

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*

Baptism of the Lord/2nd Sunday of the Year 8th January

This weekend (8th/9th January) the Church takes to the banks of the River Jordan, to a scene which highlights the identity of Jesus Christ who is God's Son and upon whom the Father's favour rests. This is St. Matthew's account of the Baptism of the Lord. Next weekend the text comes from St. John's Gospel and we hear John the Baptist declaring that he saw the Spirit come down and rest on Jesus like a dove. The Baptist confirms that he has seen and that he is a witness that Jesus is the Chosen One of God. The Evangelists give us different perspectives and it is so important to stop and reflect on what is being revealed and the insights being shared with us.

In this period immediately after Christmas, what can you remember seeing during the celebrations? How has Jesus made himself known to you personally? Was there a moment or a place? Did the unexpected occur? Was there a person who made an impact? Did you find yourself speaking or acting in such a way that you pointed someone to Christ, perhaps unconsciously? John the Baptist in St. John's Gospel is the constant signpost letting people know of the Lord's presence. St. Matthew has a fondness for the names of God's Son, namely Jesus which means the One who saves and Emmanuel - God with us. St. Matthew wants us to find God in our midst through Jesus, the One who brings forgiveness. Which of these appeals to you the more?

Over the years I have found that these weeks can be very trying for many people as Christmas fades into the distant past and Easter is months away. This is the season when the multitude starts to feel exhausted and overwhelmed. How can we help one another? What difference can we make? I hope that the event on Tuesday 7th February at Westminster Cathedral will give everyone something to look forward to if able to get to London. For others the Mass and celebration on Saturday 11th February at 6pm will give us as a community an opportunity to get together and party well!

May 2023 bring you many blessings. Through you may others be blessed by God. May our community flourish!

With love and prayers, **Fr. Norbert**

PEACE SUNDAY 15th January. The Bishops of England and Wales invite us to make this a day of prayer for peace and to reflect on the theme chosen by Pope Francis, which this year is "No one can be saved alone. Combatting Covid-19 together, embarking together on paths of peace." The Pope says: Covid-19 plunged us into a dark night. It destabilized our daily lives, upset our plans and routines, and disrupted the apparent tranquillity of even the most affluent societies. It generated disorientation and suffering and caused the death of great numbers of our brothers and sisters. In addition to its physical aspects, Covid-19 led to a general malaise in many individuals and families; the long periods of isolation and the various restrictions on freedom contributed to this malaise, with significant long-term effects. Pope Francis continues: What then is being asked of us? First of all, to let our hearts be changed by our experience of the crisis, to let God, at this time in history, transform our customary criteria for viewing the world around us. We can no longer think exclusively of carving out space for our personal or national interests; instead, we must think in terms of the common good, recognising that we belong to a greater community, and opening our minds and hearts to universal human fraternity. We cannot continue to focus simply on preserving ourselves; rather, the time has come for all of us to endeavour to heal our society and our planet, to lay the foundations for a more just and peaceful world, and to commit ourselves seriously to pursuing a good that is truly common. For full text go to www.paxchristi.org.uk Let us proclaim Christ once more as Prince of Peace and entrust our world to him.

PILGRIMAGE Fr. Norbert has been trying to find a pilgrim company to take us on our next journey! All Saints Travel based in Swindon has created an itinerary for a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Jordan. The dates are Sunday 19th to Tuesday 28th November 2023 £1597 per person for a shared room (or with a single room supplement of £597). The pilgrimage will go to Petra in Jordan which will be a first for us from Welwyn Garden City. There are brochures and booking forms at the back of each church. If you would prefer to go online, the link is <http://www.allsaintstravel.co.uk/hj0812/> To secure a place booking forms and a £400 deposit need to be in with All Saints by 15th February. It promises to be a brilliant experience. Let others know!

LISTER HOSPITAL If a parishioner or a family member goes into the Lister Hospital, the following links might be helpful: Non-urgent referrals 01438 285519, Urgent referrals 01438 314333 (and ask for duty chaplain), Chaplaincy Team email is spiritualcare.enh-tr@nhs.net Please remember that the sick person must want the Chaplaincy to know that they are Catholic and that they want to be seen by a priest!

BISHOP PAUL McALEENAN will celebrate 9.30 Mass at Our Lady's on Monday 9th January; then 9.30am Mass at Holy Family and 11.30am Mass at Our Lady's on Sunday 15th January. Canon Michael Munnely will celebrate 9.30 Mass at Our Lady's on Monday 16th January. We thank them for their help.

FINANCE COMMITTEES Our Lady's Finance Committee will review the accounts for 2022 on Thursday 19th January at 7.45pm, St. Bonaventure's Finance Committee will do so on Wednesday 1st February at 10.30am and Holy Family's Finance Committee on 1st Feb at 5pm.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY The main Service of Prayer will be in Our Lady's Church on Sunday 22nd January at 4pm. Christians from across Churches in WGC are welcome to join us as we explore the theme: "Jesus in the Garden City" and pray for our churches and the town. Our guest preacher is Revd Jude Livermore (Head of Mission, the Methodist Church of Britain). It is the first time in a number of years that the Service will be in a Catholic Church. It would be great to have lots of you there! Afterwards there will be tea and cake in the Trinity Hall. We need help with parishioners to make cakes and serve tea and coffee and generally to make everyone, especially our guests, feel most welcome. Anne Keller has kindly agreed to coordinate the tea. Please email her on kellera19@virginmedia.com if you can help. (the previous newsletter had an incorrect email address - sorry!) The Service will last 50 minutes and the tea half an hour or so. The Mayor, Councillor Barbara Fitzsimon, has kindly agreed to attend. Please come if you can.

