

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

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 8th August 2021

‘Lord, I have had enough!’ These are the words of Elijah in our First Reading today. Elijah was chosen and given the task of being a prophet and pointing out the correct way people - especially rulers - should live. He was so aware of how he was the last faithful prophet left and that his responsibility was enormous and almost impossible. God intervenes through his angel and gives Elijah the nourishment he needs to keep him going on his journey to Horeb, God’s mountain. There he would be given an amazing experience of God and discover anew his role.

Do you ever feel like that? Have you prayed in that way? What was the response you experienced? Life can at times be so challenging. Most of us have found this in the time of pandemic as we listen to guidelines and regulations, find they have changed, adjust our approach and then have to alter things even more! Perhaps some of you have had a chance to go away - even abroad? Maybe others are waiting, and still waiting, for the situation to be more stable and the opportunity to go away knowing that you will not have to worry about adjusting plans at the last moment.

As we gather for Mass in church or virtually, the Father puts us in touch with a form of nourishment which is heavenly and enduring. We receive an experience of love in all its fullness radiating from the Cross of Jesus Christ and are sustained by the taste of eternity in the Eucharist. Whatever weighs us down or distorts our vision cannot be compared with the Sacrifice of total giving on Calvary which directs us on life’s journey. In our Gospel passage from St. John, the Lord speaks of himself as the ‘living bread come down from heaven’; this bread is his ‘flesh, for the life of the world.’ As Jesus utters these words, what must have been going through his mind and heart? He offers himself. He gives life. His flesh is food. God’s Son chooses to

feed us with food sourced in heaven; he yearns for us to join him through the strength of this nourishment. There is nothing he wants to come in the way of our arriving at our destiny of eternal life and that is why he carried the Cross for us and with us.

As the summer unfolds, stay safe and feel the Lord's presence. Relax and be renewed. Allow the wonder of the Eucharist to be that beacon guiding you every step of the way. Fr. Tony and I continue to pray for you. Please keep us in your prayers. God bless you. With much love, *Fr. Norbert*

SACRAMENTS

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals can all take place.

Baptisms If you are thinking about the Baptism of your child, contact Fr. Tony or Fr. Norbert 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 limit on numbers.

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 should be put in an envelope and given to one of the priests or popped through the letterbox of one of the presbyteries. The intentions will be published in the newsletter as below.

This week Masses have been celebrated for: Augustus Joachim RIP, Peter Chapman's Intention, Maura Myles RIP, Declan Brogan RIP 2nd Anniv, Paddy Loughrey RIP Anniv, Augustus Joachim RIP Birthday, Lizzie Francis Birthday Intention, Aisling Kelly's Intentions, Simon Stanton RIP, Raphael Attard's Intention (In thanksgiving), Josie Bell RIP.

FR. TONY has only two more weeks with us before he moves to be Parish Priest of The Five Precious Wounds in Stonebridge Park (between Harlesden and Wembley). We will invite Fr. Tony back in the autumn to say 'Thank you' for his ministry, support and friendship to us all these last two years. In readiness for that there will be an opportunity for parishioners to contribute towards a farewell presentation. This will be announced in due course.

STREAMED MASS

youtube.com/c/WelwynGardenCityCatholicChurches

We continue to stream Mass on Sunday at 10am

PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF MASS IN WELWYN GARDEN CITY

This schedule of Masses will continue at least until September/October. We are keeping to the simple form of Mass for the time being. Also, the precautions with the use of sanitiser will continue. By the end of August, we should have a good idea of how things are going with the rate of infection and people's sense of security. We would rather not keep chopping and changing every few weeks.

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.

FACEBOOK PAGE

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

Gospel reflections, the latest news, and so on.

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 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.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF OUR PARISHES There has been a very positive response to the setting up of standing orders. We ask all of you to consider this if you are able. Fr. Norbert and Fr. Tony have forms for each parish. 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.

