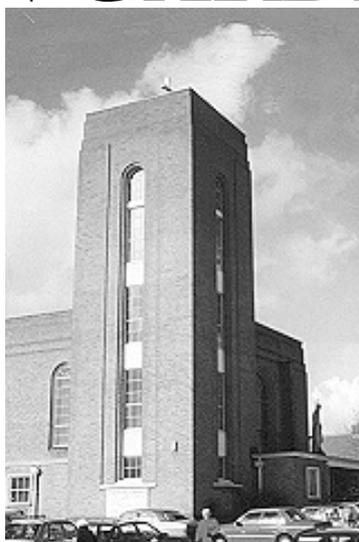


WELWYN GARDEN CITY



ST. BONAVENTURE



**OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



HOLY FAMILY

*Parish Priest: Fr. Norbert Fernandes Assistant Priest: Fr. Tony Thomas
Parish Secretary: Kathryn Hubbard*

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time 17th January

Today's Gospel passage is from St. John; in it we see the first disciples gathering around Jesus. The Baptist points to Jesus who passes by and says 'There is the Lamb of God'. Two latch onto Jesus and spend the day with him. It is a beautiful scene evoking the magnetism of Jesus and I have often pondered what those new disciples would have witnessed in the course of the day. One year at this time, I was on holiday in Goa, where my family comes from, and as I reflected on this passage I walked along the sea, soaking in the sunshine and feeling the sand between my toes. I thought of the people they would have met, of how Jesus would have looked at them and responded, of how this would have had a huge impact on the new disciples. Such holidays are now but a dream! The Gospel image is NOT!

In these last few days, we have had icy winds and so much rain battering us and keeping us indoors. On Thursday I went out for a long walk, jumping over puddles, gloves keeping me warm and looking out for people who might be coming towards me. It was so interesting! One man was out walking his dog and moved off the path into the mire. Cheerfully he said to me 'I'm muddy already!' A lady pointed to her walking boots as she stepped out of the way. I must add that I am very happy to wait and let people pass. One couple much older than me smiled as I let them go by and said to me: 'There's a room in heaven for you'. I had been walking for around 30 minutes and the next hour left me uplifted by their words, their joy and the difference it made to me. I kept thinking about the two disciples with Jesus and how his ministry was preparing people for a place in heaven, that even here on earth we have a taste of what is still to come.

Pandemic, regulations, darkness and suffering - how different have our lives become! Yet we must never forget that God is with us, filling our lives with love.

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In Chapter 14 of St. John, Jesus tells his disciples at the Last Supper: 'There are many rooms in my Father's house.' How do you picture that room? What does the Lord do to make it special for you? Who are the people who come your way or are a part of your life whom you can inspire with such a vision? Our long journey continues and we have many questions. The complications of life assail us but the Lord is close to protect and defend us. The light of the Gospel shines out and nothing can take away that light from us. There really IS hope.

In these coming days, I invite you *to walk with the Lord*. Watch the people coming your way. Learn from them. Share with them a smile, a kind word, a note of promised hope. Look around at nature and witness the signs of spring bursting forth. Feel, experience and radiate God's presence!

Let's pray for one another. Fr. Tony and I ask God's blessing upon you.

With much love, ***Fr. Norbert***

PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF MASS IN WELWYN GARDEN CITY

As you are well aware, we are now in lockdown. The Prime Minister has still given permission for Places of Worship to be open. We have continued with the schedule of Masses established:

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

The new strain of coronavirus is a worry and we still want to ensure the safety of all coming to church and of our stewards. Here are some extra changes we have made in our churches:

1. Creating greater distance between people in the pews.
2. Having more protection for the stewards by their being behind a table as people arrive and as they leave.
3. The distribution of Holy Communion will be more measured, with distancing between the 'bubbles' that come up.
4. It is even more important for people arriving at the doors of the church to keep extra space between them and those in front and those behind.
5. Socialising outside the church before or after Mass should NOT happen for everyone's well-being and safety.
6. Church heaters will switch off 5 minutes before Mass begins and more ventilation will be absolutely necessary.

