

# WELWYN GARDEN CITY



**ST. BONAVENTURE**



**OUR LADY,  
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



**HOLY FAMILY**

*Parish Priest: Fr. Norbert Fernandes Assistant Priest: Fr. Martin Tate  
Parish Secretary: Kathryn Hubbard*

***Third Sunday of Advent 13th December 2015 (p.87 of Mass book)***

Last Tuesday Pope Francis opened the Holy Door of St. Peter's in Rome and inaugurated the Year of Mercy. So we have begun! Here in our town on Tuesday evening we marked the beginning of the Jubilee Year with the opening of Doors of Mercy in Our Lady's Church. It was an amazing experience especially because so many people came from the other parishes of Stevenage Deanery. Our Deanery comprises of Royston, Baldock, Letchworth, Hitchin, Stevenage, Knebworth, Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City. So many representatives gathered with lighted candles outside the church in order solemnly to process into church. The Lord has a sense of humour and sent a blast of wind to blow out the candles in one big *whoosh!* Our RCIA Group was there and the Liturgy was supported in a huge number of ways by the Confirmation Group. Our young people were great ambassadors and made us feel so proud. Together with the musicians, singers, servers and hospitality group, they gave all our visitors a brilliant experience of the Church in WGC with warmth of welcome and hospitality as well as the holiness of the Mass proclaiming God's Presence and taking us to heaven. I am so grateful to everyone who worked so hard behind the scenes to get things ready and assist in all that unfolded. Our visitors kept saying 'Thank you!'

Today the Church says to us 'Gaudete! Rejoice!' There is not long to go until Christmas! John the Baptist in our Gospel passage is asked by the people who come to him 'What must we do?' This is a significant question we must ask ourselves with just a short period left of our Advent journey. Take time to stop and reflect. Pray hard for the courage to be like the Baptist and announce the Good News. Share with your loved ones an experience of a deep faith put into action as you reach out to those who are in need far away as well as those closer to home. Let us ensure that Pope Francis' vision for the Year of Mercy will be realised through our willingness to receive from God mercy beyond measure and in turn lavish it on others in a way we had never thought possible. God bless you! ***Fr. Norbert***

**RECONCILIATION SERVICE FOR ADVENT** in Our Lady's Church on Tuesday 15th December at 8pm. Pope Francis asks each one of us to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, that is go to Confession, in the Year of Mercy. Why not come? As a community we will reflect on God's Word before celebrating individual Confessions. There will be four extra priests to help that evening! Parents, why not give your children the opportunity to prepare for Christmas with the celebration of Confession?

**ADVENT PRAYER** There will be half an hour of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in Advent: on Monday after Our Lady's 9.30am Mass, on Thursday after Holy Family's 9.30am Mass and on Friday after St. Bonaventure's 9.30am Mass. Come for some quiet prayer and reflection.

**ALASTAIR LIVINGSTONE RIP** Alastair's Funeral Mass will be on Monday at 12noon in St. Bonaventure's Church.

**BISHOP JOHN SHERRINGTON** will celebrate 11pm Mass on Christmas Eve and the St. Stephen's Day Mass at St. Bonaventure's. On Sunday 27th December he will celebrate the 9.30am Mass on the Feast of the Holy Family at Holy Family Church and on Friday 1st January he will celebrate the 10am Mass at Our Lady's for New Year's Day. This will be his last Christmas with us in the Garden City and we wish him every blessing as he prepares to take up the reins of North London!

**RCIA** There are 9 adults preparing for the Sacraments at Easter next year. The final session before Christmas is tomorrow (Monday 14th) at 7.30pm and then Monday 18th January at 7.30pm in Our Lady's sacristy. Please keep them in your prayers.

**MARRIAGE PREPARATION DAY** for couples marrying in Welwyn Garden City or elsewhere in 2016/17 on Saturday 6th February 2016. Please let Fr. Norbert know if are planning to get married so that the necessary paperwork and preparation can be arranged.

**SCHOOL FORMS** Fr. Norbert will be available to sign the Certificate of Catholicity Forms for parents applying to a Catholic School for Reception Class entry. The remaining date is Tuesday 15th 3 - 5pm. Parents are asked to arrange a 5-minute appointment through Kathryn Hubbard on 01707 322579 and to wait in Our Lady's Church at the arranged time. Parents should come with their child, bringing the Certificate of Catholicity (available from the schools) AND collect from the back of our churches or from Kathryn an extra form to be completed for Fr. Norbert. This is essential. There will not be a January session so parents are asked to sign up this side of Christmas. Thank you for your co-operation.

