

# WELWYN GARDEN CITY



**ST. BONAVENTURE**



**OUR LADY,  
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



**HOLY FAMILY**

*Parish Priest: Fr. Norbert Fernandes Assistant Priest: Fr. William Johnstone  
Parish Secretary: Kathryn Hubbard*

## ***Second Sunday of Advent 5th December 2021***

In today's Gospel reading from St. Luke, the Evangelist is especially keen to pinpoint the ministry of John the Baptist in a particular place and a specific time. The same will be the case for the Birth of Christ....a few weeks more to go! St. Luke has a lovely turn of phrase when he says: '...the word of God came to John the Baptist son of Zechariah in the wilderness.' How did it come? Did John hear it? feel it? experience it? Had he contemplated passages of the Hebrew Bible such as Luke quotes and realise that his calling was to be a voice creating a smooth pathway for the coming Messiah? Was he 'zapped' by the Holy Spirit (a bit like being pinged by a COVID App!) and he knew his life would never be the same again? Take time today to reflect on this.

As you read this piece, where are YOU? At home or in the office or out and about browsing your phone? At a different level where are you? Sad, anxious, confused, angry, alone, hopeful, happy? What 'time' is it? Are you looking at your clock/watch/phone/computer? Is there another kind of 'time'? Are you frantically rushing around? Are the days of Advent not moving fast enough? Have you a fear that the new strain of coronavirus will scupper your plans? There is God's TIME! An instant. An eternity. A serene moment when the WORD lives in our midst and transforms history. In this Season of Advent, we are invited by God to align ourselves in place and time with his Son. We are challenged by John the Baptist to seek the forgiveness of our sins so that we can welcome the Christ. We are encountering a God who cannot wait to meet us to share with us salvation. WOW! This is one of my favourite words when I ponder the enormity of what God's intention for humanity is!

So, search for silence and stillness. Do your best to create this atmosphere for those around you in anticipation of the coming of the Lord. Allow the word of God to come to you this Advent! May God bless you, your homes and your loved ones. May your endeavours bear much fruit. Be assured of my prayers. With much love, ***Fr. Norbert***

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION** On the parish website [wgc-catholics.org.uk](http://wgc-catholics.org.uk) there are forms for parents to download to enrol children and young people for these Sacraments. First Communion children should be at least in Year 3 at school and Confirmation candidates in at least Year 9. Preparation will begin after the February half-term in 2022 with the Sacraments being celebrated next summer. The enrolment forms will help us to know how many are involved and to plan the respective preparation courses.

**ADULTS WHO WISH TO JOIN THE CHURCH (RCIA)** Please contact Fr. Norbert on 01707 323234 in the first place. Once we have an idea of numbers, we'll plan the preparation. Thank you.

**MASS IN WGC** The times of weekday and weekend Masses have now returned to the usual schedule in our three churches. Mass intentions can be booked in all three churches. **The safety and security of all people is important** which means that **distancing** in the benches and going up to Holy Communion is respected, **face coverings** worn as far as possible and the **sanitising** of hands continues. Please note space is at a premium in St. Bonaventure's because of its size.

### **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/>

Gospel reflections, the latest news, 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.

**OUR LADY'S CHAPEL** looks out onto the car park of the new Parish Hall which means that people can come to the windows and look into the Chapel and see the Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady's statue.

**CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE** On the parish website [wgc-catholics.org.uk](http://wgc-catholics.org.uk) there is form to download requesting a Certificate of Catholic Practice. Please fill it out and return to Fr. Norbert at Our Lady's and he will prepare the document and return to the family. Thank you.

If you need a Baptismal Certificate for your child, please contact Kathryn Hubbard on 01707 322579.



**MASS INTENTIONS** Fr. Norbert and Fr. William are celebrating the Mass Intentions week by week. If anyone wants Mass offered for a particular intention, please let them know. Donations for the Masses should be put in an envelope and given to Fr. Norbert or Fr. William or popped through the letterbox of one of the parishes. The intentions celebrated will be published in the newsletter as below. This week Masses have been celebrated for: Simon Stanton RIP, Margaret Walsh RIP, Michael Wheelan RIP, Toby Roche R.I.P. Michael Mulrennan R.I.P. Anniv, Alexander and Agnes Kenney RIP, Eithne McShane RIP Anniv, Frank McHugh RIP, Marie Frewen Int, Bridget O'Neill Int, Josie Bell RIP & Louise Fearn RIP, Holy Souls

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF OUR PARISHES** Now that all three churches are back in action, please note that we are NOT planning to have collections during Mass but we are asking you to consider setting up a standing order for your particular church. In the last year there has been a very positive response to the setting up of standing orders; please think about doing so. There are forms for each parish. Just to be clear: YOU set up the standing order with your bank (right hand part of form) and return the left-hand side to us so that we can claim back GiftAid if tax is paid. The Virgin Money Giving across the Diocese will stop at the end of November. Thank you for your co-operation, generosity and encouragement, all of which are much appreciated.

**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](mailto:foodbank@newzioncf.net) and you will be given details as to how to make a donation. New Zion is very grateful for the financial support being received.

**ST ALBANS** The Catholic Mass at St. Albans Cathedral takes place at 12 noon every Friday. It is back in the Lady Chapel and all are welcome.

## **SACRAMENTS**

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals can all take place.

**Baptisms** If you are thinking about the Baptism of your child, contact Fr. Norbert or Fr. William to arrange a date.

**Weddings** If you are planning to get married this year or next in WGC or beyond, please let Fr. Norbert know so that the necessary preparation and paperwork can be organised.

