

# 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*

## ***Fifth Sunday of Easter 2nd May 2021***

In today's Second Reading, St. John writes to his community. He has much to say to them and, as is often the case, it is so hard to work out what is going on! Two things I'd like to focus on: firstly, he states that 'our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active'. At the end, he is assured by the fact that the Spirit has been given to them meaning that God lives in them AND they live in God.

When you love someone very much, you try to find just the right way of expressing it. If words are used with no supporting action, the beloved might begin to wonder what the reality is. Some people might not be able to find the appropriate words but their gestures become the embodiment of what they are trying to express. I am sure that St. John bases his written words on the experience he has of knowing he was loved by Jesus Christ - in his Life, Death and Resurrection. The Word who became Flesh who poured out love in his ultimate self-giving is the Sign. The Apostle wants his people to be just the same, giving evidence of the mystery they share in through their faith in God's Son. What about us? These months of pandemic have challenged us into action: care of neighbour, family, friend; sacrifices in order to make sure the vulnerable are cared for; patience and perseverance. Definitely Love-in-action!

On Easter Day Jesus appears to the disciples in the room with closed doors and breathes upon them his Spirit. Think about his last gasp of breath from the Cross with his Mother and the Beloved Disciple standing close by. In this Epistle, the same Beloved Disciple wants his community to know that they have received this Gift from the Father and Son, the One who ensures the mutual indwelling of Father and Son, of the disciple and God himself. Just think - God lives in you and me. Each one of us is given access to God; one day eternal life will be the treasure we discover

for ever in a heavenly home! There are times when we just cannot manage on our own...God is there for us. There are moments when the impossible seems to unfold...it has to be the hand of God. How powerful is this Holy Spirit which vivifies and enables. This same Spirit will come at Pentecost to renew us and the face of the earth, thus completing the Easter Mystery.

I hope you are keeping well and that there is light for you personally at the end of the Covid tunnel. Everything certainly is not back to normal. However, the practical expression of loving faith and the reliance on God's Spirit will carry us forward. God bless you this Bank Holiday weekend!

With love and prayers,  
**Fr. Norbert**

## **SACRAMENTS**

*Current regulations apply at least until 17th May, 2021*

**Baptism** is NOT permitted outside of communal worship. *After 17th May, celebrations can take place. If you are thinking about Baptism of your child, contact Fr. Tony or Fr. Norbert to arrange a date.*

**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.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION MASSES** Congratulations to all the children who made their First Holy Communion these last two weekends. Our thanks to all who have helped in any way with the celebrations, especially Fr. Tony who coordinated the preparation.

**CONFIRMATION MASSES** were celebrated last week. Congratulations to the newly confirmed young people. There are more Confirmation Masses this week on Monday and Friday at 7pm. 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.

**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.

**VIRTUAL COFFEE MORNINGS** The group have decided to wait for face to face gatherings!

**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. Not ideal in the cold, but a possible place to offer a (quick) prayer.

**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: Mrs Jane D'Souza's Intentions, Simon Stanton RIP, Brian Hughes' Intentions, Mick McGeehan RIP Anniv, Mary Moran RIP 8th Anniv, Chris Doocey RIP Birthday, Augustus Joachim RIP

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Josie Bell who died on Wednesday.

**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.

**ASCENSION OF THE LORD** Thursday 13th May There will be 9.30 Mass at Holy Family and 7pm Mass at Our Lady's on that day.

**FOUNDATION GOVERNOR** Holy Family School and Our Lady's School are looking for anyone who might be interested in becoming a Foundation Governor. A Governor with this responsibility is appointed by the Diocese and so the application would go through Fr. Norbert as Parish Priest. If you are interested or want to find out more, contact Fr. Norbert. Thank you!

**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 weekday Masses and now will take place this weekend. 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.

**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](mailto:foodbank@newzioncf.net) and you will be given details as to how to make a donation.

**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!

**VACCINE CONFIDENCE** A Covid-19 vaccine confidence webinar has been organized for the of Dioceses of Brentwood, Southwark and Westminster, with the cooperation of Hertfordshire County Council and Hammersmith & Fulham Council, and other local authorities. It will take place on Saturday 15th May 2021 from 10am to 11.30am and will feature a panel of eminent medical experts led by Prof Kevin Fenton, Regional Director of Public Health London. The panel will share the latest information on COVID-19 vaccination. There will be an opportunity for participants to ask questions anonymously. To join the webinar: <https://zoom.us/j/99627319556> Passcode: 546617

**FREE FACEMASKS** The local charity Welwyn Hatfield Community Services have donated some free, homemade face masks which you can take as you come in to 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/>

## THY KINGDOM COME - LIGHTING UP THE WORLD IN PRAYER

Ascension Day (13th May) until Pentecost (23rd May)

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/thy-kingdom-come/>

This is an ecumenical initiative and Westminster Diocese draws our attention to the following resources:

**Pentecost Novena:** A beautiful way to prepare ourselves for the joy of Pentecost. This resource is available as a download, booklet, or podcast:  
<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/thy-kingdom-come/pentecost-novena/>

**Journey with Mary:** This special playlist has been created for us to journey with Mary from the Ascension to Pentecost . What would we say, or share with Mary?  
<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/thy-kingdom-come/journey-with-mary/>

**Praying for 5:** During the novena which 5 friends, family, neighbours, who may be away from the Church, or have yet to discover the love offered them by Jesus would you pray for. Simply do so throughout the day and ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit for them.

