

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 of Lent 7th March 2021

In four weeks it'll be Easter! Does that scare you or are you feeling more hopeful that journey's end does not seem too far away? This time last year we were soon to enter into lockdown and our whole way of life about to be changed dramatically and drastically: not being able to visit loved ones, masks and hand-sanitising being the regime with social distancing, holidays and outings put on hold, no public worship for the time being. It also marked the beginning of the streaming of Mass - a whole new experience for me and, perhaps, for many of you too! The fascinating thing about the streamed Mass is the range of comments which I occasionally hear. Recently a parishioner told me she texts her friend during Mass and they compare notes. Someone else informed me that the cooking of lunch is accompanied by Sunday Mass in the background! We have entered into such an extraordinary mode of being both inside the church and in everyday life. Our connections with one another have entered a totally new dimension. Physically we have not necessarily been able to be present to one another; through the internet we have realised there are still so many *out there* who are interested and care.

In our Gospel reading today, Jesus cleanses the Temple. After the Wedding Feast at Cana, he travels to Jerusalem for Passover and does the unthinkable - so much is cleared out! Can you imagine an event like that taking place in our own day? The police would be there in a flash, an arrest made, interviews and assessments...and definitely the Press! At the start of his ministry in St. John's Gospel, the Lord wants things to be done in the right way especially in the Temple, God's house. Clutter and distraction to be removed and the focus shifted to the 'Temple' which is his Body and reference to his being raised up on the third day. The Passover experienced by the People of Israel centuries before

will have a new meaning in the Death and Resurrection of Jesus at Easter. The here and now will break into eternity just as the Son left his place at the Father's Right Hand to enter our reality.

Lent continues. We have more weeks to walk with the Lord. There still are opportunities to be seized: things to be sacrificed, extras to be undertaken. With the Gospel reading in mind, what do you think in your life needs to be cleansed? Are there obstacles getting in the way? Is there light trying to get in? Does your whole being yearn to be kick-started? Jesus knows us very well and can see into our minds and hearts. He is well aware of the pain, suffering and struggles of our lives. He also perceives what is possible and avenues which could be opened up with a little prompting (or a big kick!). This Lent reflect back on the last twelve months and ponder what has been hard, what has been novel and life-giving, what has drawn you even closer to God and an experience of his love. Ask the Lord Jesus to be your companion in whatever you face and to bring you to a fresh outpouring of grace at Easter.

Let's continue to pray for one another. God bless you.

With much love, *Fr. Norbert*

PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF MASS IN WELWYN GARDEN CITY

Places of Worship can remain open. We are doing all we can to keep people as safe. We continue with our schedule of Masses:

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

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: Roddy Brice RIP Birthday, Augustus Joachim RIP, In thanksgiving for the Stewards in our churches, Tony Hubbard RIP, Maurice Gauchard RIP Anniv, Ellen Castelo RIP 6th Anniv, Angelo and Elizabeth Lauria and their families, Fr. McCoy RIP 9th Anniv, Deirdre Davis RIP 3rd Anniv, Bernadette Smith RIP, Stanislaw Garbacik Intentions, In Thanksgiving to St. Jude.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS Fr. Tony will lead Stations of the Cross live every Wednesday at 10.30am on Zoom. These will be recorded and made available on the parish Facebook page and the YouTube channel from 10am on Fridays for those who wish to make the Stations of the Cross at their leisure. Please contact Fr. Tony for the Zoom link: tonythomas@rcdow.org.uk

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER TRIDUUM The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales has sent through an outline of how to celebrate the Easter Triduum, based on Government restrictions and fresh norms from Rome. Fr. Norbert and Fr. Tony hope to have in next week's newsletter the schedule for Holy Week.

MOTHERING SUNDAY Next Sunday (14th) is the half-way point through Lent and in this country we celebrate Mothering Sunday.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY There will be Mass on St. Patrick's Day, Wednesday 17th March, at 9.30am at Holy Family Church. Come if you can!

