

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 and Fourth Sundays of Advent 11/18th December 2022

On the Third Sunday of Advent, John the Baptist sends messengers from his prison cell to ask Jesus: 'Are you the one who is to come, or have we got to wait for someone else?' John has heard what Christ is doing and his emissaries are told by Jesus to report to John what they see and hear - there is life, transformation and the experience of the Kingdom of Heaven. On the Fourth Sunday, we read that the Lord speaks to King Ahaz telling him to ask God for a sign. The King claims he doesn't want to put the Lord to the test; it is more likely that he's afraid of what the sign might demand of him! He is offered the image of 'the maiden with child who will give birth to a son who will be called Emmanuel - God-is-with-us'. Does King Ahaz worry that this new-born child will take his throne? Does he find the sign a challenge?

We are now over the half-way mark of Advent. The Lord's Coming is imminent! What do you see and hear? What signs are coming your way which put you on the spot? What is the Lord asking of you? In each of our churches there is white candle waiting to be lit for the Nativity...but not yet! We have to journey through the days and especially the Sundays to reach the moment of the arrival of the Baby, the Christ Child. There is nothing we can do to make things happen more quickly or to slow down the passage of time! We have to wait, watching and listening, open to God's Gift and ready to respond to the invitation. On the Fourth Sunday, the Church presents us with St. Joseph who has already made up his mind to take one course of action and then, after considering the Angel's message, takes Mary home as his wife - thus doing what God asks of him. The rest is history!

For those of you travelling to other parts for Christmas, go safely and come back refreshed. For visitors who have come to join family or friends, welcome and enjoy your stay. For our community celebrating Christmas in a renewed way after the pandemic, let us give glory to God!

May God bless you and your loved ones. With love and prayers, *Fr. Norbert*

ADVENT SERENITY! There will be **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament** for 30 minutes after Mass on Mondays at Our Lady's 10.00-10.30am, on Thursdays at Holy Family 10.00-10.30am and on Fridays at St. Bonaventure's 10.00-10.30. Spend some quiet and peaceful time in the Lord's Presence as you journey through this busy season.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION This Advent there won't be an evening Service. However, there are many opportunities for Confession: Thursdays at Holy Family 10.00 -10.30am, Saturday mornings at St. Bonaventure's 10.30 -11.00am and Saturday evenings at Our Lady's 5.00 -5.30pm. If anyone wants to make an appointment for Confession, you can call Fr. Norbert on 01707 323234 or Fr. William on 01707 327434.

ADVENT GROUP Fr. William writes: 'We are running an Advent reflection group on Friday evenings in Advent in the Parish Room at Holy Family Church. It is an opportunity to meet other people, share ideas, explore your faith and think about questions that really matter. The sessions begin at 7.45pm and finish at 9pm. Refreshments are served from 7.15pm onwards. All welcome!'

NEWSLETTER This weekend's newsletter covers the Third and Fourth Sundays of Advent. The newsletter for Christmas, published on 24th/25th December, will cover three weeks. So, please get any information to Fr. Norbert for the next newsletter. Thank you.

CHRISTMAS PREPARATIONS Our thanks to the generous donors who have provided each of our churches with Christmas trees and to the volunteers who have decorated them. The outdoor Crib is up, reminding the wider world of the fact that Christ is coming. All the Christmas Masses will have musical accompaniment; we are grateful to the musicians and singers who support the Liturgy in this way.

CHILDREN'S MASS FOR CHRISTMAS The children of our three churches are invited to take part in the Children's Mass for Christmas which will be at 5pm on Christmas Eve at Our Lady's. There will be a one-hour practice in Our Lady's Church on Saturday 17th December at 10am. Parents are asked to stay with their children at the practice. *Everyone is most welcome to take part.*

ALTAR SERVERS are asked to sign up for Christmas Masses on lists in each sacristy. St. Stephen's Day is on Monday 26th December and Mass will be at 10am in Our Lady's. Altar servers from our three churches are very welcome to serve at this Mass on the feast day of their Patron Saint.

