

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

Seventeenth Sunday of the Year 26th July 2020

It's hard to believe that the month of July is almost over! It has been such a different entry into the holiday period. Time is a strange phenomenon: racing by, slowing down and standing still when you need it to move quickly! Summer is a good opportunity to take stock of where we are going, how things are unfolding and where we would like to be. Often it is when people might consider starting a new job or make a fresh start in life. This summer more than ever it would be crucial for us to reflect on the challenges we have faced and our responses, the sadnesses and disappointments endured and how we have coped, the looking out to new horizons and what we have discovered through fresh approaches.

Jesus keeps wanting us to respond to the Reign of God which he proclaims and lives. It is breaking into the here and now, taking us to the eternity of heaven. The Kingdom is the revelation of God in our midst, calling us to an experience of Divine Presence where there are no constraints of time and space. St. Matthew presents us in today's Gospel with parables to inspire us to consider how the Kingdom is waiting to be found - treasure which lies buried - and is the joy of the person who is searching for something precious - the pearl of great price. The protagonists in these parables experience sheer delight and sell all they own in order to acquire something even better. The 'cost' has been worthwhile. Just think of Jesus who lovingly gives up everything for us and enriches us with grace, mercy and peace.

In these months what have you discovered about God, others or yourself? What have you desperately been longing for from the Lord...and did you find it? Something material, a person, or an experience? Our natural means of contact through hand shakes, hugs or kisses have had to be buried! Have you now found a smile, yours or another's, to be more significant (behind the face covering!)?

next page

Communicating through a screen or handset or letter has become crucial when we couldn't meet with those who are so dear to us. In the expression of our faith, we have been deprived of the normal modes of worship and we've had to get used to streaming, quiet time, the Bible and Nature to facilitate prayer. God has not stopped communicating either! How and where have you found him?

At the very beginning of lockdown. I was struck by the fact that things would never be the same again. We have seen that in new practices and restrictions. However, I really felt that whenever we would come out of it, as Church we would have to be different. By this I mean that it is like starting all over again. It is as if the Gospel is being proclaimed for the first time; people are considering their response. The searching and discovering are vital if we are to be animated by this message and bowled over by the Jesus Event. That is why I feel we must return to our roots and carefully examine the uniqueness of Jesus in our own lives, decisions and outlook as well as rejoice in the awareness that God has never stopped loving us beyond measure. This sort of reckoning doesn't happen in a few minutes! Give a parcel of your time to God and implore him to enlighten you; open your heart and allow his love to make you more human and more divine - just like Jesus! Keep searching, discovering, rejoicing and don't count the cost!

Let us continue to pray for one another and give mutual support. Fr. Tony and I ask God to watch over you and your loved ones. God bless 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 and Wednesday at 9.30am.

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. Do 'like' this page so that any updates appear in your own news feed, and share it with your friends too!

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.

PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF MASS IN WELWYN GARDEN CITY As the Sunday Obligation has been suspended, you are free to come to any of the Masses. Our plan is to continue as below together with the streamed Mass on Sunday at 10am. Around 200 people have come during the week, so there is the capacity for people to come more than once in the week if they wish.

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). Stewards sanitise hands on entry. 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. The galleries in both churches are not be open. There are no Mass-books or printed newsletters. Give yourselves time to park and prepare to enter the church - arrive **EARLY!** ***You are now strongly encouraged to wear a face covering.***

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 told that you cannot congregate outside but must make your way home. 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 there are cleaning teams to sanitise everything which has had human contact and to prepare the church for the next Mass. Any property left behind has to be disposed of. Priests have been told not to greet their people for the sake of everyone's protection. We have purchased masks, plastic aprons and gloves for stewards and 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.

At each Mass last week there were many volunteers who acted as stewards and helped clean afterwards. If you can offer support, please send your name to Fr. Tony or Fr. Norbert. As the weeks go by, some may be away so the availability of extra hands would be appreciated.

