

WELWYN GARDEN CITY



ST. BONAVENTURE



**OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



HOLY FAMILY

*Parish Priest: Fr. Norbert Fernandes Assistant Priest: Fr. Tony Thomas
Parish Secretary: Kathryn Hubbard*

29th Sunday of the Year 18th October 2020

‘Give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar - and to God what belongs to God.’
These are the words of Jesus used to respond to those trying to catch him out with a trap about the paying of taxes. The Lord asks for a coin, gets his protagonists to acknowledge whose face/image is on it, and then speaks what is written above. Of course, his opponents must have been thrown into confusion. More importantly, what do we make of the pronouncement?

Some people over the centuries have taken the saying to point to a separation of Church and State, religion and politics - never the twain shall meet! Ring-fencing areas of life from one another may be regarded as more convenient! In some countries this leads to a status quo where there is a real fear of interference and a total abhorrence of boundaries being crossed. Note that Jesus didn't carry money or appear to subscribe to the tax-system following the Romans! Does that play into the hands of those who do not want to pay taxes?! For the Jewish nation, the paying of taxes was a sign of oppression by a foreign, pagan empire. Surely many of us find ourselves saying ‘Everything belongs to God’? God lies behind all there is and so glory and thanksgiving should be offered to the Creator? Finally, the image of the Emperor on the denarius coin implied he was a deity. We have only one God and bear the image of God in ourselves; this stamp is far more significant than anything a Caesar might display on a piece of metal.

Where does this leave us? Perhaps today, as we listen to this passage, we need to focus on what it means to *give back to God what belongs to God*? **Time:** spending time in contemplation of the beauty of God's Creation (and respecting it), time to praise God for what he has given us, time to pray and listen, time to enjoy being in God's company.

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Resources: From the little I have, is there something I can share with the less fortunate? Is there something big that I could do without and contribute to the poor? **Myself:** God has created me in his image and likeness. What does this mean? How do I see it in reality? Do I recognise the same in others?

We are being offered more demanding challenges from our political leaders to protect us and keep us safe. It is always hard to lose freedom especially when we cannot see the point. However, take time to reflect hard on the difference you can make to the safety, health and future of loved ones, those who are front-line workers and society as a whole. Have a good week. Fr. Tony and I ask God's blessing upon you.

With much love, *Fr. Norbert*

STREAMED MASS

[youtube.com/c/WelwynGardenCityCatholicChurches](https://www.youtube.com/c/WelwynGardenCityCatholicChurches)

We continue to stream Mass on Sunday at 10am

FACEBOOK PAGE

<https://www.facebook.com/Welwyn-Garden-City-Catholic-Churches-113038463699672/>

We have a Facebook page for our three parishes. Please search for 'Welwyn Garden City Catholic Churches' to find us. There are Gospel reflections, the latest news, live rosaries and so on.

MASS ON RADIO

If you are aware of someone not on the internet who would like to follow Mass, RTE Radio broadcasts Mass on 252 Longwave. For those who have a digital radio, Radio Maria broadcasts in London on DAB+ and in the Cambridge area on DAB.

MASS INTENTIONS Fr. Norbert and Fr. Tony are celebrating the Mass Intentions week by week. On Sundays the Mass is offered for the 'People of our Parishes'. If anyone wants Mass offered for a particular intention, please let Fr. Norbert or Fr. Tony know. Donations for the Masses can be made at a later stage. The intentions will be published in the newsletter as below.

This week Masses have been celebrated for: Sr Alphonsus Mills RIP, Ricardo Vitorino RIP (12th Anniv), Elizabeth Roebuck RIP, Mary McEvoy RIP

LATELY DEAD Please pray for the repose of the souls of Margaret Provan and Jo Parlow (Tim Parlow's mother) who died recently.

SACRAMENTS

Below is the latest information for our parishes here in Welwyn Garden City based on Government guidelines and those issued by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. As you realise many things keep changing with very little notice, so please bear with us. Thank you for your patience!

