

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*

Eighth Sunday of the Year 26th February 2017 p. 142 of book

From Cardinal Vincent Nichols: **‘Called to Serve the Sick’**

One of the great gifts of Pope Francis to the Church has been the Jubilee Year of Mercy, which concluded last November. During that Year, we entered so much more deeply into an understanding and acceptance of the mercy of God towards each of us, no matter the circumstances of our life. We also refreshed the flow between the mercy we receive from the Lord and the mercy we extend to those around us through the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

Now, for the next six months, I ask you all to focus on one particular corporal work of mercy: caring for the sick. From now until the close of our Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes at the end of July, I hope that we can look again at how we respond to those in our midst who are sick, in body or in mind, and how we support them and their families. The care we extend will embrace not only sick members of our own family and our relatives, but also those in our neighbourhood, those in hospital, and those who are burdened with chronic illness or painful conditions. This special season, with the title ‘Called to Serve the Sick’, is being led by Bishop Paul McAleenan. I thank him for all his work in this.

Caring for the sick is a daily, practical expression of the mercy we have first received from God. This means that our caring for the sick arises from our faith in God and is most fully completed when it takes its shape from that faith. The care we offer, then, is shot through with a loving trust that this sickness, these special needs, which a person is carrying, are capable of bringing that person closer to God, and of helping others through their own pain. This is what we mean by ‘redemptive power of suffering’. I am sure you know the words of that wonderful hymn which says: ‘Nearer my God to thee, nearer to thee. E’en though it be a cross that raiseth me, nearer my God to thee.’

The first reading of our Mass today expressed the feelings experienced by many in their illness: ‘The Lord has abandoned me. The Lord has forgotten me’. Indeed this is often how we feel. But the promise contained in that reading from Isaiah assured us that God’s love is stronger even than a mother’s love. God promises: ‘I will never forget you.’ And God looks to us to give practical expression to that promise. God wants us to say to those for whom we care: ‘I, too, in God’s name, will never forget you!’ This is what St Paul means when he says that we have been ‘entrusted with the mysteries of God’ and prays that we may be found worthy of that trust. *Continued over*

My mother had a special way of approaching the presence of illness and suffering in her life. She often remarked that the traditional saying 'God never gives a cross without the back to bear it' was wrong. She insisted that it ought to say 'God never gives a cross without the backs to bear it' for it is only by standing shoulder to shoulder that can we carry the crosses which come our way from the Lord. Indeed, quite often it is the shoulders of the sick persons themselves who help us to carry the cross together. Often it is the sick who bless us with their courage, tenacious faith and enduring hope.

On Wednesday this week, we begin the time of Lent in which we try to follow more closely Our Blessed Lord, especially in the sufferings he bore for us. This longer season of 'Called to Serve the Sick', can start by our looking again, during Lent, at how we care for those who are going through a time of illness, or indeed whose lives are coming to an end. It asks us to see beyond all the necessary practical help and medical care to the very soul of the person, seeing them as a precious daughter or son of our Heavenly Father, making their way to him, coming closer, step-by-step, with Christ himself. As Cardinal Hume said: 'The journey to heaven always goes over the hill of Calvary.' We can make that journey together.

Please do look out for the steps and events of this season. Please do make a renewed effort to remember the sick and the dying in your prayers. Please do not turn your back on them, simply handing them over to professional care, important though that care is. The mystery of the gift of life in each one of us becomes more precious at such times. Let us treasure and serve that mystery, for it is the mystery of God himself.

ASH WEDNESDAY is this week on 1st March. Mass with the giving of ashes will be at Holy Family Church at 9.30am, at St. Bonaventure's at 12noon and at Our Lady's at 7pm. Ash Wednesday is a Day of Fasting and Abstinence.

LENT In our churches during Lent, there will be times of quiet prayer before the Blessed Sacrament: Monday 10.00 - 10.30am at Our Lady's, Thursday 10.00 - 10.30am at Holy Family and Saturday 10.30 - 11.00am at St. Bonaventure's. There will be Stations of the Cross: Wednesday 10am at Holy Family, Friday 10am at St. Bonaventure's and 7.30pm at Our Lady's.

EARLY MASS During Lent there will be First Friday Mass at St. Bonaventure's followed by breakfast on 3rd March and 7th April. Why not try and come during Lent?

LENTEN TALKS IN ST ALBANS These are about the Bible and will take place in St. Alban and St Stephen's Church, Beaconsfield Road AL1 3RB at 8pm in March on Wednesday 8th, Thursday 16th, Wednesday 22nd and Wednesday 29th. All are welcome. More details on poster on church noticeboards.

MASS FOR BEREAVED PARENTS On Saturday 11th March at 2.30pm in the Cathedral a Mass will be celebrated for all bereaved parents. As parents arrive in the Cathedral that day they will be invited to write the name of their deceased child, which will later be collected and taken to the sanctuary. Please let Fr. Norbert know if you are planning to go.

HCPT GROUP 183 There will be a retiring collection for this year's HCPT group 183 trip to Lourdes, after every Mass of the weekend of the 4th and 5th of March. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

WOMEN OF VALOUR is a Prayer Group made up of women who meet every Saturday at 5pm 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.

OUR LADY'S The monthly cleaning of the church and maintenance of the grounds will take place at the earlier time of 9.30am next **Saturday 4th March** for ONE hour. There will be refreshments afterwards. Everyone is very welcome to come along, can you help?