WGC Catholic Churches Christmas Hampers 2022 Christmas Hampers will be delivered to the elderly and housebound of the Parish. Packing will take place this Friday Dec 16th at 7pm and delivery will be on Saturday Dec 17th. This will take place in Sally Kee's home. Please contact Sally if you are able to help on 07870 402510/sallyamkee@gmail.com If you would like to deliver hampers on the Saturday morning, then please let Sally know; collection will be from HF Parish Room between 10.00am and 10.30am. Your generosity of time and spirit to the now traditional hamper deliveries is always really heart-warming and the hamper recipients are always truly grateful not only to receive a hamper but also to know that we are all thinking about them in what can be a very lonely time of year. Thanks in advance for your continued support.

SCHOOLS On Monday 12th December Commonswood School will have its Christmas Concert in Our Lady's Church. Holy Family School and Our Lady School will each have their Carol Services the evening of Thursday 15th December.

SENIOR CITIZENS CHRISTMAS TEA PARTY Friday 16th December, from 10am - 11.30am at St. John Henry Newman School, Stevenage. RSVP to Mrs A Berwick 01438 314 643 or email BerwickA@jhn.herts.sch.uk

CAROLS IN THE CLOISTERS - Friday 16th December 7.15pm - Friends, families and children all welcome! You are warmly invited to celebrate the Christmas season singing carols with our friends and neighbours in the The Cloisters AL8 6DX, followed by refreshments and more carols at the Focolare Centre for Unity, 69 Parkway AL8 6JG (next to St Bonaventure's). Festive contributions of drinks and light finger food most welcome. Bring a torch! (Meet in the car park, entrance via The Cloisters, or in the Centre if raining)

FILIPINO MASS in Our Lady's Church on Sunday 18th December at 11.30am. The Filipino Community is leading the celebration for EVERYONE. Afterwards there will be an afternoon of festive singing, dancing and traditional food sharing in Trinity Hall. There will be disco dancing until 5pm! All welcome.

TRINITY HALL is now available for hire. Bookings and enquiries can be made through the www.wgc-catholics.org.uk website, which contains the terms and conditions of hire, suggested donations for hirers as well as a live diary showing bookings and time available for hire. Please enjoy this wonderful resource and spread the word amongst friends and family who may be looking for a Hall to hire.

STREAMED MASS youtube.com/c/WelwynGardenCityCatholicChurches Each week we will inform you of the timings. This Sunday (11th) 9.30am from Holy Family. 10.30am at St. Bonaventure's (18th) Next Sunday (17th) Our Lady's Signed Mass (on the Saturday at 6pm) will be streamed at 10am.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION Any couples wanting to marry in 2023/2024 either in WGC or elsewhere should contact Fr. Norbert to organise the paperwork. The Preparation Day will be on Saturday 18th February. It will be the whole day and end with a Blessing of Engaged Couples at 6pm Mass. Please let Fr. Norbert know if you would like to attend. 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.

FIRST CONFESSION & FIRST HOLY COMMUNION Children should be at least in Year 3 at school. If any parents missed the enrolment meeting, please arrange to see Fr. Norbert to talk through all that is involved. Thank you.

CONFIRMATION Enrolment for young people for Confirmation took place last Sunday evening. If any young people (at least in Year 9) missed the meeting, please make contact with Fr. William so he can take them through the dates and expectations of the course.

SIGNED MASS The Diocesan Deaf Service will be here in WGC at 6pm Mass at Our Lady's on Saturday 17th December. There will be coffee and cake afterwards in the Sacristy. All are welcome. The Mayor will attend the Signed Mass.

FIRST FRIDAY Next 6.30am Mass will be on Friday 6th January, the Epiphany of the Lord, followed by a celebratory breakfast in the Hall at St. Bonaventure's. All welcome.