Preparation for the Sacraments in 2021 will not start until the beginning of next year. We have to find the safest and least burdensome ways of doing so!

BAPTISMS of babies and infants can now be arranged. Please contact Fr. Tony or Fr. Norbert directly to make arrangements. No more than 6 people can be present.

CONFIRMATIONS (from last year's group) will take place in November. Candidates are being contacted.

FIRST COMMUNIONS Children will be making their First Holy Communion in the three churches at scheduled and 'extra' Masses. Please note that the Scripture readings on weekdays may be changed to link up with the Sunday. Congratulations to the children who have received Jesus for the first time in Holy Communion. Our thanks to their catechists and all who helped with the celebrations.

WEDDINGS can take place with no more than **15** people present.

FUNERALS with no more than **30** people present are now permitted in church.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF OUR PARISHES We are not having a collection at Mass! Coins and notes are a possible source of infection and transmission of the coronavirus and we do not want to put collectors and counters at risk. However, the financial support of parish life is crucial and needed. Please consider using the Virgin Money Giving links on the parish website. There are standing order forms available to download on the website too. We realise that things are very challenging financially at present and do not want to put any extra burden on you. However, for those in a position to contribute to our churches, we ask you to find the best way of giving. Our thanks to you for your generosity and co-operation.

FOOD BANK New Zion Christian Fellowship continues its Food Bank every Wednesday 9 - 11am. If you are able to drop off non-perishable food for the needy members of our community, New Zion is happy to receive contributions from 8am on a Wednesday. The address is 140 Cole Green Lane AL7 3JE. If anyone would like to make a financial contribution to the Food Bank, please email foodbank@newzioncf.net and you will be given details as to how to make a donation.

ST. ALBANS CATHEDRAL Catholic Mass every Friday at 12 noon in the Nave of the Cathedral.

BLESSING OF GRAVES The Bishops have issued very strict guidelines regarding the Blessing of Graves. It looks as though we will not be able to do this as in the past. Fr. Tony and Fr. Norbert will, however, visit Hatfield Hyde, Hatfield Lawn and Welwyn New Cemeteries during the month of November to bless graves. Unfortunately, this will have to be done in a low-key way. *Thank you for your understanding.*

NOVEMBER DEAD LIST Please write down the names of loved ones who have died and give the lists to Fr. Norbert and Fr. Tony in sealed envelopes with NO money. The envelopes will be left near the altars in our churches during the month of November. The deceased will be remembered in prayer every day.

ALL SOULS DAY Monday 2nd November We are going to have Mass in each of our churches that day: 9.30am in Holy Family, 12 noon in St. Bonaventure's and 7pm in Our Lady's. We want to keep the tradition of praying for the dead on this day. Obviously, we will need stewards and cleaners. So please volunteer!

This is also an opportunity to try having public Mass in St. Bonaventure's as a one-off on this occasion. For St. Bonaventure's, those planning to come will have to contact Fr. Norbert to 'book' a place. It is a bit like a jigsaw and we will have to see how many we can accommodate according to 'bubbles' while keeping everyone safe and COVID-19 secure. Some of you can easily attend Mass at the other churches, so please open up the possibility to those who have not been able to come thus far. We ask you to arrive 15 minutes before and to be aware that there will have to be a limit on those attending hence the 'booking' of Mass.

SIGNED MASSES On the first Sunday of the month at 4.30pm, there will be a signed Mass streamed with a split screen: Shell Roca, Director of the Deaf Service, will respond in sign as Fr. Norbert celebrates the Mass in sign. This will be in place of the monthly Mass from the Cathedral. All welcome to follow and please give the details to any deaf or hard of hearing people you know.

