

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*

Fourth Sunday of Lent 31st March page 169 of the Mass Book

Every three years on this Fourth Sunday of Lent, the Church presents us with the picture of a parent who shows unconditional love, reaching out to each of his two children and reminding them of their importance. We know the parable principally as 'The Prodigal Son'; however, it is really about a Father who never stops looking out for his lost son, whilst keeping a constant love for the older boy. At this point, the half-way mark through Lent, the purple gives way to rose/pink and the Church cries our 'Laetare! Rejoice!' In this country we celebrate Mothering Sunday - and British Summer Time has come! There is so much to think about, reflect on and do, with Easter that bit closer.

How do you regard the Father in the Gospel reading from St. Luke? Is he foolish to welcome back his son? Is he wise to restore him to his place in the household, throwing such a lavish party for him? Is the younger one likely to do the same all over again? Can you walk in the shoes of the older boy who is so faithful and committed to his responsibilities? Would you have rejoiced at your younger brother's return or gone into the celebration? Many questions, a variety of responses, a diversity of views! 'Of course, it's only a story', I find myself saying. Nevertheless, it is one of the most beautiful and brilliant told by Jesus and he does so because of the complaining religious people who cannot stomach the scene of Jesus in the company of sinners. The picture presented puts us in touch with God, heaven and earth - huge, rich, reconciling love offered to all which results in a divine celebration. How easy it can be to begrudge God his mercy or feel he just doesn't know what he is doing. Please take time this week to allow the power of this parable to touch your hearts and contemplate the response God is drawing from you.

With the devastating cyclone in south-eastern Africa, CAFOD has asked us to have another Lenten collection to support our suffering brothers and sisters abroad. This will be next weekend. I'm sure you can use the special CAFOD envelopes to GiftAid your contribution. Also, our Cardinal has asked us to observe Friday 12th April as a Day of Prayer for Survivors of Abuse. More about this next week. Furthermore, the Cardinal has drawn our attention to the horror of knife crime; there will be a rally in Trafalgar Square on Saturday 6th April 2.00 - 4.00pm entitled 'Standing together'. The Cardinal will be there and invites parishioners to join him. The rally will share the lament of those who have lost loved ones; in addition, it will proclaim the goodness of so many young people - thus the voice of hope will resound! Like the Father in the parable, may our hearts reach out to the suffering; may God's love bring justice, healing, reconciliation and peace.

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

NEW PARISH CENTRE A pre-contract meeting took place during the week and it looks as though all systems are go! The builders should take possession of the site on Monday 29th April and the demolition of the old hall will follow. The project should take 12 'working' months, so our new Parish Centre would be ready by summer 2020. To get ready for the April date, we will need to have many helping hands to prepare items for storage and muscle to take things up the church tower into the rooms for safe keeping for the next year. On Friday 26th April at 11am, we are looking for volunteers to help wrap up glasses etc and box them up. On the same day from 6.30pm, we will move these boxes and furniture which is to be kept into the tower rooms. If you can help in any way, please let Fr. Norbert know. After that, whatever is left will be open to being taken by parishioners. Specific times will be published.

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY to each and every mother and honorary mum... God bless you!

LENT During the Season Lent, there will be **Stations of the Cross** on Wednesdays at Holy Family (after 9.30 Mass) and Fridays at St. Bonaventure's (after 9.30 Mass) and at Our Lady's after 7pm Mass. There will be **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament** for 30 minutes on Mondays at Our Lady's (after 9.30 Mass), Thursdays at Holy Family (after 9.30 Mass) and Saturdays at St. Bonaventure's (after 10am Mass). There will be the **early morning 6.30 Mass** at St. Bonaventure's this Friday (5th April) and the **Restoration Holy Hour** at Our Lady's on Friday 12th April after Stations of the Cross (around 8pm). The **Sacrament of Reconciliation** (Confession) will be as usual on Thursdays at Holy Family (10.00 - 10.30am), Saturdays at St. Bonaventure's (10.30 - 11.00am) and at Our Lady's (5.00 - 5.30pm). The main Service of Reconciliation for Welwyn Garden City will be in Holy Week on Tuesday 16th April at 8pm at Our Lady's.

PALM SUNDAY Any children who wish to take part in the Passion at the 11.30 Palm Sunday Mass on 14th April at Our Lady's should come to a practice the previous day (Saturday 13th) at 11am

ALTAR SERVERS In each of our sacristies there is a list of the Easter Services and practice times. Please sign up!

EASTER VIGIL MUSIC The music rehearsal for the Easter Vigil will be on Monday 15th April at 7pm in Our Lady's Church. All are welcome.

MASS WITH THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK Our Annual Mass organised by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul will be this Saturday (6th April) at 12 noon in the Focolare Centre (next to St. Bonaventure's). After the Mass there will be refreshments. All are welcome. The Sacrament of the Sick is a healing Sacrament. The priest lays his hands on the sick person's head; the Oil of the Sick is anointed on the forehead and the palms of the hands. There will be four priests available.

EASTER MEMORIAL SERVICE: If you have been bereaved recently or long ago and would like to come together to remember your loved ones at this time of Easter, please join us on Saturday, 27th April at 12pm in St Bonaventure's Church for a short Service of prayer followed by refreshments in the parish Hall. The Bereavement Group.

