

# 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*

## ***Fourth Sunday of Advent 20th December 2020***

I write to you on this final Sunday before Christmas. What words can I use? We're now in Tier 3 with the extra restrictions it brings. Have you had to change plans for Christmas? Is there disappointment among family members and friends because meeting up in close proximity for a lengthy time now just doesn't feel right? Are you wondering if there'll be another total lockdown straight after Christmas? I must admit I never ever thought life would be like this with stop-start, stop-start and so much at risk in terms of people's lives and the strain put on the medical and other frontline services, to say nothing of the pressure on jobs, material resources, education...the list goes on!

Today's Gospel from St. Luke takes us to Nazareth, to a (young) virgin betrothed in marriage. The Angel tells her that she is to become a mother, to bear in her womb no one less than the Son of God. This is to come about through the action of the Holy Spirit! That message surely would have disrupted her life totally in terms of the relationship to her future husband, how she would be regarded by others and, no doubt, what effect she would experience in her own being, in her bond with this Child and God himself. The scene reveals that Mary is favoured/chosen by God, filled with grace. She is told that nothing is impossible for God. All she can say after asking a question, is 'Let what you have said be done to me.' In that reflective moment, her words change history and God enters our world in, and through, his Son.

Mary is a great teacher showing me how to listen, how to be open to God's response to my questioning and especially inspiring me to say 'Yes!' and be constant to that commitment. In our Crib scenes everything looks just right - almost perfect - hiding perhaps the dilemma Mary faced and the need of a response. How do you think of her? What have you learned from her? How does she offer you example? Definitely worth pondering today with Christmas on the door-step!

*next page*

Fr. Tony and I are doing our best to make Christmas Mass open to as many as possible through the Masses celebrated in church and those streamed through the internet. Our prayer is that you have a happy and holy Christmas, keeping safe and staying well. We want nothing to take away the peace and joy of Christ's Birth. Remember he is our connection between earth and heaven, he holds us close to one another; so even if we cannot be physically close, let us not forget that the welcome offered to him at his Birth will be the sealing of bonds of love with so many others.

God bless you and all your loved ones. 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/>

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.

**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. The Sanctuary Lamp lights up the Tabernacle. This is possible 24 hours a day as the curtains are not drawn shut. Not ideal in the cold, but a possible place to offer a (quick) prayer.

**MASS INTENTIONS** Fr. Norbert and Fr. Tony are celebrating the Mass Intentions week by week. 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: Bernard Murphy RIP, Enid Worden RIP, Special Intention, Edna Bichard RIP, Jim Dempsey RIP, Tom and Nancy Hogan RIP, Patrick O'Reilly RIP 1st Anniv, James Haughigan RIP, Edna Bichard Funeral, Matt Matthews RIP, Tracey Laycock RIP

**LATELY DEAD** Please pray for the repose of the souls of Hugh O'Neill, Regina Ullmann (Anja Ullmann's mother) and Barbara Wilson (Richard Wilson's mother) who died recently. Also, please pray for Jacqueline Gauchard whose anniversary occurs at this time.

**ADVENT PRAYER** There are two half-hours of Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament which are on the YouTube Channel, giving time to reflect on Healing and on Forgiveness. Snatch a parcel of time to be still and reflect in readiness for Christmas.

## **SACRAMENTS**

We return back to the norms as they were before the second lockdown.

**Baptism** is permitted with only **6** present, including the child.

**Weddings** are possible with **15** present.

**Funerals** can take place with **30** mourners maximum.

**Confirmation.** We will contact the young people and their families to suggest new dates in 2021.

**Preparation for Sacraments in 2021** will be published in the New Year. Don't worry. You and/or your children will not miss out!

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF OUR PARISHES** 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 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.

**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. *There is a Signed Mass for Christmas which will be on WGC YouTube Channel going out at 8pm Christmas Eve.*

**PRIEST'S REFERENCE FORMS** Parents who will need a 'Certificate of Catholicity' for Reception class or Nursery should 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.

**CHRISTMAS HAMPERS FOR ELDERLY AND HOUSEBOUND** This weekend 60 hampers and gifts are being delivered to the elderly and housebound in our parishes. Huge thanks go to Sally Kee for collecting all the produce and (with Fergus Kee) for making up the hampers – a mammoth effort! Thanks also to numerous parishioners who have helped to deliver the hampers. It means a lot in these difficult times to be able to support some of the more vulnerable members of our community.

