

WELWYN GARDEN CITY



ST. BONAVENTURE



**OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



HOLY FAMILY

*Parish Priest: Fr. Norbert Fernandes Assistant Priest: Fr. Tony Thomas
Parish Secretary: Kathryn Hubbard*

Fourth Sunday of Easter 25th April 2021

‘I know my own and my own know me.’ These are the words of Jesus in today’s Gospel reading from St. John as the Lord speaks of himself as the Good Shepherd. How do you get to know someone? How does another know you? Spending time together is, I think, crucial because we see each other over a period of time. We notice what they are like when busy or hassled; we catch them when relaxed and chilled out. We hear their likes and dislikes - the real/true/genuine person emerges!

As we continue to celebrate the Season of Easter, our hearts keep rejoicing in the fact that Jesus is our Good Shepherd. He really does know us and was ready to lay down his life for us. This Shepherd suffered horrifically in order to bring us salvation; not one sheep straying does he want to lose and, in an almost crazy way (as we read in St. Matthew), he leaves 99 in the wilderness to look for the lost one. The hallmarks of the Shepherd sent by the Father include total obedience, pure love and amazing power to take up the life which he willingly lays down. He is on our side and has the capacity to save us!

A further way of knowing someone is to be aware of their name, to remember it and use it. Each one of us has a name, chosen usually by parents and thus the name by which God knows us. Do you know the history of the choice of your name? My grandfather was Norbert and he died two months before I was born. When my Mum had a boy, she wanted me named after her father who had so recently died. As I got older, I came to know about my grandfather from my Mum and other members of the family. I discovered that I had been baptised on St. Norbert’s Day (6th June). I read about my patron saint, Norbert, and have grown in appreciation of this saint in

heaven whose name I bear. At present, the confirmandi - young people about to be confirmed - are, or have, chosen saints' names to be used on their Confirmation Day. Some in the past have wanted the name of a grandparent, relation or friend; others decide between them which is the 'in' name for them as a circle of friends; while still others look out to society and choose a famous star and make the link with the saint that way! As the years have gone by, I have discovered that with the advent of the internet it is possible to have thousands of saints' names at the press of a button AND have a potted history albeit at times only a sentence or two. Which Confirmation name did you choose? I took St. Francis of Assisi...and have never regretted it!

As our Good Shepherd looks at each one of us personally, he looks into minds, hearts and souls; he is aware of possibilities, and he calls out to us to be someone in this world and in God's plan. That's a hard notion to get our heads around because it might appear that the 'vocation' is forced on us or that freedom cannot be exercised. My own feeling is that he just can't take his eyes off us, and he knows - he really knows. This Sunday the Church asks us to reflect on the calling we have received and rejoice in the fact that our various vocations mutually united and in harmony make the world a better place. This Sunday we pray for those still searching for a definite path to have the confidence to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd calling out to them with love. There are times when confusion or a weight of pressures can distort a genuine realisation of the Shepherd's voice, but that never prevents him from starting again and leading us forward.

So, we are half-way through Eastertide. May God bless all of you. May he hold us together as one. May we follow with trust wherever he is leading us, especially as we move from a time of crisis to fresh, renewing and life-giving pastures.

With much love, Fr. Norbert

SACRAMENTS

Current regulations apply at least until 17th May, 2021

Baptism is NOT permitted outside of communal worship.

Weddings are possible with 15 present. *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 can take place with 30 mourners maximum.

**PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF MASS
IN WELWYN GARDEN CITY**

*Places of Worship can remain open. We are doing all we can to keep people safe.
This schedule of Masses will continue at least until September/October.*

Saturday

10am Mass at Holy Family
6pm Mass at Our Lady's

Sunday

10am Mass at Our Lady's
6pm Mass at Holy Family

Monday

7pm Mass at Our Lady's

Tuesday

9.30am Mass at Holy Family

Wednesday

No Mass

Thursday

9.30am Mass at Holy Family

Friday

7pm Mass at Our Lady's

CONFESSION Only by appointment - Fr. Tony on 01707 327434 or Fr. Norbert on 01707 323234. *All necessary precautions have to be undertaken in terms of distancing and the safety of priest and penitent.*

STREAMED MASS

[youtube.com/c/WelwynGardenCityCatholicChurches](https://www.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, live rosaries and so on. Weekly Thursday Rosary will start up again on 22nd April.

