

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*

Second Sunday of Lent 28th February 2021

I write this piece on Friday (26th). The sun has shone all day. Birds have been singing. There's a cold breeze but this hasn't take away from the smiling faces in our town. Yesterday the clouds obscured the brightness of the sun and it seemed almost a different season! Life can be like that - can't it? On Monday the Prime Minister laid before us an outline of how we hope to get back to a semblance of normality with small steps, time for reflection, then making our way forward gradually. We have been given pegs to hang on to or, if you prefer, stepping stones to hop on. What will it really be like? There is hope - like the sunshine; there is darkness - like the clouds. What will the coming months bring us?

Our Lenten journey gives us days and weeks to travel on a sure pathway to the Cross and then to the Easter Triumph. There are key moments to hold on to like the First Sunday with the Temptation in the Desert and this Sunday's account of the Transfiguration. In a couple of weeks, we'll hit the half-way point with Laetare Sunday - our rejoicing on the Fourth Sunday. Finally, two weeks later Palm Sunday and our entry into Holy Week and the unfolding of Passion, Death and Resurrection. There is a rhythm. There's progress albeit at times several steps forward and back, to one side and then to the other, deep insight as well as foolish mistakes. That's life! The Light of the Paschal Mystery beckons us onward leading us to a deepening of faith and an openness to even more love flowing from the heart of Christ. Mercy is revealed to us in our struggle. The joy of reaching our destination is something to look forward to.

Today's Gospel takes us up a high mountain. We accompany Jesus as he walks with the three favoured disciples. We behold an amazing sight as Jesus is transfigured radiating glory, light and wonder beyond measure. The Father's voice speaks of his

Beloved Son and urges us to listen to him. Elijah and Moses appear confirming the testimony of the Prophecy and the Law. Peter so much wants to hold onto the whole experience and to bask in the light of the transfigured glory of Jesus with the Divine Voice ringing in his ears. NOT TO BE! They still have another hill to climb - Calvary. On that hill-top, voices will call for the Lord's death. Darkness will appear to have scored a victory. So we, with Jesus and his friends, have to come back down to earth and continue the long walk, learning and experiencing what it means for Jesus to be the Son of Man - Christ.

This journey is a long one! Lent can seem to take for ever. It is a bit like waiting for the blossoms to burst open on the trees. They appear to be taking their time sleeping in the buds. However, almost in an instant the majesty and beauty of spring make a triumphant, glorious entrance into the world of nature and into our lives. In this time of pandemic, we press on with eager hope longing for the day when things will be much better. In Lent the Church marches forward together open to Easter sunshine and the victory of Love.

Fr. Tony and I continue to pray for you. Remember us too. God bless you and have a good week. Stay well and keep safe! 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. 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: Kathleen Walsh RIP 1st Anniv, Mick McElligott RIP, William Joseph Ryan RIP Anniv, Bridget Coyle's Intention, Robert and Val Cunningham and their families, Bernie McAndrew RIP, Jean Kemp's Intention, Pila Americo's Intentions, John Kemp's Intentions, Giraldo Americo's Intentions, Simon O'Mahony RIP, Mavis Cleasby's Intentions, Bernadette Smith RIP.

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

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)

CARDINAL'S LENTEN APPEAL This Lent, please consider supporting the Cardinal's Lenten Appeal and help provide food for children and families in our communities who are facing hunger. You could also support work to help our brothers and sisters come through the global pandemic stronger and better able to cope. www.CardinalsLentenAppeal.org.uk

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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.

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.

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!

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 Lent Appeal

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 or by using one of our envelopes.

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 26th February 2021)

With the gradual easing of restrictions, advice as to what is (and is not) possible will change over the coming months. We will do our best to keep you informed. At every stage the Prime Minister will make announcements and the Bishops' Conference will respond. We, in the parishes, then will implement what is allowed. We want those coming to church to feel safe and not to be at risk from the coronavirus.

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 and return to norbertfernandes@rcdow.org.uk Many families and individuals have made contact.

There is still time to send in your forms!

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 will 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 we will keep in touch with everyone. We will do all we can to keep people safe and not be at risk whilst encouraging formation for the Sacraments. Thank you for your co-operation.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
28TH FEBRUARY**

Saturday 27th February

Deuteronomy 26:16-19 Keep God's commands

Matthew 5:43-48 God causes his sun to rise on bad men as well as good

Sunday 28th February SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Genesis 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18 Abraham is tested

Romans 8:31-34 Jesus stands and pleads for us

Mark 9:2-10 The Transfiguration

Monday 1st March ST. DAVID (520-589) *Abbot, Bishop and Patron Saint of Wales*

Philippians 3:8-14 Nothing can outweigh the supreme advantage of knowing Christ
Jesus my Lord

Matthew 5:13-16 You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world.

Tuesday 2nd March

Isaiah 1:10, 16-20 Cease to do evil. Learn to do good.

Matthew 23:1-12 Putting into practice what you preach.

Wednesday 3rd March

Jeremiah 18:18-20 The prophet faces plots

Matthew 20:17-28 The Son of Man came to serve and give his life as a ransom for many.

Thursday 4th March

Jeremiah 17:5-10 I, the Lord, search to the heart...

Luke 16:19-31 The parable of Lazarus and the rich man.

Friday 5th March

Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13, 17-28 The story of Joseph and his brothers

Matthew 21:33-43, 45-46 A parable of a vineyard