CONFESSION Only by appointment - Fr. Tony on 01707 327434 or Fr. Norbert on 01707 323234. *All necessary precautions have to be undertaken in terms of distancing and the safety of priest and penitent.*

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. 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: Margaret Myles RIP, Rita and Billy Moran 70th Wedding Anniversary, Mary Maher RIP (2 Masses), Janet Cunningham Birthday Intention, Theresa Nestor RIP

VIRTUAL COFFEE MORNING Do you miss catching up with fellow parishioners after Mass? During this lockdown there's a Virtual Coffee Morning on Thursdays at 10.30am. Simply make yourself a coffee, sign on to Zoom and catch up with some familiar faces or make new friends. Please email Fr Tony (tonythomas@rcdow.org.uk) for the Zoom meeting details. We hope to see you there!

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. *We are NOT going to have the Planned Giving Boxes of Envelopes for the coming year. Please consider changing to standing order as a way of giving.*

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.

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.

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.

ST ALBANS The Catholic Mass at St. Albans Cathedral takes place at 12 noon every Friday. Admission to the Cathedral Mass does not require ticketing and there is social distancing in a very big space in the nave. All welcome!
you there!

PEACE SUNDAY– 17th January 2021

In England and Wales we celebrate Peace Sunday on the third Sunday of January. Resources for parishes, young people and schools are provided by Pax Christi – part of the international Catholic movement for Peace.

The day provides us with an opportunity to build on the global World Day of Peace that is celebrated on New Year's Day each year and is accompanied by a [message from Pope Francis](#).

Pax Christi's National President is the Vice President of the Bishops' Conference, Archbishop Malcolm McMahon of Liverpool.

Promoting the theme, 'A Culture of Care as a Path to Peace', Archbishop McMahon wrote to parishes to encourage them to support the work of Pax Christi and to raise up the Gospel message of peace:

"The Christian message of peace, through reconciliation, justice and nonviolence, can offer hope and direction in these times. I invite you to seriously consider facilitating a collection for, or making a donation to, the work of Pax Christi at this time as a way to make a practical contribution to continuing the work of peace."

POPE'S MESSAGE

Pax Christi has based its Peace Sunday materials on the [message from Pope Francis](#) to mark the 54th annual World Day of Peace. In it, Pope Francis highlights Catholic Social Teaching as an expression of Christian care for all people – particularly in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In presenting loving care as a path to peace, the Pope highlights the connection between social injustice and violent conflict, and the critical role of women at all levels of peacebuilding.

He calls on leaders in all sectors – the state, business, science and academics, international organisations, and media – to adopt the principles of Catholic Social Teaching: the dignity and rights of each person, the common good, solidarity, peacebuilding, and the protection of creation.

He explains that these can act “as a ‘compass’, capable of pointing out a common direction, and ensuring ‘a more humane future.’”

Where there is violence, Pope Francis calls on peacemakers to promote healing and renewed encounter.

Resources for Peace Sunday can be found on Pax Christi's website: paxchristi.org.uk/peace-sunday-2021

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

18th January at 7.30pm hosted by **Rev. Dr David Chapman, Chair of Churches Together in Hertfordshire** and there will be a short service of prayer led by **Bishop Paul McAleenan**.

More details including the Zoom invitation are on the flyer attached and also on the Christian Unity website. Everyone is welcome. The Order of Service is in this newsletter.

Topic: Churches Together in Hertfordshire Prayer Meeting

Time: Jan 18, 2021 07:30 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85476164857?pwd=RHhTa3VrdWh1NjRSSzF0NUxJTzBhQT09>

Meeting ID: 854 7616 4857

Passcode: 850163

Throughout the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity we will also be sharing prayers and reflections from Christians across the county online so please do join us on Twitter and Facebook and “like”, “share” and “retweet” these posts to help encourage others in prayer for greater Christian Unity.

A selection of these offerings are already available on our website for you to see and use in your own online service across the week if you wish, please do visit the website at www.ctherts.org.uk. I have also attached a document with prayers and links to the videos on it so you can see the spread of people involved, as ever there is always room for more people to be including in our activities and I am very grateful to all those who have given their time to write and reflect on Christian Unity in this way especially at this most busy and difficult time for so many.

