

WELWYN GARDEN CITY



ST. BONAVENTURE



**OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



HOLY FAMILY

*Parish Priest: Fr. Norbert Fernandes Assistant Priest: Fr. William Johnstone
Parish Secretary: Kathryn Hubbard*

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time 23rd January

I was in a Year 2 class recently and was asked by a six-year-old child why there are four Gospels! Do you know why? I suppose it is something we take for granted and in responding I knew it wouldn't be a quick answer! I spoke about the early followers of Jesus remembering what he had said and done, passing it on to others in an oral tradition. I asked the children about how they tell their parents about what has happened at school and how their parents in turn tell others. The veracity is there but the way it is conveyed changes. I shared with the children the need to set in writing the accounts which had been passed on in oral transmission and then the writings gathered together for a community. In time we came to have FOUR Gospels which the Church determined to be the authentically inspired Word of God. I also offered the children the symbols of the four Evangelists (which I am sure you all know?!): Matthew - human form or angel, Mark - a lion, Luke - an ox, John - an eagle. These symbols are depicted in a variety of places and are based on what we read in Ezekiel and The Book of Revelation. A roundabout way of answering a brilliant question!

Why am I writing about this today? Well...This is the Sunday of the Word of God, instituted by Pope Francis at the end of the Year of Mercy, so that we can 'appreciate the inexhaustible riches contained in that constant dialogue between the Lord and his people.' Sunday by Sunday, and day by day, the Church presents us with offerings from the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament, including the Gospels. The hope is that over a three-year period we cover most of the Bible. I explained to the children on Wednesday that it is not only a case of reading Scripture but also of praying the Scriptures. We spent a few moments in silence imagining we were at Jesus' Baptism and thinking what it was like for Jesus to see, hear and feel that he was God's Son, filled with the Holy Spirit; the silence led us to reflect on the fact that God has chosen us to share in the life of Jesus so that we too are God's children, filled with the Holy Spirit

and much loved by God. An amazing dialogue into which we can all enter.

In our Gospel passage today, the Church opens up St. Luke and we are presented with his motivation in writing his Gospel: he has gone over the whole story from the beginning and has decided to write an ordered account based on what has been handed down by eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word. St. Luke gives us insights into Our Lady's role right at the beginning; he is aware of the marginalised and poor; forgiveness and mercy are oozing out of so many chapters and verses; the picture of the Lord at prayer is so inspiring especially before big decisions have to be made. From the first verses of this Gospel, we are whizzed through to Chapter 4 and Jesus ' awareness of being empowered by the Holy Spirit. His public ministry begins.

I invite you today to take out your Bible and read and reread a few verses. Enter into the riches of what is saying to you personally, let it resonate. Then find a way of sharing what you have received with others. God bless you.

With love and prayers, *Fr. Norbert*

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY (18th - 25th January)

Churches Together in Hertfordshire will have an online Service on Tuesday 25th at 7.30pm. Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89465881609?pwd=aHduWWw3b1NVOVlzZ01sa3lWdk t5Zz09>

Meeting ID: 894 6588 1609 and Passcode: 656904

For online resources, see <https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2022/>

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, and so on.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF OUR PARISHES Please consider setting up a standing order for the church you attend; this will guarantee income to support all that happens. There are forms for each parish available on the parish website; these can be used even if you are not a tax-payer. Just to be clear: YOU set up the standing order with your bank (right hand part of form) and return the left-hand side to us so that we can claim back GiftAid if tax is paid.

DONA has arrived and has been installed in each of our churches. This is a machine for contactless payments to be made to the particular parish in which the machine is sited. It should be possible to GiftAid your donation. We are so grateful to you for your generosity in giving to our parishes especially in the time of pandemic.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION On the parish website wgc-catholics.org.uk there are forms for parents to download to enrol children and young people for these Sacraments. First Communion children should be at least in Year 3 at school and Confirmation candidates in at least Year 9. Preparation will begin after the February half-term with the Sacraments being celebrated in the summer. The enrolment forms will help us to know how many are involved and to plan the respective preparation courses. Many have already signed up! If you have not yet done so, please return the forms to Fr. Norbert.

ADULTS WHO WISH TO JOIN THE CHURCH (RCIA) The Monday evenings have not proved overall to be a good time to meet. If anyone is still interested in joining the Catholic Church or is an adult who missed out on Confirmation when younger, please contact Fr. Norbert on 01707 323234 and he will organise preparation directly with you. So, there will NOT be any Monday meetings. Thanks.

