

WELWYN GARDEN CITY



ST. BONAVENTURE



**OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



HOLY FAMILY

*Parish Priest: Fr. Norbert Fernandes Assistant Priest: Fr. William Johnstone
Parish Secretary: Kathryn Hubbard*

Third Sunday of Advent 12th December 2021

We are over the half-way mark and it's Gaudete Sunday when the Church bids us 'REJOICE!' Do you feel you have achieved anything or are you still hoping for a sign, a moment to remind you that you are on track? What about those around you? Are they content, excited, exhausted or down? Advent focuses on God coming to be with us and our drawing nearer to him; this intimate closeness defines all that we do and are.

In our First Reading from Zephaniah, we are asked by the prophet to shout, rejoice and exult with all our hearts. The prophet reminds us at the end of the passage that God is dancing with shouts of joy FOR US! Can you mirror in your life the excitement God has at the prospect of being so close to us? There is much noise and a vibrant picture of love incarnate impatient to be with us! How do we share this with those around us? Ironically it more likely that silence and stillness will arrest those we encounter - the fact that we are willing to give time and create space for this God of ours who is coming.

Zephaniah also says 'The Lord our God is in our midst'. He is on his way and yet at the heart of all we do! How do you experience him? Deep within your heart? In the bustle of a household? In the colour of the lights and decorations already put up? Is the Crib the constant reminder of his presence? Do you see the Saviour in the face of someone you have helped or who has reached out to you? When you have spoken words of forgiveness or asked for pardon, have you had a glimpse of the Son of God who reconciles us to the Father, whose forgiveness we celebrate in Confession? When you are at your lowest and everything is falling apart, are you in the straw of the manger where the Christ Child was laid?

Today rejoice that Christmas is closer. Exult that he has chosen to come near. Recognise the many ways he is in your midst and give joyful thanks for these blessings! God be with you in this third week of Advent. With love and prayers, ***Fr. Norbert***

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION On the parish website wgc-catholics.org.uk there are forms for parents to download to enrol children and young people for these Sacraments. First Communion children should be at least in Year 3 at school and Confirmation candidates in at least Year 9. Preparation will begin after the February half-term in 2022 with the Sacraments being celebrated next summer. The enrolment forms will help us to know how many are involved and to plan the respective preparation courses.

ADULTS WHO WISH TO JOIN THE CHURCH (RCIA) Please contact Fr. Norbert on 01707 323234 in the first place. Once we have an idea of numbers, we'll plan the preparation. Thank you.

MASS IN WGC The times of weekday and weekend Masses have now returned to the usual schedule in our three churches. Mass intentions can be booked in all three churches. **The safety and security of all people is important** which means that **distancing** in the benches and going up to Holy Communion is respected, **face coverings** worn as far as possible and the **sanitising** of hands continues. Please note space is at a premium in St. Bonaventure's because of its size.

STREAMED MASS

youtube.com/c/WelwynGardenCityCatholicChurches

We continue to stream Mass on Sunday at 10am

FACEBOOK PAGE

<https://www.facebook.com/Welwyn-Garden-City-Catholic-Churches-113038463699672/>

Gospel reflections, the latest news, and so on.

MASS ON RADIO

If you are aware of someone not on the internet who would like to follow Mass, RTE Radio broadcasts Mass on 252 Longwave. For those who have a digital radio, Radio Maria broadcasts in London on DAB+ and in the Cambridge area on DAB.

OUR LADY'S CHAPEL looks out onto the car park of the new Parish Hall which means that people can come to the windows and look into the Chapel and see the Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady's statue.

CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE On the parish website wgc-catholics.org.uk there is form to download requesting a Certificate of Catholic Practice. Please fill it out and return to Fr. Norbert at Our Lady's and he will prepare the document and return to the family. Thank you.

If you need a Baptismal Certificate for your child, please contact Kathryn Hubbard on 01707 322579.

