

WELWYN GARDEN CITY



ST. BONAVENTURE



**OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



HOLY FAMILY

*Parish Priest: Fr. Norbert Fernandes Assistant Priest: Fr. Tom Montgomery
Parish Secretary: Kathryn Hubbard*

Sixth Sunday of the Year 11th February 2018 page 137 of the Mass Book

Cardinal Vincent Nichols writes: Leprosy is a terrible disease, still disfiguring many people and communities in the world today. In the Readings at Mass today we hear a great deal about leprosy. We heard, in the Book of Leviticus, how those who contract the disease were set apart, rejected by the community. We heard, in the Gospel, how Jesus, being moved with compassion, healed the leper who came to him. We learned that in the action of healing Jesus touched the leper. He, too, then, had to ‘stay outside in places where nobody lived.’ He could ‘no longer go openly into any town.’ As I read these words I think that Jesus, too, was now an outcast because he had touched a leper.

In these texts from the Old and New Testaments, leprosy can be taken in both a literal and symbolic sense. Symbolically it represents all those disfigurements of human life which cause people to be excluded or, as Pope Francis likes to say, confined to the ‘peripheries’ of society. There are many such excluded people, and many places and means of exclusion. This Gospel passage, then, addresses the drama of every divided society, ours included. It presents us with one compelling truth: that Jesus chooses to identify himself with those who are excluded, with those who are cast out. He teaches us to despise no one. In reaching out and touching the leper, Jesus becomes one with him, sharing his isolation and rejection. Jesus is telling us, very plainly: If you wish to be with me, come and reach out to those most in need. I am there!

The list of those excluded from our midst is long indeed. You can draw it up yourselves. It will include the homeless, those with mental illness, the elderly who live long days alone, those without hope, those driven out of home and neighbourhood through war or persecution and now living in refugee camps or detention centres on the outskirts of cities around the world. Among them we find the face of Jesus, a face that is God’s face, from which we must not turn. In the course of the coming week, the Season of Lent begins. It is a time for renewal for each one of us, a time to draw closer to the Lord so that He may pick us up and set us again on His pathway of the fullness of life. The steps we are invited to take during Lent include the three traditional Lenten practices: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. We are to make these practices a more constant part of our life and behaviour throughout these next five and a half weeks. *(Next page)*

Through daily prayer we open our hearts to the Lord; through fasting, or self-denial, we quieten the clamour within us for self-indulgence; in almsgiving we have a means of reaching out to those in need, giving expression to our compassion for them. In his Letter to the people of Corinth, as we have just heard, St Paul encourages them, very simply, with these words: 'Whatever you do at all, do it for the glory of God!' As we approach Lent together, setting out to be a people who pray, who fast and who give alms, whatever we decide to do to mark Lent this year, let us simply 'do it for the glory of God'. Then the Lord can truly touch our hearts and give us a tenfold measure of His gifts in return.

Please consider supporting the Cardinal's Lenten Appeal. There will be leaflets available next week with more information. Simply put, the Cardinal's Lenten Appeal enables me to offer funding to new programmes of outreach across the Diocese that address some of today's more pressing problems here at home.

May God bless you this coming Lent. Be sure of my prayers for you and please do keep me in your prayers. *Fr. Norbert*

PANCAKES will be served after 9.30 Mass on Tuesday morning at St. Bonaventure's. All are welcome AND it's half-term!

ASH WEDNESDAY this year coincides with Valentine's Day - 14th February! It also falls in the half-term holiday. Mass with the imposition of ashes will be at 9.30 at Holy Family Church, 12 noon at St. Bonaventure's and 7pm at Our Lady's (which Bishop Paul McAleenan will celebrate). This is a Day of Fasting and Abstinence. If you have any old palms, please bring them to church and they will be burned to make the ashes.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES Today (11th) is 160 years since the Apparitions at Lourdes took place. *Our Lady of Lourdes, pray for us!*

RICHARD MORRISSEY RIP Richard's Funeral Service will be at St. Bonaventure's on Monday 19th February at 12.30pm.

ADRIAN HARRIS RIP Adrian's Funeral Mass will be at Holy Family Church on Wednesday 21st February at 1pm. **FUNERALS** Sadly a number of parishioners have died for whom Funerals have yet to be arranged. Please pray for the repose of the souls of Baby Storm Minnette, Catherine Conroy and Nora Ashmore.

MASS IN THANKSGIVING FOR MATRIMONY on Saturday 19th May at 3pm. The Cardinal will be inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese who are celebrating their 5th, 10th 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60) wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2018. If you are celebrating an anniversary, please give Fr. Norbert the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number, if no email). Over the years many have attended this wonderful celebration; now is the opportunity for others!

RCIA Today the catechumens and candidates for the Sacraments at Easter will be presented at 11.30 Mass when they will sign a scroll which will be taken to Westminster Cathedral on Saturday 17th February; at the Rite of Election they will formally be welcomed by the Cardinal. There are 6 adults and 3 children for Baptism, 4 adults and 2 children for Reception into the Catholic Church and 3 adults for Confirmation. What an outpouring of grace! Please keep them and their catechists in your prayers.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION DAY This will take place on Saturday 24th March 2018 at Our Lady's. Please let Fr. Norbert know if you are planning to marry in 2018/19 whether in Welwyn Garden City or further away so that the Papers for Marriage can be sorted out.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT DEMENTIA An information session on dementia will be held in Anson Court, Shackleton Way (Panshanger) on Thursday 15th February at 3.30pm. This is for 1 hour 15 minutes only. Full details and contact on poster at back of the Church.

