

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*

22nd Sunday of the Year 30th August 2020

These are important days for the children and young people in our parishes as they prepare to return to school in the next couple of weeks. Some of the students I have spoken to are a little apprehensive about the return, which is understandable for those who have been away from the classroom for so long. But the overriding feeling I sense is one of excitement and optimism: about seeing old friends and making new ones; about returning to familiar routines, or perhaps making a completely fresh start in a new school or sixth-form college. Let's keep our children and young people in our prayers at this time. And let's pray, too, for the teachers and staff who have done so much to 'keep the show on the road' in our schools over these difficult few months.

This Sunday's Gospel picks up where the story from the Gospel for last Sunday left off. We remember that Simon has just made a profound statement of faith, acknowledging that Jesus is the "Christ, the Son of the Living God." In response, Jesus gives Simon a new name — Peter — and places him in a position of authority within the Christian community, giving him the "keys to the Kingdom of Heaven." It's a powerful and decisive moment for Peter and the entire Church.

But, as we hear this Sunday, the mood changes quickly as Jesus tells the newly named Peter and the other disciples that Jesus must suffer and die. Peter, always quick to speak, responds in a totally reasonable way: "God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to you." It's almost impossible for him to believe that what Jesus is saying could be true. After all, everything seemed to be going so well! But Jesus wants none of Peter's objections, declaring "Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me." Jesus tells Peter to stop thinking only about their friendship and the success of their mission. God's plans are bigger than anything we can imagine.

next page

An important part of this passage is Jesus' instruction for Peter to "get behind" him. In a sense, Jesus is reminding Peter that it's the disciple's job to follow the teacher. Peter has tried to take on the role of the teacher, dictating to Jesus what can and can't happen. By doing this, Peter "the Rock" has become a "stumbling stone" along the way that Jesus is leading his disciples. We know that that path of discipleship becomes the way of the Cross. But, we also know that the Way of the Cross leads into a garden and an empty tomb.

Peter could never have imagined any of this, however. In the passage we hear this Sunday, Peter simply hears his friend and teacher predicting that something horrible is going to happen. It makes perfect sense that he would try to prevent anything from happening to Jesus. But what comes next is very important. Jesus reminds Peter — and us — that it isn't only his journey. Jesus tells us exactly what is expected of anyone who is going to continue to journey with him: we must deny our own preferences and agendas and imitate him. These are hard words, but their meaning is unmistakable.

Gospel means "Good News" and, although it might not seem like it, even passages like the one we hear this Sunday are good news for us because as we accept the demands of discipleship we are being reminded that we aren't travelling alone. We aren't being asked to forge a new path to God. That work has been done by the one whom we follow and who reminds us by his own life that the darkness of Good Friday is followed by the bright light of Easter morning!

Fr Norbert and I continue to pray for all of you. Please pray for us too!
God bless you all, *Fr Tony*.

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 scripture 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. There is streamed Mass on Sunday at 10am. There is the capacity for people to come more than once in the week if they wish. *Face coverings must now be worn.*

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 *NOT on Bank Holiday 31st August*

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 will not be open. There are no Mass-books or printed newsletters. Give yourselves time to park and prepare to enter the church - 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 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!

NEW HALL As mentioned last week, the ‘practical completion’ of our joint Parish Hall has happened! There are a few jobs to be done in the coming days and then there will be a period of 12 months’ warranty. There have been so many years of preparing the scheme with various plans and alterations. The people of our three parishes have generously supported all that has been undertaken not only in ideas and enthusiasm but also financially. There is a loan which will need to be paid off. In due course we will look at the best ways of approaching this. We have considered many possible names! One put to me not so long ago was ‘The Trinity Hall’. It is a good suggestion as it highlights three (parishes), is explicitly Christian and intimates a reaching out to those around us just as God offers life and love and community to so many. What do you think? Please let me know. For now we can only admire the Hall from a distance. Soon, I pray, we’ll be able to celebrate with a formal opening ceremony and innumerable gatherings. Thank you for your encouragement.

BUILDING WORK St. Bonaventure’s apex stone cross is now secure. It was discovered that the cement on the tower was crumbling and that pigeons had broken in through the wooden slats! All the work has been completed. Our Lady’s Church for many years has needed the windows and tower to be painted externally as well as other repairs. Permission from the Diocese has been given and work has begun. It means that there will be scaffolding on the tower of Our Lady’s. In due course the three towers of our three churches will be the finest in town!

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 Mary Byrne RIP, Pat Mulhern RIP, John Almeyda RIP, Ryan Daley (aged 12 yrs) RIP, Erik Mester RIP, Claire Nichols ints (recovery from an operation)

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.

SIGNED MASSES Fr. Norbert has been asked to a signed Mass on Sunday 6th September, when it would have taken place at Westminster. This will be streamed with a split screen for the Director of the Deaf Service, Shell Rocca, to sign responses and interpret. The Mass will be on the YouTube channel at 4.30pm on that date.

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR WEEK BEGINNING 30TH AUGUST

Saturday 29th August The beheading of St John the Baptist

1 Corinthians 1:26-31 God chose what is foolish by human reckoning, to shame the wise

Mark 16:17-29 John is beheaded

Sunday 30th August TWENTY SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Jeremiah 20:7-9 'You have seduced me, Lord, and I have let myself be seduced'

Romans 12:1-2 The call to offer our bodies 'as a living sacrifice'

Matthew 13:44-52 Jesus calls Peter an 'obstacle in his path'

Monday 31st August

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 'The only knowledge I claimed was of the crucified Christ'

Luke 4:16-30 Jesus preaches in the Synagogue in Nazareth

Tuesday 1st September

1 Corinthians 2:10-16 The Spirit reaches even the depths of God

Luke 4:31-37 Jesus' teaching makes a deep impression on the people

Wednesday 2nd September

1 Corinthians 3:1-9 Neither the planter nor the waterer matters, only God, who makes things grow

Luke 4:38-44 Jesus makes his way to a lonely place, but the crowds follow him

Thursday 3rd September St Gregory the Great (540-604) Pope and Doctor of the Church

1 Corinthians 3:18-23 'You belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God'

Luke 5:1-11 The calling of Peter

Friday 4th September

1 Corinthians 4:1-5 The Lord alone is our judge

Luke 5:33-39 'Nobody puts new wine into old skins'