Finally, Churches Together in St Albans have shared with us their Unity Challenge and more details are attached for you to see and join in with them if you wish.

ZOOM SERVICE FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER CHRISTIAN UNITY MONDAY 18th JANUARY 2021 at 7.30pm

Led By Bishop Paul McAleenan

All Opening Verse:

Our soul is waiting on the Lord. The Lord is our help and our shield.
In him do our hearts find joy. We trust in his holy name.
May your love be upon us O Lord, as we place all our hope in you.

Opening Prayer

God our Father,
you reveal to us your love through Christ
and through our brothers and sisters.
Open our hearts so that we can welcome each other
with our differences and live in forgiveness.
Grant us to live united in one body,
so that the gift that is each person comes to light.
May all of us together be a reflection of the living Christ.

Scripture Reading

Ephesians 3: 14-21

This, then, is what I pray, kneeling before the Father, from whom every family, whether spiritual or natural, takes its name. Out of his infinite glory, may he give you his power through the Spirit for your hidden strength to grow strong, so that Christ may live in your hearts through faith, and then, planted in love and built on love you will with all the saints have the strength to grasp the breadth and the length, the height and the depth; until knowing the love of Christ, which is beyond all knowledge, you are filled with the utter fullness of God. Glory be to him whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine; glory be to him from generation to generation in the Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.

Intercessions

Reader 1 Holy Spirit, you create and re-create the Church in all places. Come and whisper in our hearts the prayer which Jesus addressed to his Father on the eve of his passion: "that they may all be one... so that the world may believe".

All Lord have mercy

Reader 2 Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, light the fire of your love in us so that suspicions, contempt and misunderstanding cease in the Church. May the walls that separate us fall.

All Lord have mercy

Reader 3 Holy Spirit, Consoler of all, open our hearts to forgiveness and reconciliation and bring

All Lord have mercy

Reader 4 Lord Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, give us poverty of spirit so that we may welcome the unexpectedness of your grace.

All Lord have mercy

Reader 5 Holy Spirit, you never abandon the men, women and children who are persecuted for their fidelity to the gospel. Give them strength and courage, and support those who help them.

All Lord have mercy

Our Father who art in heaven.....

As Christians called to be the salt of the earth and light of the world we pray

PRAYER DURING PANDEMIC

All

May we who are merely inconvenienced remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips remember those that have no safe place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home remember those who have no home.

As fear grips our country, let us choose love.

During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbours. Amen

Churches Together in St Albans Unity Challenge

This year we are in lock down but it has never been easier to visit another church – by going online.

Take part in the *Unity Challenge*:

- Visit a church that you are not used to
- Ask God to show you how He is at work there
- Come to the online Winter Forum on Feb 8th and share your experience

Below are some varied churches with streaming services.

- St Albans Abbey
- Ss Alban Stephen RC Church
- St Sophia, Greek Orthodox
- The Vinyard Church
- St Luke's C of E

If you would like you're church's streaming service to be added to this list. Please email peter@ctstalbans.org.uk

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
17TH JANUARY**

Saturday 16th January

Hebrews 4:12-16 Jesus is the supreme high priest

Mark 2:13-17 Jesus' ministry to tax collectors and sinners

Sunday 17th January SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1 Samuel 3:3-10, 19 Call of Samuel

1 Corinthians 6:13-15, 17-20 You are temples of the Holy Spirit

John 1:35-42 Spending a day with the Lord

Monday 18th January *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins*

Hebrews 5:1-10 Jesus learnt to obey through suffering

Mark 12:18-22 The newness and vitality of Christ

Tuesday 19th January

Hebrews 6:10-20 Jesus is an anchor for our soul

Mark 2:23-28 The Son of Man is master of the sabbath

Wednesday 20th January

Hebrews 7:1-3, 15-17 Melchizedek

Mark 3:1-6 Jesus heals on the sabbath

Thursday 21st January St. Agnes (Died 304) *Virgin and Martyr*

Hebrews 7:25-8:6 The power of Jesus to save is certain

Mark 3:7-12 So many people make their way to Jesus

Friday 22nd January

Hebrews 8:6-13 The new covenant
Mark 3:13-19 The Twelve are chosen to companions of Jesus