

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*

First Sunday of Lent 6th March 2022

Last Wednesday the great journey began! So many people young and old gathered in our churches on Ash Wednesday to receive ashes as a mark of our desire to repent, turn to God and get ready for the Festival of Easter. There was a tremendous sense of solidarity - we are all in this together! Now the harder part is to sustain our undertakings throughout the 40-day season. Belief in the Good News of Jesus Christ and awareness of the power of grace readily available should spur us on when we are flagging. Seeing those around us doing their best offers example when we need encouragement and inspiration. This is only the First Sunday - however, we have made it this far!

In our Gospel passage from St. Luke, the Lord filled with the Spirit is sent into the wilderness to define the forty-days as a period of prayer, fasting and reflection, alone with his Father. He is tested to the nth degree by the devil who tries to undermine the deep relationship of love which exists between Father and Son, sealed by the Holy Spirit at the Lord's Baptism. Jesus, though weak from fasting, has the strength to resist; he proclaims his total dependence on his Father. As we make our way through Lent, it is an opportunity to be seized of acknowledging the wonderful gift of Baptism which will be renewed at Easter. We have a number of adults preparing for the Sacraments at Easter - they bring vitality and we offer the love of a faith-filled community. Let us mutually support one another in the Lord and not let anything come between us and him.

This Lent our hearts, minds and spirits are going to be intertwined with the unfolding events in Ukraine - there is no escaping this fact. This is about people: people who are suffering, whose lives are being torn apart and are displaying such heroism. Other nations are being challenged as never before to respond: working to build peace, reaching out to refugees, standing up for justice and speaking out the truth. We find ourselves on a course so similar to the history of the last century. Each one of, I am sure, is asking 'What should I do?', 'What would I do if I were in that situation?', 'What will be the long-term consequences of the present situation?' As with the pandemic, we are now living through a decisive moment in history. Prayer is essential. We cannot close our eyes or hearts. Our hands must reach out to the suffering. Jesus Christ carried his Cross and brought light into darkness. He understands. He is with humanity at its lowest points. Let us put our trust in him. You are all in my thoughts and prayers. God bless you. With much love, *Fr. Norbert*

LENT STATIONS OF THE CROSS usually lasting half an hour

Holy Family on Wednesdays at 10am after 9.30 Mass

St. Bonaventure on Fridays at 10am after 9.30 Mass

Our Lady's on Fridays at 7.30pm after 7 o'clock Mass

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT for half an hour

Our Lady's on Mondays after 9.30am Mass

Holy Family on Thursdays after 9.30am Mass (during Confessions)

St. Bonaventure on Saturdays after 10am Mass (during Confessions)

EARLY MORNING MASS There is 6.30am Mass at St. Bonaventure's on the First Fridays in Lent, next on 1st April. Breakfast in the hall follows. All are most welcome.

Twenty people attended last Friday!

LENT GROUP On Thursday evening 26 parishioners from across our three churches gathered for the first session of this year's Lent course. We are meeting each week to think about the place of Mary in our Catholic faith and how she can draw us closer to God. We explored the idea of Our Lady as the new Ark of the Covenant as well as the way in which her Immaculate Conception is linked to our baptism. Each session involves theological input, including a twenty-minute video, as well as plenty of opportunity for group discussion.

VIGIL FOR UKRAINE on Saturday 12th March

Next Saturday after 6pm Mass at Our Lady's, there will be a Vigil of Prayer for Ukraine from 7pm until midnight.

7pm - 8pm Scripture readings and hymns followed by silent prayer

8pm - 9pm Rosary followed by silent prayer

9pm - 10pm Scripture readings and hymns followed by silent prayer

10pm - 11pm Stations of the Cross followed by silent prayer

11pm - Midnight Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament ending with Benediction.

There will be tea, coffee and biscuits available in the 'Cry Room' at the back of the church. If anyone can help in any way with reading or the refreshments, please contact Desi Russell on 07956 097705. Please let others know and let's make this a powerful testimony of prayer for those who are suffering so much at this time.

