



# CHURCH OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE AND ST ANDREW HITCHIN

(In the care of the Augustinians of the Assumption)

*If you are going into hospital please remember to indicate that your details may be passed to the RC Chaplain, Bernadette Cassidy on 07884 187463*

**Parish Priest: -**

Fr Michael Lambert AA E-mail: [michaellambert@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:michaellambert@rcdow.org.uk)  
Fr Christopher Burgess AA

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**Times of Masses**

Sunday: 8.30 am, 10.30 am, 5 pm  
Monday 10 am  
Tuesday 10 am  
Wednesday 10 am  
Thursday 10 am  
Friday 10 am  
Saturday 10 am, 6 pm (Anticipated Mass)

**Reconciliation: Saturday 10.30 to 11.15 am**

Newsletter No 1277 – May 4 <sup>th</sup> – May 17 <sup>th</sup> , 2008 THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD (A) DIARY	
Sunday Coffee Mornings	May 4 <sup>th</sup> – Kings Foundation May 11 <sup>th</sup> – Rainbows May 18 <sup>th</sup> – One World Group
Sun 11 <sup>th</sup>	Confirmation Group (6-8.30pm)
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup>	Confirmation (5pm)
<b>Mondays</b>	Mums & Toddlers Group (Hall)(9.30-11.15am) Meditation Group (12.30-1.30pm)(UCR) AA's (UCR) (8-10pm)
12 <sup>th</sup> May	Townswomen's Guild (Hall)(1-4.30pm)
<b>Tuesdays</b>	Padre Pio Prayer Group (Church)(7.30pm) Sacramental Preparation (Hall)(8-10pm) Morning Prayers (Church) (9.30am) Sing & Sign (UCR)(9.30-10.30am) Bethany Club (Hall)(10am-4pm)
13 <sup>th</sup> May	Youth Eucharistic Service 6.30 pm (Church).
<b>Wednesdays</b>	Rosary Group (Hall)(9.30-11.30am) Scripture Group (UCR)(1.30-3pm) RCIA (UCR)(8-10pm)
7 <sup>th</sup> & 14 <sup>th</sup> May	Wed - Italian Club (Hall)(1-3.30pm)
7 <sup>th</sup> May	Sacramental Preparation (LCR)(4-6pm)
14 <sup>th</sup> May	Praise Group (LCR) (10.30-12noon) Townswomen's Guild (Hall)(6-10pm) Hitchin Society (LCR)(6-8pm)
<b>Thursdays</b>	Rosary (After Mass)(Church) Meditation Group (6.30-7.30pm)(UCR) AA's (8-10pm) (UCR)
<b>Fridays</b>	Mums & Toddlers Group (Hall)(9.30-11.15am) AA's (UCR)(12-1.30pm) Choir Practice (Church)(8-9pm)

*Please note that this Newsletter is for a two week period and so should be kept for that period of time.*

**Youth Eucharistic Service** was attended by 13 people of a variety of youthful ages. It was a prayerful and reflective time which was enjoyed by all, and the pizza was great. Our next service is on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May and can only be better if you decide to come to. It is aimed at 14+ with contemporary music and readings.

**Parish Prayer:** Heavenly Father, we offer you this Parish of Our Lady Immaculate and St. Andrew, our parish. We pray that we may be one, one with you, one with our priests and one with each other.

May the Holy Spirit be among us, guarding us and guiding us in all our thoughts, words and actions, today and in the future.

We ask this through Christ our Lord, who reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

**Our Parish Dinner and Dance:** was a great success, made a profit of £430 and thoroughly enjoyed by all who took part in it: the food was excellent and plentiful – all cooked on the premises! Wine and other drinks flowed copiously and provided the energy for the dancing, to a band which specialised in the music of the 60s and 70s – an era lots of us enjoyed! Fr Michael relived his youthful days in Liverpool by putting us all to shame on the dance floor. Our deep appreciation and thanks go to the Team which planned and ran the event, so smoothly and with such obvious enjoyment. Fr Robert would have been well and truly at home with it. Fr Christopher even managed to win a three month Fitness Voucher! The Spirit was certainly moving in more ways than one. May this be the first of many events which can draw us together, enjoy each other's company and inspiration for working together for our joint future!

**Feedback from our Confirmation Candidates,** at the 10.30am Mass on April 28<sup>th</sup>, was very helpful to the Community as a whole, as we seek to move forward together: they presented in dramatic form the Mission of Phillip to Samaria and the effect of his preaching and the openness of those who were hostile to the Jewish way of living, to receive the message of Jesus. This was then followed by a Group Homily, so to speak, which basically affirmed us to recognise who we are, warts and all, but above all to see that we are loved and needed by the Lord, as we are and as who we are – **HERE AND NOW** - IN HIS SERVICE, TO PROCLAIM HIS MESSAGE AND LIVE AS MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY FULLY!

**Thursday to Sunday 1-4 May inclusively** Fr Michael is in Lyon, France, for a Meeting of the French Province, to plan for the future life and work of the Order in this part of the world.

