

WELWYN GARDEN CITY



ST. BONAVENTURE



**OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



HOLY FAMILY

*Parish Priest: Fr. Norbert Fernandes Assistant Priest: Fr. Gerard O'Brien
Seminararian: Samuel Ejeregbe Parish Secretary: Kathryn Hubbard*

First Sunday of Advent 30th November (p.82 of Mass book)

Advent and Christmas are two of the Church's seasons. The word advent means *arrival*. Advent means more than preparing for Christmas. It starts each new Christian year, a period of waiting and expectancy. This happy season starts this week-end and lasts for four weeks; a time of special prayer, liturgy and scripture. Advent calls us to a new beginning. Curious about when our Lord '*will come again*' we Christians live in an 'in between period of salvation'; between the two comings of Jesus.

We await the arrival of Jesus at the end of time when he gathers us to himself, commemorated in the first two weeks of Advent. We await expectantly with hope and joy, until Jesus Christ is revealed to everyone on the last day. We then celebrate the arrival of Jesus as a baby in Bethlehem in the second two weeks of Advent. But the joy is restrained during Advent; there are no flowers at the altar and the vestments are purple so represent restraint not sadness. On the third Sunday of Advent, which we call Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday, the vestments are a lighter shade, rose, to signify that the birthday of Jesus is getting closer; the excitement increases. This time of year can be so busy; shopping, special school events, cooking, visiting. Yes it is an exciting time, but the secular world tries to convince us that Christmas is here already. Let us not allow this beautiful season of Advent pass by in the stress of preparing for Christmas. Maybe we can be still for just 5 minutes a day and reflect on that night in Bethlehem when Jesus was really born, when God became man for each one of us and what this means to us. After all the Christmas season really only begins on Christmas day and continues well beyond St Stephen's day (Boxing Day) and the sales.

Fr. Gerard

ADVENT During the Season of Advent there will be quiet prayer before the Blessed Sacrament in each of our churches for half an hour: Our Lady's on Mondays at 10am, in Holy Family on Thursdays (as usual) at 10am and in St. Bonaventure's on Fridays at 10am. **CHRISTMAS SERVICES CARDS** are available this weekend. Please take one.

RECONCILIATION SERVICE before Christmas will take place on Tuesday 16th December at 8pm. This will provide each one of us with a time of reflection to take stock of our lives and prepare ourselves by celebrating God's forgiving love in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. There will be a number of visiting priests to help Fr. Gerard and Fr. Norbert in hearing Confessions.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION DAY on Saturday 7th February in Our Lady's Hall. All couples getting married in WGC or elsewhere in 2015 and 2016 are invited to this day which will start with coffee at 10.30am and end with the Blessing of Engaged Couples at the 6pm Mass. It is important that couples make contact with Fr. Norbert soon so that the paperwork and all the necessary preparations can be made, especially if you are marrying outside of WGC.

FUNERALS Our Sympathy and prayers to family and friends of the deceased **WILLIAM GALWAY R.I.P.** The Funeral Mass for Bill Galway will be in Our Lady's Church at 12.30pm on Monday 1st December.

ANTHONY DAGNALL R.I.P. The Funeral Mass for Anthony Dagnall will be in St. Bonaventure's Church at 11am on Wednesday 3rd December.

MARY MARTIN R.I.P. The Funeral Mass for Mary Martin will be in St. Bonaventure's at 12.30pm on Wednesday 10th December.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD (SHOE BOXES) Thank you to all who contributed so generously to this appeal, a total of 106 boxes were collected on Monday.

OUR LADY'S CHURCH Thanks to all who came to build the Outdoor Crib in preparation for Advent and Christmas and to those who provided refreshments. Your efforts are greatly appreciated by the Parish and the local community.

OUR LADY'S CHURCH The monthly cleaning of the church and grounds maintenance takes place next Saturday 6th December at 10am for ONE hour with festive refreshments afterwards. All are welcome to come along!

RECEPTION CLASS PRIEST'S FORMS Fr. Norbert will be available to sign Priest's Reference Forms for children applying to Reception Class in our Catholic Schools on Wednesday 17th December 3 - 6pm at Our Lady's Church. Parents need to ring Kathryn Hubbard on 01707 322579 to arrange a 5-minute appointment. Parent/s should come with a completed form and their child and wait in the church. Another date will be proposed for early January.

THE CAFOD group will be meeting in the parish room at Holy Family on Tuesday 2nd December at 7.30 pm. Anyone who wishes to come along will be very welcome.

NATIVITY PLAY ST. BONAVENTURE'S Once again as part of our Carol Service at St. Bonaventure's on 14th December at 4pm, there will be a Nativity Play. All children/young people are invited to take part. Our first rehearsal is this afternoon Sunday 30th November from 2.30pm - 4pm.