### **REQUEST FOR HELP FROM SVP**

The SVP is supporting a young mum in Welwyn Garden City who is setting up home for the first time. In addition to larger items the SVP are helping her to source, she needs crockery, cutlery, pots and pans, bedding, and towels. Please email Fr Tony ([tonythomas@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:tonythomas@rcdow.org.uk)) if you are able to donate any of these items. Thank you, as ever, for your generosity.

**CHILDREN'S VIRTUAL NATIVITY** This year we will be recording a 'virtual' Nativity Play to be streamed on Christmas Eve **at 12 noon**. If you would like to join the Zoom gathering please contact either Sarah Cafferty on [david.cafferty@ntlworld.com](mailto:david.cafferty@ntlworld.com) or Eddy Gallucci on [eddyandreka@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:eddyandreka@hotmail.co.uk). Safeguarding guidelines are to be followed at all times.

**METANOIA** On Thursday we had the last session in our online course 'Metanoia'. It was titled '**Do you love me?**'

*Summary:* God never gives up on us and always seeks us out in order to love us. God does not force himself on us but tenderly and patiently waits for us to return to him. The human heart wants to be loved and to love, and this loving desire is ultimately only satisfied in God. This love story is the greatest of all love stories. We reciprocate this love by loving others. Jesus came in love to save us, and we respond by sharing the news of this great love with the world. We tell others who we know Jesus to be. We tell how we have been loved and how he has done great things for us. When we come to know the love of Jesus, we are moved to share it with others.

*Scripture:* Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." (Jn 21:15)

*Reflection:* Come, Holy Spirit. Take a moment to rest in the love of God. Know that at every moment of every day, God is beholding you with the greatest love. You are not alone. When you feel ready, ask God to remove the obstacles that stand between you and a more free and total love of him.

**ST ALBANS** The Catholic Mass at St. Albans Cathedral has resumed. It takes place at 12 noon. Admission to the Cathedral Mass does not require ticketing and there is social distancing in a very big space in the nave. All welcome. *There will not be a Catholic Mass on Christmas Day or New Year's Day at St. Albans Cathedral.*

**THE HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL** are seeking to appoint a new Foundation Governor. An opportunity for you to support our Catholic primary school has arisen. Governors have oversight of the curriculum and the appointment of staff and are accountable for the performance of the school. They have a strategic role to play as well as acting as a critical friend to the Head teacher. More information about the role is available on <https://education.rcdow.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2.-being-a-foundation-governor-booklet.pdf>

Also, <https://holyfamilyschoolwelwyn.secure-primariesite.net/topic/governors>

If you are interested in supporting our school, please speak to Fr Norbert, our Chair of Governors for more details and contact Jackie Willcocks in the school office 01707375518. Thank you.

**‘GIVING TREE 2020’** Suzanne Meenan writes: ‘I am delighted to inform you that the total raised for the Giving Tree collection this year was £800! Thank you all so much for your donations, which went to HomeStart, For Baby’s Sake and Danes Educational Trust. All the charities were incredibly grateful and blown away by your generosity - the Danes Educational Trust sent this message, “It means so much to all of us and so much to our families.” Thanks also to Father Norbert for supporting with administration of the funds. Wishing you all a happy and healthy Christmas’

**FROM FOCOLARE** Dear Friends, Many thanks for all the very generous donations of clothes for refugees. We, by some miracle, were able to squeeze all the donations into two cars. Currently no further donations are required.

Dear everyone, You may be aware that, for a few months now, every Monday at 6pm there has been a short ecumenical service of prayers and reflections via Zoom from Welwyn Garden City. Through the wonders of modern communications the news of this event has spread to a number of people from various Churches throughout the world. On Monday 21st December there will be an International Ecumenical Prayer Service with Carols hosted by Welwyn Garden City. This event will begin at 5.50pm GB time (virtual doors will open at 5.40) and finish at 6.20pm.

Here is the link if you don’t have it: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83349075349> Meeting ID: 833 4907 5349

After this, the next service will be on January 4th 2021 at 6pm, on the same link, with the virtual doors opening at 5.45pm.

