

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*

Third and Fourth Sundays of Advent 15th December pages 88/91 of book

On the Third Sunday of Advent, we hear from Isaiah: 'Do not be afraid.' St James tells his community: 'Be patient...do not lose heart.' St. John the Baptist sends messengers to ask Jesus: 'Are you the one?' How do these words from Scripture resonate in your mind and heart as we reach an important milestone in the Advent Season? We're over the half-way mark! The Church cries out 'Gaudete! Rejoice!' Is that how you feel? What are the things in your personal life, in society or further afield which make you afraid? Is it hard to be patient because your prayers have not yet been answered or the response was baffling? Do you at times, like the Baptist, wonder if it all really is true and Jesus is the Messiah, the Saviour of the world? Isaiah speaks of a time when creation will be renewed and the downtrodden and suffering of humanity will be lifted up. James writes about the farmer who exhibits great patience in carrying out his work. Jesus just asks the messengers to report what they have heard and what they have seen - it IS Good News! It does take faith and trust; it requires looking and understanding, listening and perceiving. That is our task and responsibility as we prepare ourselves and the world for the Lord's coming.

On the Fourth Sunday of Advent, with Christmas imminent, we have in our Gospel reading the picture of Joseph receiving a message in a dream that Mary will conceive a child through the Holy Spirit and that his name will be Jesus - the one who will save the people from their sins; Isaiah's prophetic words are quoted which refer to the child who will be Emmanuel - God-with-us. St. Matthew simply tells us that Joseph did what the Lord had told him to do. We are preparing to encounter God intimately close to us in a baby; this child will bring us salvation. God wants us to carry out his will. This can sometimes be challenging in the circumstances we face; however, the Lord is close to us and in the midst of complications, his grace breaks through. So do not worry!

However and wherever you celebrate the coming Feast, I pray that it will be a time of blessing for you and your loved ones. May God reveal his presence anew, strengthening you in faith and love. Thank you for all you do to make our community open and vibrant, one that reaches out. May new parishioners enjoy their first Christmas in Welwyn Garden City and may visitors be enriched by these special moments in our midst. For those travelling to be with family or friends elsewhere, have a wonderful time and come back safely. God bless you. ***Fr. Norbert***

ADVENT During the Season of Advent there will be times of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament as follows: Monday (16th and 23rd) at Our Lady's and Friday 20th at St. Bonaventure's all 10.00 -10.30am.

RECONCILIATION SERVICE in readiness for Christmas will be on Tuesday 17th December at 8pm in Our Lady's. It is a wonderful way of preparing for Christmas by being at peace with God and others, reflecting on the forgiving love made known in Christ and by being open to grace which heals. There will be seven priests available for Confessions.

CAROL SERVICES Our Lady School in Our Lady's Church on Wednesday 18th December at 6pm. Holy Family School in Holy Family Church on Thursday 19th December at 6pm. Commonswood Primary School in Our Lady's Church on Monday 16th December at 6pm.

CAROL SINGING The Christian Churches of the town will be singing carols at the Woodhall shops Saturday 21st December 11.00 - 11.30am and 3.00 - 3.30pm. Come and add your voices.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS MASSES The practice for St. Bonaventure's Christmas Children's Mass (6pm Christmas Eve) will be on Tuesday 17th December after the Crib Service. The practice for Holy Family Church's Children's Christmas Mass (6.30pm Christmas Eve) will be on Sunday 22nd December after 9.30 Mass. (There is a signing up sheet at the back of Holy Family Church). The practice for Our Lady's Children's Mass (5pm Christmas Eve) will be on Monday 23rd December at 11am. All children are welcome to take part.

NADINE STALLARD RIP Nadine's Funeral Mass will be at Holy Family Church on Thursday 19th December at 9.30am. (This means there will not be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament or Confessions after Mass.)

MARY ROBERTSON RIP Mary's Funeral Mass will be at Our Lady's on Monday 30th December at 12.30pm.

RCIA for those preparing to join the Catholic Church at Easter continues on Monday at 7.30pm in Our Lady's Sacristy.

PRIEST'S REFERENCES *Extra Date!* Parents seeking a Certificate of Catholic Practice for their child's entry to Reception Class or Nursery are invited to sign up for an appointment with Fr. Norbert in Our Lady's Church on Friday 10th January 4.00 - 6.00pm. Please ring Kathryn Hubbard on 01707 322579 or email parishsec@stbonaventure.org.uk to book a 5-minute appointment. Parents are asked to fill out a yellow 'Extra Form' available at the back of the churches, to bring their child and wait in the church to be called. Thank you.

THE HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS SEPTEMBER 2020 We welcome applications to our School Reception class starting September 2020. This process is for children who were born between 1st September 2015 and 31st August 2016. All application forms need to be completed and returned to the school office by 15th January 2020. All forms can be found on our website <https://www.holyfamily.herts.sch.uk/admissions/> [1] You must also apply online at Hertfordshire Admissions www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions [2]. Tours of the school with the head teacher for prospective parents take place on Tuesday and Thursday from 10am, please contact the office to book a place.

