of service, are cared for. Donation envelopes are available, which need to be completed if you want to 'Gift-Aid' your donation, and you can also contribute via the card machine.



ALTAR SERVERS

In recent weeks we have been inviting our younger parishioners, to volunteer to serve at Mass. The response, to date, has not been overwhelming, and that is disappointing! Altar Servers carry out an important ministry, during Mass, and contribute to the dignified celebration of the Liturgy. More offers, from boys and girls,



who have made their First Communion, would be most welcome, as indeed would offers from any of our young people. So, parents please encourage your children to offer themselves for this important ministry. If you would like your child to serve, please send their details to the Parish Office.

ST. ALBANS AND DISTRICT FOODBANK

Milk and juice collections for the foodbank will be take place this weekend. So please, if you can, bring a carton of UHT milk or long-life juice to the church on Saturday or Sunday.

PARISH WALK

WEDNESDAY 14TH DECEMBER 10.00AM

This will be our last walk of the year so I hope as many of you who can will join us. We'll meet at the usual time after Mass and have a sort walk before retiring for a drink and festive mince pie or two in a local hostelry Janet

01582 -621960

janet.evers1938@gmail.com



HOMELESSNESS SUPPORT GROUP

Following the delivery of the donation bins for NOAH and Keystage, we wanted to let you all know of another way to support these amazing organisations if you are able to, via **AMAZON WISH LISTS**. The link to **Keystage's** is <https://amzn.eu/3HSwWDw>: our contact there has chosen to make it more Christmas focused but has said that after Christmas she will make it more generic. For **NOAH** the link is <https://amzn.eu/1YCWRpo>. Our contact there has mentioned that it is being updated so different things may be added over time. We do want to emphasise that we know there are many good causes out there and also how difficult things are financially, particularly at the moment so please don't feel under any pressure to donate to the bins **and** the Wishlists - or indeed to either. If you are able to contribute in some way, this will be very much appreciated by both NOAH and Keystage.

If anyone is interested in becoming more involved with the group, please contact Monika Westgate at monikamoko@hotmail.com.

We have now agreed with both NOAH and Keystage to house one each of their donation bins which have arrived and can be found in the courtyard of the Church.



For NOAH, (Blue Bin) they ask for clothing (no undergarments, unless they are brand new and packaged); coats and jackets; shoes; toys; and bric-a-brac. You can also Gift Aid your donations for them by filling out a Gift Aid form, copies of which will be kept at the back of church and also in a plastic pocket attached to the bin. The donations will either go directly to those in need, or will be sold in their charity shops to raise income and continue to fund their services.

Keystage (Yellow Bin) have asked for tinned foods and non-perishable foods e.g. cereals, biscuits, chocolate; and socks, gloves, scarves and toiletries.

Thank you all so much for your ongoing support which is much appreciated by both NOAH and Keystage. If anyone is interested in becoming more involved with the group, please contact Monika Westgate at monikamoko@hotmail.com.

FESTIVE FAMILY CONCERT

A festive family concert will be held in Church next Sunday 11th December at 5.00pm by Kathryn McGuinness and her Saxophone Quartet. Tickets are Adults £12.50, 18-25 £5 and under 18s Free. Tickets and more information can be found <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on/harpenden/our-lady-of-lourdes-church>

YOUTH OF THE PARISH

**YOUNG ADULTS BRUNCH . SATURDAY
17TH DECEMBER 2022 - 11AM TO 3PM**

<https://nymo.org/brunch/>

Northampton Youth Ministry Office will be hosting an extended young adult brunch at the Church of Our Lady Help of Christians, in Luton. If you are aged 18- 35yrs you are invited to join the team for a brunch and some incredible teaching.

**FLAME 2023 -
SATURDAY 4TH MARCH 2023 -
12PM TO 5.40PM RISE UP**

<https://cymfed.org.uk/flame/>

This year's confirmation candidates will be joining thousands of other young catholic people at the OVO Wembley Arena on Saturday 4th March 2023 for an inspiring day of prayer, adoration, catechesis, reflection, celebration and praise. Everyone else aged School Year 9 (and not already in the confirmation course) through to University age are invited to join them for the day to experience this UK's largest catholic youth conference.

Tickets are £20 plus travel. Please contact the parish office, or Anne Pesez anne.pesez@gmail.com before mid January if your child is interested in coming.

SING FOR ...4 JANUARY 2023

Please put the dates in the diary - something to look forward to in January ! Adults and children are invited for this charity-fundraising singing project - more details to follow but there is a choice of Tuesday OR Sunday rehearsals.

**Tuesday 10th January 7.30-9.00pm
Undercroft**

Tuesday 17th Jan, 24th Jan, 31st Jan
AND to widen the opportunity for more/
families to take part in this project :

**Sunday 15th January 3.00-4.00pm
Undercroft**

22nd Jan, 29th Jan

Performance SUNDAY 5th FEB 2pm
Rehearsal, 3pm CONCERT

Please email katiemjack@yahoo.co.uk to book a place £35 for the project per family (whether 1 person or 10 !) Money, after expenses, to NOAH and Keystage Housing .

MASS INTENTIONS NEXT WEEK

<p>Sat 3rd Dec</p> <p style="text-align: right;">6.00pm</p>	<p>St Francis Xavier, Priest 2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A) Ita Long RIP</p>
<p>Sun 4th Dec</p> <p style="text-align: right;">8.30am 9.45am 11.30am</p>	<p>2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A)</p> <p>Walter Nicholls RIP (Anniv) People of the Parish Alan & Mary Healy Wedding Anniversary Zoom Code 883 7014 5568.</p>
<p>Mon 5th Dec</p> <p style="text-align: right;">9.15am</p>	<p>Advent feria Bridgie & Christopher & Families (Sp Int)</p>
<p>Tue 6th Dec</p> <p style="text-align: right;">9.15am</p>	<p>Advent feria Paddy Doran & Family Deceased RIP</p>
<p>Wed 7th Dec</p> <p style="text-align: right;">9.15am</p>	<p>St Ambrose, Bishop & Doctor Kathleen Callinan RIP (Anniv) Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help</p>
<p>Thur 8th Dec</p> <p style="text-align: right;">11.00am</p>	<p>THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, Patron of the Diocese Joan Gaire RIP</p>
<p>Fri 9th Dec</p>	<p>Advent feria</p>
<p>Sat 10th Dec</p> <p style="text-align: right;">12.00 Noon</p> <p style="text-align: right;">6.00pm</p>	<p>Advent feria Baptism McEvoy Family</p> <p>3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A) (Gaudete Sunday) Aggie Kelly RIP</p>
<p>Sun 11th Dec</p> <p style="text-align: right;">8.30am 9.45am 11.30am</p>	<p>3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A) (Gaudete Sunday)</p> <p>People of the Parish Deceased members of the Choir Anne Harrison RIP (Anniv) Zoom Code 883 7014 5568.</p>



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