

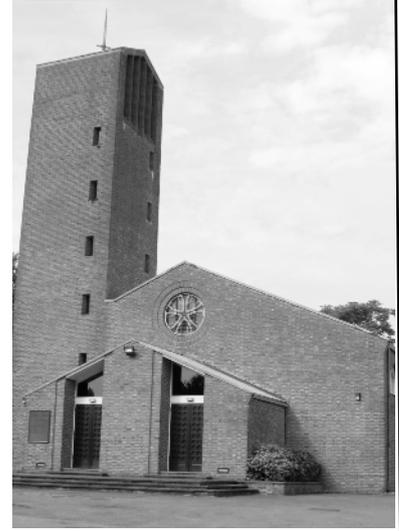
WELWYN GARDEN CITY



ST. BONAVENTURE



**OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



HOLY FAMILY

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

Third Sunday of Advent 17th December 2017 p. 87 of Mass book

‘Who are you?...What have you to say about yourself?’ These are two questions put to John the Baptist in today’s passage from St. John’s Gospel. I suppose the questions I ask myself on this Third Sunday of Advent are: Where has the time gone? Surely we are not already lighting the pink/rose candle on the Advent Wreath? With last weekend’s snow and icy conditions, it feels as though a week has been lost. With next Sunday being Christmas Eve, there won’t be a fourth week of Advent to prepare!

John the Baptist is described as a witness to speak for the light; he refers to himself as a ‘voice’, quoting from the prophecy of Isaiah. Modelling ourselves on the one who prepared Israel for the Coming of Christ, can we in just one week be witnesses and voices? How will we allow the light of the Lord to be reflected from us onto others? Will those we encounter hear the Lord’s voice resonating in our words? Later on in St. John’s Gospel, the Baptist says: ‘He must increase. I must decrease.’ Is it as easy as that to step back and give Christ first place? Something to ponder.

Last Sunday I experienced an amazing moment when parishioners and neighbours helped to dig my car out of the snow at the top of Knightsfield. I had thought I would have to abandon my car and walk back to Our Lady’s through the caked-in snow of the paths and probably arrive back late for Mass. However, rescue came my way! Kindness, patience and sympathy were extended to me in abundance and for these I am truly grateful. Many of you were not able to leave your homes safely and the wisest thing was not to battle against the elements. Hopefully these coming days will not be as trying and all that has to be done will be completed.

Let us endeavour in this week to care for one another and extend a hand in support and Christ-like friendship to those we meet. If you are travelling, go safely and see you in 2018! To visitors, I wish you a warm welcome! May Christ’s Coming fill us all with joy, grace and love. God bless you. ***Fr. Norbert***

ADVENT There will be half an hour of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament after Monday's 9.30 Mass at Our Lady's, Thursday's 9.30 Mass at Holy Family and Friday's 9.30 Mass at St. Bonaventure's. In the midst of the busy-ness of this season, come for some peace and stillness before the Lord.

SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION for our three churches on Tuesday 19th December at 8pm in Our Lady's Church. Come and share in the joy of the Sacrament of Reconciliation as part of your Advent. There will be a time of reflection and priests available to hear Confessions.

NATIVITY PLAY AND CAROL SERVICE AT ST. BONAVENTURE'S This Sunday 17th December at 4pm. Followed by a bring and share tea. All welcome.

CRIB SERVICE Come along with your children to a short and informal Crib Service at St. Bonaventure's on Tuesday 19th 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).

CAROL SERVICES Our Lady's School has its Carol Service in Our Lady's Church on Monday 18th December at 6.30pm. Holy Family School's Carol Service will be in Holy Family Church on Tuesday 19th December at 6pm.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION DAY This will take place next year on Saturday 24th March at Our Lady's. Please let Fr. Norbert know if you are planning to marry in 2018/19 whether in Welwyn Garden City or further away so that the Papers for Marriage can be sorted out.

RCIA Next session in Our Lady's Sacristy at 7.30pm Monday 15th January.

THANK YOU to the members of Holy Family CAFOD group who cleaned the church this Thursday. Your help is much appreciated.

ALTAR SERVERS There are lists for you to sign up for the Christmas Masses. Don't forget your Patron Saint, St. Stephen whose Feast will be on Tuesday 26th December. Mass will be at St. Bonaventure's at 10am.

AVIGNON 2018 Parish trip to Avignon in France Sunday 23rd - Friday 28th September. Brochures and booking forms are now at the back of our churches.

ANGELA PICKSTOCK RIP Angela's Funeral Mass will be at Our Lady's on Friday 22nd December at 9.30am.

CHURCH CLEANING FOR CHRISTMAS St. Bonaventure's are having a final clean on Thursday 21st December at 10am.

HCPT A big Thank You to everyone who came along or donated to HCPT group 183 Christmas fair, we had a brilliant turn out and made £445.65 to help pay for a child's place on next year's trip. Also a big thanks for all who helped run stalls xx

FIRST FRIDAY The next early Mass will be on Friday 5th January at 6.30am in St. Bonaventure's followed by breakfast in the Hall. All welcome.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES CARDS are at the back of church. Please take one.