BIBLE STUDY IN 2020 Have you ever wanted to learn more about the bible, but don't know where to start? To mark the Church's 'Year of the Word' we will be running the 'Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible' study programme, which presents the 'big picture' of the Bible from Adam and Eve to Jesus and the Church. At Holy Family on eight alternate Thursday evenings from 23rd January. Please let Fr. Tony know if you are interested.

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS for the ELDERLY AND HOUSEBOUND Hamper packing will take place in Holy Family Church Parish Room on Fri 20th Dec at 7pm and delivery the following day (hampers to be collected at 10am.) If you would like to help in any way by packing or delivering please ring Sally Kee 07870 402510, Caroline Sherar 07929 709901, Ann Power 07732 974780 or Joss Innocent Landers 07757 753426 or just come along.

NATIVITY PLAY AND CAROL SERVICE AT ST. BONAVENTURE'S This Sunday 15th December at 4pm. Followed by a 'bring and share tea'. Please come along and support our children.

CRIB SERVICE Come along with your children to a short and informal Crib Service at St. Bonaventure's this Tuesday 17th December at 3.45pm. Listen to a Christmas story, sing a carol and then decorate the Christmas tree. Afterwards you can make a Nativity bauble, a Nativity card and/or a mosaic Nativity scene to take home. Drinks and biscuits too!

CARDINAL Our Cardinal, Vincent Nichols, celebrates 50 years of Priesthood on Saturday 21st December. His Golden Jubilee Mass will be at the Cathedral at 10.30am.

ALTAR SERVERS Please sign up for the Christmas Masses on the sheets in each sacristy. St. Stephen's Day on Thursday 26th December is your day! Come to the 10 o'clock Mass at Holy Family. There'll be something in the Parish Room afterwards for everyone.

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 celebrant on 21st February and 27th March.

MARRIAGE Any couples who wish to get married in Welwyn Garden City or elsewhere should contact Fr. Norbert. The Marriage Preparation Day will be on Saturday 28th March. Couples marrying in 2020 or 2021 are invited.

FIRST FRIDAY The next early morning Mass at 6.30 at St. Bonaventure's will be on 3rd January followed by breakfast in the hall. There will be a festive flavour!

MONTHLY ADORATION The next 'Restoration' Holy Hour will be on Friday 10th January at 7.30pm. The Holy Hour includes Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, worship music, reflections and silence. All are welcome.

CENTENARY SERVICE The Churches in Welwyn Garden City will be having a Service to mark the town's Centenary on Sunday 19th January at 4pm. It will be at St. John's Church, Monks Rise AL8 7NX. Afterwards there will be tea and cake. The WGC Brass Band will play. Dignitaries have been invited and representatives of local schools. Fr. Norbert will be giving the reflection and he needs your support! So please keep this date in your diaries and do all you can to come and give thanks to God for 100 years of the Garden City.

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.

OBERRAMMERGAU Wednesday 9th - Friday 11th September, 2020. The brochures and booking forms are at the back of our churches. Let Fr. Norbert know if you require an electronic version. Europe was affected by a terrible plague at the beginning of the 17th century. In 1633 the people of the village of Oberammergau in Germany prayed and promised that if the plague left their village, a play commemorating the Passion of Jesus Christ would be performed every ten years. Their prayers were answered and the first Passion Play was performed in 1634.

TRANSPORT TO MASS contact Martin Moore on 07768 650660 or Desi Russell on 01707 371399 who will endeavour to arrange a lift for you.

HERTS WELCOMES REFUGEES are appealing for funds to buy laptops and tablets for refugee families who have a child in Year 6 or above. If you are interested in donating please look at <http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/laptops-for-refugees>.

CHURCH CLEANING FOR CHRISTMAS Holy Family this Wednesday after 9.30am Mass, St. Bonaventure's this Thursday at 10am. Refreshments provided. Our Lady's time to be announced.

NEWSLETTER The next newsletter will be a Christmas newsletter from 25th December up to Sunday 12th January - the Baptism of the Lord - which concludes the Christmas Season. Please think about what needs to be in the newsletter for this period and send it in by **Thursday morning** 19th December at the latest. Thank you. (The newsletter after the Christmas one will be out on 20th/21st January)

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 Our Lady's Church
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 Holy Family Church
 194 Knightsfield AL8 7RQ

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

CONFESSIONS

St. Bonaventure: Saturday **10.30am -11am**
 Our Lady's: Saturday **5pm -5.30pm.**
No Confessions at Holy Family this week

You can read the newsletter on the Website
www.wgc-catholics.org.uk

MASS TIMES

16 Monday	9.30am	Mass	Our Lady's	Advent feria
17 Tuesday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
18 Wednesday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	Advent feria
19 Thursday	9.30am	Funeral Mass	Holy Family	Nadine Stallard R.I.P.
20 Friday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
21 Saturday	10am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	Advent feria
Fourth Sunday of Advent				
21 Saturday	6pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
22 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	
23 Monday	9.30am	Mass	Our Lady's	
24 Tuesday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	



Christmas Eve



Tuesday 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

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.