

WELWYN GARDEN CITY



ST. BONAVENTURE



**OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



HOLY FAMILY

*Parish Priest: Fr. Norbert Fernandes Assistant Priest: Fr. Vincent Malone
Parish Secretary: Kathryn Hubbard*

First Sunday of Advent 1st December 2013 (page 82)

‘The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus Christ.’ These are the opening words of Pope Francis’ Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* published on Tuesday. Today as we enter the Season of Advent let us stop to ponder these few words in the opening sentence.

Firstly, our Holy Father speaks about the joy of the Gospel. Good News is at the heart of our Faith - Good News proclaimed afresh to each generation willing to hear it. Jesus Christ IS the Message from God our Father to us and to the whole of humanity. What do you think is the essence of what God wants to say to us? How have you heard it personally? What keeps it alive for you? I am sure God wants us to remember that we have been created in his image and likeness. He cannot stop telling us of his deep love for us. There is nothing that he wants to stand in the way of our being embraced by him and that is why he sent us his Son Jesus Christ, the Word made Flesh.

‘...fills the hearts and minds of all...’ It is all very well to know this message in our minds or only to hold it in our hearts. However, the challenge is to keep pondering the Gospel, mulling it over and cherishing it. Then to start the process all over again! We need to find ways of sharing what we have learned with others so that the deep joy of what we believe radiates from our attitudes, behaviour and conviction. Advent is a time to make space for Jesus Christ, to clear a pathway for him who is bringing us so much. It is also the time to give those around us a living experience of Divine Love.

‘...who encounter Jesus Christ.’ Our Faith is one of encounter - meeting with God who reveals himself in the Christ Child, in the Man hanging from the Cross, in the Risen One. He WILL come again in glory at the end of time. We meet him here at Mass and in our everyday circumstances.

Let us pray that this Advent we will let these words from Pope Francis become a reality in our lives and in our world. God bless you. ***Fr. Norbert***

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO EVERYONE I felt happy and sad, all at the same time last Saturday. The Farewell celebration in church and hall was wonderful and much appreciated. Thank you to all who were involved in making it happen with food and decorations and music and lovely displays of singing, fencing and dancing. Thanks and blessings to the servers at Mass. What a sense of joy in the community - I'll miss you all. Your generosity is touching and appreciated. With your love and support I move into another part of the Lord's wonderful garden. God bless you all. With love, *Fr. Michael*.
*Thank you to all the many people who helped in any way last Saturday with Fr. Michael's Farewell - at Mass or in the Hall afterwards. As you can tell he thoroughly enjoyed it.

ADVENT On Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays in Advent there will be half an hour of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament after morning Mass at 9.30 - a time of silent prayer and reflection in each of our churches.

ADVENT REFLECTION To help with our preparation for Christmas, Fr. Vincent will give a reflection on how we can follow Mary's example of saying 'yes' to God. It will take place on Wednesday 11th December at 8pm in Holy Family Parish room. All are welcome. Refreshments will follow.

ARTHUR CAREY RIP Arthur's Funeral Mass will be at 11am on Thursday 5th December in St. Bonaventure's.

RCIA Next meeting on Monday 2nd Dec. at 7.30pm in Our Lady's sacristy.

GREETINGS CARDS It is a tradition each year for parishioners to send greetings to persecuted Christians, victims of torture and their support groups. Even though the card is a small token, it means a lot to the prisoners who receive them. You will have an opportunity to send a simple message and sign a joint card this weekend at all Masses. A small donation towards the cost of card and postage would be welcomed.

SVP The annual SVP collection will take place after each Mass next weekend 7/8 December. Your contributions make a huge difference in the way the SVP is able to support and assist our Friends in the parish. Thank you for your generosity. SVP Gift Aid envelopes are available at the back of church.

HCPT CHRISTMAS GRAND DRAW Tickets will be on sale at the back of the churches on the weekend of 7th and 8th at all Masses for your chance to win £4000!

OUR LADY'S CHURCH Many thanks to all who gave up their time on a cold Saturday morning and helped to build and erect the Outdoor crib ready for Advent and to all who provided the welcome refreshments.

OUR LADY'S CHURCH Cleaning of our church and garden maintenance will take place on Saturday 7th December at 10am for 1 hour. Refreshments will be provided. All are welcome to come along and help!

LOURDES WATER is available at the back of each church, please help yourself.

SCHOOL MASSES On Monday 2nd December there will be Mass in Holy Family School at 11am and at 2.15pm there will be Mass in Our Lady School. The Masses are to mark the start of the season of Advent. Parishioners are welcome.