PLEASE NOTE: MASS TIMES

Monday	9.30am	Mass	Our Lady's
Tuesday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's
Wednesday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family
Thursday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family
Friday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's
Saturday	10am	Mass	St. Bonaventure

SUNDAY MASSES

Saturday	6pm	Mass	Our Lady's
Sunday	8am	Mass	St. Bonaventure
	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family
	10.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure
	11.30am	Mass	Our Lady's
	6pm	Mass	Holy Family

CONFESSIONS	St. Bonaventure's	Saturday 10.30am - 11am
	Holy Family	Thursday 10am - 10.30am
	Our Lady's	Saturday 5pm - 5.30pm

MASS INTENTIONS Fr. Norbert and Fr. William are celebrating the Mass Intentions week by week. If anyone wants Mass offered for a particular intention, please let them know. Donations for the Masses should be put in an envelope and given to Fr. Norbert or Fr. William or popped through the letterbox of one of the presbyteries. The intentions celebrated will be published in the newsletter as below. This week Masses have been celebrated for: Marion Hobbs' Intention, Margaret Coyle RIP, Richard Brett's Intention, James Haughian RIP Anniv, People of the Parishes, Lourdes D'Cunha special intention, Toby Roche RIP, Kathleen Casey (sicK0, Katarzynn and Peter Lacina R.I.P. and George and Chris, John and Margaret Brophy R.I.P. Mary Mullarkey intentions, Ann Grace McEvoy, People of the Parishes.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF OUR PARISHES Now that all three churches are back in action, please note that we are NOT planning to have collections during Mass but we are asking you to consider setting up a standing order for your particular church. In the last year there has been a very positive response to the setting up of standing orders; please think about doing so. There are forms for each parish; these can be used even if you are not a tax-payer. Just to be clear: YOU set up the standing order with your bank (right hand part of form) and return the left-hand side to us so that we can claim back GiftAid if tax is paid. Thank you for your co-operation, generosity and encouragement, all of which are much appreciated.

FOOD BANK New Zion Christian Fellowship continues its Food Bank every Wednesday 9 - 11am. If you are able to drop off non-perishable food for the needy members of our community, New Zion is happy to receive contributions from 8am on a Wednesday. The address is 140 Cole Green Lane AL7 3JE. If anyone would like to make a financial contribution to the Food Bank, please email foodbank@newzioncf.net and you will be given details as to how to make a donation. New Zion is very grateful for the financial support being received.

ST ALBANS The Catholic Mass at St. Albans Cathedral takes place at 12 noon every Friday. It is back in the Lady Chapel and all are welcome.

SACRAMENTS

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals can all take place.

Baptisms If you are thinking about the Baptism of your child, contact Fr. Norbert or Fr. William to arrange a date.

Weddings If you are planning to get married this year or next in WGC or beyond, please let Fr. Norbert know so that the necessary preparation and paperwork can be organised.

Funerals No limits on numbers.

MARY'S MEALS is a charity which provides meals for children across the world so that they do not go to school hungry. At the moment there is match-funding for any donations received. Why not double your giving at no extra cost? marysmeals.org.uk/donate or 0800 6981212

RED BOXES/MISSIO Any money collected or which you wish to donate can be sent by cheque payable to Missio-Mill Hill to Red Box, 23 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1NU or online missio.org.uk/redbox

Or by text REDBOX 5 (to donate £5) or REDBOX 10 (to donate £10) to 70085

Or by phone 020 7821 9755 (office hours)

Or by Bank Transfer: Account Name Missio, Sort Code 16-00-16, Account number 10824230

Your generosity has made such a difference and supports the work of the Missions. Thank you!

TRANSPORT TO MASS If any parishioners need a lift to Mass the Transport to Mass Group is there! If anyone can offer a lift, please contact Kay Mason on 01707 335633. All necessary safeguarding and health and safety guidelines will be followed. In particular there is a parishioner (with wheelchair and walking frame) of Holy Family who needs a lift once a month to 9.30am Mass on Sunday. Your help would be much appreciated.

