

WELWYN GARDEN CITY



ST. BONAVENTURE



**OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



HOLY FAMILY

*Parish Priest: Fr. Norbert Fernandes Assistant Priest: Fr. Tony Thomas
Parish Secretary: Kathryn Hubbard*

First Sunday of Lent 21st February 2021

On Ash Wednesday around 200 people attended Mass in Holy Family and Our Lady's combined. A similar number of households were united through the streamed Mass. Together we made a new beginning, a fresh start with the onset of Lent. For those able to come to church, there was a novel way of receiving ashes as they were sprinkled on the heads of those approaching. I must admit I was liberal in my use and asked the ministers to ensure I was covered in ashes too! Everyone was so reverent. Everyone wanted their ashes! For me, throughout the day and especially at its close, I could feel the ashes in my hair rubbing into my scalp. This certainly was a constant reminder of the need to embark on a change of course with my gaze fixed on Calvary, the Cross and Resurrection. These ashes are an outward sign of an appeal from God to me, touching my heart with the special grace of Lent to lead to a springtime deep within and in my way of living. The presence of so many with me in church and through the internet highlights that Lent is not just about myself but about a community wanting to get closer to God and aware that this is facilitated through reaching out to others with generous and forgiving love.

Now the First Sunday! The Church takes us into the wilderness where the Spirit *drove* Jesus *out*. Jesus is not allowed to wallow in the wonder of his Baptismal experience at the Jordan where the Spirit descended as a dove and the Father's voice was heard. The Lord faces temptation - a severe time of testing and trial; there are wild beasts too. However, angels are there to look after him. When the Forty Days are up, he enters Galilee with a message and *he is the Message*. The time/moment/opportunity has come. The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent. Believe the Good News. Jesus wants us to make use of what is on offer and answer the invitation. God's Kingdom is just round

next page

the corner - don't miss it! Refocus your life/ your heart totally on God. Believe this Good News from God the Father and let it become a part of who you are. There are not many words used in today's text. Nevertheless, so much is intimated!

We have Forty Days or so. I am sure for a huge majority of us, we're wondering about the statement to be made on Monday by the Prime Minister about the relaxing of restrictions and the setting out of the road map to 'normality'. In Lent we create our own personal regulations for the season. We mark out the path that will take us to Easter, giving us a taste of eternity. Let us pray that the loving service and generous sacrifice of the multitude in this time of pandemic may encourage us this unique Lent to continue to reflect the fullness of Christ's Love pouring forth from the Cross upon humanity. Stay well and keep safe. Look after one another. Fr. Tony and I continue to pray for you. God bless you.

With much love, *Fr. Norbert*

PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF MASS IN WELWYN GARDEN CITY

Places of Worship can remain open. We are doing all we can to keep people as safe as possible. We continue with our schedule of Masses:

Saturday

10am Mass at Holy Family

6pm Mass at Our Lady's

Sunday

10am Mass at Our Lady's

6pm Mass at Holy Family

Monday

7pm Mass at Our Lady's

Tuesday

9.30am Mass at Holy Family

Thursday

9.30am Mass at Holy Family

Friday

7pm Mass at Our Lady's

CONFESSION Only by appointment - Fr. Tony on 01707 327434 or Fr. Norbert on 01707 323234. All necessary precautions have to be undertaken in terms of distancing and the safety of priest and penitent.

STREAMED MASS

[youtube.com/c/WelwynGardenCityCatholicChurches](https://www.youtube.com/c/WelwynGardenCityCatholicChurches)

We continue to stream Mass on Sunday at 10am

FACEBOOK PAGE

<https://www.facebook.com/Welwyn-Garden-City-Catholic-Churches-113038463699672/>

Gospel reflections, the latest news, live rosaries and so on.

MASS ON RADIO

If you are aware of someone not on the internet who would like to follow Mass, RTE Radio broadcasts Mass on 252 Longwave. For those who have a digital radio, Radio Maria broadcasts in London on DAB+ and in the Cambridge area on DAB.

OUR LADY'S CHAPEL looks out onto the car park of the new Parish Hall which means that people can come to the windows and look into the Chapel and see the Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady's statue. Not ideal in the cold, but a possible place to offer a (quick) prayer.

MASS INTENTIONS Fr. Norbert and Fr. Tony are celebrating the Mass Intentions week by week. If anyone wants Mass offered for a particular intention, please let Fr. Norbert or Fr. Tony know. Donations for the Masses can be made at a later stage. The intentions will be published in the newsletter as below.