We hope you can join us. Feel free to invite friends. This has been an unusual year and times for prayer and reflection amongst nations and Churches is a joy to experience!

*Mary and Paul Gateshill*

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING  
20TH DECEMBER**

**Saturday 19th December**

Judges 13:2-7, 24-25 Samson's birth is announced

Luke 1:5-25 Zechariah's vision in the Temple foretelling John the Baptist's birth

**Sunday 20th December FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12,14,16 Nathan and David

Romans 16:25-27 Paul proclaims Jesus Christ

Luke 1:26-38 The annunciation of Jesus' birth to Mary

**Monday 21st December**

Song of Songs 2:8-14 Song of the Beloved or Zephaniah 3:14-18 The Lord is in your midst

Luke 1:39-45 The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth

**Tuesday 22nd December**

1 Samuel 1:24-28 Hannah presents Samuel in the temple at Shiloh

Luke 1:46-56 Mary's *Magnificat*

**Wednesday 23rd December**

Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24 'I am going to send my messenger.'

Luke 1:57-66 The birth of John the Baptist

**Thursday 24th December**

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12,14,16 David's house and sovereignty

Luke 1:67-79 Zechariah's *Benedictus*

**Friday 25th December CHRISTMAS**

Many readings for various Masses!

\*\*\*\*\*

**PLEASE READ THE NEXT TWO PAGES FOR DETAILS OF  
MASSES OVER CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR**

\*\*\*\*\*8\*

## SCHEDULE OF MASSES OVER CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

### CHRISTMAS EVE

OUR LADY'S 3pm, 5pm and 9pm.

HOLY FAMILY 4pm, 6.30pm and 10pm

### CHRISTMAS DAY

OUR LADY'S 9am and 11am

HOLY FAMILY 8am and 10am



*There isn't a booking system. It is imperative that you give yourself time to arrive early and give details to the stewards.*

*When the church is full to capacity, you may have to stand outside.*

*At all these Masses the Scriptures are the same: Isaiah 9:1-7 and Luke 2:1-20.*

*The simpler form of Mass continues.*

*Congregational singing is not allowed. No heating in church during Mass.*

*Now that we are in Tier 3, it is even more important for everyone to keep a safe distance, wear masks and do all that is possible to prevent transmission of the coronavirus.*

### STREAMED CHRISTMAS MASSES

On our YouTube Channel there is a 'Night Mass' going out at 6pm on Christmas Eve and a 'Day Mass' available from 10am Christmas Day (with different Scriptures, Prayers and Carols). There is also a Signed Mass available from 8pm on Christmas Eve.

### SATURDAY 26TH DECEMBER St. Stephen's Day

10am Holy Family

6pm Our Lady's

### SUNDAY 27TH DECEMBER FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

10am Our Lady's

6pm Holy Family

### MONDAY 28TH DECEMBER The Holy Innocents

10am Our Lady's

**TUESDAY 29TH DECEMBER St. Thomas of Canterbury**

10am Holy Family

**WEDNESDAY 30TH DECEMBER**

*No public Mass*

**THURSDAY 31ST DECEMBER**

10am Holy Family

**FRIDAY 1ST JANUARY 2021 THE MOTHERHOOD OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

10am Our Lady's

**SATURDAY 2ND JANUARY St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory Nazianzen**

10am Holy Family

6pm Our Lady's

**SUNDAY 3RD JANUARY SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS**

10am Our Lady's

6pm Holy Family

**MONDAY 4TH JANUARY**

7pm Our Lady's

**TUESDAY 5TH JANUARY**

9.30am Holy Family

**WEDNESDAY 6TH JANUARY THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD**

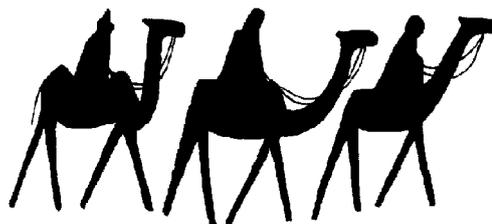
9.30am Holy Family

7pm Our Lady's



**THURSDAY 7TH JANUARY**

9.30am Holy Family



**FRIDAY 8TH JANUARY**

7pm Our Lady's