**A simple Prayer Journal** has been produced to support our personal prayer during the novena,

[https://www.thykingdomcome.global/sites/default/files/2021-03/TKC%20Prayer%20Journal%202021%20DOWNLOAD\\_0.pdf](https://www.thykingdomcome.global/sites/default/files/2021-03/TKC%20Prayer%20Journal%202021%20DOWNLOAD_0.pdf)

**For Families:** There are some delightful resources to help families, particularly those with young children praying Thy Kingdom Come. To explore what is on offer please click below;

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/cheekypandas>

**Sharing your good news:** Westminster would love to hear Thy Kingdom Come stories from you – before, during, or after the Novena. Please send these, and any pictures you might want to share, to Deacon Roger Carr-Jones at the Agency for Evangelisation – [rogercarrjones@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:rogercarrjones@rcdow.org.uk).

**DAY OF PRAYER FOR SURVIVORS OF ABUSE** Tuesday 4th May  
Prayer for Healing and Reconciliation

*Praise to you Father of our Lord Jesus Christ  
the source of all consolation and hope.*

*Be the refuge and guardian of all  
who suffer from abuse and violence.*

*Comfort them and send healing  
for their wounds of the body, soul and spirit.*

*Help us all and make us one with you  
in your love for justice*

*as we deepen our respect for the dignity of every human life.*

*Giver of peace, make us one in celebrating  
your praise, both now and forever.*

*We ask this through Christ our Lord.*

*Amen.*

There are a number of resources on the Bishops' Conference website  
<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/our-work/safeguarding/day-of-prayer-for-survivors-of-abuse/day-of-prayer-for-survivors-of-abuse-2021/>

**FRIENDS OF THE HOLY LAND** Our 2021 Pentecost Challenge is launched, with a focus on helping Christian families keep their children in Christian schools. Please support our Appeal by visiting our website [www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk/pentecost](http://www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk/pentecost) or sending a donation to FHL, Farmer Ward Road, Kenilworth CV8 2DH. You can register to join an 84-mile virtual pilgrimage between Bethlehem and Nazareth, using just 2 miles/day of your exercise. You can obtain sponsorship from friends or family or simply sponsor the parishioners you might know who are already walking, cycling or swimming! For those with children/grandchildren at local schools, why not encourage them to set up a team!

For more information, email office at [office@friendsoftheholylan.org.uk](mailto:office@friendsoftheholylan.org.uk) or telephone 01926 512980.

**PRAY IN MAY WITH MARY'S MEALS** Since our humble beginnings, Mary's Meals, named after Mary the Mother of Jesus, has been built on a foundation of prayer and the many little acts of love from those who support us.

This May, the month traditionally dedicated to Our Lady, we invite you to join us in prayer to celebrate the wonderful work of Mary's Meals and give thanks that we are now reaching more than 1.8 million children with a nutritious meal in 19 countries every school day. We also pray for God's continued blessing on our beautiful mission, that through His providence it will always flourish, enabling us to reach more hungry children. For more details, the website is <https://www.marysmeals.org.uk/prayinmay>

Thank you for remembering Mary's Meals in your prayers. God bless you all.



## CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF ENGLAND AND WALES

### Reflection by the Bishops of England and Wales

#### *The Day of the Lord*

Gathering as Bishops in Conference this week, we wish to pay tribute to all in the Catholic community who have shown such courage, generosity and understanding in the face of adversity this past year. Across England and Wales, families and parish communities have risen to the challenge of sustaining one another through times of great isolation, loneliness and grief in an impressive variety of ways, spiritual, emotional and practical. We thank all who have worked tirelessly in prisons, in hospitals, care-homes and across the medical profession for giving of themselves so generously. We thank all who have worked valiantly in our schools, facing unforeseen demands and meeting them with characteristic professionalism and dedication.

We wish also to pay tribute to those who have given of their time and energy to keep open our churches as havens of peace and prayer. Churches up and down the land have realised the vision of Pope Francis that they be like village-wells where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey; and centres of "constant missionary outreach." We thank all who have developed diverse new patterns of outreach - of prayer, catechesis, study and spiritual solidarity; all who have made participation in the Mass possible through the internet.

Also prominent in this tribute should be thanks to all who have contributed to the immense effort of providing food for those most in need. The generosity shown in the distribution of so very many meals has given eloquent expression to the mercy, love and compassion which are at the very heart of God. Many have been touched by the joy of meeting Christ in the poor; and many of the poor by the joy of meeting Christ in selfless parishioners. The provision of food is often the first step into a deeper relationship of help and accompaniment, including the sharing of the gift of faith in our Blessed Lord.