WGC CATHOLIC CHURCHES CHRISTMAS HAMPERS 2021 Hamper packing will take place in the Parish Room at Holy Family Church on Friday Dec 17th at 7pm. As we are trying to be Covid safe please can you let me know if you intend to join us so I can control numbers in what is a relatively small place. The room will be well ventilated, and I think it would be a good idea if we all wore masks as we worked. Hamper collection for delivery will be between 10.00 and 10.30 on Saturday Dec 18th. There was an amazing response last year to delivery in the extraordinary situation we found ourselves in and I know the hamper recipients were truly grateful not only to receive a hamper but also to know that we were all thinking about them in what can be a very lonely time of year. Thanks in advance for your continued support. Sally Kee 07870 402510/sallyamkee@gmail.com

THE FOCOLARE MOVEMENT is seeking to recruit a Coordinator/Manager for the running of the Centre for Unity in Welwyn Garden City. This is a part time job which requires a certain amount of flexibility regarding working hours. It will be a temporary position for a year, to be reviewed at the end of the contract.

Hours: Flexible (average) 20 hours per week, including some evenings and weekends.

Essential Criteria: Sympathetic to the vision, aims and objective of the Focolare Movement and its working ethos at the Centre for Unity. Sensitivity to the different needs of diverse groups from different Christian denominations, faith groups and a variety of other organisations. Flexible approach to supporting and coordinating a group of volunteers and one paid worker. For informal discussion and to apply please contact Mary Gateshill – cfu@focolare.org.uk

VIRTUAL NATIVITY After last year's great participation, the Children Liturgy team at Our Lady's Church is keen to organise another "Virtual" Nativity play to be streamed on Christmas Eve. If you would like your children to take part, please contact either Sarah Cafferty on david.cafferty@ntlworld.com or Eddy Gallucci on eddyandreka@hotmail.co.uk. The actual recording of the Nativity play will take place on the weekend before Christmas (Sat 18th). We can use the outfits from church so please let us know by Thursday 16th Dec. All youngsters welcome to take part! Safeguarding guidelines will be followed at all times.

HOLY FAMILY CLEANING Holy Family church cleaning will take place on Wednesday 15th December after the 9.30am Mass. Volunteers will be very welcome.

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING 12TH DECEMBER

Saturday 11th December

Ecclesiasticus 48:1-4, 9-12 The prophet Elijah

Matthew 17:10-13 John the Baptist regarded as Elijah

Sunday 12th December THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Zephaniah 3:14-18 The joy of God who renews us

Philippians 4:4-7 'I want you to be happy'

Luke 3:10-18 'What must we do?'

Monday 13th December St. Lucy Virgin Martyr whose name means 'Light'

Numbers 24:2-7,15-17 'I see him - but not in the present, I behold him - not not close at hand...'

Matthew 21:23-27 The authority of Jesus

Tuesday 14th December St. John of the Cross (1542-1591) With St. Teresa of Avila reformed the Carmelite Order. Wrote about the 'Dark Night of the Soul'. Treated badly by his superiors and peers; by the time of his death, they had recognised his sanctity.

Zephaniah 3:1-2,9-13 'I will leave a lowly and humble people...'

Matthew 21:28-32 Saying 'Yes!' and meaning it.

Wednesday 15th December

Isaiah 45:6-8,18,21-25 'Send victory like a dew, you heavens, and let the clouds rain it down. Let the earth open for salvation to spring up.'

Luke 7:19-23 John the Baptist's disciples are told by Jesus to report to him what they have seen and heard.

Thursday 16th December

Isaiah 54:1-10 'My love for you will never leave you.'

Luke 7:24-30 The greatness of John the Baptist

Friday 17th December

Genesis 49:2,8-10 Jacob speaks to his sons

Matthew 1:1-17 The genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham