

# 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*

## ***Fourth Sunday of Advent 18th December 2016 p. 91 of book***

We have made it to the Fourth Sunday of Advent...and what a long week it is going to be! Every third year - 2017 will be the next time - we are given the image of Our Lady in St. Luke's Gospel as she says 'Yes!' to the Angel's message. Mary displays a total receptivity; all she has to do is give the affirmative to God and she conceives of the Holy Spirit and brings forth Jesus, God's Son.

Today, however, we are immersed in St. Matthew's Gospel and the key figure is Joseph. Joseph is a man of honour; he decides what it is best to do. However, the message he receives from an Angel in a dream bids him do otherwise; he is obedient to God's voice and carries out what is asked of him. Even though we do not hear Joseph utter a word, we are aware of the strength of his presence and the huge commitment he makes to God as he takes Mary to be his wife and undertakes to care for the Child she has conceived.

Finally, two names are mentioned: one is the name *Jesus* which must be given to the Baby by St. Joseph. This name literally means 'the one who saves' and so Jesus will save us from our sins. Secondly, by quoting the prophecy of Isaiah, Matthew adds another name *Emmanuel* which points to the fact that in Jesus, God is with us. This Child will help us experience God's love at its deepest and most intimate.

So where does this leave us with the onset of Christmas so close? Let us not forget Mary's role and find time to be quiet and receptive to the Coming of Christ. Let us imitate St. Joseph's example and be ready to do the things we have to do, to use our energy in the service of God and others. As we make space in our lives for Christ's Coming, let us allow him to give us a fresh taste of eternity with his mercy, compassion and pure love! Some of you will be travelling soon to spend Christmas with loved ones elsewhere. There are visitors who will be arriving to be in our midst and share the Christmas Festival with family and friends. Whatever we do and however things unfold, may we know that God is with us - now and for ever. God bless you this coming Christmas! ***Fr. Norbert***

**RITA LEONARD RIP** Funeral Mass will be in Our Lady's on Friday 30th December at 12.30pm.

**ALTAR SERVERS** There are lists for you to sign up for the Christmas Masses. Don't forget your Patron Saint, St. Stephen whose Feast will be on Monday 26th December. Mass will be at Our Lady's at 10am.

**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS MASSES** There is a practice today after Holy Family's 9.30am Mass for children who wish to take part in Children's Mass for Christmas on Christmas Eve. Our Lady's practice will be on Friday 23rd at 11am in the church. Practice for St. Bonaventure's is this Tuesday at the end of our Crib Service (about 4.15pm)

**FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY** is on Friday 30th December. Mass will be in Holy Family Church at 10am followed by refreshments in the Parish Room. All welcome.

**ABBOT HUGH ALLAN** writes: "When people ask me about the start of my vocation to the priesthood, the answer is easy - two great priests, Fr Andrew Moore and Fr Michael Archer, both parish priests of St Bonaventure's and now both gone home to the Father's house. Recently the Holy Father appointed me the Apostolic Administrator of the Falkland Islands and Superior to the Mission to St Helena, Tristan de Cunha and Ascension Island. At the same time, I was made an Abbot! I'll still be superior of my monastic community and parish priest of Chelmsford. It means that I am now responsible for the pastoral care of the Catholic communities on the South Atlantic Islands. I will live in Chelmsford for 10 months of the year and then travel around the Islands for the other two months. All seems a little far away from sitting in the front room of St Bonaventure's presbytery chatting with Fr Andrew. Please keep me in your prayers. God love you!" We wish Abbot Hugh every blessing in his new role.

**TRANSPORT TO MASS** A group of parishioners from our three churches has met to reflect on a follow-up to the Year of Mercy, especially the call of Pope Francis to reach out to the community. The plan is to organise a transport service to Mass for parishioners who are unable to attend on their own; this will enable those people to continue to feel part of the community. It is intended to cover all 3 churches. There will be a meeting on Wednesday 18th January at 7:30pm in St Bonaventure's Hall to discuss the proposal. Please attend if you are interested and have any thoughts or experience on the subject. Any questions please contact Desi Russell 01707 371399 or Joe Galloway 01707 894207. What a great opportunity!

**WOMEN OF VALOUR** is a Prayer Group made up of women who meet every Saturday at 4pm in Our Lady's Chapel (near the entrance to the Hall) to say the Rosary and to share the Word. They would like to invite you to join them and encourage you to bring your children along. Next meeting will be on Saturday 7th January.

**COUNCIL CAROL SERVICE** will take place in Howardsgate outdoors on Thursday 22nd December at 6.30pm (close to the main entrance to the Howard Centre). It will be hosted by the Churches in Welwyn Garden City and the address will be given by Reverend Rob Marshall from St. John's, Digswell who does Thought for the Day on Radio 4. Come well-wrapped up! *Our thanks to all who sang in the Howard Centre last Saturday. There was a heavenly harmony surrounding the shoppers! The 'In the Picture' outreach was a great success too.*

**SCHOOL CAROL SERVICE** Holy Family School in Holy Family Church on Tuesday 20th December at 6pm.

**NATIVITY PLAY AND CAROL SERVICE AT ST. BONAVENTURE'S** Today at 4pm followed by a bring and share tea. All welcome.

**CRIB SERVICE** Come along with your children to a short and informal Crib Service at St. Bonaventure's this Tuesday 20th 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).

