

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*

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time 5th September 2021

Today's Gospel reading from St. Mark is wonderful! There is a big gathering with the crowd bringing a deaf man with a speech impediment to Jesus to lay his hand upon him. We see Jesus take the man aside in private and speak to him setting him free from what he has experienced and enriching his life with hearing and clear speech. We return to the response of the multitude who are over the moon and praise Jesus for all the good things he has done.

How has your week gone? Were there highpoints enjoyed with others? Were there quiet, reflective moments when you just knew God was there? As we prepare to enter a fresh week, what are you grateful to God for? For me it has certainly been a schools' week! Leading reflections with staff on their inset days, celebrating Mass with a Year 7 cohort and a service with Year 12 put me in touch with adults, young people and children at a key point in their lives - what a blessing! I also had a Wedding last Saturday and then a Baptism on Sunday with the joy of families and friends gathering in their respective ways. I had the opportunity to cook dinner for a trio, being challenged to come up with dishes I had never served up before...all from scratch! There have been visits to individuals and those who have made contact on the phone or who have turned up at my front door. Never a dull moment! I have continued to be fortunate enough to have time for personal prayer and quiet moments of contemplation as well as daily Mass. God finds ways of reaching out to us with love, grace, joy and peace. We MUST always be on the lookout and listening for that Presence which is beyond anything we can imagine, the God who is not afraid of the ordinary, putting us in touch with what is extraordinary.

Going back to the man in the Gospel, he now could hear the voice of Jesus - what do you think it sounded like in tone, strength and expression? The man can speak clearly - what message does he have to communicate to those around him and how is it uttered? We meet Jesus in so many ways. Let us be ready to hear him even more attentively and to use our whole being to share with others the joy of knowing him.

Have a great week ahead and God bless you and your loved ones.

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.

FR. TONY We wish Fr. Tony every blessing as he starts this weekend in the Church of The Five Precious Wounds as Parish Priest of Stonebridge Park.

FR. WILLIAM This week we welcome Fr. William Johnstone to Welwyn Garden City as our Assistant Priest. He will be busy unpacking and we look forward to getting to know him better. We ask God to bless him in this first appointment as a newly ordained priest.

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, 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.

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. We are monitoring 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

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. Norbert on 01707 323234.

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.

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. There are 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.

MASS INTENTIONS Fr. Norbert is celebrating the Mass Intentions week by week. If anyone wants Mass offered for a particular intention, please let him know. Donations for the Masses should be put in an envelope and given to Fr. Norbert 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: Monica Vergette RIP, Patricia Hart RIP, Joan O'Connor RIP, Jean Potter RIP 1st Anniv, Stephen Greene RIP, Augustus Joachim RIP, Agnes D'Mello RIP, Jesus Muniz Castelo RIP Birthday, Ejikeme Belonwu RIP

STEWARDS We are so grateful to the stewards who have worked tirelessly in our parishes at every Mass, offering a warm welcome to those attending, ensuring people feel safe and then cleaning the churches afterwards. We are continuing with the regime now established. If any of you are willing to help in the coming weeks, please let Fr. Norbert know. Thank you!

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! Fr. Norbert will be the Celebrant on 9th October.

PLEASE SPONSOR One of our parishioners Spencer White is raising money for Cancer Research and Marie Curie by participating in the Swimathon on Sunday 12th September at Hatfield swimming pool. This will be a 5km swim, a half marathon is swimming terms. Please keep him in your prayers as he trains for this event which he is aiming to complete in under 2 hours. To contribute towards this fantastic cause please see Spencer's Just Giving page at:
<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/swimathon-20211516>

SCHOOLS Let's keep in our prayers the children and young people of our schools as they start a new year that they together with staff, governors and families may have a successful year and be able to respond to whatever challenges the pandemic continues to bring. In a few weeks students will start at college and university, some leaving home for the first time. Let's remember them too.

RETRouvaille Covid 19—a very challenging time for many marriages. So much uncertainty around, health, income, employment, vulnerable family members, children, housing. Different ways of seeing things, coping with change, managing fears can be a source of conflict and stress. It can be difficult to talk, to listen to support and comfort when there is so much uncertainty. Being together all the time, brings different challenges. You wonder would we be better apart?

