

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*

Sixth Sunday of the Year 16th February page 136 of Mass book

Cardinal Vincent Nichols writes: The prayer of our Mass today expresses the desire of our faith: that God's grace will create in us "hearts that are true and just" which can be "a dwelling pleasing to you." We pray that our way of life will be marked by an unaffected truthfulness and a lasting sense of justice. We pray, too, that we may be comforted, in all circumstances, by an enduring sense of God's presence. Soon we will be entering the season of Lent, a time when we seek spiritual renewal in our lives. Step by step we will look into ourselves and pinpoint the ways in which we are neither truthful nor just, and the ways in which we close our hearts to the promptings of God. Today's Gospel already points to some aspects of that self-examination: no place for anger; for self-indulgence and betrayal, especially within sexual intimacy and the commitments we have given. Rather, we seek wisdom and find happiness in following God's law. This is our project.

A few days ago, I was privileged to meet Pope Francis. At my request, he blessed a new icon dedicated to Our Lady of Walsingham. He did so because he knows that during this Lent, on 29th March, all are invited to make a personal Act of Dedication of our country to Our Blessed Lady. In doing so we repeat the Dedication made in 1381 by Richard II of England who promised this land and its people as the Dowry of Mary. There is much for us to learn about being the Dowry of Mary and the love which is expressed in that title. It is rich in history even if not contemporary in language. I hope we can use these coming weeks to deepen our knowledge of this ancient and lovely devotion. This fits well into our Lenten journey. Mary will always lead us to her Son. She will take us to him so that he can show us his love and mercy.

There are two special occasions during which we can invite Mary to lead our Lenten journey. The first is the three-day period from 19th to 22nd March when the Statue of Our Lady of Walsingham will come to Westminster Cathedral. There will be three days of devotion and renewal. Please do come if you can. The second occasion is the three days from 26th to 28th March, leading up to the National Day of Rededication on 29th March. *continued over ...*

I hope that all of us can observe these days of prayer, asking Mary to embrace this country of ours, to instil in us a truthfulness and a love of justice, so that we may experience, as she herself did, the joy of the Lord's presence.

We all know well the title of Mary as our 'sorrowful Mother'. We turn to her in our sorrows. Yet there is another tribute to her, even more deeply rooted in our tradition. It is that of the Joys of Mary. These Joys, often numbered as seven, include the coming of the Angel Gabriel to Mary at the Annunciation and the wondrous birth of her Son, our Blessed Saviour and her glorious entry into the happiness of heaven. We share in them for they are the great joy of our faith. Indeed, we are called to be heralds of this joy in a world often in need of joyfulness. May Mary help us to know and share her joy as we live and proclaim our faith. May God bless us and guide us throughout this coming Lent.

ASH WEDNESDAY this year will be on 26th February as we enter the Season of Lent. Masses with the distribution of ashes will be at 9.30am at Holy Family Church, 12 noon at St. Bonaventure's and 7pm at Our Lady's. Please remember Ash Wednesday is a Day of Fasting and Abstinence. *If you have old palms, please bring them to whichever church you attend and they will be burned to make the ashes.*

SVP VINNIE PACK PROJECT The Society of St. Vincent de Paul are distributing 11,500 Vinnie Packs containing cold weather essentials to the homeless and those spending the principal part of their day on the streets. Each pack contains thermal gloves, thermal hat, two pairs of socks, wet wipes, toothbrush, toothpaste, Pavement magazine, information sheet and pen. Please could you consider sponsoring packs at a suggested donation of £3.50 per pack? Donations can be sent to Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ with cheques made out to SVP or by bank transfer to Nat West sort code 60-60-04, account no. 4608 8237. Thank you so much for your support.

MASS OF THANKSGIVING FOR MARRIAGE The annual Mass will be at Westminster Cathedral on Saturday 30th May 2019 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 2020. 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). Fr. Norbert will then send them on. Many couples over the years have attended this Mass and found it very uplifting.

RCIA for those preparing to join the Catholic Church at Easter. The Group will be presented at Mass next Sunday and then on Saturday 29th February they will be presented to the Cardinal and Bishops of our Diocese at the Rite of Election at 3pm. There is no session on Monday 17th February; the Group will meet the following Monday (24th February) at 7.30pm at Our Lady's.

CONFIRMATION The next evening session will be on Sunday 8th March at 7.15pm in Holy Family Church.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION The next meeting for parents of First Communion children from our three churches will be on Wednesday 4th March at 7.30pm in Our Lady's Church.

BOOKS FOR LENT These are at the back of church, please take one if you will use it. Books for children and for adults, Lenten calendars too. They are all FREE.

