

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

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time 24th January 2021

Have you ever read the *whole* of the Book of Jonah? It is well worth it - only four chapters! Does your mind take you immediately to the 'whale'? Jonah is quite a character. God chooses him to preach to the people of Nineveh to persuade them to change their ways. Jonah runs away! There is the storm at sea and he is thrown overboard only to end up in the belly of the 'fish' (the word used in Hebrew). That's the first chapter. The second focuses on his prayer inside the creature which results in him being spewed out onto the shore. The third chapter is where today's passage comes from: God asks Jonah a second time to go to the people of Nineveh. He listens and says his piece. What he doesn't realise is that they take seriously the message and respond, entering a time of wholehearted repentance. Thus no punishment comes to them. The fourth chapter has the humorous scene of the prophet sitting outside the city waiting for something to happen; he is watching for the destruction of the city. He is overcome by the heat, sulks and is angry with God. God's word to his reluctant instrument is that he is right to have compassion on the people of Nineveh who don't know their right hands from their left. That is how this Book ends.

Our Gospel passage from St. Mark speaks about people who catch fish - the much smaller variety! Jesus walks along the seashore gathering new disciples as is evidenced by the two sets of brothers who are called. They leave the nets and their boats behind, giving up their trade as fishermen and now embark on the vocation to 'fish' people. They would have known only too well that fish cannot survive out of water, their natural habitat, and so would have learned how to call people into the new environment of the Kingdom and life, in and through, Jesus Christ. The tools of this novel trade would be the Word of God, a call to repentance and the power of God's Kingdom. As someone 'called' by the Lord, have you had to leave things and people behind? Has there been a fresh approach required of you? Who or what have you caught?! *next page*

A final word about **'fish'**. The Greek word is 'I-ch-th-u-s' (using Roman letters). The early Christians used this as a symbol of their faith in Jesus. Each letter represented a word which reads 'Jesus Christ Son of God and Saviour'. This can be seen in the catacombs. In recent decades people have the image of a fish on their car as a sign that they are Christians.

So, this week, think about fish! Reflect on Jonah, the brothers called to be disciples and how it can be a sign of following Christ. In this time of pandemic, listen carefully to the voice of the Lord, calling you and empowering you to be his instruments.

Have a good week and stay safe. God bless 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: Patricia O'Byrne RIP, Mary and Christopher Ready RIP, Deceased members of the O'Donnell family, Deceased members of the Hayes family, Kit Cunningham RIP, Simon O'Mahony RIP, Mary Free (nee Walsh) 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.

LAPTOP AND TABLET COMPUTERS FOR HOME LEARNING As we all know, there is a currently big demand for computers that children and young people can use for home learning while schools are closed. The Welwyn Garden City SVP is therefore appealing to parishioners for donations of second-hand laptop and tablet computers which they can pass on to our schools, Our Lady's and Holy Family. Please contact Mary Dunne at marydunne22@yahoo.com if you have a laptop or tablet to donate. Please note that schools, in conjunction with the local authority, have systems to 'cleanse' these devices of all data before they are ready to be used by children.

The specifications should be as follows:

Chromebooks: any specification will be fine

iPads: anything iPad Air 2 or newer

Windows laptops: at least Windows 10, at least Core i3 + processor, at least 4GB ram +, any hard drive size

Many thanks.

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!

CARITAS VOLUNTEER FAIR "Step Forward in Love"

Online Event Wednesday 10th February from 11am -1pm

Whether you want to try volunteering for the first time or are looking for a new role, come and find out what volunteering opportunities are out there at the moment.

Please register at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/caritas-volunteer-fair-tickets-135713539851>

CAFOD Your Support in Action Join CAFOD online this coming Saturday 30th January from 1030am to 1230 and listen to CAFOD's representative live from Ethiopia talking about how your support is enabling communities gain access to clean water. Contact westminster@cafod.org.uk for registration link and further information.

SACRAMENTS

Current regulations (as of 15th January 2021)

Baptism is NOT permitted outside of communal worship.

Weddings are possible (in limited circumstances) with 6 present. 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 can take place with 30 mourners maximum.

Confirmation 2020 *Sadly we have had to postpone these celebrations.*

SACRAMENTS 2021

On the Parish Website, you will find forms to download:

First Holy Communion (and Confession) - Children should be at least in Year 3

Confirmation - Young people should be at least in Year 9

Adults for the Sacraments

Adults who wish to join the Catholic Church through Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion or Adults already baptised in a Christian Church who wish to be received into the Catholic Church or Catholic Adults who missed out on Confirmation when younger.

Our plan is to use the Season of Lent to do the preparation and celebrate the Sacraments soon after Easter. (Dates haven't yet been decided) It is not ideal but this past year has had so many ups and downs with dates due to lockdown and worries about the coronavirus. We do not want to put extra pressure on families or individuals at a time of much uncertainty. We want adults and children to share in the life of the Church through the Sacraments.

Most of the preparation will be done at home with families/individuals and there will be Zoom plenary sessions to keep everyone in touch. We will do all we can to keep people safe and not be at risk whilst encouraging formation for the Sacraments.

At this stage we need to know names and details so we can be in touch. Please return the forms to Fr. Norbert as soon as possible. Email addresses are really important. Thank you for your co-operation. Let's do our best!

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
24TH JANUARY**

Saturday 23rd January

Hebrews 9:2-3, 11-14 The action of Christ the High Priest
Mark 3:20-21 Jesus and his relatives

Sunday 24th January THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Jonah 3:1-5,10 Ministry of Jonah
1 Corinthians 7:29-31 'Our time is growing short'
Mark 1:14-20 Jesus begins his ministry preaching and calling disciples

Monday 25th January CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL

Acts 9:1-22 The road to Damascus experience for Saul/Paul
Mark 16:15-18 'Go...proclaim Good News'

Tuesday 26th January St. Timothy and St. Titus *Co-workers of St. Paul,
Timothy in Ephesus and Titus in Crete.*

2 Timothy 1:1-18 'I always remember you in my prayers'
Mark 3:31-35 The family of Jesus - those sitting around him!

Wednesday 27th January

Hebrews 10:11-18 The fruits of Jesus' offering
Mark 4:1-20 The parable of the Sower

Thursday 28th January St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) *Priest and Doctor of
the Church*

Hebrews 10:19-25 The action of Jesus - the supreme High Priest.
Mark 4:21-25 'The amount you measure out is the amount you will be given'

Friday 29th January

Hebrews 10:32-39 'Remember all the sufferings you had to meet...'
Mark 4:26-34 More parables of the Kingdom

PARISH DIARIES 2021 We have received copies of the Parish Diary for our parishes. If you would like a copy (they are free) please email your name and address to parishsec@stbonaventure.org.uk and a copy will be posted to you.