HELP FOR UKRAINE AND REFUGEES A number of people across our area have already started collecting and sending goods to Ukraine to support those in need and refugees. By next weekend we should have clear details of places where goods can be dropped off and a list of what is actually needed. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

OUR CHURCHES WITH THE NEW REGULATIONS

Mass books and hymn books in use. **Printed newsletter** every week.

Holy Water in the stoups as you enter church. However, we will ensure that at the end of each Mass the stoups will be emptied, wiped clean and fresh Holy Water put **in for the next congregation.**

Benches are not blocked off.

Votive candles available to light at the stands. Please be very careful if you have the sanitising gel on your hands - your fingers could catch light!

Altar Servers back in action! Please ensure you have an alb which fits and come early for a run through the serving.

Holy Communion to the Sick and the housebound is possible. Again, please let Fr. Norbert know soon. The format of how the Blessed Sacrament is taken from Mass will be outlined.

Holy Communion Priests and Eucharistic Ministers are to continue wearing masks and sanitising their hands for the distribution of Holy Communion. It is really good practice for those coming up to Communion to receive the Sacred Host before they leave the priest or the Eucharistic Minister.

Chapel at Our Lady's is open once more for quiet prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. It is very close to the new Hall and is open from 7am until 6pm.

Teas and coffees after Mass are possible.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF OUR PARISHES Please consider setting up a standing order for the church you attend. The forms for each parish are 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. Contactless payments can be made on the machines at the back of each church. Thank you!

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION All First Communion and Confirmation families should have received information about the preparation and dates. Please let Fr. Norbert know if this has not happened. This is the last opportunity to sign up as the Confirmation candidates have aretreat afternoon on Sunday 13th March and the First Confession/First Communion children have an afternoon gathering on Sunday 20th March.

ADULTS WHO WISH TO JOIN THE CHURCH (RCIA) These were presented at Mass last weekend and went to Westminster Cathedral for the Rite of Election on 5th March Please pray for them as they journey towards Easter and the Sacraments.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION There will not be a face-to-face preparation day this year. However, any couples wanting to marry this year or next either in WGC or elsewhere should contact Fr. Norbert to organise the paperwork and the Marriage Course. Thank you.

BAPTISMS Please contact Fr. Norbert or Fr. William if you wish to arrange the Baptism of your child and they will organise all that is needed.

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. This week Masses have been celebrated for: Cade family intention, Peace in Ukraine (4 Masses) Deirdre Davis RIP (4th Anniversary), Brian Hall RIP (Wedding Anniversary), Susan Henschker RIP, People of the Parish, Joe Neumann RIP, John Summerville RIP, Pat Desmond RIP Birthday, John Laggan RIP, Sophia Ryan RIP, Ellen Castelo RIP Anniv, Josie Bell RIP & Louise Fearn's RIP

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.

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.

HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL Our thanks to the staff and children of Holy Family School who sang at last weekend's 9.30 Mass to say 'Thank you' to Michael Cade for his years of service as governor. They joined Sally Key and the choir in creating heavenly harmony in a very full church. We are grateful to Michael for all he has done over 18 years as a governor.

OUR LADY SCHOOL For the next two Mondays, children from Our Lady School will join the congregation at 9.30 Mass in Our Lady's Church and will stay for part of the time of Exposition. Years 1 - 3 on 7th and Years 4 - 6 on 14th.

2/7 CUBS based in the Scout Hut at Our Lady School will be coming to Tuesday's 7pm Mass and will stay for a tour of the church.

ST ALBANS The Catholic Mass at St. Albans Cathedral takes place at 12 noon every Friday in the Lady Chapel, All are welcome.

OPUS DEI EVENING OF RECOLLECTION at Holy Family Church for Lent on Wednesday 23rd March at 7pm: An Evening of Recollection is like a mini retreat lasting only a couple of hours, spent away from your ordinary occupation, when you can reflect on how you live your faith in your everyday work and with your family, friends and colleagues. An atmosphere of personal prayer and recollection is maintained during the evening to help you consider aspects of your life and identify areas in which you can improve. Two meditations will be given by a priest, along with a talk on some aspect of the spiritual life, an examination of conscience and Benediction at the end of the evening. A priest will also be available for confession throughout the evening. This recollection is intended for men, however, there is also an Evening of Recollection for women at St. Peter's Church, Hatfield on 16th March at 7pm. All are welcome and no booking is necessary. If you have any questions, please contact Fr. William or Ed Newman-Sanders (07984149320).