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.

MASS INTENTIONS Fr. Norbert and Fr. Tony are celebrating the Mass Intentions week by week. If anyone wants Mass offered for a particular intention, please let Fr. Norbert or Fr. Tony know. Donations for the Masses can be made at a later stage. The intentions will be published in the newsletter as below.

This week Masses have been celebrated for: Stefanella Julius RIP, Roger Francis RIP anniv, Brian Houghton RIP anniv, Simon Stanton RIP, Josef and Marika Cherne RIP, Michael Kennedy RIP, Fr. Emidio RIP, Josef and Gertruda Melecke RIP

BANK HOLIDAY On Monday 3rd May there will be an extra Mass at Our Lady's at 10am. The evening 7 o'clock Mass will be a Confirmation celebration.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION MASSES are being celebrated this weekend 24th/25th April. Congratulations to the children from last week; prayers for the children and their families this weekend. Our thanks to all who have helped in any way with the celebrations.

CONFIRMATION MASSES will be celebrated on Mondays 26th April and 3rd May and Fridays 30th April and 7th May all at 7pm for the young people whose Confirmations were postponed from last year. This year's group will be confirmed on Fridays 21st and 28th May and Monday 24th May, again at 7pm. Please remember these young people at this important moment in their lives.

VIRTUAL COFFEE MORNINGS The group has decided to wait for face to face gatherings! So, Thursday was the last one.

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.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF OUR PARISHES Fr. Norbert writes: This last year we have not had any collections. Many of you were already contributing through standing orders. Others have made use of the Virgin Money Giving pages or have set up standing orders. Still others from time to time have put money through the doors of the presbyteries. For all this generous giving, we are most grateful. We now have to have the finances in order for the coming months and years. The setting up of standing orders is a powerful way of having sustained support of all that we undertake here in our three parishes. I feel that this is the best way forward. Consequently, we are having a 'standing order drive'. It began at the 7pm weekday Masses last week. This coming week it will take place at the 9.30 am weekday Masses and at all the weekend Masses at the start of May. Members of our Finance Committees will be available with standing order forms for the three parishes. They will explain how to use them. For some of you, this might not be the right moment, so please be patient; for others however, this might be just the right time to move to this way of giving which benefits the running of our three parishes. I would also ask those who watch Mass online to consider this in solidarity with their fellow parishioners. For the foreseeable future, the Sunday collection will not take place nor will there be 'Boxes of envelopes'. Thank you for all that you do, and have done, to keep things going in these challenging times, especially when your own lives have been disrupted by the pandemic.

SIGNED MASSES On the first Sunday of the month at 4.30pm, there will be a signed Mass streamed with a split screen: Shell Roca, Director of the Deaf Service, will respond in sign as Fr. Norbert celebrates the Mass in sign. This will be in place of the monthly Mass from the Cathedral. All welcome to follow and please give the details to any deaf or hard of hearing people you know. Next Signed Mass Sunday 2nd May at 4.30pm.

ST ALBANS The Catholic Mass at St. Albans Cathedral takes place at 12 noon every Friday. Admission to the Cathedral Mass does not require ticketing and there is social distancing in a very big space in the nave. All welcome!

VOCATIONS SUNDAY Bishop John Sherrington writes: On the Fourth Sunday of Easter, Good Shepherd Sunday, we will pray for vocations to the priesthood, as well as for our seminarians at Allen Hall and the Beda College, and the priests of our Diocese. Good Shepherd Sunday presents an opportunity when we can talk about the life of the priest and invite men to consider this wonderful and grace-filled vocation with its blessings and its crosses. As the result of the lockdown and the pandemic, there may be greater desire for some men to reflect on God's calling and to listen to the Holy Spirit. I am also writing to ask your help in supporting the Priests' Training Fund with the annual appeal. The collection is due to take place this weekend (24th/25th April).