This week Masses have been celebrated for: Jeanette Budd RIP, Marie Hayes Intentions, Mary O'Neill RIP, Mary and Kevin Maume Intentions, Mick McElligott RIP, Gay Sealey Intentions, Tracey Laycock RIP Birthday, Therese Nixon RIP, Holy Souls in Purgatory, Brand Family Intention.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS Fr. Tony will lead Stations of the Cross live every Wednesday at 10.30am on Zoom. These will be recorded and made available on the parish Facebook page and the YouTube channel from 10am on Fridays for those who wish to make the Stations of the Cross at their leisure. Please contact Fr. Tony for the Zoom link: tonythomas@rcdow.org.uk

FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF OUR PARISHES The financial support of parish life is crucial and needed. Please consider using the Virgin Money Giving links on the parish website. There are standing order forms available to download on the website too. We realise that things are very challenging financially at present and do not want to put any extra burden on you. However, for those in a position to contribute to our churches, we ask you to find the best way of giving. Our thanks to you for your generosity and co-operation. We are NOT going to have the Planned Giving Boxes of Envelopes for the coming year. Please consider changing to standing order as a way of giving.

LENTEN COURSE: NO GREATER LOVE Filmed on location in the Holy Land, No Greater Love is a biblical pilgrimage that reveals Christ's amazing love for us. Best-selling author Edward Sri guides you through the last hours of Christ's life. You will walk step-by-step with Jesus from the garden of Gethsemane to Mount Calvary. Every step of the way, Old Testament prophecies, messianic expectations, biblical symbolism, and historical context shed light on the mystery of Christ's suffering and death. Experience a deeper understanding and appreciation of God's immeasurable and unconditional love for you—grow closer to Jesus than you ever have before. (Here is a trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3kQlQ1_Z6Qk&feature=emb_logo).

The course will run for five Thursdays, beginning on 25th February, at 7.45pm on Zoom. Please email Fr Tony (tonythomas@rcdow.org.uk) to book your place. All welcome!

VIRTUAL COFFEE MORNING Do you miss catching up with fellow parishioners after Mass? During this lockdown there's a Virtual Coffee Morning on Thursdays at 10.30am. Simply make yourself a coffee, sign on to Zoom and catch up with some familiar faces or make new friends. Please email Fr Tony (tonythomas@rcdow.org.uk) for the Zoom meeting details. We hope to see you there!

FOOD BANK New Zion Christian Fellowship continues its Food Bank every Wednesday 9 - 11am. If you are able to drop off non-perishable food for the needy members of our community, New Zion is happy to receive contributions from 8am on a Wednesday. The address is 140 Cole Green Lane AL7 3JE. If anyone would like to make a financial contribution to the Food Bank, please email foodbank@newzioncf.net and you will be given details as to how to make a donation.

SIGNED MASSES On the first Sunday of the month at 4.30pm, there will be a signed Mass streamed with a split screen: Shell Roca, Director of the Deaf Service, will respond in sign as Fr. Norbert celebrates the Mass in sign. This will be in place of the monthly Mass from the Cathedral. All welcome to follow and please give the details to any deaf or hard of hearing people you know.

PRIEST'S REFERENCE FORMS Parents who will need a 'Certificate of Catholicity' for school should download the form on this website called 'Request for a Certificate of Catholicity'. Fill it in and return to Fr. Norbert who will then contact each family to arrange for a Certificate to be issued.

PARISH DIARIES 2021 We still have copies of the Parish Diary for our parishes. The diaries are useful for knowing all the feast days of the year! If you would like a copy (they are free) please email your name and address to parishsec@stbonaventure.org.uk and a copy will be posted/delivered to you.

LAPTOP AND TABLET COMPUTERS FOR HOME LEARNING

As we all know, there is a currently big demand for computers that children and young people can use for home learning while schools are closed. The Welwyn Garden City SVP is therefore appealing to parishioners for donations of second-hand laptop and tablet computers which they can pass on to our schools, Our Lady's and Holy Family. Please contact Mary Dunne at marydunne22@yahoo.com if you have a laptop or tablet to donate. Please note that schools, in conjunction with the local authority, have systems to 'cleanse' these devices of all data before they are ready to be used by children.

The specifications should be as follows:

Chromebooks: any specification will be fine

iPads: anything iPad Air 2 or newer

Windows laptops: at least Windows 10, at least Core i3 + processor, at least 4GB ram +, any hard drive size

Many thanks.

