

WELWYN GARDEN CITY



ST. BONAVENTURE



**OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



HOLY FAMILY

*Parish Priest: Fr. Norbert Fernandes Assistant Priest: Fr. Gerard O'Brien
Seminararian: Samuel Ejerege Parish Secretary: Kathryn Hubbard*

Third Sunday of Advent 14th December (p.88 of Mass book)

On this Third Sunday of Advent, John the Baptist is quizzed 'Who are you?...We must take back an answer..' And John's response is: 'I am a voice.' Have any of you ever considered yourself to be a 'voice'? There are many kinds of voices - happy, stern, sad, persuasive, challenging, young, old. For those around you this Advent, what kind of messenger are you? Of course, there are words; actions very often can speak more eloquently. Then there is motivation - what's going on in one's heart. Sometimes the right words do not always come out, but another person can feel what we are trying to express and can be touched quite deeply by the strength of our faith and love. Our great privilege in Advent as we get closer to Christmas is to proclaim to those around us that Jesus IS coming and to let our hope underpin all that we do.

Last Sunday evening I arrived back from Goa. I had a wonderful time. Every day in Old Goa around 90,000 queued in the heat to see the body of St. Francis Xavier and to pray for many intentions (as I prayed for you). It was an amazing sight to watch Hindus, Muslims and Christians side by side waiting to encounter the relics of this great missionary Saint. On the Feast Day, 3rd December, 15,000 were at the Main Mass celebrated by a Cardinal from Bombay; Konkanim, Portuguese and English were the languages used. I bumped into an English priest from our Diocese who had come specially; he was overwhelmed by the whole experience. The joy of faith was so tangible and spilled out into public fairs and celebrations which involved everyone. Soon the Goan Christmas stars will be take pride of place outside people's homes pointing to the Christ Child whose Birth we will proclaim and celebrate.

As we enter these last days of Advent, I pray that each one of you will feel the power of God's love and in turn use your whole being - voice, mind and heart - to announce the message that Christ's coming is imminent. God bless you! Fr. Norbert

ADVENT During the Season of Advent there will be quiet prayer before the Blessed Sacrament in each of our churches for half an hour: in Our Lady's on Mondays at 10am, in Holy Family on Thursdays at 10am and in St. Bonaventure's on Fridays at 10am.

RECONCILIATION SERVICE in preparation for Christmas will take place this Tuesday (16th) at 8pm in Our Lady's Church. Come for a time of reflection and peace! Use the opportunity to take stock of your life and share in the joy and healing of God's forgiving love in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. There will be a number of visiting priests to help Fr. Gerard and Fr. Norbert in hearing Confessions.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION DAY on Saturday 7th February in Our Lady's Hall. All couples getting married in WGC or elsewhere in 2015 and 2016 are invited to this day which will start with coffee at 10.30am and end with the Blessing of Engaged Couples at the 6pm Mass. It is important that couples make contact with Fr. Norbert soon so that the paperwork and all the necessary preparations can be made, especially if you are marrying outside of WGC.

MARGARET HINDSON RIP Margaret's Funeral Mass will be in Our Lady's Church on Tuesday 16th at 9.30am. (There will still be 9.30am Mass at St. Bonaventure's.)

RECEPTION CLASS PRIEST'S FORMS Fr. Norbert will be available to sign Priest's Reference Forms for children applying to Reception Class in our Catholic Schools on Wednesday 17th December 3 - 6pm at Our Lady's Church. Parents need to ring Kathryn Hubbard by 12noon on Tuesday (01707 322579) to arrange a 5-minute appointment. Parent/s should come with a completed form and their child and wait in the church. Another date will be proposed for early January.

INTERFAITH MATTERS 'Decorations', this Tuesday 16th December at 7.30pm at the Backhouse Room, Handside Lane. Celebrating Seasonal Festivals with seasonal food samples.

KEYBOARD PLAYER required for Our Lady's music group. We play at least once a month at 11:30 mass on Sunday morning. Own keyboard preferred. Ability to read music preferred. Contact Ciaran Pugh on 07748 464640 for more details.

HOLY FAMILY Opening of church during the day - This will begin on Monday (15th) for private and quiet prayer; a place to be just still with Our Lord. The areas that needed securing have been secured. Please call in if you are passing or in the area, or paying a visit to the shops. No set times but I hope to open it in the morning by 9am up to about 4pm. However occasionally there may be times when I need to close it earlier. Please keep this new initiative in your prayers. *Fr. Gerard.*

ALTAR SERVERS Mass for all our altar servers on the feast of St. Stephen, their patron, will be on Friday 26th December at 10am in St. Bonaventure's. Bishop John Sherrington will be the Main Celebrant. We invite all our servers to come with their albs and cinctures and to arrive by 9.45am. The annual altar servers' Mass will be at Westminster Cathedral on Saturday 14th February (2pm for a 2.30pm start). We hope that a group from Welwyn Garden City will be able to attend. In regard to Christmas there is a list in the sacristy of each church for servers to sign up for Christmas Masses.