SIGNED MASSES From Sunday 5th September, the monthly Signed Masses will take place again in Westminster Cathedral Hall at 4.30pm. They will be streamed directly from there. Fr. Norbert will celebrate the first one and then the rota of 6 priests who sign will start up again. Thank you for all the encouragement and interest from parishioners in the last 18 months. We are grateful to Shell Roca, Director of the Deaf Service for her input.

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!

SPONSORED CYCLE RIDE FOR CAFOD John Beckett and Adam Coeur-de-Lion, and other parishioners from the Catholic parishes of Welwyn Garden City, are taking part in a sponsored bicycle ride to raise money for CAFOD. Their ride will take them to nine local Catholic churches in Knebworth, Stevenage, Letchworth, Baldock and Welwyn Garden City. In total the route will be just under 50 miles! They plan to cycle it on Friday 20th August. Please support John, Adam and our other parishioners with this great effort for a worthy cause. *Please note* the amended JustGiving details as follows: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/cafodbikeridewgc>

SUNDAY MASS The Bishops of England and Wales have issued a statement which is attached for your information. The statement concerning the Sunday Obligation reads, ‘it is hoped that it will be possible for all Catholics in England and Wales to fulfil this most important Church precept, that of the Sunday Obligation, by the First Sunday in Advent 2021. In the meantime, all Catholics are asked to do their best to participate in the celebration of the weekly Sunday Mass and to reflect deeply on the centrality of Sunday worship in the life of the Church.’

CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF ENGLAND AND WALES

Statement from the Catholic Bishops of England

Sunday – it is our Day

On 19th July, the current legislative powers which assist the mitigations against the covid-19 virus transmission will be rescinded by HM Government. Nevertheless, there will be an encouragement to personal and corporate responsibility in this area; as the Prime Minister said in his most recent statement “The pandemic is not over.” Even without this legislation in place, the Church in England and Wales will be adopting a cautious approach to capacity and activity within our buildings, especially at corporate acts of worship.

We are mindful of the certain fact that the Covid-19 virus is still circulating in society. Vaccines provide genuine protection against the worst effects of the virus, yet we recognise the legitimate fear on the part of some who otherwise desire to gather for Holy Mass. It is our continuing judgement, therefore, that it is not possible at the present time for all of the faithful to attend Mass on a Sunday thus fulfilling their duty to God.

It is hoped that it will be possible for all Catholics in England and Wales to fulfil this most important Church precept, that of the Sunday Obligation, by the First Sunday in Advent 2021.

In the meantime, all Catholics are asked to do their best to participate in the celebration of the weekly Sunday Mass and to reflect deeply on the centrality of Sunday worship in the life of the Church.

In April, following our Plenary Assembly, we offered a reflection on the experience of the extraordinary long months of the pandemic. It was titled *The Day of the Lord*. We also began to look at the way forward. We spoke about the important invitation to restore the Sunday Mass to its rightful centrality in our lives. We asked for a rekindling in our hearts of a yearning for the Real Presence of the Lord in the Eucharist, as our response to the total, sacrificial love that Jesus has for us. We said: “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.” May this continue to be our striving during these coming months as we journey back to the full celebration of our Sunday Mass and our renewed observance of *The Day of the Lord*.

SYNODAL PROCESS The next Synod of Bishops will be in 2023. The Holy Father calls the entire Catholic Church to embark on a ‘Synodal Path’, in which he seeks not only to refresh the mission of the Church but to do so in a way which expresses the Synodal nature of the Church. The timescale for this process requires an initiative this autumn. It is a summons to a process in which every Parish will reflect together on what we have learnt from the pandemic, how it has changed us, how to renew sacramental life and how to renew our sense of mission and purpose. The Holy Father’s call is that all the faithful who have shared in this time of crisis will make important contributions to the revitalising of our ‘communion, participation and mission’ - the key themes in the title of this Synodal invitation. This is just to keep you in the picture. We will find ways to have our own discussion and reflection here in Welwyn Garden City.