**FIRST FRIDAY** The next early Mass will be on Friday 6th January at 6.30am in St. Bonaventure's followed by breakfast in the Hall. All welcome.

**THANK YOU** Daniel Priolo, a Year 13 student at the John Henry Newman School would like to thank all who supported his sale of Christmas decorations for KISS - a charity in Uganda. He raised £143.

**FIRST CONFESSION & FIRST HOLY COMMUNION** The first meeting for parents of our three churches will be on Wednesday 25th January at 7.30pm in Our Lady's Church. If you have not yet signed up for your child at Our Lady's or Holy Family Churches, please let Fr. Norbert know as soon as possible. Children should be at least in Year 3.

**CONFIRMATION** The next session will be on Sunday 22nd January at 7.15pm in Holy Family's Parish Room.

**RCIA** Next meeting on Monday 16th January at 7.30pm in Our Lady's Sacristy.

**GREETING CARDS FOR PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE** Please write a simple greeting, blank card or postcard to the prisoner saying that you are thinking of him/her and not to lose hope. Prisoners' details will be at the back of the Church please feel free to take a leaflet. Due to the anti-christian attitude of prison authorities, no mention should be made of Christmas as this could endanger the prisoner (there are exceptions). More info, Anne Stapleton 01707 707063.

**MARRIAGE PREPARATION DAY** will be on Saturday 4th February in Our Lady's Hall. Couples who wish to get married here in WGC or in another place in 2017/18 are invited to come. Keep the date free. After the summer, please contact Fr. Norbert so that all the necessary paperwork can be arranged.

**HOLY LAND** (Sat 27th May - Sunday 4th June, 2017: 43 have booked) and **FATIMA** (Sunday 10th - Thursday 14th September 2017: 14 have booked so far) £689. We have run out of brochures for both pilgrimages, so best to contact Pax Travel for more details on 020 7485 3003 or [info@paxtravel.co.uk](mailto:info@paxtravel.co.uk)

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS** St. Bonaventure's Tuesday 17th January at 10.15am. Holy Family Wednesday 18th January at 7pm. Our Lady's Friday 20th January at 7.45pm.

**WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY** The main Service will be on Sunday 22nd January at 4pm in the United Reformed Church opposite Sainsbury's. There will be two other Services: Wednesday 18th January at 12 noon at Ludwick Way Methodist Church and on Wednesday 25th January at 8pm at Christchurch Baptists (Peartree Lane/Tewin Road).

**ST. BONAVENTURE'S COFFEE GROUP (FOR CAFOD)** has recently sent off £150 to purchase some World Gifts. Details of purchases are in the parish hall.

**PLEASE NOTE:** There will be morning Confessions as usual next Saturday. There will not be Confessions on Saturday evening at Our Lady's.

**NEWSLETTER** Next weekend's Christmas newsletter will take us through to the weekend of 14th/15th January. Any item for inclusion needs to be in by this Wednesday morning.

**Fr. Norbert 01707 323234**  
**welwyngdncityeast@rcdow.org.uk**  
 Our Lady's Church  
 141 Woodhall Lane AL7 3TP

**Fr. Martin 01707 327434**  
**welwyngdncitydigs@rcdow.org.uk**  
 Holy Family Church  
 194 Knightsfield AL8 7RQ

**Kathryn Hubbard 01707 322579**  
**parishsec@stbonaventure.org.uk**  
 St. Bonaventure's Church  
 81 Parkway AL8 6JF

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

**Website for our 3 parishes**  
**[www.wgc-catholics.org.uk](http://www.wgc-catholics.org.uk)**

**CONFESSIONS**

Holy Family:	Thursday 10am
St. Bonaventure:	Saturday 10.30am - 11am
Our Lady's:	None this week.

**MASS TIMES**

19 Monday	9.30am	Mass	Our Lady's	Advent feria
20 Tuesday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
21 Wednesday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	Advent feria
22 Thursday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	Advent feria
23 Friday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
24 Saturday	10am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria

**Nativity of the Lord**

**Christmas Eve**  
**Saturday 24th December**



**Children's Vigil Masses**

5pm Our Lady's  
 6pm St. Bonaventure  
 6.30pm Holy Family

**Mass of the Nativity**

9pm Our Lady's  
 10pm Holy Family  
 11pm St. Bonaventure

**Mass with Carols**

9am St. Bonaventure  
 10am Holy Family  
 11am Our Lady's



**Sunday 25th December**

**CHAPLAIN TO THE Q.E.II AND LISTER HOSPITALS:** If you are going into hospital and need a Catholic Chaplain contact Rev. Anthony Curran (Deacon) **Office Tel: 01438 285138 (24/7)**  
**Urgent need: 01438 314 333 via text message: 07876 526935 email: chaplaincy.enh-tr@nhs.net**