OUR LADY SCHOOL The Christmas Fete on the 28th November raised a huge £982.60 which was wonderful. The children from Our Lady sang Christmas carols in the Howard Centre and raised £195.74, the proceeds to be split between Our Lady School and the Isabel Hospice. Well done!

CAROL SERVICE AND NATIVITY PLAY at St. Bonaventure's this Sunday at 4pm. This will be followed by a 'bring and share tea' please come and support our children. **ST. BONAVENTURE'S AND OUR LADY'S** lists for Readers, Eucharistic Ministers and Welcomers for Christmas are at the back of the church. Please sign if you can minister.

COUNCIL CAROLS on Thursday 18th December at 6.30pm. Come and sing carols around the Christmas tree on the Campus Roundabout. If the weather is not good, we will move into the the foyer of the Campus West Theatre. All welcome.

CAROLS IN THE CLOISTERS. All welcome. Carols and Christmas reflections followed by refreshments. 7pm - 9pm Sat 20 Dec in the Focolare Centre, 69 Parkway, WGC. Contributions of festive snacks to share appreciated.

CRIB SERVICE Come along with your children to a short and informal Crib Service at St. Bonaventure's on Tuesday 16th December at 3.45pm. We place the figures in the crib, have a story and then decorate the Christmas tree. We will also have a short practice for those who will be at our Children's Christmas Mass (at 6pm on Christmas Eve). We also have a Children's Mass on Sunday 21st December.

HOLY FAMILY CHILDREN'S NATIVITY MASS The Children's Nativity Mass will take place on Christmas Eve at 6.30pm. There will be a rehearsal on Sunday December 21 after the 9.30am Mass. Please sign your child/children up for parts - there is a board at the back of church - or speak to Joss. Children of any age are welcome. If your child is in Key Stage Two please also leave your e-mail address so we can e-mail you their reading part to practise. Thank you.

BE AWARE A reminder that you should take your bag with you when you leave your seat in church. Thieves do target churches and we need to be vigilant.

BISHOP JOHN SHERRINGTON will celebrate some Masses in WGC over Christmas: 11pm at St. Bonaventure's Mass of Nativity on Wednesday 24th December, 9.30am at Holy Family on Sunday 28th December, the feast of the Holy Family and 10am Mass at Our Lady's on New Year's Day, the feast of Our Lady.

CARDINAL'S MASS of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony will be at Westminster Cathedral on Saturday 23rd May 2015 at 3pm. The Cardinal will be inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese who are celebrating their 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60) wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2015. 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).

CONFIRMATION preparation begins on Sunday 18th January. Please let Fr. Norbert know as soon as possible if you missed out on the enrolment meeting.

FIRST COMMUNION Preparation for parents and their children at Holy Family Church and Our Lady's Church begins in January. Again, if you missed out on the enrolment meetings, please let Fr. Norbert know.

NEWSLETTER Today's newsletter will take us to Christmas; so there will not be a copy on the Fourth Sunday of Advent. The following newsletter will be a Christmas newsletter available from Christmas Eve and will take us through to the Baptism of the Lord (11th January 2015)

CHRISTMAS MASSES

CHRISTMAS EVE Children's Vigil Masses 5pm Our Lady's, 6pm St. Bonaventure's, 6.30pm Holy Family

Mass of the Nativity 9pm Our Lady's, 10pm Holy Family, 11pm St. Bonaventure's, all preceded by Carols.

CHRISTMAS DAY 9am St. Bonaventure's, 10am Holy Family, 11am Our Lady's.

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Holy Family Church
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OUR LADY'S PARISH CENTRE Bookings should be made with Phil Johnson 01707 377442
peartreepomegranatecafe@googlemail.com

MASS TIMES

15 Monday	9.30am	Our Lady's	Advent feria
16 Tuesday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria
	9.30am	Our Lady's Funeral Mass	
	7pm	Our Lady's	
17 Wednesday	9.30am	Holy Family	Advent feria
18 Thursday	9.30am	Holy Family	Advent feria
19 Friday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria
	7pm	Our Lady's	
20 Saturday	10am	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria

Fourth Sunday of Advent

20 Saturday	6pm	Our Lady's	
21 Sunday	8am	St. Bonaventure	
	9.30am	Holy Family	
	10.30am	St. Bonaventure	
	11.30am	Our Lady's	
	6pm	Holy Family	
22 Monday	9.30am	Our Lady's	Advent feria
23 Tuesday	9.30am	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria
	7pm	Our Lady's	
24 Wednesday	9.30am	Holy Family	Advent feria



CHAPLAIN TO THE Q.E.II AND LISTER HOSPITALS: If you are going into hospital you can contact the R.C. Chaplain: Jacqueline Humphreys on 07884187463