

WELWYN GARDEN CITY



ST. BONAVENTURE



**OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



HOLY FAMILY

*Parish Priest: Fr. Norbert Fernandes Assistant Priest: Fr. Martin Tate
Parish Secretary: Kathryn Hubbard*

Nativity of the Lord 25th December and Sundays up until 15th January

Cardinal Vincent Nichols writes:

My mother taught me many things. One was this: that a mother can never forget her child, even if that child is no longer in her presence and care. The bond between them endures. It is written into her heart and flesh. A mother carries the hopes of her child as her own; she feels the anguish of her child; she suffers whatever pain befalls the fruit of her womb. This lesson helps me to understand why we do so well to turn to Our Lady. Mary is our mother. She bears us as her children not by conceiving us in her body but by adopting us within her heart. She is our mother in all things, above all our Mother of Sorrows and our Mother of Mercy.

Have you noticed that in most statues of Our Blessed Lady, she is holding her son? In fact, she is holding him out to us, showing us the blessed fruit of her womb, Jesus. It is to him that she wants us to come. She brings him to us and us to him. In him we find and receive all that we need, for he is our foundation, our hope and our joy. In the words of St Paul, he is the one sent by God, born of a woman, to redeem us. He makes it plain that, in all truth, we are truly sons and daughters of God for 'God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts: the Spirit that cries out "Abba! Father!"' (Gal 4:4-6).

Mary conceived the Eternal Word of God in her womb, giving him the gift of her flesh and blood. We, in our lesser way, are to do likewise. We are called to give him our flesh and blood in the actions of everyday which we hope will express his love and compassion, his forgiveness and joy, to all whom we meet. This truth is beautifully expressed in these ancient words: 'Christ abode for nine months in the tent of Mary's womb; he abides until the consummation of the ages in the tent of the Church's faith; he will abide for ever and ever in the knowledge and love of the faithful soul.' (Cf Blessed Isaac of Stella)

As the New Year begins I wish you all every blessing: '*May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord let his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord uncover his face to you and bring you his peace*' (Numbers 6:25). And may the prayers of our Lady sustain us both now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

CHRISTMAS THANKS Fr. Norbert writes: There are so many who have helped in a huge number of ways to ensure we have celebrated Christmas well: those involved upfront in the Liturgy - musicians and singers, altar servers, Eucharistic Ministers and Ministers of the Word, welcomers and collectors, the catechists who have prepared the children for the Christmas Masses; those who keep our churches so clean and maintain the grounds, the flower arrangers, people who have erected the Christmas trees and Cribs and put up decorations; the behind-the-scenes helpers: sacristans who keep everything ready and wash the church linen, those who tidy up after Mass, those who prepare our orders of service, newsletters and fold them, those who serve refreshments after Mass; the counters of the collections; there are those who pray hard in the background and offer much needed support in this way. There are countless signs of your love and generosity. I am very grateful to those who prepared and distributed the hampers for the elderly and housebound, to those who brought gifts for needy children and those who transported them, to those who have written Christmas cards to prisoners of conscience; to the various groups and individuals who take care of the less privileged, lonely or isolated members of our local community. The rest of the year so much is happening nourishing people in faith and expressing the power of faith through acts of charity and kindness. Fr. Martin and I wish all of you, our people, family, friends and visitors a blessed Christmas and joyful hope in the New Year! Thank you for your generous Christmas offerings and gifts, for the cards and good wishes.

RITA LEONARD RIP Rita's Funeral Mass will be at Our Lady's on Friday 30th December at 12.30pm.

PATRICK WRIGHT RIP Patrick's Funeral Mass will be at St. Bonaventure's on Tuesday 10th January at 10.30am.

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY is on Friday 30th December. Mass will be in Holy Family Church at 10am followed by refreshments in the Parish Room.. All welcome.

COLLECTION FOR YEMEN AND ALEPPO We have all witnessed the destruction in Aleppo and the starvation of people in Yemen. CAFOD has asked that there be a special collection to support those who are suffering. We will hold a retiring collection the weekend of 7th/8th January in our three churches. We thank you in advance for your great generosity

TRANSPORT TO MASS A group of parishioners from our three churches has met to reflect on a follow-up to the Year of Mercy, especially the call of Pope Francis to reach out to the community. The plan is to organise a transport service to Mass for parishioners who are unable to attend on their own; this will enable those people to continue to feel part of the community. It is intended to cover all 3 churches. There will be a meeting on Wednesday 18th January at 7:30pm in St Bonaventure's Hall to discuss the proposal. Please attend if you are interested and have any thoughts or experience on the subject. Any questions please contact Desi Russell 01707 371399 or Joe Galloway 01707 894207. What a great opportunity!

WOMEN OF VALOUR is a Prayer Group made up of women who meet every Saturday at 4pm in Our Lady's Chapel Next meeting will be on Saturday 7th January.

FIRST COMMUNION CHILDREN (SB) meet again on Saturday 14th January and there is a Children's Mass on Sunday 15th.