ST. ALBANS Every Friday at St. Albans Abbey-Cathedral a Catholic Mass is celebrated at 12 noon. You are all welcome. This Friday (16th) and next (23rd) Fr. Norbert is the celebrant.

NURSERY PRIEST'S REFERENCES Fr. Norbert will be available to sign the Certificate of Catholicity Forms for entry to nursery in our Catholic schools. On Tuesday 20th February and Monday 5th March 3.30 - 5.30pm at Our Lady's Church.. Please contact Kathryn Hubbard on 01707 322579 to arrange a 5-minute appointment with Fr. Norbert on one of those days. There are at the back of our churches pink 'extra forms' which should be brought filled in to the meeting. Please wait in Our Lady's Church to be called. Fr. Norbert would like to meet the children as well as their parents.

HCPT GROUP 183 Beetle Drive on Saturday 17th Feb in Our Lady's Church Hall from 2:30pm till 5pm and a quiz night on Friday 23rd of February to raise funds for this years pilgrimage to Lourdes. Teams of up to 8 people £5 per person starting at 8pm please bring own drinks. To book your table please call Barbara on 07789743703

AVIGNON 2018 Parish trip to Avignon in France Sunday 23rd - Friday 28th September. Between 1309 and 1377, seven successive popes resided in Avignon. There is an amazing Palace of the Popes and the renowned Bridge of Avignon where we are going to sing 'Sur le pont d'Avignon'. Close by is Chateauneuf-du-Pape where we will do wine tasting! Brochures and booking forms are now at the back of our churches. 18 have signed up already; 30 places maximum. Why not take a brochure from the back of the church and find out more?

LOOKING AHEAD Pax Travel is arranging for us some pilgrimages: 25th May - 2nd June 2019 Walking the 'Camino' from Lisbon to Santiago de Compostella, Ecumenical Pilgrimage to Assisi 25th - 30th May 2020 and the Passion Play in Oberammergau 9th - 11th September 2020. More details will become available in due course.

VISITS There will be an afternoon at St. Edmund's College, Old Hall Green, Ware on Sunday 22nd April 2 - 5pm with an opportunity to have a tour of the Pugin Chapel, the Museum which has many items from Penal Times and to have a time of prayer. There will also be tea and cake! On Saturday 5th May there will be a day in Aylesford at The Friars where there is a Shrine of Our Lady.

ACCOMMODATION A mother and her daughter are looking for accommodation. If you can help, please contact Fr. Norbert.

CAKE SALE Monica Hilario, one of our parishioners will be going to Thailand for a couple of months from June to work with children in schools and orphanages. One of her goals for this trip is to raise £800 as a donation for the schools she will visit to help them with resources to develop the children's education. Monica will hold a cake sale on Sunday 18th Feb at Our Lady's after the 11.30 Mass and Sunday 4th March at St Bonaventure's after the 10.30 Mass. We wish her well.

NEW PARISH CENTRE Our Growing in Faith Project to rebuild the Hall as a new Parish Centre for our three churches is finally progressing! We hope soon to have drawings which will be displayed in our three churches for you to look at and reflect on. There will be a meeting on Tuesday 6th March at 8pm (coffee from 7.45pm) in the present hall. The architect and diocesan surveyor will be here to receive your feedback. Please come! Thank you for your patience.

INTER FAITH Inter Faith Dialogue: past, present and future Tuesday 20 February at the Focolare Centre for Unity, 7pm for 7.15.

SPECIAL NEEDS MASSES Saturday 24th Feb at 6pm and Saturday 28th April at 6pm.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY After 6pm Mass on Saturday 17th March there will be a 'Get-together' in the hall. Please let Fr. Norbert know if you would like to help and have any ideas about the entertainment!

MASS WITH THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK will be on Saturday 23rd June at 12 noon at Our Lady's

FILIPINO MASS will be on Saturday 23rd June at 6pm.

AFRICAN MASS will be on Sunday 8th July at 11.30am.

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

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

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

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

Website for our 3 parishes
www.wgc-catholics.org.uk

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

CONFIRMATION Our young people have their next session on 25th February at 7.15pm in Holy Family's Parish Room.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PARENTS from our three churches will have their next meeting in Our Lady's Church on Wednesday 21st February at 7.30pm.

A REQUEST My name is Kimberley Mester and I am a sixth form student doing a researched based report as part of one of my A level options. I would be grateful for parishioners who have undergone chemotherapy in the last 5 years, particularly for breast cancer; leukaemia or lung cancer who would be prepared to discuss their experience with me. Please contact me on mester.family@gmail.com or text me your contact details 07534602982.

LENTEN LUNCHESES The CWL invites you to join them on Saturday at the Family Centre for Lenten Lunches at 12.00. It is a very sociable occasion and we have Soup and a Roll and Cakes for only £3.00. If you need a lift please phone Anne Davidson 01707 327569

MASS TIMES

12 Monday	9.30am	Mass	Our Lady's	feria
13 Tuesday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
14 Wednesday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	Ash Wednesday
	12noon	Mass	St. Bonaventure	
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
15 Thursday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	Lent feria
16 Friday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Lent feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
17 Saturday	10am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Lent feria
	First Sunday of Lent			
17 Saturday	6pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
18 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 **Chaplaincy Office Tel: 01438 285138 (24/7) Urgent need: 01438 314 333** via text message: **07876 526935** email: chaplaincy.enh-tr@nhs.net