The Synodal Process

Introduction

The title of the 2023 Synod of Bishops is “*For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission.*” For the first time, the Synod Office in Rome has produced a comprehensive process which encompasses the stated aim of the Holy Father that the Church in today’s world should have a vision of missionary communion orientated to evangelisation.¹ The process begins in the Particular (or Local) Church and then moves to the level of the Bishops’ Conference. From there, discernment takes place in the Regional Area – for England and Wales, it would be steered by the European Council of Bishops’ Conferences (CCEE) – before moving to the Universal Church with the final Synod Gathering of Bishops in 2023, *sub et cum Petro*.

Origins

The process reflects the teaching of the Second Vatican Council in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*. In this Council Document, the universality of the People of God is affirmed (LG§12) and by their anointing in the Holy Spirit, the universal body is “incapable of being at fault in belief.” A presupposition for this important statement is a formation of the people in a lived experience of faith, foreshadowed in the Old Testament especially in the Exodus, from which the life of the Gospel is lived by those united to Christ in his new covenant (LG§9). The sacrament of Baptism offers entry into the life of faith and love. The Eucharistic liturgy is the pre-eminent place that the Christian community gathers to celebrate this faith and love. So, the People of God celebrate this life of faith and

love in the context of the Scriptures and the Eucharist. Thereby their faith in the Word of God and in the Tradition of the Church, through the Scriptures and the teaching office of the Church, is affirmed and nurtured. Faith is nourished through the hearing of the Word and the sharing of the Body of the Lord. Through these actions, the members of the Church enter into communion with him and all each other.

The importance of the Bishop

From this universal people, the bishops are chosen and consecrated and have an attention to the whole flock but, in particular, to the Church to which they have been appointed (LG§23). Their ministry is one of “pastors, masters of teaching, priests of sacred worship, ministers of government.” Theirs is the charism of discernment as they are the “authentic guardians, interpreters and witnesses to the faith of the whole Church.”² Therefore, the bishops have a key role in listening to the people of God in their particular Church, and under the power of the Holy Spirit, to hear and discern what is being said of that Church. “In virtue of this catholicity, each part contributes its own gifts to other parts and to the entire church, so the whole and each of the parts are strengthened by the common sharing of all things and by the common effort to achieve fullness in unity.” (LG §13). Each local Church is a fundamental part of the Universal Church, so what happens in each local Church contributes to the whole. It is the first link in the communion of faith shared with the other churches and cemented in the unity of the local Church around the bishop. The diversity of the local Churches and their context brings different gifts to the whole, which contribute to it. This is key to understanding this synodal pathway.

All-Many-One

The synod process is one of “journeying together” towards Christ, the *Way, the Truth and the Life* who calls his people into a unity of purpose and mutual listening between people and pastors. This journeying arrives at the Synod of Bishops gathering itself, which is presided over by the Bishop of Rome, who is called to speak as “pastor and teacher of all Christians” as the supreme witness to the *fides totius Ecclesiae*.³ The bishops are linked to the Bishop of Rome through the bond of episcopal communion and at the same time, are subject to him as head of the College of Bishops. The process therefore can be considered as an exercise of listening *all-many-one*; that is, the voice of the people of God in the particular church (all), must be heard, listened to and discerned by their bishops as the authentic pastors (many), who then gather with the Successor of Peter (one) who acts as a point of unity for the Universal Church. The ultimate discernment is for the Pope who will offer a Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation based on what is presented to him throughout the process of mutual listening, in which the fruits of this discernment are published in a manner that reflects the

life of the Church as always changing within its own context in the world, yet ever faithful to that which it has received.

Questions and Answers

1. What does “Synodality” mean?

Synodality comes from a Greek word meaning the “walking together” (syn-) on a “particular way” (-hodos) The “particular way” has been defined by the Synod of Bishops in its process for the Synod 2023. This can be seen in the infographic attached to this document.