PRAYERS FOR PEACE On Saturday 14th January after 10am Mass there will be Exposition with readings and prayers for Peace for one hour at St. Bonaventure's.

OUR LADY'S The Outdoor Crib will be taken down on **Saturday 7th January at 10am** along with the monthly church cleaning for ONE hour. All are welcome to come along to help. Refreshments will be available afterwards.

THANK YOU to those who cleaned at St. Bonaventure's and Holy Family recently and thank you to John Finn for making the new outdoor crib at Holy family.

ALTAR SERVERS Don't forget your Patron Saint, St. Stephen whose Feast will be on Monday 26th December. Mass will be at Our Lady's at 10am with refreshments afterwards in the Hall.

FIRST FRIDAY The next early Mass will be on Friday 6th January at 6.30am in St. Bonaventure's followed by breakfast in the Hall. All welcome.

FIRST CONFESSION & FIRST HOLY COMMUNION The first meeting for parents of our three churches will be on Wednesday 25th January at 7.30pm in Our Lady's Church. If you have not yet signed up for your child at Our Lady's or Holy Family Churches, please let Fr. Norbert know as soon as possible. Children should be at least in Year 3.

CONFIRMATION The next session will be on Sunday 22nd January at 7.15pm in Holy Family's Parish Room.

RCIA Next meeting on Monday 16th January at 7.30pm in Our Lady's Sacristy.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION DAY will be on Saturday 4th February in Our Lady's Hall. Couples who wish to get married here in WGC or in another place in 2017/18 are invited to come. Keep the date free. After the summer, please contact Fr. Norbert so that all the necessary paperwork can be arranged.

HOLY LAND (Sat 27th May - Sunday 4th June, 2017: 43 have booked) and **FATIMA** (Sunday 10th - Thursday 14th September 2017: 14 have booked so far) £689. We have run out of brochures for both pilgrimages, so best to contact Pax Travel for more details on 020 7485 3003 or info@paxtravel.co.uk

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS St. Bonaventure's Tuesday 17th January at 10.15am. Holy Family Wednesday 18th January at 7pm. Our Lady's Friday 20th January at 7.45pm.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY The main Service will be on Sunday 22nd January at 4pm in the United Reformed Church opposite Sainsbury's. There will be two other Services: Wednesday 18th January at 12 noon at Ludwick Way Methodist Church and on Wednesday 25th January at 8pm at Christchurch Baptists (Peartree Lane/Tewin Road).

POPE PAUL SCHOOL in Potters Bar will celebrate its 50th Anniversary next year and invites all past pupils, teachers, parents and staff to a School Reunion on Saturday 28th January 2017 from 7.30 pm in The Old Manor Pub and Restaurant, Wyllyotts Place, Darkes Lane, Potters Bar EN6 2JD. Please let the school know by emailing: admin@popepaul.herts.sch.uk

HOLY FAMILY CAFOD group will be meeting on Tuesday 3rd January at 2pm in the parish room at Holy Family. All are welcome to come along.

Thank you to everyone who supported the Advent Fayre which raised £335.12 and the Christmas raffle which raised £210. Your support makes a real difference to the community of Sebeya in Ethiopia and is transforming lives.

Fr. Norbert 01707 323234

welwyngdncityeast@rcdow.org.uk

Our Lady's

141 Woodhall Lane

AL7 3TP

Website: www.ourladys-parish.info

Fr. Martin 01707 327434

welwyngdncitydigs@rcdow.org.uk

Holy Family Church

Kathryn Hubbard 01707 322579

parishsec@stbonaventure.org.uk

St. Bonaventure's

81 Parkway AL8 6JF

Website:

www.stbonaventure.org.uk

OUR LADY'S PARISH CENTRE

Bookings should be made with Phil Johnson 01707 377442

27 Tuesday	10am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	St. John
28 Wednesday	10am	Mass	Holy Family	The Holy Innocents
29 Thursday	10am	Mass	Holy Family	St. Thomas Becket
30 Friday	10am		Holy Family	The Holy Family
	12.30pm	Funeral Mass	Our Lady's	
31 Saturday	10am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	
31 Saturday	6pm	Mass	Our Lady's	Mary, Mother of God
01 Sunday	8am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	
	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	
	10.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	
	11.30am	Mass	Our Lady's	
			<u>No evening Mass at Holy Family</u>	
02 Monday	10am	Mass	Our Lady's	SS Basil and Gregory
03 Tuesday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	Christmas feria
04 Wednesday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	Christmas feria
05 Thursday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	Christmas feria
06 Friday	6.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Christmas feria
	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
07 Saturday	10am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Christmas feria
07 Saturday	6pm	Mass	Our Lady's	Epiphany of the Lord
08 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	
09 Monday	9.30am	Mass	Our Lady's	Baptism of the Lord
10 Tuesday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	feria
	10.30am	Funeral Mass	St. Bonaventure	
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
11 Wednesday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	feria
12 Thursday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	feria
13 Friday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
14 Saturday	10am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	feria