CAFOD The CAFOD group will be meeting at on Tuesday 2nd April at 2pm in the parish room at Holy Family. All are welcome. On Saturday 6th April the CAFOD group will be running a Charity car park at Oaklands college. If you are going to be in town on the day please give us your support. Parking will £1 per visit no time restrictions.

OUR LADY'S CHURCH CLEANING The monthly cleaning and maintenance of the church is on Saturday 6th April at 10am for ONE hour followed by refreshments. Many hands make light work, please do come along to help!

REPOSITORY at Our Lady's. Easter, Communion and Confirmation cards and gifts now on sale. Open before and after most Masses.

SIGNED MASS Our thanks to Shell Roca, Director of the Diocesan Deaf Service, for being with us at Saturday's 6pm Mass this weekend and for the time spent preparing with parishioners.

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES CARD Available this weekend. Please keep in a safe place so that you know all the service times for Holy Week and Easter.

RCIA Next session on Monday 1st April at 7.30pm in Our Lady's Sacristy.

WALSINGHAM This year on Saturday 18th May, we will have a coach going to Walsingham in Norfolk. It is always a glorious day and we have the joy of joining the National Deaf Pilgrimage. More details next week.

CARDINAL'S LENTEN APPEAL is a way of observing Lent. Take one of the special envelopes from the back of the church. Money raised through this appeal will support areas of Diocesan life: Marriage and Family Life, Youth and Evangelisation, the Church's Service in Society which now will include a new programme focusing on food poverty. Envelopes can be put in the church collection and will be sent on.

POLISH-ENGLISH MASS will be on Saturday 29th June at 6pm at Our Lady's.

AFRICAN MASS The celebration for 2019 will be on Sunday 14th July at 11.30am

FILIPINO MASS Saturday 6th July at 6pm has been chosen for this celebration.

SANTIAGO PILGRIMAGE There will be a gathering on Saturday 27th April after 6pm Mass at Our Lady's in the Sacristy of any pilgrims who would like to meet up before the pilgrimage in May. It will take the form of a bring and share. Also, any pilgrims who would like to be on a coach to and from the airport should let Fr. Norbert know.

CANTERBURY OUTING 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. Flyers including booking forms are at the back of the churches and must be filled in and returned well in advance. It should be a brilliant day. One coach is now full. Please return the forms with your money as soon as possible. Don't miss out!

ASSISI 2020 Brochures and booking forms are now available at the back of our churches. The pilgrimage will have Christians from WGC to mark the Centenary and 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.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION DAY Our thanks to the married couples who gave of their time last Saturday and shared their own experiences with those preparing for Marriage. It was a very fruitful day. Any other couples who wish to get married in Welwyn Garden City or elsewhere should contact Fr. Norbert

CONFIRMATION Our thanks to the young people and catechists of the Confirmation Group for leading the Stations of the Cross on Friday. Last Sunday's Retreat Day at Aylesford was blessed with lots of sunshine and gave the young people an opportunity to have a time of quiet as well as being introduced to different forms of prayer. The final session will be on Sunday 12th May at 7.15pm in Holy Family Church. The Confirmation Rehearsal will be on Sunday 2nd June at 7.45pm in Our Lady's Church and the Confirmation Mass on Friday 7th June at 7.30pm in Our Lady's.

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 the Celebrant on 5th April.

LIVE SIMPLY -so that others can simply live.

Saint Francis of Assisi tells us that this planet is like a **Sister** with whom we share our life - and a beautiful **Mother** who opens her arms to embrace us. Pope Francis writes "This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse [of the world's resources]."

CHILDREN'S EASTER WORKSHOP AT ST. BONAVENTURE'S There will be an Easter Workshop for children on Tuesday 16th April from 2- 4pm. Come and help plant our outdoor Easter Garden, make your own garden, make some Easter things, join in an Easter egg hunt, prepare for our Way of the Cross, have a 'Happy Easter Tea' (bring and share) and listen to the Easter story. More information nearer the time. £2 per child to cover some of our costs.

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 St. Bonaventure's Church
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Fr. Tom 01707 327434
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 Holy Family Church
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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

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.

MARY'S MEALS is a global movement of people from all walks of life, united by their belief that no child in this world of plenty should endure a day without a meal. The idea is that one daily meal is provided in a place of learning to attract chronically poor children into the classroom where they receive an education which in the future can be their ladder out of poverty. The work of Mary's Meals is built on the power of prayer. Each day 1,425,013 children in 18 countries receive school meals. (£13.90 feeds a child for a whole school year). For more information, contact marysmeals.org.uk or phone 0800 6981212. At present the Government is matching donations.

MASS TIMES

01 Monday	9.30am	Mass	Our Lady's	Lent feria
02 Tuesday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Lent feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
03 Wednesday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	Lent feria
04 Thursday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	Lent feria
05 Friday	6.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	
	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Lent feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
06 Saturday	10am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Lent feria

Fifth Sunday of Lent

06 Saturday	6pm	Mass	Our Lady's
07 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**