CAFOD Daily Walk? Something positive this Lent.

Could you walk 10000 Steps either on one day or everyday this Lent? The walk could be a sign of your solidarity with all those who do not have access to a safe water source and who have to walk for water each day. Find out more or sign up online at cafod.org.uk/walk and go the distance this Lent and help to end water poverty. Thank you for your ongoing support,

One minute film also available here: Walk for Water video: Walk for Water: Abdella's journey | CAFOD - YouTube

CAFOD FAST DAY

Abdella lives in an extremely remote and mountainous part of Ethiopia. It takes him ten hours a day to collect water. He says his life is being wasted as he has no time for anything else. Please give today to reach vulnerable communities around the world with water and to provide other vital support. Please donate online at www.cafod.org.uk/give

You can also easily give via text.

Text LENT 5 to 70460 to give £5

Text LENT 10 to 70460 to give £10

Text LENT 20 to 70460 to give £20

Or Telephone: 0303 303 3030 to donate over the phone

*Texts cost £10 plus one standard rate message and you'll be opting in to hear more about our work and fundraising via telephone and SMS.

If you'd like to give £10 but do not wish to receive marketing communications, text LENTNOINFO to 70460.

For more information, please see our Privacy Policy: cafod.org.uk/Legal-information/Privacy-notice

SACRAMENTS

Current regulations (as of 15th January 2021)

Baptism is NOT permitted outside of communal worship.

Weddings are possible (in limited circumstances) with 6 present. If you are planning to get married this year or next in WGC or beyond, please let Fr. Norbert know so that the necessary preparation and paperwork can be organised.

Funerals can take place with 30 mourners maximum.

Confirmation 2020 Sadly we have had to postpone these celebrations.

SACRAMENTS 2021

On the Parish Website, you will find forms to download. Please email to norbertfernandes@rcdow.org.uk

First Holy Communion (and Confession) - Children should be at least in Year 3

Confirmation - Young people should be at least in Year 9

Adults for the Sacraments

Adults who wish to join the Catholic Church through Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion or Adults already baptised in a Christian Church who wish to be received into the Catholic Church or Catholic Adults who missed out on Confirmation when younger.

We are using the Season of Lent to do the preparation and celebrate the Sacraments soon after Easter. (Dates haven't yet been decided) It is not ideal but this past year has had so many ups and downs with dates due to lockdown and worries about the coronavirus. We do not want to put extra pressure on families or individuals at a time of much uncertainty. We want adults and children to share in the life of the Church through the Sacraments.

Most of the preparation will be done at home with families/individuals and there will be Zoom plenary sessions to keep everyone in touch. We will do all we can to keep people safe and not be at risk whilst encouraging formation for the Sacraments. At this stage we need to know names and details AS SOON AS POSSIBLE so we can be in touch. Please return the forms to Fr. Norbert. Email addresses are really important. Thank you for your co-operation. Let's do our best!

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
21ST FEBRUARY**

Saturday 20th February

Isaiah 58:9-14 The Lord will always guide you

Luke 5:27-32 Jesus at table with tax collectors and sinners

Sunday 21st February FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Genesis 9:8-15 The rainbow - sign of God's covenant with Noah and humanity

1 Peter 3:18-22 Christ died for sins to lead us to God

Mark 1:12-15 Jesus is tempted in the wilderness

Monday 22nd February THE CHAIR OF ST. PETER *This feast signifies the unity of the Church founded upon the Apostles with Peter as Head*

1 Peter 5:1-4 Be shepherds of the flock entrusted to you by God

Matthew 16:13-19 'Who do you say I am?'

Tuesday 23rd February

Isaiah 55:10-11 The Word of God carries out what it was sent to do.

Matthew 6:7-15 The Lord's Prayer

Wednesday 24th February

Jonah 3:1-10 The repentance of the people of Nineveh

Luke 11:29-32 The sign of Jonah is the only sign which will be given to this generation

Thursday 25th February

Esther 4:17 Queen Esther appeals to God

Matthew 7:7-12 Ask...search...knock...

Friday 26th February

Ezekiel 18:21-28 The renouncing of sin bringing life
Matthew 5:20-26 Be reconciled with your brother and then make your offering

ST ALBANS The Catholic Mass at St. Albans Cathedral takes place at 12 noon every Friday. Admission to the Cathedral Mass does not require ticketing and there is social distancing in a very big space in the nave. All welcome!