PRIEST'S REFERENCE FORMS With the Secondary School transfer process unfolding, many parents will need a 'Certificate of Catholicity'. Please download the form on this website called 'Request for a Certificate of Catholicity'. Fill it in and return to Fr. Norbert who will then contact each family to arrange for a Certificate to be issued. *Not long to go. Please don't wait until the last moment. 31st October is deadline!*

FR. TONY ON THE RUN? On 27th November, Fr Tony is going to run a 'Virtual Runner' half-marathon (<https://www.virtualrunneruk.com/>) at Panshanger Park, to raise funds for the Welwyn Garden City Society of St Vincent de Paul. As you know, the SVP does wonderful work supporting elderly and vulnerable members of our community, and any sponsorship money raised will help them in particular during this year's challenging Christmas season. If you would like to support Fr Tony and the SVP, please go to this JustGiving page: <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/tony-thomas-876>

SVP REQUEST for household items. The SVP is trying to source furniture/household items for a lady setting up home, having moved out of the YMCA. She needs the following items: fridge, freezer, cooker, washing machine, tumble dryer, bed, side drawers, TV, TV stand. If you are able to donate any items, or can suggest where they could be obtained, please contact Fr Tony (01707 327434). Any help would be greatly appreciated.

METANOIA: What must I do to inherit eternal life?

On Thursday evening we had the latest session in our online course, 'Metanoia'. Each week in the newsletter, we will print a summary of the week's teaching, along with a brief spiritual reflection on the same theme.

Summary: Perhaps the most important question every person needs to be able to answer is this: What do I need to do in order to inherit eternal life? How do I get to Heaven? Many people oversimplify their answer to this question and believe it is enough to simply be a good person, to avoid breaking the commandments, and to go to church. Although all these things are extremely important in the journey towards heaven, not enough attention is paid to the importance of following Jesus. In fact, Jesus is rarely mentioned. However, Jesus is THE way to heaven and being in a relationship with him is key to inheriting the Kingdom of God.

Reflection: Our decision to follow Jesus is a constant choice, one that we make time and time again. Take a few minutes to consider what God has done for you and how he has loved you, been patient, kind and merciful. Once again, give your heart to the Lord and choose to follow him.

WORLD MISSION SUNDAY supports missionaries who work alongside communities who are poor or in need regardless of their background or belief. If you would like to contribute to Missio, call 020 7821 9755 or visit website missio.org.uk

Mission Prayer:

*Here I am, Lord, send me to share your love with all people.
May I be empowered and carried by you
to be courageous and enthusiastic in bearing faithful witness
to the merciful Father,
to the love of his Son, Jesus Christ,
and to the divine life in the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever. Amen.*

PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF MASS IN WELWYN GARDEN CITY The Sunday obligation has been dispensed so you are free to attend Mass on any day. There is space too on weekdays for people to come more than once. Mass will continue to be streamed on a Sunday at 10am *Please note that at present we cannot use the heating during Mass in our churches because they have strong blowers and would transmit any airborne virus. We apologise for this. Best to wrap up well if the weather turns much colder.*

Saturday

10am Mass at Holy Family

6pm Mass at Our Lady's

Sunday

10am Mass at Our Lady's

6pm Mass at Holy Family

Monday

7pm Mass at Our Lady's

Tuesday

9.30am Mass at Holy Family

Thursday

9.30am Mass at Holy Family

Friday

7pm Mass at Our Lady's

As you arrive there are stewards outside to make sure people respect distancing and to take contact details (name and phone number which will be held securely for 21 days). For those who have downloaded the Government Covid-19 App, please use the QR Code which has been created (one for each church). Stewards sanitise hands on entry. Face masks are mandatory. More stewards lead you to places. People must sit in their 'bubbles', that is as couples, families or households. We have single chairs for individuals. We ask that you only sit or stand in your place and do not use the kneeler. Once the church has reached its capacity, we are not be allowed to admit any more. Parents are asked to keep a watchful eye on their children at all times. Remember toilets are not available. There are no Mass-books or printed newsletters. You do not have to 'book' to come, but please arrive EARLY!

