

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*

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time 26th September 2021

Another month nearly completed! The sun has been shining and we've enjoyed warmth and beauty outdoors. What has your week been like? Challenges, frustrations, straightforward, delightful? Life is so varied and amazing...God works in all sorts of ways!

For me, a really uplifting occasion was on Thursday evening when a group of 16 Christian Leaders from our town gathered for the first time in 18 months to share a meal and have time together - no Zoom or total distancing! I asked those attending to come with a one-minute thought to offer the others based on the answer to the following question: 'How have you felt the Lord close to you during the pandemic?' It was very moving to hear the dreams and joys of such a diverse gathering. No right or wrong answers - just a word from the heart based on real experiences.

The pandemic has not left us totally; but we have the sense of a new beginning. How would you respond to my question? I suppose some of you are wondering what I said?! I spoke about how I wanted to stay well so that I could be there to serve you. I recalled the extra time I have for prayer and reflection - not always possible at other times! I offered the experience of going to the Lister to visit and minister to those dying of Covid-19 and the powerful witness of the loving care of the staff who were revealing such compassion and professionalism in the midst of so much heartache and tragedy.

In our Gospel reading from St. Mark, the Lord well and truly challenges us to put him first and not to let anything get in the way. The language used is Semitic in idiom

and sounds so harsh to our modern ear; however, the turn of phrase pushes people to the extreme but does not intend the literal. The passage also forces us to acknowledge that God can and does choose to work beyond the boundaries we would expect - but that is God being God!

Let's take time this week to be open to the workings of God's Spirit in our own lives and allow ourselves to recognise that self-same Spirit in others. God bless you and keep you in his care. With much love, *Fr. Norbert*

FR. TONY'S FAREWELL Fr. Tony is settling into his new parish and is beginning to feel at home. On a Sunday he doesn't have an evening Mass and so he and Fr. Norbert have agreed to have his Farewell Mass on Sunday 17th October at 6pm at Holy Family Church followed by a gathering with a presentation. As you leave Mass there are envelopes for this purpose which you are asked to return to Fr. Norbert and they will be put together as one cheque. If you are contributing by cheque please make it out to WRCDT and write 'Fr. Tony' on the back; these will be paid into the parish account. If anyone would like to help with the reception afterwards, please let Fr. Norbert know. Covid hasn't gone away and so we'll find the best way to share food and drink as we give thanks for Fr. Tony's ministry in our midst, whilst keeping everyone safe. Thank you.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION On the parish website wgc-catholics.org.uk there are forms for parents to download to enrol children and young people for these Sacraments. First Communion children should be at least in Year 3 at school and Confirmation candidates in at least Year 9. Preparation will begin after the February half-term in 2022 with the Sacraments being celebrated next summer. The enrolment forms will help us to know how many are involved and to plan the respective preparation courses.

ADULTS WHO WISH TO JOIN THE CHURCH (RCIA) Please contact Fr. Norbert on 01707 323234 in the first place. Once we have an idea of numbers we'll plan the preparation. Thank you.

MASS IN WGC From Monday 8th November, the times of weekday and weekend Masses will return to their usual schedule. This means that St. Bonaventure's will be open again. The safety and security of all people is important. Mass intentions can be booked from that date in all three churches. Obviously with COVID-19 and all the restrictions we have faced, things might change but the desire is to establish a strong pattern which can be carried on for some time. In the coming weeks we will reflect on the way Mass is celebrated, the use of ministers and altar servers and also singing at Mass. The scheduled times of Confession will be reinstated from 8th November too.

PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF MASS IN WELWYN GARDEN CITY

The precautions with the use of sanitiser will continue for now.

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. Norbert on 01707 323234 and Fr. William 01707 327434

SACRAMENTS

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals can all take place.

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

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 8th October.

MASS INTENTIONS Fr. Norbert and Fr. William are celebrating the Mass Intentions week by week. If anyone wants Mass offered for a particular intention, please let them know. Donations for the Masses should be put in an envelope and given to Fr. Norbert or Fr. William 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: Josie Bell RIP, In thanksgiving (Rodrigues and Pais families), Shannon Howes Intention, Teresa Knowles Birthday Intention, Intentions of Miriom O'Shea and Marie Sandford, Simon Stanton RIP.

CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE On the parish website wgccatholics.org.uk there is a form to download requesting a Certificate of Catholic Practice. Please fill it out and return to Fr. Norbert at Our Lady's and he will prepare the document and return to the family. Thank you.

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.

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.

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.

OUR LADY'S The monthly cleaning of Our Lady's Church will start up again this Saturday 2nd October at 10am. Volunteers are asked to come and help for an hour. There are many cobwebs waiting to be cleared away! Also, help with the maintenance of the grounds would be much appreciated. Please come this Saturday for an hour starting at 10am.

CAFOD Family Fast Day – Climate Crisis Appeal

Our local experts are helping people all over the world to adapt to climate change and protect our common home. This Family Fast Day, donate in the parish using a CAFOD envelope (available as you leave Mass) or online through the CAFOD website (cafod.org.uk/climatecrisis) and help communities affected by the worst impacts of the climate crisis. You can also add your voice to our online petition calling for our Prime Minister to show leadership in tackling the climate crisis, cafod.org.uk/climate. And thank you for your generosity for our emergency appeals to support our sisters and brothers in crisis in Afghanistan and Haiti. You can read more about CAFOD's response at cafod.org.uk/emergencies.

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.

SPONSORED BIKE RIDE FOR CAFOD This has raised a total of £2328.36! We are so grateful to the riders and parishioners who helped to make this possible. **WELL DONE!**

SEASON OF CREATION This is a time of sustained prayer and action which started on 1st September and lasts a month and four days. During this season we are encouraged to pray and engage in community events in order to deepen our relationship with our God, our neighbour and the earth we share, being ever more attentive to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

Prayer

Father, Lord of all creation,
we praise you with all your creatures
and the whole universe that comes forth from the work of Your hands.
We acknowledge the privilege and responsibility
that You give us as stewards of Your creation.
In our ignorance we have done damage to our common home
and our brothers and sisters are suffering.
Through faithfully following your Son
guide and direct us to prepare for a better future.
Teach us to contemplate You in the beauty of the universe,
for all things speak of You.
Give us the grace to recognise, respect and protect all You have created,
using wisely all that you have entrusted to us.
Holy Spirit, who first hovered over the dawn of creation
and drew order out of the chaos,
help us to build your kingdom of justice, love, peace and beauty
where the poor of the earth are crying out.
You, who live and reign, world without end, Amen.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK
BEGINNING 26TH SEPTEMBER**

Saturday 25th September

Zechariah 2:5-9,14-15 'I am coming to dwell in the middle of you.'

Luke 9:43-45 'The Son of Man is going to be handed over.'

Sunday 26th September TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Numbers 11:25-29 The Lord takes some of the spirit that was on Moses and shares it with the elders. James 5:1-6 An answer for the rich!

Mark 9:38-43,45,47-48 Challenges of discipleship.

Monday 27th September St. Vincent de Paul (1581-1660) Priest, Founder of the Vincentians. Renowned for service of the poor, missionary work and education.

Zechariah 8:1-8 God will bring his people back

Luke 9:46-50 The disciples of Jesus argue between themselves.

Tuesday 28th September

Zechariah 8:20-23 'We want to go with you, since we have learnt that God is with you.' Luke 9:51-56 Jesus resolutely takes the road to Jerusalem

Wednesday 29th September SAINTS MICHAEL, GABRIEL AND RAPHAEL
Archangels mentioned in Scripture

Apocalypse 12:7-12 The image of Michael in the heavens

John 1:47-51 Jesus speaks of angels ascending and descending.

Thursday 30th September St. Jerome (340-420) Priest and Doctor of the Church.
Translated the Bible into Latin

Nehemiah 8:1-12 As Ezra reads from the Book of the Law of Moses, the people are moved to tears.

Luke 10:1-12 The Lord sends out 72 in pairs to prepare places which he will visit.

Friday 1st October St. Therese of the Child Jesus (1873-1897) Carmelite Nun and Doctor of the Church. She wrote about her Little Way - doing ordinary things in an extraordinary way. She is also Patron of the Missions because of her burning desire to be a missionary and her prayerful and supportive encouragement to those on the missions.

Baruch 1:15-22 The admission of not listening to God

Luke 10:13-16 The pride of the towns of Chorazin and Bethsaida