

WELWYN GARDEN CITY



ST. BONAVENTURE



**OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



HOLY FAMILY

*Parish Priest: Fr. Norbert Fernandes Assistant Priest: Fr. Tom Montgomery
Parish Secretary: Kathryn Hubbard*

First Sunday of Advent 2nd December page 82 of the Mass Book

I recently received my first ever Advent Calendar with chocolates inside! A new experience...and it is a religious, delicious one! Many traditions will be springing into action in our homes, schools and churches. As well as purple for this season of preparation and expectation, the Advent Wreath is our companion. I was thinking about its shape: a circle with no beginning or end, reminding us about God who has always been there and always will be. The decoration of evergreen highlighting that God's love is everlasting. The four candles for the four Sundays of Advent with light getting brighter each week and the climax with the lighting of the Christmas Candle at our destination. I'm sure that by now many of us know it all by heart!

What strikes me is that there is a danger that we might recite things and do the expected in a routine way, perhaps like going round and round in circles, getting dizzy and very tired! The First Sunday of Advent marking the beginning of a new year in the Church's life is a wake-up call to those who embark on the routine. Jesus Christ WILL come again in glory! There will be signs; it will be frightening; no-one here on earth quite knows when it will take place. Jesus' words invite us to 'stay awake' and 'be ready'. While we all have our favourite traditions, Advent urges us to prepare for the unexpected and all that Jesus wants to bring us and to the whole of creation. As well as getting ready for the celebration of that first coming and remembering he will return in glory, we must be open to his breaking into our lives in the here and now - in the poor and oppressed, in the sorrowful and depressed, in the stranger suddenly making contact with us. The present tests our willingness to welcome Christ as he chooses and when he chooses. That can put us on the spot!

Let us at the start of this holy season commit ourselves to Jesus with prayer, generosity to the person in need and a determination not to let this opportune time pass by till next year. May God bless your efforts, your loved ones and each one of you on this journey we begin today.

God bless you. ***Fr. Norbert***

ADVENT On Mondays at Our Lady's, Thursdays at Holy Family and Fridays at St. Bonaventure's, there will be half an hour of silent prayer before the Blessed Sacrament - a time of peace and refreshment. Don't forget the early morning Mass on Friday 7th and the Restoration Holy Hour on Friday 14th as other 'extras' in this holy (and very busy!) season. There are at the back of our churches booklets for adults and children. Please take one (free of charge) and make good use of it!

FIRST FRIDAY The early Mass will be at St. Bonaventure's at 6.30am this week followed by breakfast in the hall. All welcome.

MONTHLY ADORATION The next 'Restoration' Holy Hour will be on Friday 14th December soon at 7.30pm. The Holy Hour includes Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, worship music, reflections and silence. All are welcome.

ADVENT RECONCILIATION SERVICE This will be on Tuesday 18th December at 8pm in Our Lady's Church. Come and share in the wonderful gift of God's forgiving love celebrated in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. There will be a number of priests helping with Confessions.

SIMONE FRITH RIP Simone's Funeral Service will be at Harwood Park Crematorium on Wednesday 5th December at 12.30pm.

TRACEY LAYCOCK RIP Tracey's Funeral Mass will be at Our Lady's Church on Wednesday 12th December at 12.30pm.

MARGARET WALSH RIP Margaret's Funeral Mass will be at Holy Family Church on Friday 14th December at 10.30am.

CONFIRMATION The young people who have begun their preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation will be presented at various Masses this weekend. Please keep them in your prayers as well as their families, sponsors and catechists.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION Enrolment for Holy Family Church will be today (2nd) after 9.30 Mass. Holy Family's sessions begin in the new year and will be after school on Wednesdays. *If anyone missed last Tuesday's enrolment meeting at Our Lady's, please see Fr. Norbert.*

MARRIAGE PREPARATION Any couples wishing to get married in Welwyn Garden City or elsewhere should speak to Fr. Norbert so that the necessary preparations can be made. The Marriage Preparation Day will be on Saturday 23rd March 2019.

LOURDES 2019 DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE – Next year's pilgrimage dates are Saturday 20th July – Friday 26th July. We are still waiting for the details of the cost to be sent out, but if you are interested in going then contact Fr Tom.

HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL The School will be having a Christmas Fayre on Saturday 15th December 11am - 2pm. Fr. Christmas will be there, and a magician; there will be stalls, food and a raffle. Why not come?

HOLY FAMILY GIVING TREE MASS The Giving Tree Mass this year will be on Sunday 9th December at 9.30am. During this Mass the children will be encouraged to think about people less fortunate than themselves. The idea is that every child who attends the Mass brings up a wrapped Christmas gift, either for a child or an elderly person, to be placed under a 'Giving Tree' during the offertory. (label your gifts Boy/Girl and a suggested age range, e.g. under 5, 5 to 10, teenager or adult). These gifts will then be given to children/the elderly in need in the local area. We thank you in advance for your generosity.

ETHNA MCSHANE R.I.P. Please pray for the repose of the soul of Ethna McShane who died this Friday afternoon.

CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE Parents applying to Catholic Primary Schools for entry into Nursery and Reception class will need this certificate. Parents are asked to contact Kathryn Hubbard on 01707 322579 to make a 5-minute appointment at Our Lady's Church with Fr. Norbert. At the back of our churches is an additional form which parents are asked to fill out beforehand and bring with them to the meeting together with their child. Please wait in the church and Fr. Norbert will call you. The dates are: Tuesday 4th December 4 - 5.30pm, Friday 14th December 4 - 5.30pm and Wednesday 19th December 3.30 - 5pm.

RCIA Next session Monday 3rd December at 7.30pm in Our Lady's sacristy.

CAROL SERVICES Commonswood Primary School will have theirs in Our Lady's Church on Monday 17th December at 6pm. Our Lady School has theirs in Our Lady's Church on Wednesday 19th December at 6pm and Holy Family School has theirs in Holy Family Church on Thursday 20th December at 6pm. The Christian Churches will have the annual Christmas Service outside the Howard Centre on Thursday 20th December at 6.30pm.

CAROLS IN THE CLOISTERS Friday 14th Dec 6.30-8.30pm at the Focolare Centre, 69 Parkway, An evening of carols, everyone is welcome! Calling all children! Come and join with us to sing and celebrate the coming of Jesus! If you have a traditional costume, do wear it, if not come as a shepherd, king or angel - or come just as you are! Light refreshments, all contributions of savoury or sweet finger food most welcome.

NATIVITY PLAY AT ST. BONAVENTURE'S on Sunday 16th December, there will be a Carol Service and Nativity Play. All children/young people are invited to take part (not just St. Bonaventure's). Our first rehearsal is **today** 2nd December from 3.30pm - 4.30pm.

ST. ANDREW'S DAY Thank you to all who made last Friday's celebration so enjoyable.

SPECIAL NEEDS MASS Our next celebration will be at Our Lady's on Saturday (8th) with Mass at 6pm and a gathering in the sacristy afterwards. Please bring food to share. There'll be a quiz and bingo too. All welcome.

ST. BONAVENTURE'S CHURCH CLEANING Come along this Thursday at 10am to help clean the church. Refreshments after the hard work!

HOLY FAMILY CHRISTMAS EVE CHILDREN'S MASS There is a list the back of the church for children to sign up to if they want to take part There will be one rehearsal on Sunday 23rd December after the 9.30 Mass after which costumes will be handed out.

DATES Day Pilgrimage with the Deaf to Walsingham Saturday 18th May. Trip to Canterbury Cathedral with Christian Churches of WGC Saturday 15th June 2019. Service in the Crypt, Guided Tours, picnic lunch, free (shopping!) time and Evensong in Cathedral. Keep the dates free!

CHRISTMAS A CAPPELLA SINGING FREE TASTER SESSIONS Welwyn Harmony Ladies Chorus invites you to come and have fun singing Christmas songs a cappella in four-part harmony. Tuesday 27th November and 11th December from 7.30pm to 9.30pm at the Vineyard Barn, Digswell Rise, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 7PU. All ladies welcome! Contact: info@welwynharmony.co.uk for more details.

INTER FAITH MEETING Earlier this year Fr. Norbert gave a presentation about Christian pilgrimages. On Thursday 13th December at 7.15 in the Focolare Centre there will be an opportunity to hear about pilgrimages in other faiths: Baha'i, Hindu, Islamic and Jewish. All welcome.

A REMINDER that items for inclusion in the newsletter need to be in by Thursday evenings.

Fr. Norbert 01707 323234
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Our Lady's Church
141 Woodhall Lane AL7 3TP

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

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

CONFESSIONS

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

Website for our 3 parishes
www.wgc-catholics.org.uk

ST ALBANS Every Friday at St. Albans Abbey-Cathedral a Catholic Mass is celebrated at 12 noon. You are all welcome.

SENIOR CITIZENS CHRISTMAS TEA PARTY – Wednesday 5th December @ 12.30pm. Join us at Nicholas Breakspear Catholic School for an afternoon of Festive Treats & Fun. To RSVP (or for more information) please contact Nicola Butler – 01727 860 079 or email butlern@nbs.herts.sch.uk

DO YOU KNOW anyone who would like to attend Mass but cannot manage the journey? We have experienced volunteer drivers willing to provide door to door transport. Please telephone Kay on 01707 335633 or Desi on 01707 371399

The CAFOD group will be meeting on Tues 4th December at 2pm in the parish room at Holy Family. All are welcome.

The AFRICAN COMMUNITY will be meeting on Sunday, 16 December after 11.30a.m. Mass at Our Lady. The meeting will be held at Our Lady's Sacristy and all African parishioners are invited to attend.

MASS TIMES

03 Monday	9.30am	Mass	Our Lady's	St. Francis Xavier
04 Tuesday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
05 Wednesday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	Advent feria
06 Thursday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	St. Nicholas
07 Friday	6.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	
	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	St. Ambrose
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
08 Saturday	10am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Immaculate Conception

Second Sunday of Advent

08 Saturday	6pm	Mass	Our Lady's
09 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** email: chaplaincy.enh-tr@nhs.net