2. If the process is already defined, how do we “walk together?”

Every member of the Church has the right to speak, and the obligation to allow those charged with the work of discernment the freedom to do so. Pope Francis in his book *Let us Dream* says “we need a respectful, mutual listening, free of ideology and predetermined agendas”⁴ This is at the heart of the process. Each diocese will form its own means of running this listening process so that it reaches as broad a scope of people as possible.

3. Is this just for parishes and dioceses?

No, it involves everyone. Schools, young people, hospital chaplaincies, university chaplaincies, prison chaplaincies, the religious and consecrated communities, the societies of apostolic life, those with a distinctive charism in the church all have a voice that speaks into the conversation. Catholic organisations and charities also have a role to play in this work. Echoing the experience of the Second Vatican Council, Ecumenical and Interreligious engagement is also encouraged, and this is best facilitated at the local level. This is an important voice from outside the Church that offers an insight into the collaboration for the good of all.

4. Can we talk about any topic?

Pope Francis says “what is under discussion at synodal gatherings are not the traditional truths of Christian doctrine. The Synod is concerned mainly with how teaching can be lived and applied in the changing contexts of our time.”⁵ Therefore all topics can be raised but it is important to realise that not all will form part of the ongoing discussion.

REFUGEE FAMILY RESETTLEMENT Community Sponsorship - Sponsor Refugees is one of the main legal routes for families living in refugee camps to be resettled in the UK. More than 150 groups across the UK have welcomed a refugee family to their neighbourhood. Read their deeply inspiring and heart-warming stories www.sponsorrefugees.org Lucia Brusati from WGC and Gareth Wall from Stevenage are hoping to set up a local group, meet with individuals who might be interested in helping a refugee family to be resettled in the UK. They are in touch with the Hertfordshire Welcomes Refugees group, the national support agencies for the scheme, Citizens UK and Reset as well as existing Community Sponsorship groups in Baldock, Biggleswade and Bermondsey. If you want to know more, please make contact through the details given below.



**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK
BEGINNING 8TH AUGUST**

Saturday 7th August

Deuteronomy 6:4-13 Listen! God is One!

Matthew 17:14-20 The power of faith~

Sunday 8th August NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1 Kings 19:4-8 Elijah is strengthened by heavenly food as he journeys towards God's mountain.

Ephesians 4:30-5:2 'Imitate God...follow Christ.'

John 6:41-51 Jesus says: 'The bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world.'

Monday 9th August ST. TERESA BENEDICTA OF THE CROSS (Edith Stein) (1891-1942) Born into a practising Jewish family. Distinguished career as a philosopher and academic. Became a Catholic in 1922 and joined the Carmelite Order. Died in Auschwitz concentration camp.

Hosea 2:16,17,21-22 The Lord says: 'I will betroth you to myself...with integrity and justice, with tenderness and love...with faithfulness...'

Matthew 25:1-13 The parable of the sensible and foolish bridesmaids

Tuesday 10th August ST. LAURENCE (Died 258) Deacon and Martyr. Popular Saint in the City of Rome

2 Corinthians 9:6-10 God loves a cheerful giver; there is no limit to the blessings which God can send you.

John 12:24-26 'Wherever I am, my servant will be there too.'

Wednesday 11th August St. Clare (1193-1253) In the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi, Clare lived a life of poverty and simplicity underpinned with deep contemplation.

Deuteronomy 34:1-12 In praise of Moses who dies~Matthew 18:15-20 'Where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.'

Thursday 12th August

Joshua 3:7-11,13-17 The people cross the River Jordan and enter the Promised Land

Matthew 18:21-19:1 Forgiveness - how often and how deep?

Friday 13th August

Joshua 24:1-13 Joshua reflects on all God has done for his people

Matthew 19:3-12 The Pharisees try to test Jesus