**Funerals** No limits on numbers.

**MARY'S MEALS** is a charity which provides meals for children across the world so that they do not go to school hungry. At the moment there is match-funding for any donations received. Why not double your giving at no extra cost? [marysmeals.org.uk/donate](http://marysmeals.org.uk/donate) or 0800 6981212

**RED BOXES/MISSIO** Any money collected or which you wish to donate can be sent by cheque payable to Missio-Mill Hill to Red Box, 23 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1NU or online [missio.org.uk/redbox](http://missio.org.uk/redbox)

Or by text REDBOX 5 (to donate £5) or REDBOX 10 (to donate £10) to 70085

Or by phone 020 7821 9755 (office hours)

Or by Bank Transfer: Account Name Missio, Sort Code 16-00-16, Account number 10824230

Your generosity has made such a difference and supports the work of the Missions. Thank you!

**SIGNED MASS** Our thanks to Sarah Metcalfe from the Deaf Service for helping us with last Saturday's Mass. The congregational signing was excellent! The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Barbara Fitzsimon, and Lady Salisbury from Hatfield House were delighted to attend and share in this celebration at the start of Advent.

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**TRANSPORT TO MASS** If any parishioners need a lift to Mass the Transport to Mass Group is there! If anyone can offer a lift, please contact Kay Mason on 01707 335633. All necessary safeguarding and health and safety guidelines will be followed. In particular there is a parishioner (with wheelchair and walking frame) of Holy Family who needs a lift once a month to 9.30am Mass on Sunday. Your help would be much appreciated.

**HCPT GROUP 183** 'Sadly group 183 have had to make the difficult decision not to travel to Lourdes at Easter. We are very disappointed but feel we would like to wait to make sure the amazing young people in our care have the best pilgrimage possible. Fingers crossed that by waiting things might look better in 2023. We would like to thank you for your continuing support and want to let you know that all monies previously raised will be there to support us 2023. Best wishes, Emma (Group Leader)'

**WGC CATHOLIC CHURCHES CHRISTMAS HAMPERS 2021** Hamper packing will take place in the Parish Room at Holy Family Church on Friday Dec 17th at 7pm. As we are trying to be Covid safe please can you let me know if you intend to join us so I can control numbers in what is a relatively small place. The room will be well ventilated, and I think it would be a good idea if we all wore masks as we worked. Hamper collection for delivery will be between 10.00 and 10.30 on Saturday Dec 18th. There was an amazing response last year to delivery in the extraordinary situation we found ourselves in and I know the hamper recipients were truly grateful not only to receive a hamper but also to know that we were all thinking about them in what can be a very lonely time of year. Thanks in advance for your continued support. Sally Kee 07870 402510/sallyamkee@gmail.com

**GIFTS FOR LOCAL REFUGEE FAMILIES** Due to the continuing risk of covid infection, we won't be holding a 'Giving Tree' Mass at Holy Family Church again this year. Instead, like last year, we will provide vouchers for supermarkets, which is a covid-friendly option, and allows families to buy food, toys or clothes - depending on what is most needed. This year we've been asked to support 25 refugee families from Afghanistan living in our area. So, if you feel you can help, please put your donation in a sealed envelope labelled 'Giving Tree' and put it through the door of the Presbytery at either Holy Family or Our Lady's by 8th December. You were so generous last year; it would be great if we could show the same support for the refugee families. For further information please contact [suzanne.meenan@btinternet.com](mailto:suzanne.meenan@btinternet.com). Thank you.

**THE FOCOLARE MOVEMENT** is seeking to recruit a Coordinator/Manager for the running of the Centre for Unity in Welwyn Garden City. This is a part time job which requires a certain amount of flexibility regarding working hours. It will be a temporary position for a year, to be reviewed at the end of the contract.

Hours: Flexible (average) 20 hours per week, including some evenings and weekends.

Essential Criteria: Sympathetic to the vision, aims and objective of the Focolare Movement and its working ethos at the Centre for Unity. Sensitivity to the different needs of diverse groups from different Christian denominations, faith groups and a variety of other organisations. Flexible approach to supporting and coordinating a group of volunteers and one paid worker. For informal discussion and to apply please contact Mary Gateshill – [cfu@focolare.org.uk](mailto:cfu@focolare.org.uk)

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK  
BEGINNING 5TH DECEMBER**

**Saturday 4th December**

Isaiah 30:19-21,23-26 'The Lord dresses the wounds of his people and heal the bruises...'

Matthew 9:35-10:1,5,6-8 The compassion of Jesus

**Sunday 5th December SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Baruch 5:1-9 Put on beauty, integrity, glory, splendour...

Philippians 1:4-6,8-11 Paul prays very hard for the community

Luke 3:1-6 John the Baptist receives God's word and is a voice in the wilderness

**Monday 6th December**

Isaiah 35:1-10 'Look, your God is coming...to save you.'

Luke 5:17-26 Jesus heals the paralysed man who is helped by his friends.

**Tuesday 7th December St. Ambrose** (340-397) Bishop of Milan, chosen by acclamation even before being baptised as an adult! Teacher, shepherd, gave his money to the poor. Instrumental in St. Augustine's conversion.

Isaiah 40:1-11 The glory of the Lord shall be revealed!

Matthew 18:12-14 The joy of finding one lost sheep

**Wednesday 8th December IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF OUR LADY**

Genesis 3:9-15,20 Adam and Eve

Ephesians 1:3-6,11-12 'God chose us... to be holy and spotless.'

Luke 1:26-38 Mary is highly favoured and says 'Yes!' to the angel.

**Thursday 9th December**

Isaiah 41:13-20 'I, the Lord...am holding you by the right hand.'

Matthew 11:11-15 John the Baptist is the Elijah who was to return

**Friday 10th December**

Isaiah 48:17-19 'I teach you...I lead you...'

Matthew 11:16-19 John the Baptist and the Son of Man