CHILDREN'S TUESDAY GROUP We have a break for half term now and meet again on 25th February when we will be thinking about Lent and enjoying pancakes. Why not come along, you will be very welcome.

HCPT Many thanks for the amazing generosity and support given to the group at last week's retiring collection, there is still time to donate with more gift aid envelopes at the back of church or alternatively online at www.justgiving.com/hcpt183. Thank you again, from group 183 x

BUILDING WORKS The new Parish Centre is progressing and should be ready in July. The work on Holy Family's tower will start up again any day!

ST ALBANS Every Friday at St. Albans Abbey-Cathedral a Catholic Mass is celebrated at 12 noon. You are all welcome. Fr. Norbert will be celebrant on 21st February and 27th March.

CLASS PLACES AVAILABLE AT HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL: Reception – 3 places
Year 2 – 4 places, Year 3 – 1 place, Year 4 - 1 place.

ASSISI 2020 Brochures and booking forms are now available at the back of our churches. The pilgrimage will be from Sunday 24th May until Friday 29th May 2020. There will be limited places so if you are interested, please return your booking form to Pax Travel as soon as possible. If anyone needs an electronic version, please let Fr. Norbert know.

OBERAMMERGAU Wednesday 9th - Friday 11th September, 2020. The brochures and booking forms are at the back of our churches. Let Fr. Norbert know if you require an electronic version. Europe was affected by a terrible plague at the beginning of the 17th century. In 1633 the people of the village of Oberammergau in Germany prayed and promised that if the plague left their village, a play commemorating the Passion of Jesus Christ would be performed every ten years. Their prayers were answered and the first Passion Play was performed in 1634.

MARRIAGE Any couples who wish to get married in Welwyn Garden City or elsewhere should contact Fr. Norbert. The Marriage Preparation Day will be on Saturday 28th March. Couples marrying in 2020 or 2021 are invited.

INTER FAITH On Tuesday 3 March from 10am to 4pm at the Focolare Centre the Hertfordshire Inter Faith Group will be hosting a conference entitled 'Stronger Together' where high-profile faith leaders will explore how we create stronger, cohesive communities. The main speaker will be the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire. The day is free and includes lunch but places must be booked via <https://hertsinterfaithconference-stronger-together.eventbrite.co.uk> and on Tuesday 10 March 7 - 9.30pm at Hatfield Fire Station AL10 0DA the local inter faith group will be holding the second of their Rites of Passage evenings when the topic will be 'Initiation' where we will learn how people make their adult commitment to their beliefs.

MOTHER AND TODDLER Every Wednesday in St. Bonaventure's hall from 10am. Why not give it a try?

OUR LADY'S REPOSITORY New Stock: Welcome to the Church, New Home, Wedding, I said a prayer for you, Thank you Mass, Thinking of you Mass, Mass on your Wedding Day, many new birthday cards, rosaries (single decade and a selection), various candles, Mothers Day, St Patrick and Easter. Open before and after most Masses.

LENTEN LUNCHEAS The Catholic Women's League are having their Lenten Lunches in The Salvation Army HQ, (next to Our Lady's Church), starting on the 29th February through to 4th April. It a lovely way to meet new people and meet up with people from our own parishes and with friends from other churches. It will be lovely to see you there. If you need a lift please ring Sally 01707 884492.

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

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

You can read the newsletter on the Website
www.wgc-catholics.org.uk

LIBRARY AT ST. BONAVENTURE'S This is located in the parish hall and you are welcome to come and browse and borrow. There are some very interesting books available. No rush to read them or to return them.

TRANSPORT TO MASS needs a temporary driver to take a lady with a zimmer frame from Rowans to the 9.30am Mass at Holy Family Church on Sunday 23rd February and Sunday 1st March. If you are able to help please contact Martin Moore on 07768650660. Thank you in advance for your help.

DATES FOR 2020 Special Needs Masses will be at 6pm on Saturdays 7th March and 2nd May. Signed Masses on Saturdays 14th March and 25th July. Pilgrimage to Walsingham Saturday 16th May. Mass with the Anointing of the Sick will be on Saturday 30th May at 2.30pm. Polish-English Mass Saturday 6th June at 6pm. Filipino Mass on Saturday 4th July at 6pm. African Mass Sunday 12th July at 11.30am.

MASS TIMES

17 Monday	9.30am	Mass	Our Lady's	feria
18 Tuesday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
19 Wednesday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	feria
20 Thursday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	feria
21 Friday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
22 Saturday	10am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Chair

Seventh Sunday of the Year

22 Saturday	6pm	Mass	Our Lady's
23 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.