The structure of the Mass has been simplified so that people are not in an enclosed place for longer than 30 minutes: no singing or music, no 2nd Reading or Bidding Prayers, no Gloria or Creed, no collection, Offertory procession or Sign of Peace,

no Communion from the Chalice, no altar servers, no lighting of votive candles. At the time of Holy Communion, the priest says to the whole congregation 'The Body of Christ' to which you all respond 'Amen'. Only the priest receives at that point. After the Blessing and Dismissal, stewards guide people from their benches to the front of the sanctuary, keeping distance at all times. Those who wish to receive Holy Communion may only receive in the hand with no words uttered by priest or communicant and then you leave the church - in Holy Family by the doors either side of the sanctuary, and in Our Lady's by the side door on the left and by the 'Holy Door' at the back on the right. Even those not receiving Holy Communion must follow this flow. As you exit the church, the stewards sanitise your hands.

We have been reminded by our Bishops that people should not gather outside church in a social way before or after Mass as this may be a source of further contagion.

We ask you to respect the stewards who are your fellow parishioners and are doing their best to facilitate the whole process.

Only the priest prepares the vessels for Mass and the ciboria (with hosts) have their lids on until Holy Communion is distributed at the end.

After each Mass the stewards sanitise everything which has had human contact and prepare the church for the next Mass. Any property left behind has to be disposed of. We have purchased masks, plastic aprons and gloves for stewards/cleaners as well as sufficient sanitising and cleaning materials.

Some of you may not feel ready to return because of health issues or because you care for someone who is vulnerable. Others might still be afraid and this is totally understandable.

If you think you have the virus, please do NOT come and put others at risk. COVID 19 symptoms: a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature), a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual), a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.

We are very grateful to the many volunteers who have helped as stewards and spent time cleaning the churches after Mass. Some have now returned to work. If any others are available on a weekday or at the weekend, please let Fr. Tony or Fr. Norbert know. Thank you.

CONFESSION On the days when public Mass is celebrated, Fr. Tony and Fr. Norbert will NOT be able to hear Confessions before or after Mass. However, ring Fr. Tony on 01707 327434 or Fr. Norbert on 01707 323234 if you would like to make an appointment for Confession. The Sacrament will be outside the church building with priest and penitent standing; every attempt will be made to keep distance and reduce the risk of infection either way, while respecting the confidentiality of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The church will NOT be open for prayer after.

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Saturday 17th October St. Ignatius of Antioch (died 107) *Bishop and Martyr. Thrown to the lions in Rome. Influential writings give us a picture of the nature of the early Church.*

Ephesians 1:15-23 'May you be given a spirit of wisdom and perception'

Luke 12:8-12 '...do not worry...the Holy Spirit will teach you what you must say.'

Sunday 18th October TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Isaiah 45:1, 4-6 'I have called you by your name...'

1 Thessalonians 1:1-5 '...God loves you...you have been chosen...'

Matthew 22:15-21 '...give to God, what belongs to God.'

Monday 19th October

Ephesians 2:1-10 'God loved us with so much love...we are God's work of art..'

Luke 12:13-21 Be rich in the sight of God.

Tuesday 20th October

Ephesians 2:12-22 'You are being built into a house where God lives, in the spirit.'

Luke 12:36-38 Be ready!

Wednesday 21st October

Ephesians 3:2-12 'I have been made a servant of the Gospel'

Luke 12:39-48 The expectations of the disciples

Thursday 22nd October St. John Paul II (1920-2005) *So many of us remember lots about him!*

Ephesians 3:14-21 Paul's Prayer

Luke 12:49-53 'I have come to bring fire to the earth!'

Friday 23rd October

Ephesians 4:1-6 'Lead a life worthy of your vocation.' Luke 12:54-59 Jesus wants us to look at the signs of the times!