LENTEN REFLECTION PROJECT The Saint John Henry Newman School, along with Nicholas Breakspear School and the feeder primaries have been working together to produce some weekly reflections based on the Stations of the Cross. Every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday a reflection will be published on the YouTube channel below available from 7am and accessible throughout Lent.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYq9YYRxTsJ_9-_IYvxRWsg/videos

The schools invite you to share in these reflections, led by the pupils and staff across the area. Thank you!

CARDINAL'S LENTEN APPEAL This Lent, please consider supporting the Cardinal's Lenten Appeal and help provide food for children and families in our communities who are facing hunger. You could also support work to help our brothers and sisters come through the global pandemic stronger and better able to cope.

www.CardinalsLentenAppeal.org.uk

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. *Next Mass available from 4.30pm Sunday 7th March*

PRIEST'S REFERENCE FORMS Parents who will need a 'Certificate of Catholicity' for school 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! *Fr. Norbert will be the Celebrant on 19th March*

CAFOD Daily Walk? Something positive this Lent.

Could you walk 10000 Steps either on one day or everyday this Lent? The walk could be a sign of your solidarity with all those who do not have access to a safe water source and who have to walk for water each day. Find out more or sign up online at cafod.org.uk/walk and go the distance this Lent and help to end water poverty. Thank you for your ongoing support,

One minute film also available here: Walk for Water video:

Walk for Water: Abdella's journey | CAFOD - YouTube

CAFOD Lent Appeal

Abdella lives in an extremely remote and mountainous part of Ethiopia. It takes him ten hours a day to collect water. He says his life is being wasted as he has no time for anything else. Please give today to reach vulnerable communities around the world with water and to provide other vital support. Please donate online at www.cafod.org.uk/give or by using one of our envelopes.

You can also easily give via text.

Text LENT 5 to 70460 to give £5

Text LENT 10 to 70460 to give £10

Text LENT 20 to 70460 to give £20

Or Telephone: 0303 303 3030 to donate over the phone

*Texts cost £10 plus one standard rate message and you'll be opting in to hear more about our work and fundraising via telephone and SMS.

If you'd like to give £10 but do not wish to receive marketing communications, text LENTNOINFO to 70460.

For more information, please see our Privacy Policy: cafod.org.uk/Legal-information/Privacy-notice

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER An On-Line Marriage Encounter weekend takes place on the 20-21 March. Use this time to enrich your marriage from the comfort of your home with this on-line weekend. For more details go to wwme.org.uk

SACRAMENTS

Current regulations apply at least until 29th March, 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 New dates will be set.

SACRAMENTS 2021

On the Parish Website, you will find forms to download and return to norbertfernandes@rcdow.org.uk Many families and individuals have made contact. There is still time to send in your forms!

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.

We are using the Season of Lent to do the preparation and will 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 we will keep in touch with everyone. We will do all we can to keep people safe and not be at risk whilst encouraging formation for the Sacraments. Thank you for your co-operation.

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING 7TH MARCH

Saturday 6th March

Micah 7:14-15,18-20 ‘...have pity on us...tread down our faults to the bottom of the sea...’

Luke 15:1-3, 11-32 Jesus tells the parable of the prodigal Son

Sunday 7th March THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

Exodus 20:1-17 The Ten Commandments

1 Corinthians 1:22-25 We preach a crucified Christ

John 2:13-25 Around the time of Passover, Jesus cleanses the Temple in Jerusalem

Monday 8th March

2 Kings 5:1-15 Naaman the leper is cured in the River Jordan

Luke 4:24-30 The people of his home town try to do away with Jesus

Tuesday 9th March

Daniel 3:25,34-43 God is gentle and merciful

Matthew 18:21-35 ‘How often must I forgive my brother?’

Wednesday 10th March

Deuteronomy 4:1,5-9 The people of Israel are so fortunate to have God very near to them.

Matthew 5:17-19 To keep the commandments is to be great in the Kingdom of heaven

Thursday 11th March

Jeremiah 7:23-28 ‘Listen to my voice!’

Luke 11:14-23 Jesus Christ, the sign that the Kingdom of God is here

Friday 12th March

Hosea 14:2-10 ‘I will love them with all my heart’ Mark 12:28-34 ‘Love God...love your neighbour as yourself...’