MASS IN WGC The times of weekday and weekend Masses have now returned to the usual schedule in our three churches. Mass intentions can be booked in all three churches. **The safety and security of all people is important** which means that **distancing** in the benches and going up to Holy Communion is respected, **face coverings** are now required and the **sanitising** of hands continues. Please note space is at a premium in St. Bonaventure's because of its size.

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.

TRANSPORT TO MASS If any parishioners need a lift to Mass the Transport to Mass Group is there! If anyone can offer a lift, please contact Kay Mason on 01707 335633. All necessary safeguarding and health and safety guidelines will be followed. In particular volunteers are needed for 10.30am Mass at St. Bonaventure's.

CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE On the parish website wgc-catholics.org.uk there is form to download requesting a Certificate of Catholic Practice. Please fill it out and return to Fr. Norbert at Our Lady's and he will prepare the document and return to the family. Thank you.

If you need a Baptismal Certificate for your child, please contact Kathryn Hubbard on 01707 322579 email parishsec@stbonaventure.org.uk

MASS INTENTIONS Fr. Norbert and Fr. William are celebrating the Mass Intentions week by week. If anyone wants Mass offered for a particular intention, please let them know. Donations for the Masses should be put in an envelope and given to Fr. Norbert or Fr. William or popped through the letterbox of one of the presbyteries. The intentions celebrated will be published in the newsletter as below.

This week Masses have been celebrated for: Eleanor Shannahan RIP, John Gammell RIP, Eleanor Shannahan RIP, Owen Devine RIP, Mary Kate Murray (intentions), Chris O'Brien (intentions), Katarzyna & Peter Lacina/George & Chris RIP, Helen O'Rourke RIP, Margaret Coyle RIP, Teresa Coughlan RIP, Tracey Laycock RIP, John Davin (birthday intention), Peter Richardson's benefactors.

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. New Zion is very grateful for the financial support being received.

ST ALBANS The Catholic Mass at St. Albans Cathedral takes place at 12 noon every Friday. It is back in the Lady Chapel and all are welcome. Fr. Norbert will be the celebrant on 11th February.

SACRAMENTS

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals can all take place.

Baptisms If you are thinking about the Baptism of your child, contact Fr. Norbert or Fr. William to arrange a date.

Weddings 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 No limits on numbers.

SCRIPTURE READINGS BEGINNING 23RD JANUARY

Saturday 22nd January

2 Samuel 1:1-4,11-12,17,19,23-27 David laments the deaths of Saul and Jonathan
Mark 3:20-21 Jesus' relatives are convinced he's out of his mind!

Sunday 23rd January THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Nehemiah 8:2-6,8-10 The Word of God is proclaimed - the people's response.
1 Corinthians 12:12-30 You together are Christ's body; each is a different part.
Luke 1:1-4,4:14-21 The scope of Luke's Gospel. Jesus empowered with the Spirit

Monday 24th January St. Francis de Sales (1567-1622) *Bishop of Geneva at time of Reformation. Gentle, caring pastor. Patron Saint of journalists and writers.*

2 Samuel 5:1-7,10 David becomes king of the whole nation. The Lord is with him.
Mark 3:22-30 Jesus is accused of having an unclean spirit working in him.

Tuesday 25th January CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL *Saul's life is changed for ever as he hears the Lord calling to him. He becomes Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles.*

Acts 9:1-22 or Acts 22:3-16 The road to Damascus
Mark 16:15-18 The Eleven are sent out to the whole world proclaiming Good News.

Wednesday 26th January St. Timothy (Ephesus) and St. Titus (Crete) *Companions and helpers of St. Paul sent to the places mentioned above.*

2 Timothy 1:1-8 Paul asks Timothy to fan into a flame the gift that God gave him. Or
Titus 1:1-5 Paul refers to Titus as his child in the faith they share.
Mark 4:1-20 The parable of The Sower

Thursday 27th January

2 Samuel 7:18-19,24-29 David is honoured to be king and prays before the Lord.
Mark 4:21-25 'The amount you measure out is the amount you will be given.'

Friday 28th January St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) *Dominican Priest and Doctor of the Church*

2 Samuel 11:1-4,5-10,13-17 David and Bathsheba
Mark 3:13-19 Mark 4:26-34 Parables of the Kingdom of God