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. We ask you to have patience and generosity of spirit if things get complicated time-wise!

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 Denis O'Brien RIP, Cissie Bargh RIP, Stan Griffin RIP Anniv

PARISHIONERS WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY

Denis O'Brien RIP

Cissie Bargh RIP *Marion Brogan's sister*

Joan Bramblecombe RIP

As well as praying for the repose of the souls of all who have died, let us remember the many bereaved families at this sad time.

BAPTISMS, CONFIRMATIONS, FIRST COMMUNIONS will be celebrated in due course after the summer.

WEDDINGS are allowed, with limited numbers present.

FUNERALS with very limited numbers will be permitted in church. There will still be the possibility of graveside or crematorium services.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF OUR PARISHES You will note that with public Masses starting again this weekend, we will not be having a collection. 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. Please consider using the Virgin Money Giving links on the parish website. If you would like to set up a standing order, please contact Fr. Norbert and the appropriate forms will be emailed or posted to you. 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 that you consider 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. Fr. Norbert will be the celebrant on 14th August.

FILIPINO AND AFRICAN MASSES On the YouTube channel you will find songs and slides from Masses in the past.

SIGNED MASSES Fr. Norbert has been asked to celebrate Signed Masses on Sunday 2nd August and Sunday 6th September when they would have taken place at Westminster. These will be streamed with a split screen for the Director of the Deaf Service, Shell Rocca, to sign responses and interpret. The Masses will be on the YouTube channel at 4.30pm on the particular days.

CAFOD is mindful of all the uncertainty in many places in this country, and all that is being done to respond. CAFOD continues to hold you in prayer. Thanks to generous support from the Catholic community, they are already working across 26 countries, to prevent the virus' spread, and limit food shortages it has caused in the poorest communities. But there is so much more to be done. The needs are immense, long term, complex, and evolving, and so our response needs to be large scale, and multifaceted. CAFOD has joined with the UK Disasters Emergencies Committee to help millions of people whose lives are at risk, as coronavirus spreads across refugee camps and countries suffering conflict. You can donate at cafod.org.uk/coronavirus to help CAFOD scale up its coronavirus response through our global Church family. Or use CAFOD's Summer of Hope fundraising ideas with your family and friends to transform lockdown and raise money for the appeal: cafod.org.uk/summerofhope.

JUSTICE AND PEACE A Catholic Response to George Floyd and Black Lives Matter - Friday 24th July 2020. *There will be written reports made available in due course of last Friday's webinar.*

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR WEEK BEGINNING 26TH JULY

Saturday 25th July ST. JAMES *Apostle*

2 Corinthians 4:7-15 We are earthenware vessels which holds a treasure

Matthew 20:20-28 Places in heaven

Sunday 26th July SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1 Kings 3:5, 7-12 Solomon asks God for wisdom

Romans 8:28-30 The calling to be a true image of God's Son

Matthew 13:44-52 More parables of the Kingdom

Monday 27th July

Jeremiah 13:1-11 God's intention for his people...they have not listened

Matthew 13:31-35 The mustard seed and the leaven

Tuesday 28th July

Jeremiah 14:17-22 'God, you are our hope!'

Matthew 13:36-43 The wheat and the darnel

Wednesday 29th July St. Martha *Sister of Mary and Lazarus, friend of Jesus*

1 John 4:7-16 We should love one another

John 11:19-27 Martha's trust in Jesus when Lazarus dies

or Luke 10:38-42 'Martha, Martha, you worry and fret...' !

Thursday 30th July

Jeremiah 18:1-6 The potter's house

Matthew 13:47-53 The parable of the dragnet

Friday 31st July St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) *Priest and founder of the Jesuits. Wrote the Spiritual Exercises which form a great foundation for retreats*

Jeremiah 26:1-9 The call to the people to repent

Matthew 13:54-58 Jesus returns to his home town and is rejected