NEWSLETTER Next week's newsletter will take us through to Sunday 14th January 2018. Any items for this Christmas newsletter covering that period need to be sent in by the morning of Wednesday 20th December at the VERY latest. Thank you.

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY CAFÉ in Our Lady's Hall every third Thursday of the month 10am - 2pm. There will be activities and refreshments.

ZUMBA for those with physical and learning disabilities in Our Lady's Hall on Wednesdays 11.30am - 12.30pm. The instructor brings in her dog Pickles for 'pet therapy'! Cost £6 which includes refreshments and fruits. Those who need support/carer must bring their own support/carer (who enters free).

CAKE SALE after 11.30am Mass at Our Lady's today. Please support the young people who have organised this sale.

T'AI CHI for health and well-being. Relax your mind and body, improve strength, co-ordination and flexibility and get to know this ancient traditional form of self-defence and exercise. Instructor Dan Nichols has recently come back to England having trained with 19th generation Grand-master Chen Xiao Xing in China. Beginners and advanced students welcome. Classes 7-8pm every Tuesday at Woodhall Community Centre. Free introductory lesson.

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS FOR THE ELDERLY AND HOUSEBOUND Our now traditional hamper packing will take place in the Holy Family Church Parish Room on Fri 22nd Dec at 7pm with delivery the following day, Sat 23rd Dec (hampers to be collected at 10am.) If you would like to help with the hampers by packing or delivering please contact Sally Kee 07870 402510, Ann Power 07732 974780 or Joss Innocent Landers 07757 753426. Your response last year was amazing and we're hoping this year will be the same as the recipients are always truly delighted to receive their hamper but also to know that we as a parish are thinking of them at this sometimes lonely time of year.

HERTFORDSHIRE ESOL Volunteer Coordinator £27,000 per year pro rata (one year post) *Are you innovative, creative and enjoy a challenge?* In partnership with the CDA Hertfordshire, Herts Welcomes Syrian Families (HWSF) are looking for a part time ESOL Volunteer Coordinator for Hertfordshire. The post will be for 9 hours a week but with flexible hours and working from home. This is the first time a post such as this has been created in Hertfordshire. Your main duties will be to create a supportive network for ESOL / Language Support Volunteers in areas where Syrian Refugees have settled in order to support the improvement of their language skills and integration. Interested? To find out more you can call Irene Austin Chair HWSF on 07463 486048 for an informal chat, or email chair@hwsf.org.uk for a full job description and application form (these files can also be found on our website <http://www.hwsf.org.uk/news/were-hiring-esol-volunteer-coordinator-needed>). Closing date is 05 January 2018.

ALTAR SERVERS There are lists for you to sign up for the Christmas Masses. Don't forget your Patron Saint, St. Stephen whose Feast will be on Tuesday 26th December. Mass will be at St. Bonaventure's at 10am.

NEED A CLEANER? Then phone Elizabeth Anderson on 01707 883770 or 07980 887231, regular cleaning, fortnightly, monthly, spring cleans, ironing etc.

HOLY FAMILY PARISHIONERS would like to thank the Loughrey family for their generous donation of the Christmas Tree for the church.

CHAPLAIN TO THE Q.E.II AND LISTER HOSPITALS: If you are going into hospital and need a Catholic Chaplain contact Rev. Anthony Curran (Deacon) **Office Tel: 01438 285138 (24/7) Urgent need: 01438 314 333** via text message: **07876 526935** email: chaplaincy.enh-

Fr. Norbert 01707 323234
welwyngdncityeast@rcdow.org.uk
 Our Lady's Church
 141 Woodhall Lane AL7 3TP

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

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

OUR LADY'S PARISH CENTRE Bookings
 should be made with Phil Johnson 01707
 377442 **Website for our 3 parishes**
www.wgc-catholics.org.uk

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

MASS TIMES

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 18 Monday | 9.30am | Mass | Our Lady's | Advent feria |
| 19 Tuesday | 9.30am | Mass | St. Bonaventure | Advent feria |
| | 7pm | Mass | Our Lady's | |
| 20 Wednesday | 9.30am | Mass | Holy Family | Advent feria |
| 21 Thursday | 9.30am | Mass | Holy Family | Advent feria |
| 22 Friday | 9.30am | Mass | St. Bonaventure | Advent feria |
| | 9.30am | Funeral Mass | Our Lady's | |
| | 7pm | Mass | Our Lady's | |
| 23 Saturday | 10am | Mass | St. Bonaventure | Advent feria |
| Fourth Sunday of Advent | | | | |
| 23 Saturday | 6pm | Mass | Our Lady's | |
| 24 Sunday | 8am | Mass | St. Bonaventure | |
| | 9.30am | Mass | Holy Family | |
| | 10.30am | Mass | St. Bonaventur | |
| | 11.30am | Mass | Our Lady's | |



Christmas Eve



Monday 25th December

Nativity of the Lord

Children's Vigil Masses

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| 5pm | Our Lady's |
| 6pm | St. Bonaventure |
| 6.30pm | Holy Family |
| Mass of the Nativity | |
| 9pm | Our Lady's |
| 10pm | Holy Family |
| 11pm | St. Bonaventure |



Mass with Carols

| | |
|------|-----------------|
| 9am | St. Bonaventure |
| 10am | Holy Family |
| 11am | Our Lady's |