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.

ANNUAL MASS OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE at Westminster Cathedral on Saturday 14th May 2022 at 3pm.

The Cardinal is 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 2022. 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). Before Covid, many couples from our parishes attended this Mass and were absolutely delighted to share in the joy of the celebration.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Saturday 5th March

Isaiah 58:9-14 How to find happiness in the Lord

Luke 5:27-32 Jesus is the doctor who brings healing to the sick and the sinner

Sunday 6th March FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Deuteronomy 26:4-10 The account of how God saved his people

Romans 10:8-13 Faith and salvation

Luke 4:1-13 Jesus is tempted in the wilderness for 40 days

Monday 7th March

Leviticus 19:1-2,11-18 Love your neighbour as yourself

Matthew 25:31-46 Whatsoever you did to the least of these, you did unto me.

Tuesday 8th March

Isaiah 55:10-11 The power of God's word

Matthew 6:7-15 Jesus teaches us to pray

Wednesday 9th March

Jonah 3:1-10 Jonah preaches; the people of Nineveh repent.

Luke 11:29-32 The greatness of what Jesus brings.

Thursday 10th March

Esther 4:17 Esther puts her trust in God and pleads for her people.

Matthew 7:7-12 Ask, search, knock...God will answer.

Friday 11th March

Ezekiel 18:21-28 The one who renounces sins and wickedness is pleasing to God

Matthew 5:20-26 What Jesus asks of his disciples.

FAMILY FAST DAY 11TH MARCH We remember that there are many people who need our love and support all around the world. Children experiencing malnutrition like Amie's daughter Lombeh did in Sierra Leone or as we are seeing now in Ukraine, families affected by conflict. Your small act of love can make big things happen. Donations to CAFOD this Lent will reach families around the world, enabling local experts to provide support to families in times of need or conflict. You can donate in church using a CAFOD envelope or by visiting the CAFOD website: cafod.org.uk/lent Envelopes can be returned next weekend.

Acts of love Link to the Family Fast Day 2 minute video:
<https://vimeo.com/671068271/050e20f8a3> or
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znd6WLGVhpM>

2 Minute Fast Day Prayer /reflection Film

<https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Prayer-resources/Lent-prayer-2022>
<https://vimeo.com/680487747>

<https://vimeo.com/658936752>

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81 Parkway AL8 6JF

Assistant Priest
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williamjohnstone@rcdow.org.uk
Holy Family Church
194 Knightsfield AL8 7RQ

SVP Request for a single mum.
Dining chairs, kettle, girls clothes
4,7 and 8 year olds. Contact Janet
on 01707 326456. Thank you.

FACEBOOK PAGE

<https://www.facebook.com/Welwyn-Garden-City-Catholic-Churches-113038463699672/> Gospel reflections, the latest news, 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.

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

We continue to stream Mass on Sunday at 10am

This week there will be Ash Wednesday Mass available from 7am.

We are also going to stream live the 6.30am Mass this First Friday from St. Bonaventure's. We will ensure that no faces will be seen for safeguarding purposes.

MASS TIMES FOR THE WEEK

05 Saturday	6pm	Our Lady	Confessions 5-5.30pm
06 Sunday	8am	St. Bonaventure	
	9.30am	Holy Family	
	10.30am	St. Bonaventure	
	11.30am	Our Lady	
	6pm	Holy Family	
07 Monday	9.30am	Our Lady	
08 Tuesday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	
	7pm	Our Lady	
09 Wednesday	9.30am	Holy Family	
10 Thursday	9.30am	Holy Family	Confessions 10-10.30am
11 Friday	6.30am	St. Bonaventure	
	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	
	7pm	Our Lady	
12 Saturday	10am	St. Bonaventure	Confessions 10.30am - 11am