INTERFAITH MATTERS 'Decorations', Tuesday 16th December at 7.30pm at the Backhouse Room, Handside Lane. Celebrating Seasonal Festivals with seasonal food

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS 2014 BUCKET COLLECTION For the last 7 years parishioners have donated items or money to make Christmas Hampers for the elderly and house bound. The recipients of these hampers have been really grateful not only with the contents of their hampers but because they indicated the parish was thinking of them at this sometimes very lonely time of year. Last year we distributed hampers to approximately 60 households using money donated by way of bucket collections where we were overwhelmed by the generosity of parishioners.

This year there will be bucket collections at all three parishes next weekend 6th/7th Dec where we hope you will be able to give as generously. If you think you can help by shaking a bucket at the end of Masses in any of the three churches then please let us know. We will also need many helpers to assemble and distribute the hampers so please find it in your heart to volunteer and make someone's day in the run up to Christmas.

The hampers will be assembled in Holy Family Parish room on Fri 19th Dec at 7.00pm and distributed on Sat 20th Dec from 10.00am. If you know of anyone who you think would benefit from receiving a hamper or are able to help in any way please contact Sally Kee 01707 261394, Jacqueline McCallum 01707 328460, Joss Innocent Landers 01707 396172, Caroline Sherar 01707 327862 or Ann Power 01438 717132.

FLOWER ARRANGING St. Bonaventure's Flower Arranging Classes are back for the festive season! Connor & Julie are back with four different flower arranging classes, starting on Tuesday 2nd December - 7pm - open to all abilities, beginners welcome! Places for classes need to be booked in advance as flowers are provided. First class is £7, for more information about the classes please call Connor on 078012 06721.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION of Our Lady on Monday 8th December. This is not a Holy Day in our country. As well as 9.30am Mass there will be an extra Mass at 7pm at Our Lady's.

CAROLS IN HOWARD CENTRE led by the Christian Churches of WGC on Sunday 7th December 3 - 4 pm. Come and lend your voice! Coffee and mince pies in YMCA space afterwards. **COUNCIL CAROLS** on Thursday 18th December at 6.30pm on the Campus Roundabout. All welcome.

CAROL SERVICES Holy Family School's KS2 Carol Service will be in Holy Family Church on Thursday 11th December at 6pm. Our Lady School's Carol Service will be in Our Lady's Church on Friday 12th December at 2pm. Springmead Primary School will be having their Carol Service in Our Lady's Church (for the third year) on Wednesday 10th December at 6pm, Commonswood Primary School will have their Carol Service for the first time in Our Lady's Church on Monday 15th December at 6pm.

CAROLS IN THE CLOISTERS. All welcome. Carols and Christmas reflections followed by refreshments. 7pm - 9pm Sat 20 Dec in the Focolare Centre, 69 Parkway, WGC. Contributions of festive snacks to share appreciated.

TALK Evangelisation and Contemporary Society: the Challenge of Pope Francis - a talk by Bishop John Sherrington for all WGC parishioners. Tues 3rd Feb 2015 at 7.45 pm in the Focolare Centre, 69 Parkway, WGC. Keep this date in your diary; further details to follow.

SHEILA STACK R.I.P. We have been informed of the recent death of Sheila Stack whom some parishioners of Our Lady's will remember.

ACTION BY CHRISTIANS AGAINST TORTURE Receiving a greetings card means a great deal to a prisoner of conscience. It can be like a candle in a dark cell. This year ACAT has sent us a list of thirty-two names of prisoners and support groups throughout the world, from The Phillipines to Nigeria to China who suffer for the sake of Justice. Ready stamped/addressed cards have been prepared for these people. All that is needed is to add your own greeting plus those of your family and friends; a donation for postage and card would be appreciated. Contact Anne Stapleton (328516).

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OUR LADY'S PARISH CENTRE Bookings should be made with Phil Johnson 01707 377442
 peartreepomegranatecafe@googlemail.com

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

MASS TIMES

01 Monday	9.30am	Our Lady's	Advent feria
	12.30pm	Our Lady's	Funeral Mass William Galway R.I.P.
02 Tuesday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria
	7pm	Our Lady's	
03 Wednesday	9.30am	Holy Family	St. Francis Xavier
	11am	St. Bonaventure's	Funeral Mass Anthony Dagnall R.I.P.
04 Thursday	9.30am	Holy Family	Advent feria
05 Friday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria
	7pm	Our Lady's	
06 Saturday	10am	St. Bonaventure	St. Nicholas
Second Sunday of Advent			
06 Saturday	6pm	Our Lady's	
07 Sunday	8am	St. Bonaventure	
	9.30am	Holy Family	
	10.30am	St. Bonaventure	
	11.30am	Our Lady's	
	6pm	Holy Family	



CHAPLAIN TO THE Q.E.II AND LISTER HOSPITALS: If you are going into hospital you can contact the R.C. Chaplain: Jacqueline Humphreys on 07884187463