**Fr Michael is on Retreat** from Monday 5 to Thursday 8 May.



**Pentecost sees us celebrate the end of the Season of Easter**, the fifty days of rejoicing and deepening our Faith in the Resurrection of Jesus and its relevance to us now.

**\*4.00pm:** in Bancroft Gardens: we are holding an **Outdoor Service and Picnic** to rejoice as Churches Together in this important day in the life of the Community.

**At the Parish Council Meeting** held Monday 21 April, amongst other items discussed was a handout from a talk given at Westminster "Candid Notes for the Laity" Copies were taken away by Council members for prayer and reflection in the run up to our Parish AGM. Copies are also available in the Porch for you to study as well.

### Planning for the Future of the Parish:

We will be starting a process of consultation with individual parishioners and groups within the parish, to assess how best to use our resources (human and financial) to manage the services and ministries with one less priest, since Father Robert's passing.

Father Michael and Father Christopher feel they can maintain the current levels of Masses and hospital visiting but they must feel free to ask for our help and support as it is needed.

In brief:

- ✚ No change to the frequency of Weekend Masses necessary at present
- ✚ Frequency of Mass during the week may be reviewed
- ✚ Parish will look at the experiences of other parishes to see how to use our resources and participate more fully
- ✚ Practical steps need to be taken to encourage vocations
- ✚ Practical steps need to be taken to support our two priests.
- ✚ Prayer is required from every parishioner to discern the best way forward for vocations, ministries and the parish. We will make use of the new Parish prayer for this and also the Time of Exposition on Saturday mornings.

You are all invited to the Parish council AGM (see below) which will provide a forum for further discussion, with the wider Parish.

**Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May - The AGM is on Monday evening at 8.00pm in the Hall** will provide a forum for further discussion, with the wider Parish. Please put this date in your Diary and make every effort to come along and contribute to this important phase of Parish Life.

### Other items from the Parish Council meeting

- ✚ It was noted that all the electric fires had recently been left on in the Scout hut. There is a spare key in the Priests' house – if anybody sees the fires left on, please ask for the key & turn them off.
- ✚ **Pastoral report** included the following:
  - The development of catechists is to be encouraged.
  - There will be four formation talks in June for adults
  - Volunteer visiting to the elderly and housebound is to be encouraged.
- ✚ REACT, the CTH event on August 2<sup>nd</sup> will be supported by the parish. We have been asked to provide accommodation for the night of August 1<sup>st</sup> to 10 young people who are organising the event. All offers of help are gratefully received from any members of the parish who have a valid CRB check in place. Please let the pastoral office know if you are able to help.

- ✚ The Parish prayer will be changing shortly and will be relaunched at the Parish AGM on 19<sup>th</sup> May.
- ✚ Fr Tom has agreed that we can arrange to publish Fr Robert's sermons as a series of books over the coming years. A meeting has taken place to put plans into action. It is intended to aim to publish the first book by the start of the new liturgical year in November as a celebration of what would have been Fr Robert's 50<sup>th</sup> year of priesthood in December.

### Other dates of interest

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May 6pm Service of Healing and Wholeness – an opportunity to explore and experience the healing presence of the Holy Spirit through prayer at Christchurch, Bedford Road, Hitchin

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> May 7pm Nicky Williams, Police Community support officer, in her new role of link officer for the deaf, invites members of the deaf and blind community for tea and biscuits at Hitchin police station to hear about the latest news and developments in these sectors.

Wednesday May 14<sup>th</sup> 12.30pm We have received a letter from Lord Alton of Liverpool, Jim Dobbin of the All-party parliamentary Pro-Life Group and the Rt Hon Ann Widdecombe asking for support to attend a mass lobby of the MPs at the Houses of Parliament with regard to the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill. Meeting place is at the Emmanuel Centre, Marsham Street, Westminster, London SW1 (nearest tube station St James's Park. If anyone is planning to attend can they let Carol in the parish office know so that a return can be made of our parish intentions to attend.

10<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> May 2008 10.00am – 3.00pm Vaughan House, Victoria **Christian Morality Study Day (CCRS) The Bishops' Conference Certificate Course.** These two short sessions will help participants to understand the skills of moral decision-making, to examine Christian teaching in its relation to the universal search for what constitutes 'common good', and to explore the application of a Catholic Christian understanding of some contemporary moral issues. This two session study days are offered at two locations. This is an open course and all are welcome to attend the study days.

9<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008. 1.00am – 4.00pm Potters Bar, Herts £15 (pre-booked) pay on the day or £20 pay on the day (without pre- booking). This sum covers the cost of both days.

To book a place, contact Warren: 020 7798 9150 or email: [catadmin@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:catadmin@rcdow.org.uk)  
For full details visit:  
[www.rcdow.org.uk/evangelisation](http://www.rcdow.org.uk/evangelisation)

**Sunday 18 May Christian Aid Collection.** Christian Aid Week is 11-19 May. Churches Together in Hitchin participates in the national door to door collection. However if your street is missed we will be putting out envelopes at Masses for your contributions over the weekend of 17/18 May. There is a box in which to put your filled envelope. DO please fill in the Gift Aid section - Christian Aid gets an extra 28 pence for each £1 at no extra cost to you - you have already paid it in tax! Thank you for your generosity.