ST. BONAVENTURE'S Cleaning of the church takes place this Thursday at 10am. All welcome to come and help.

ST. DAVID'S DAY With Ash Wednesday falling on 1st March, this year the Mass of St. David will not be celebrated. However, we wish all our Welsh parishioners every blessing!

NURSERY PRIEST'S REFERENCES Fr. Norbert will be available to sign the Certificate of Catholic Practice forms for Nursery entry on Wednesday 8th March 3.30 - 5.30pm and Monday 13th March 3.30 - 5.30pm at Our Lady's Church. Parents are asked to contact Kathryn Hubbard on 01707 322579 (or email parishsec@stbonaventure.org.uk with preferred date and approximate time) to arrange an appointment with Fr. Norbert. Fr. Norbert will be giving out his 'extra' form either before or after Mass at weekends. On the day of the appointment, parent/s should come into Our Lady's Church with their child and wait to be called. Parents whose children were baptised in one of our three churches in WGC may request a Baptismal Certificate from Kathryn Hubbard.

FR. MARIUS COJAN - a Romanian priest from the Diocese of Iasi is coming to the end of his first week in WGC. He leaves us on Friday 3rd March.

PALMS TO BE BURNED If you have palm branches from previous years, please drop them in at one of the churches and they will be burned in time for Ash Wednesday.

HOLY FAMILY'S 50TH The next meeting to continue planning for Holy Family Church's 50th Anniversary will be on Tuesday 7th March at 8pm in the Parish Room (after the CAFOD Meeting).

CARDINAL'S MASS FOR WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES will be on Saturday 3rd June at 3pm at Westminster Cathedral. If you are celebrating your 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th, 60th or more, and would like to be invited to this Mass, please give the details of your names and address, email, phone number and date of wedding to Fr. Norbert and he will send them on. Every year many couples have attended this Mass and have come home extremely happy!

GEORGE PUGH RIP George's Funeral Mass will be at St. Peter's, Hatfield, Wednesday 8th March at 10.30am with his body being received into the church the night before at 7pm. Parishioners are welcome at both services and to a reception for George at Beales Hotel, Comet Way, Hatfield, from 2pm. Please join George's family in supporting The PSP Association, www.pspassociation.org.uk

TRANSPORT TO MASS The next project meeting will be held on Thursday 9th March at 7.30pm at Holy Family's Parish Room. The Group has reached the stage of researching similar projects established in neighbouring parishes and will be presenting their findings for discussion. If you have any experience or advice on transport, your contribution to help shape the service provided would be welcome. Please come along. For further information contact Joe Galloway 01707 894207 or Desi Russell 01707 371399

FIRST CONFESSION & FIRST HOLY COMMUNION The next parents' meeting will be on Wednesday 8th March at 7.30pm in Our Lady's Church. Congratulations to the children of St. Bonaventure's and Holy Family who made their First Confession yesterday (25th). Our Lady's First Confession will be on Saturday 4th March at 11am. Please keep the children and their families in your prayers.

CONFIRMATION Next session will be on Sunday 5th March at 7.15pm in the Parish Room of Holy Family. **RCIA** Next meeting on Monday 27th February at 7.30pm in Our Lady's Sacristy. The Rite of Election at Westminster Cathedral will be on Sunday 5th March at 3pm. The adults and child for the Sacraments at Easter will be presented to the Cardinal and Bishops of our Diocese on that day. This weekend (24th/25th February) they will sign scrolls at Mass which will be taken up to the Cathedral.

MAN UNITED SHIRT Sophie Constable got 17 of the Manchester United Team to sign a shirt for her when she met them. She wants to sell it for CAFOD's project in Ethiopia. The shirt will go to the highest bidder. For more info or to place a bid please contact Sophie (or Marian) 01438-716777 or 07956-287130.

HELP!! Please join us - St. Bonaventure's Coffee Group. We enable parishioners to meet, talk, build bonds after the 10.30am Mass. At the same time we are raising money for CAFOD. One is only called to help every 6 to 8 weeks. Ring Jenny on 01438717798 if interested or come and talk to us after Mass we are in the Parish Room

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

PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL Minutes will be left at the back of our churches when they are ready.

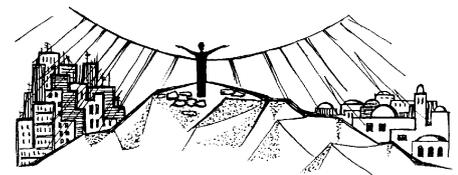
SYRIAN FAMILIES Several of the families welcomed into Hertfordshire have asked for bicycles and some have been donated. However a couple of them need repairs - new inner tubes, brake cables.... Nothing major. Is there anyone who could volunteer to carry out some repair and maintenance work? Help is needed to collect them from their present location, in Bayfordbury, and, when repaired, to deliver them to a family in Borehamwood. If you can help, please contact Vicky on woodcraftvicky@gmail.com

ST PATRICK'S DAY After 7pm Mass at Our Lady's on Friday 17th March, there will be a gathering in Our Lady's Hall to mark St. Patrick's Day. There will be Irish dancers, a quiz and we ask you to bring food to share.

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

MASS TIMES

27 Monday	9.30am	Mass	Our Lady's	feria
28 Tuesday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
Ash Wednesday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	
	12noon	Mass	St. Bonaventure	
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
02 Thursday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	Lent feria
03 Friday	6.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	
	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Lent feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
04 Saturday	10am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Lent feria
			First Sunday of Lent	
04 Saturday	6pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
05 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 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