SCHOOL FORMS Parents who need a Priest's Reference Form for Reception Class entry at one of our Catholic schools should arrange an appointment through Kathryn Hubbard on 01707 322579. Fr. Norbert will be available in Our Lady's Church on Monday 9th December 4 - 6pm and Wednesday 18th December 4 - 6pm. Parent/s are asked to come with their forms prepared, to bring their child and to wait in church. If your child was baptised at one of our WGC churches and you need a copy of your child's Baptismal Certificate, please contact Kathryn Hubbard.

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS for the Housebound and Elderly 'Bucket Collection.' For those who missed this collection last week (donations of £1 or more) there will be 'Bucket Collections' after each Mass again this week.

PLEASE SUPPORT KISS AND THE PASSAGE Frilly Scarves, Self Knit kits and Personalised Santa treat plates on sale after church today (St. Bonaventure's).

NATIVITY PLAY ST. BONAVENTURE'S Our first rehearsal is today, the next rehearsal is Tuesday 3.45pm and then Sat/Sun 2.30-4pm. All children welcome.

HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL Next Saturday 12-3pm. Donations of whole cakes and tray bakes most welcome It is not too late to book a table, forms are at the back of church.

LECTIO DIVINA (praying the scriptures) during Advent - Lection Divina continues this Thursday at The Holy Family Church hall. The prayer sessions are open to all parishioners from the three parishes. All sessions will take place on the Thursday prior to the Sunday Mass they relate to. Start at 8pm and finish around 9.15pm. Tea, coffee and biscuits will follow.

CAN YOU HELP? A single mum is in need of rugs to cover a bare floor, she also needs a single mattress. If you can help contact Janet on 01707 326456.

HOLY FAMILY CHURCH Giving Tree Mass is next Sunday 8th December, at 9.30am. During this Mass the children will be encouraged to think about children less fortunate than themselves. The idea is that every child who attends the Mass brings up a wrapped Christmas gift to be placed under a 'Giving Tree' during the Offertory (label gifts boy/girl and age of child. These gifts will then be given to local organisations who help children in need. Last year the response was tremendous so please try your hardest even in these difficult times to give what you can to help.

The Christmas Tableau The Christmas Tableau is at the 6.30pm Mass on Christmas Eve. Rehearsals for this will be on 15th and 22nd Dec. If your child would like to take part please sign up on the clipboard at the back of the church. Thank you.

HARVEST FAST DAY The Collection in October came to £1809.49 from our three parishes. Thank you for your generosity.

CONGRATULATIONS to John and Joyce Maguire on the occasion of their Diamond wedding anniversary this Thursday. Mass will be celebrated for them on 10th December.

PAPAL CONSULTATION Remember that Pope Francis wants to hear your thoughts about the 'pastoral challenges to the family in the context of evangelisation'. See the website of the Catholic Church in England and Wales for background information. You can make an online response on <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FamilySynod2014> Paper copies of the Synod Questionnaire are available at the back of our churches. Responses need to be in by 6th December.

CONCERT Our thanks to the Hertfordshire Constabulary Choir for their concert last Monday and to Holy Family's CAFOD for arranging the fundraising event for the Philippines.

DEANERY EDUCATION MASS Thanks to all who supported last Tuesday's Mass, especially to John Henry Newman School for the music at Mass and to Our Lady's and Holy Family Schools for providing the refreshments.

CAROL SINGING at the Howard Centre next Sunday 8th December by the Christian Churches. Come and add your voice between 1 and 2pm!

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Fr. Vincent 01707 327434
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Holy Family Church
194 Knightsfield AL8 7RQ

OUR LADY'S PARISH CENTRE
 Bookings should be made with Phil (Philomena) Johnson 01707 377442 or 07790 135458
 peartreepomegranatecafe@googlemail.com

CONFESSIONS Holy Family:	Thursday 10am - 10.30am
St. Bonaventure:	Saturday 10.30 - 11am
Our Lady's:	Saturday 5pm - 5.30pm

MASS TIMES

02 Monday	9.30am	Our Lady's	Advent feria
03 Tuesday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	St. Francis Xavier
	7pm	Our Lady's	
04 Wednesday	9.30am	Holy Family	St. John Damascene
05 Thursday	9.30am	Holy Family	Advent feria
	11am	St. Bonaventure	Funeral Mass
06 Friday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	St. Nicholas
	7pm	Our Lady's	
07 Saturday	10am	St. Bonaventure	St. Ambrose
	Second Sunday of Advent		
07 Saturday	6pm	Our Lady's	
08 Sunday	8am	St. Bonaventure	
	9.30am	Holy Family	
	10.30am	St. Bonaventure	
	11.30am	Our Lady's	
	6pm	Holy Family	



CHAPLAINS TO THE Q.E.II AND LISTER HOSPITALS: If you are going into hospital you can contact the R.C. Chaplains: Jacqueline Humphreys and John Paul Lyttle, on 07884187463