OPEN EVENING - FILM "THE LETTER" SHOWING AT THE FOCOLARE CENTRE FOR UNITY, Friday 20th January 2023, 7.30-9pm - Tea/coffee provided from 7.15. This gripping documentary film about the Pope's meetings with supporters of the Laudato Si' movement talks about the power of humanity to stop the ecological crisis. Four voices that have gone unheard in global conversations have been invited to an unprecedented dialogue with the Pope. Hailing from Senegal, the Amazon, India, and Hawaii, they bring perspective and solutions from the poor, the indigenous, the youth, and wildlife into a conversation with Pope Francis himself. This documentary follows their journey to Rome and the extraordinary experiences that took place there, and is packed with powerfully moving personal stories. Trailer: <https://youtu.be/l3EBHebH17Y>

FR. NORBERT'S INSTALLATION AS CANON will take place at Westminster Cathedral on Tuesday 7th February during Vespers (Evening Prayer) at 4.45pm. Afterwards there will be Mass at 5.30pm. Everyone is most welcome! There will be a Parish Celebration on Saturday 11th February with Mass at 6pm and a Reception in the Trinity Hall at 7.15pm. Ann Chappell has kindly agreed to coordinate the party. Please contact her on ahchappell@aol.com if you can offer help in any way. Fr. Norbert continues as Parish Priest of WGC and Dean of Stevenage.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION – Volunteering for CAFOD CAFOD, the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, are looking people join us in our mission here in the Westminster Diocese. Could you volunteer and help us raise awareness in either parishes or schools about our work across the developing world tackling poverty and injustice? Find out more by joining one of our volunteer meetings in Lambeth London on Saturday 21st January or Oakwood, North London on Wed 1st February. Please contact Tony at CAFOD for further details. westminster@cafod.org.uk or 0208 449 6970

COMMONSWOOD SCHOOL will have a concert in Our Lady's Church on Thursday 26th January, postponed because of the snow in December.

LOOKING AHEAD The Mayor's Civic Service will be in Our Lady's on Sunday 26th February at 3pm. There will be a Day Out to Ely organised by the Christian Churches on Saturday 10th June. There will be a Polish-English Mass at 6pm on Saturday 17th June with a reception afterwards. The Filipino Community will lead 6pm Mass on Saturday 24th June with a party afterwards. The annual African Mass will be on Sunday 2nd July at 11.30 with a celebration afterwards. Please put these dates in your diaries and come!

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 Mass on Sunday 8th January 10.30 livestreamed from St. Bonaventure, Sunday 15th January 11.30 livestreamed from Our Lady's, Sunday 22nd January 10.30 livestreamed from **St. Bonaventure**.

FIRST CONFESSION & FIRST HOLY COMMUNION The first session for parents and their children is on 29th January in Our Lady's Church 3.30 - 5.00pm. If anyone has not yet made contact to enrol their son/daughter, please Kathryn Hubbard on parishsec@stbonaventure.org.uk

CONFIRMATION The first session for the young people will be in the Focolare Centre (Parkway) on Sunday 22nd January 3 - 5pm. Anyone who has not yet enrolled, please email Fr. William on williamjohnstone@rcdow.org.uk

RCIA The next meeting will be in the sacristy at Our Lady's Church on Monday 23rd January at 7.30pm.

FIRST FRIDAY Next 6.30am Mass will be on Friday 3rd February followed by in the Hall at St. Bonaventure's. All welcome. The feast of the Epiphany included (non-alcoholic) prosecco, sausage rolls and chocolate biscuits. We are so grateful to all involved in preparing and serving these refreshments.

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CONFESSIONS

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

Website wgc-catholics.org.uk

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. Some couples have indicated that they will attend the day. Fr. Norbert asks all couples coming to email him on norbertfernandes@rcdow.org.uk so that he can send by email the latest information.

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

08 Sunday	8am	St. Bonaventure	Mary Frost and John Frost (R.I.P.)
	9.30am	Holy Family	Ann Grace McEvoy (R.I.P.)
	10.30am	St. Bonaventure	Prudence Finlay (R.I.P.)
	11.30am	Our Lady	Brain Sturt (R.I.P. anniversary)
	6pm	Holy Family	John Flynn (R.I.P. anniversary)
09 Monday	9.30am	Our Lady	Maurice Regan
10 Tuesday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	Philomena Tobin (intentions)
	7pm	Our Lady	James Haughian (R.I.P.)
11 Wednesday	9.30am	Holy Family	Alice and Joe Phelan (R.I.P.)
12 Thursday	9.30am	Holy Family	Alice and Joe Phelan (R.I.P.)
13 Friday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	
	7pm	Our Lady	Barbara Wilson (R.I.P.)
14 Saturday	10am	St. Bonaventure	Sean and Kathleen Kennedy
	6pm	Our Lady	Kathy and Edie Rand (R.I.P.)
15 Sunday	8am	St. Bonaventure	People of the Parish
	9.30am	Holy Family	Patrick McEvoy (R.I.P.)
	10.30am	St. Bonaventure	Denis O'Brien (R.I.P.)
	11.30am	Our Lady	Gerry and Rosemary Lyons and family
	6pm	Holy Family	James Dempsey (R.I.P.)
16 Monday	9.30am	Our Lady	Intentions of Susan Martin
17 Tuesday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	
	7pm	Our Lady	Nieddu family intentions
18 Wednesday	9.30am	Holy Family	Thanksgiving to St. Jude
19 Thursday	9.30am	Holy Family	Maurice Regan
20 Friday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	
	7pm	Our Lady	Chris Wilson (R.I.P.)
21 Saturday	10am	St. Bonaventure	Alan and Margaret Staples (intentions)
	6pm	Our Lady	Jo Neumann R.I.P. anniversary)