CHAPEL at Our Lady's is open Monday to Friday from 7.30am until 6pm. It's a quiet and peaceful place to pray before the Blessed Sacrament and light a candle. *The Chapel will close for the Christmas holidays from Saturday 17th December and reopen on Monday 16th January.*

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. If you can offer the occasional lift to 10.30am Mass please contact Kay. Thank you.

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

SAFEGUARDING The rechecks which were requested are still needed. We are sorry that a couple of the email addresses were incorrect! Please retry with the following. Thanks.

Ann Chappell (wgcdigswellsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk) Holy Family,

Mary Stephenson (wgcceastsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk) Our Lady's

Cathy Staniforth (wgcsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk) St Bonaventure's

GIVING TREE Thanks for all the donations, big and small, to the Giving Tree collection this year. We were able to donate £550 worth of supermarket vouchers to people in most need across our area. I'm sure your generosity will help the recipients at a time of such economic difficulty, and bring them some joy at Christmas time. On their behalf and that of Welwyn & Hatfield Community and Voluntary Services who distribute the vouchers - thanks again!

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141 Woodhall Lane AL7 3TP

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Holy Family Church
194 Knightsfield AL8 7RQ

Parish Secretary
Kathryn Hubbard 01707 322579
parishsec@stbonaventure.org.uk
St. Bonaventure's Church
81 Parkway AL8 6JF

CONFESSIONS

Saturdays	5pm-5.30pm	Our Lady
Thursdays	10am - 10.30am	Holy Family
Saturdays	10.30am - 11am	St. Bonaventure

Website wgc-catholics.org.uk

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. 140 Cole Green Lane AL7 3JE. The Food Bank Baskets will be at the back of our churches and so items may be left in them.

RCIA The Rite of the Christian Initiation of Adults for adults who would like to join the Catholic Church next meets on Monday 12th December at 7.30pm in the Sacristy of Our Lady's. (Last session before Christmas) Adults, who missed out on Confirmation when they were younger, can prepare for Confirmation too. It is not too late to join! You would be very welcome.

MASS TIMES

10 Saturday	6pm	Our Lady	Derek Relph (R.I.P.) and Deborah Martin R.I.P.
11 Sunday	8am	St. Bonaventure	Tim Baker (intentions)
	9.30am	Holy Family	Liam Fernandes (1 st birthday)
	10.30am	St. Bonaventure	Chris Doocey (R.I.P.)
	11.30am	Our Lady	Mary Pospiech (R.I.P. 1 st anniversary)
	6pm	Holy Family	Leonard Bonner, Tim Kelly, Barney Kelly, Owen Divine (all R.I.P.)
12 Monday	9.30am	Our Lady	Baby George Head (R.I.P.)
13 Tuesday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	
	7pm	Our Lady	Paddy and Sheila O'Reilly (R.I.P. anniversary)
14 Wednesday	9.30am	Holy Family	McManus and Hall families and friends
15 Thursday	9.30am	Holy Family	John McGrath (R.I.P.)
16 Friday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	Peter Lacina (30 th anniversary)
	7pm	Our Lady	In thanksgiving
17 Saturday	10am	St. Bonaventure	Private intention
	6pm	Our Lady	Christina Bonass (R.I.P. anniversary)
18 Sunday	8am	St. Bonaventure	People of the Parish
	9.30am	Holy Family	Lee Enright (R.I.P.)
	10.30am	St. Bonaventure	James Gallagher (R.I.P.)
	11.30am	Our Lady	Eddie Divine (R.I.P. anniversary)
	6pm	Holy Family	David Lloyd (R.I.P.)
19 Monday	9.30am	Our Lady	Deceased members of the Walsh family
20 Tuesday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	
	7pm	Our Lady	Tom and Nancy Hogan (R.I.P.)
21 Wednesday	9.30am	Holy Family	All those recently deceased
22 Thursday	9.30am	Holy Family	Elizabeth Cruz Reyer (special intention)
23 Friday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	
	7pm	Our Lady	Simon Francis (birthday intentions)
24 Saturday	10am	St. Bonaventure	Daniel Kenroy (R.I.P.)