**CHRISTCHURCH**, Peartree councillors, the local community and faith groups invite you to a Christmas Get Together event which will take place on the 15th December in Christchurch, Broadwater Road between 6.30pm - 8pm. This event, like many others happening at this time of the year, will be an opportunity for our local community to come together. It will also give us a chance to sing and learn few Christmas carols in other languages! It will be a wonderful occasion to "say goodbye" to Christchurch on Broadwater Road. Luckily, they are staying in Peartree!! The event will provide: \* Some lovely mince pieces \* Opportunity to socialise and network \* Opportunity to sing Christmas carols\* Opportunity to take part in some informal games.

**NEWSLETTER** There will be a newsletter next Sunday 20th December and then one available from Christmas Eve which will take us through to Sunday 17th January 2016. Any items for the Christmas newsletter covering that period up to 17th January need to be sent in by the morning of Tuesday 22nd December at the latest.

**CAROL SERVICE AND NATIVITY PLAY** at St. Bonaventure's this Sunday at 4pm. This will be followed by a 'bring and share tea' please come and support our children.

**CRIB SERVICE** Come along with your children to a short and informal Crib Service at St. Bonaventure's this Tuesday 15th December at 3.45pm. We place the figures in the crib, have a story and then decorate the Christmas tree. We will also have a short practice for those who will be at our Children's Christmas Mass (at 6pm on Christmas Eve). We also have a Children's Mass on Sunday 20th December.

**ALTAR SERVERS** Please sign up for Masses over the Christmas Season. There are lists in each sacristy. Also, the WGC Altar Servers' Mass will be on the Feast of St. Stephen on Saturday 26th December at 10am in St. Bonaventure's. All welcome.

**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS MASS PRACTICES:**

**ST. BONAVENTURE'S** have a practice on Tuesday 15th after our Crib Service which is at 3.45pm. If you are unable to attend this rehearsal please arrive early for the Mass (6pm) on Christmas Eve so that your child can be given something to do.

**HOLY FAMILY** If your child would like to take part in this Christmas Mass please write your child's name on the list at the back of the church - there will be one rehearsal after 9.30am Mass on Sunday 20th December. All children are invited to take part.

**OUR LADY'S** Children who wish to take part in Our Lady's Church Children's Christmas Mass at 5pm on Christmas Eve will have a practice in the church on Monday 21st December at 11am.

**CONFIRMATION** The next session will be on Sunday 17th January at 7.15pm in Holy Family's Parish Room.

**SPECIAL NEEDS MASS** Our thanks to all who helped with the Mass at the end of November and for the food for the Curry Night which followed. The quiz, bingo and the opportunity to get together made for a delightful evening.

**OUR LADY SCHOOL** Foundation Nativity (Nursery & Reception) - Tuesday 15th December, 11am at the school. All welcome.

**CAROL SERVICES Holy Family School** on Monday 14th December at 6pm - KS2 Christmas Carol Service in Holy Family Church. All parishioners welcome.

**Our Lady School** has its Carol Service on Wednesday 16th in Our Lady's Church at 7pm. All welcome.

**OUR LADY'S CHURCH** Many thanks to the Monday Bingo Club at Our Lady's for their generous donation to the Electrical Refurbishment Fund.

**WORLD YOUTH DAY** Twenty young people came to the meeting a few weeks ago. Brochures are at the back of the church. The dates are 23rd July - 3rd August, 2016. 2 - 3 million young people (16 - 30 years old) will gather in Krakow with Pope Francis. Why not be one of them?! Any questions - ask Fr. Norbert!

**CHURCH CLEANING FOR CHRISTMAS Holy Family Church** cleaners would be very grateful if any mothers could spare them 1 to 2 hours on Tuesday 15th December to help clean the church ready for the Christmas celebrations. At this moment the four church cleaners (who have done this for many years) would welcome any help. Many thanks. **St. Bonaventure's** are having a cleaning morning on Tuesday 22nd December after 9.30am Mass, all welcome to come and help (refreshments will be provided to keep up the energy levels!)

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 Holy Family Church  
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 welwyngdncitydigs@rcdow.org.uk

**OUR LADY'S PARISH CENTRE**  
 Bookings should be made with Phil Johnson  
 01707 377442

**HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL** have some 50th anniversary pens and tea towels (with individual self portraits) available to purchase from Gloria Holmes 07951579406 or email with your order to holyfamilyfa@gmail.com. Pens are 50p, tea towels £2.50. Thank you for your continuous support. *Holy Family Friends Association.*

**OUR LADY'S COFFEE MORNINGS** There will be no coffee on Thursdays until 7th January 2016.

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

**MASS TIMES**

14 Monday	9.30am	Mass	Our Lady's	St. John of the Cross
15 Tuesday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
16 Wednesday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	Advent feria
17 Thursday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	Advent feria
18 Friday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
19 Saturday	10am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria

**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

19 Saturday	6pm	Mass	Our Lady's
20 Sunday	8am	Mass	St. Bonaventure
	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family
	10.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure
	11.30am	Mass	Our Lady's
	6pm	Mass	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