

# 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*

## ***28th Sunday of the Year 11th October 2020***

I love the imagery used in today's First Reading! Isaiah speaks of a banquet of rich food, a banquet of fine wines, of food rich and juicy, of fine strained wines. Can you picture the table? Does the aroma of the food fire up your taste-buds? Can you feel the silky wine sliding down your throat? What a feast this will be at the end of time! Moreover, we are told that Death will be destroyed for ever and tears will be wiped from every cheek. There is hope, joy and salvation on God's mountain; his hand rests on it.

At this time, as we face another major spike of the coronavirus, hope is desperately needed. We lived through the spring and summer with many shielding, with not being able to meet up with loved ones or embrace them in a natural way. There was the sadness of death, the pain of grief and the heroism of so many front-line workers. Now we are embarking on another road. The picture proffered by the prophet is of the best food and drink not just for an individual but for countless guests. You know the feeling of being at a celebration: talking, listening, laughing, crying, eating, drinking, moments of silence - being TOGETHER. This IS heaven and it can be experienced here on earth.

As we enter a new path in this time of pandemic, let each of us think about who we need to accompany us, who we should be on the lookout for, within our homes, the streets we live on, in the community. Let us consciously determine to face the autumn and winter together so that no one is alone or utterly fearful. Surely this is what it means to be Church - a community of people called by God to share in the life of his Son. In the Second Reading, as St. Paul writes to the people of Philippi, he says '...it was good of you to share with me in my hardships. In return my God will fulfil all your needs, in Christ Jesus, as lavishly as only God can.' How powerful are these words in our present situation. Let's allow them to come to life in the here and now! *next page*

The Gospel parable from St. Matthew reveals a wedding feast to which those invited come up with excuses not to attend. The king's servants are told to go and collect anyone they could find - good and bad alike. People who least expected to be there, now share in the gracious bounty of the king at his Son's wedding feast. They are delighted to have been found and respond immediately. The tail end of the parable has the scene of the king looking over his guests and discovering one who is not wearing a wedding garment. This man is thrown outside. This always seems so harsh given the compassion of Jesus in his ministry. However, the lesson for us is that we must never take for granted the invitation we have received and accepted. There is responsibility which goes with it: faith must be lived out! Use your imagination for a moment: what would a wedding garment look like on you? Are there many hidden kindnesses that are a part of your being? Is there obvious graciousness revealed? Is forgiveness - offered and received - a hallmark? Who helps you to create such a garment? This is worth pondering as we take seriously all that is being lavished upon us by our God in Christ Jesus his Son.

So, stay safe and keep well. Let us pray for one another. May the bonds of faith and community hold us together. 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 Brendan Fallon RIP, Sheila Anderson RIP, Sophie Constable's Intention (30th birthday), Antoinette Igoe RIP, Ann Dunn RIP

**LATELY DEAD** Please pray for the repose of the soul of Margaret Provan 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!*

**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 receiving Jesus for the first time in Holy Communion. More next weekend.

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

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

**RCIA** Congratulations and welcome to the many new members who have joined the Catholic Church over the last weeks. We are so grateful to the catechists who have supported them on their faith journey. *If any adults are interested in joining the Catholic Church or if you are an adult who missed out on Confirmation when younger, please contact Fr. Norbert.*

**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

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

**BLESSING OF GRAVES** We are hoping to have the traditional Blessing of Graves in November. Obviously this will be carried out slightly differently because of the coronavirus restrictions. We will keep you informed.

**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. This Sunday - 4th October at 4.30pm Available on our YouTube channel.

**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.

**CAFOD FAST DAY** was on Friday 9th. CAFOD has taken the theme of 'survive build heal' for this year. There is the obvious awareness that the coronavirus is affecting peoples everywhere. CAFOD asks us to support our brothers and sisters in developing countries by helping set up handwashing stations, providing PPE for health workers, providing children with pencils and books as they study at home, helping farmers safely sell their produce and delivering food packages to those who cannot go out to work. We will not be having retiring collections in WGC but encourage you to use online [cafod.org.uk/give](https://cafod.org.uk/give) or text CAFOD to 70085 to donate £10. Thank you.

**CAFOD PRAYER** *O God, you call us out of darkness.*

*May we hear your voice in the cry of our brothers and sisters in crisis.*

*As you walk alongside us always,*

*may we walk beside one another listening and responding in love.*

*Shine the light of your compassion through us,*

*dispelling chaos, fear and despair.*

*Breathe hope and courage into all our hearts*

*as we work together to rebuild once more.*

*Strengthen us, Lord, and keep us steadfast.*

*Bring healing and comfort to us all*

*and lead us renewed into your marvellous light.*

*We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.*

**METANOIA ‘Who do you say I am?’** On Thursday we had the first session of our new online course called ‘Metanoia’. Each week in the newsletter we will summarise the teaching from the latest session, and offer a brief reflection based on its themes: **Who is Jesus?** Jesus takes his disciples to Caesarea Philippi, a place riddled with images of pagan gods and idols. It is important that Jesus brings them to this place that elicits many images of gods. Jesus asks the disciples who people think he is. There are all kinds of various answers, but the significant question is whether or not they know who Jesus is. This is significant because Jesus will depart from Caesarea Philippi and begin his journey to Jerusalem, which will end with his death. It is imperative that the disciples know who he is before they begin their gruelling journey. **Reflection:** Take some time when you are not distracted, when you have a few minutes, and ask God to reveal to you the difference between who you think he is and who he is. Ask God to place on your heart what it means that he is the Christ, that he is your Christ, that he is close to you and that he has rescued you. There are still one or two places left on this course. Please email Fr Tony ([tonythomas@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:tonythomas@rcdow.org.uk)) if you would like to join us.

## **SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING 11TH OCTOBER**

### **Saturday 10th October**

Galatians 3:22-29 Baptised in Christ...you are clothed in Christ

Luke 11:27-28 Happy those who hear the word of God and keep it.

### **Sunday 11th October TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

Isaiah 25:6-10 The banquet prepared by God

Philippians 4:12-14 ‘Now I have been through my initiation, I am ready for anything anywhere.’

Matthew 22:1-10 Parable of the wedding feast

### **Monday 12th October**

Galatians 4:22-24, 26-27, 31 - 5:1 Christ freed us!

Luke 11:29-32 Sign of Jonah

### **Tuesday 13th October ST. EDWARD THE CONFESSOR (1003-1066) *Became King of England in 1042. Built Westminster Abbey. Generous to the poor.***

Romans 8:26-30 The Spirit comes to help us in our weakness

Matthew 5:1-12 The Beatitudes

### **Wednesday 14th October**

Galatians 5:18-25 The fruits of the Spirit

Luke 11:42-46 Woes

**Thursday 15th October St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) Nun and Doctor of the Church. Reformed the Carmelite Order. Woman of great prayer**  
Ephesians :1:1-10 God chose us to be holy, to live through love  
Luke 11:47-54 More woes

**Friday 16th October**

Ephesians 1:11-14 You have heard the message and believed it.  
Luke 12:1-7 Our worth in God's eyes

**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 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.