Retrouvaille is a programme to support couples, it brings a positive focus, new hope and helps nourish and grow your marriageand you don't need to leave home, it comes to you!

For confidential information about 'Retrouvaille', or to register for the next programme, a Virtual weekend commencing 24th October 21st- 2021, Call or text 086 8211795. Email: info@retrouvaille.uk – or visit www.retrouvaille.uk

SVP There has been a request for gardening tools to be donated for a single father bringing up his young family. If you can help, please ring Janet Lewis on 01707 326456. Thank you.

BABY STROLLER *From parishioners:* 'We have a preloved baby buggy/pram/stroller and the brake does get stuck but it is in a decent condition. We were given it and were wondering if anyone from the church, who is low on money, is in need of one?' If you are interested, please contact Fr. Norbert who will pass on the details. Thanks.

HERTS WELCOMES REFUGEES

Here is an update from Herts Welcomes Refugees (HWR) in the light of the unfolding crisis in Afghanistan:

You will all be concerned about the horrific situation in Afghanistan so here is an update on related activities in Hertfordshire.

There are already 24 Afghan families (130 individuals) in two hotels in the Watford area. They came here under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP Scheme) and have been given emergency, short term support from the Red Cross and assistance from the Home Office.

HWR, mainly via Kate Scott, our very active Area Convenor for Dacorum, and several other charities are taking, or have already delivered, clothing, children's toys and books and other urgently needed items.

At the moment we do not need any more of these - but we will let you know if we are asked for more.

What we do need are mobile phones - wiped - and/or Sim cards with £10 or £20 on them.

If you are able to provide any of these they can be posted to Kate at 80 Oak Cross Road, Berkhamsted, HP4 3HZ.

We realise that phones would be more expensive to post and if you prefer these could be dropped off at my house - 106 Handside Lane, WGC, AL8 6SY. (If the package won't fit through the letter box and there is no reply please go round the back of the house and leave on one of the cushioned chairs under the porch.

According to the Watford Observer Welwyn Hatfield is one of three Hertfordshire boroughs to have committed to taking in Afghan refugee families under the ARAP scheme.

Can you email your local councillors to say how glad you are about this? Apparently Grant Shapps has said he is looking forward to welcoming Afghans to the area so we should email him as well.

The HWR Management Team are discussing the impact the new arrivals will have on us and how we can help the local authorities who take in Afghan refugees. Obviously there will be more work to do but we will continue to support the refugees and asylum seekers who are already here and still need our help.

Vicky Woodcraft,

Trustee and Safeguarding Officer, Herts Welcomes Refugees.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK
BEGINNING 5TH SEPTEMBER**

Saturday 4th September St. Cuthbert (634-687) Monk, Prior and then Bishop of Lindisfarne. Zealous in preaching the Gospel. Body now in Durham Cathedral.
Colossians 1:21-23 Paul, servant of the Gospel
Luke 6:1-5 Sabbath controversy

Sunday 5th September TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
Isaiah 35:4-7 'Courage! Do not be afraid!'
James 2:1-5 The making of distinctions in the community
Mark 7:31-37 Jesus helps a man to hear and speak clearly

Monday 6th September
Colossians 1:24-2:3 The continuing suffering of Christ
Luke 6:6-11 More sabbath controversy

Tuesday 7th September
Colossians 2:6-15 In Jesus lives the fullness of divinity
Luke 6:12-19 Jesus spends the night in prayer and then chooses the 12 apostles

Wednesday 8th September BIRTHDAY OF OUR LADY
Micah 5:1-4 The one to be born - Jesus
Luke 4:38-44 Matthew 1:1-16, 18-23 Matthew account of the Birth of Jesus.

Thursday 9th September
Colossians 3:12-17 The qualities of the community
Luke 6:27-38 'Give, and there will be gifts for you!'

Friday 10th September
1 Timothy 1:1-2, 12-14 Paul is filled with faith and love
Luke 6:39-42 'Can the blind lead the blind?'