'Vibrant' is a word which seems to have characterised so many of our parishes throughout the pandemic. We wish to salute our priests in particular for the leadership they have shown in this time of crisis. We thank them for their deep devotion to both the liturgy and to their parishioners. We commend every priest who made of his parish "a 'sanctuary' open to all" and with a particular care for the poor; and the many Deacons who have exercised with such generosity their mission of charity.

What will be the pace of our emerging from this pandemic remains as yet unclear. What is clear is the challenge we face of bringing our communities and the practice of the faith to a still greater expression and strength. As your bishops, we are aware of a threefold pattern to this challenge.

- a) There are the fearful and weary, anxious about coming into the enclosed spaces of our churches; those who have simply lost the habit of coming to church. Personal contact, clear reassurance, and sensitive invitations will all be needed.

- b) There are those who will have reassessed their pattern of life and priorities. The practice of faith within the community of the Catholic Church may not be among those priorities. A gap may have opened up, or widened, between the spiritual dimension of their lives and any communal expression of that spiritual quest. They represent a particular focus and concern for our outreach.
- c) There are those whom we might describe as the 'Covid curious', those who have come into contact with the Catholic Church through our presence on the internet – a contact we may be able to develop through our continuing presence across diverse media platforms.

In facing these challenges, we are endowed with veritable treasures which serve to resource and enrich us. Among them are our schools, in which so many are regaining confidence to come together with others. We believe our schools can indeed be bridges back to church. There is also the remarkable work of social outreach which has grown exponentially during these long months of pandemic. On this, too, we must build. But the greatest treasure is, of course, the sacramental life of the Church, and, pre-eminently, the Eucharist.

It is the Eucharist, the celebration of the Mass, that makes the Church; and it is the Church, in the gift of the Holy Spirit, which makes the Eucharist. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the lifeblood of the Church. It requires our active participation and, to be fully celebrated, our physical presence.

At this moment, then, we need to have in our sights the need to restore to its rightful centrality in our lives the Sunday Mass, encouraging each to take his or her place once again in the assembly of our brothers and sisters. We face the task of seeking to nurture the sense of Sunday as “a weekly gift from God to his people” , and something we cannot do without; to see Sunday as the soul of the week, as giving light and meaning to all the responsibilities we live out each day; to see the Sunday Eucharist as food for the unique mission with which we have been endowed.

In the time to come we can do no better than to rekindle in our hearts, foster and encourage, a yearning for the Real Presence of the Lord and the practice of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, a gift so deeply appreciated in these times of lockdown. We need to begin by fostering this in ourselves. For the Eucharist should be the cause of our deepest joy, our highest manner of offering thanks to God and for seeking his mercy and love. We need to make it the foundation stone of our lives.

The invitation to Sunday Mass resonates all the more deeply when we consider, as Pope St John Paul II reminds us in the Encyclical Letter *Dies Domini*, that the Sabbath rest is nothing if not a call to remember the gift of God's Creation. The Eucharist is indeed a celebration of the created world, called into life by the Eternal Word, for the bread and wine of the earth becomes the Body and Blood of Christ who is that same Lord of all life. The Christ to whom we come so close in the Eucharist must be the foundation of our strivings, not least in the urgent task we face of caring for creation and our environment.

Pope St John Paul II spoke of our amazement at the gift of the Mass and the abiding Presence of our Blessed Lord in the Sacrament of the Altar. Herein lies our treasure, enriching our relationship with Jesus and bringing together every aspect of our life and mission. This is such an important focus for our task in the coming months.

22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021

## SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING 2ND MAY

**Saturday 1st May St. Joseph the Worker** highlights the dignity of work  
Acts 13:44-52 Paul and Barnabas determine to preach to the pagans  
John 14:7-14 'Whatever you ask for in my name, I will do.'

### **Sunday 2nd May FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

Acts 9:26-31 The disciples are afraid of Saul, the new convert.  
1 John 3:18-24 Our love is to be real and active  
John 15:1-8 Jesus is the Vine and we are the branches.

### **Monday 3rd May ST. PHILIP AND ST. JAMES** Apostles

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 The Gospel received and preached. Jesus appeared to James  
John 14:6-14 Philip wants to see the Father!

**Tuesday 4th May ENGLISH MARTYRS** *Men and women, rich and poor from every walk of life chose to hold onto their Catholic Faith and suffered terribly.*

Acts 7:55-60 As Stephen dies, he forgives those putting him to death and prays:  
'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'  
Matthew 10:17-20 'You will be dragged before kings and governors for my sake...do not worry'

### **Wednesday 5th May**

Acts 15:1-6 Paul and Barnabas argue with some members of the Church who demand that the pagans should be circumcised.  
John 15:1-8 'It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit...'

### **Thursday 6th May**

Acts 15:7-21 The Apostles in Jerusalem debate the position of the pagans and what should be asked of them.  
John 15:9-11 'As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love.'

### **Friday 7th May**

Acts 15:22-31 The Church in Jerusalem sends a letter to Antioch giving encouragement  
John 15:12-17 'You are my friends.'