I am very conscious that the pandemic has affected everyone's finances and especially those of our parishioners who have been very generous in many different ways. This year we look forward to celebrating four ordinations to the priesthood and three ordinations to the diaconate for the diocese. The cost of the training these men will have been borne by the Priests' Training Fund. Thank you and God bless you.

To contribute online visit: www.rcdow.org.uk/donations

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY (SVP) Welwyn Garden City Annual Report 2020-21

Our Vision, which is inspired by Christ's message to love our neighbour as ourselves, is for individuals and families who are in any form of need to have hope and a sense of dignity, worth, well being and peace of mind.

Our Purpose in WGC is to support those in need in our parish through person-to-person contact. During the Covid-19 restrictions, this personal contact has not always been possible. However, Members have kept in touch by telephone, door-step visits when allowed, and by dropping off necessary items to all those who have requested assistance. We were also delighted to be able to deliver Christmas hampers in December 2020 and Easter 'goodies' to many families with young children. Regrettably, the annual St John Bosco Summer Camp was postponed as were other various outings; we are hopeful that 2021-2022 will bring about these possibilities again.

During the 12 months ending March 2021, Members made a total of 91 visits and 1110 telephone calls, keeping in touch with approximately 65 Friends.

We are grateful to Fr. Tony for his continuing support of our Conference and for his heroic sponsored marathon last year. All proceeds went to our SVP Conference, which helped tremendously in Members being able to continue to help and support our Friends. Thank you. Our WGC Parishioners have also been most generous in baking cakes, producing home-made marmalade and rallying round to our appeal to help two young ladies, one a single mum, to set up their first homes, with furniture and white goods. We know that all recipients are very grateful indeed and we thank our parishioners on their behalf. Should you require any information or more details on the work we do or, indeed, would like to join our Conference, please contact Janet Lewis on 01707 326456.

We thank you and ask for God's blessing for your kind generosity in supporting our work. APRIL 2021

FREE FACEMASKS The local charity Welwyn Hatfield Community Services have donated some free, homemade face masks which you can take as you come into church. If you would like to know more about their work, or make a contribution to them, please go to <https://www.welwynhatfieldcs.org.uk/>

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
25TH APRIL**

Saturday 24th April St. Erkenwald (Died 693) and St. Mellitus (Died 624)
Bishops of London

Acts 9:31-42 The Lord works through Peter

John 6:60-69 Many of Jesus' followers cannot accept his teaching about 'The Bread of Life' and part company with him.

Sunday 25th April FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 4:8-12 The power of the name of Jesus

1 John 3:1-2 We are God's children!

John 10:11-18 'I am the Good Shepherd'

Monday 26th April

Acts 11:1-18 The Gospel is accepted by pagans. Peter gives an account of his experience.

John 10:1-10 'I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.'

Tuesday 27th April

Acts 11:19-26 The Gospel spreads. At Antioch the disciples were first called 'Christians'.

John 10:22-30 Jesus responds to the words: 'If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.'

Wednesday 28th April

Acts 12:24 - 13:5 The ministry of Barnabas and Saul (Paul)

John 12:44-50 The Father's commands mean eternal life

Thursday 29th April ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA (1347-1380) Dominican, urged popes to reform the Church, wrote inspired and mystical works. Doctor of the Church and Patron of Europe

1 John 1:5 - 2:2 Jesus Christ is the sacrifice that takes away our sins.

Matthew 11:25-30 Jesus exclaims: 'I bless you Father, Lord of heaven and of earth...'

Friday 30th April

Acts 13:26-33 Paul speaks in the synagogue in Antioch

John 14:1-6 'Do not let your hearts be troubled'

MISSIO RED BOXES We have received a letter of thanks from Missio to our parishes in Welwyn Garden City for the generosity of response in 2020. All monies raised have continued to help our global family and the missionaries who serve them. The figure for our parishes through the Red Boxes, online and direct debits is £3294.70. A huge sum - well done and thank you.