

# 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 of Advent 8th December page 85 of the Mass Book***

John the Baptist has arrived! The Herald of Jesus Christ is on the scene! When I think of a herald, I imagine a person in a special uniform with a bell in hand and crying out ‘Oyez! Oyez!’ There is silence called for and then a proclamation is made. Usually there is rejoicing at good news if that is the case. And then what?

In our Gospel reading today from St. Matthew, the Baptist is wearing amazing garb and feasting on exotic delights - camel hair, locusts and wild honey! The Evangelist presents us with a picture of hordes of people making their way to the wilderness of Judaea. What was their motivation? To see this strange man? To hear his message? To follow everyone else like sheep? Maybe a longing to be transformed by news which was fresh and hopeful? John’s voice urges the crowds to repent; he proclaims that the kingdom of heaven is close at hand. Repentance is a turning around, a new beginning and a refocus on God. The ‘kingdom’ is revealed in a person - Jesus Christ; and his coming is imminent. What would they have made of the Baptist’s assault on the Pharisees and Sadducees?

How do we as Church understand John’s harsh words about ‘presuming’ things? John the Baptist and then Christ himself want the fruits of repentance to be evident. God wants us all to be saved! Perhaps this week we might set time to reflect on what it really means for us to be God’s children because of our belonging to the Church and our bond with Jesus. Are we living up to the calling? Is change required? Do we take it all for granted or put our faith on hold in the every day? The Church asks us to grasp the seriousness of the fact that the Lord is coming in glory and that we need to prepare a way for him.

Let us pray for our country as we go to the polls on Thursday. God’s Spirit and his inspiration surely are crucial as we make decisions for our own lives and for future generations. Whatever the outcome, let us beg the Lord to bring us harmony, justice and hope.

God bless you. *Fr. Norbert*

**ADVENT** During the Season of Advent there will be times of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament in each of our churches: Mondays at Our Lady's, Thursdays at Holy Family and Fridays at St. Bonaventure's all 10.00 -10.30am. The Service of Reconciliation will be on Tuesday 17th December at 8pm in Our Lady's; there will be seven priests available.

**CAROL SERVICES** Our Lady School in Our Lady's Church on Wednesday 18th December at 6pm. Holy Family School in Holy Family Church on Thursday 19th December at 6pm. Commonswood Primary School in Our Lady's Church on Monday 16th December at 6pm.

**CAROL SINGING** The Christian Churches of the town will be singing carols at the Woodhall shops Saturday 21st December 11.00 - 11.30am and 3.00 - 3.30pm. Come and add your voices if you are free!

**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS MASSES** The practice for St. Bonaventure's Christmas Children's Mass (6pm Christmas Eve) will be on Tuesday 17th December after the Crib Service. The practice for Holy Family Church's Children's Christmas Mass (6.30pm Christmas Eve) will be on Sunday 22nd December after 9.30 Mass. (There is a signing up sheet at the back of Holy Family Church). The practice for Our Lady's Children's Mass (5pm Christmas Eve) will be on Monday 23rd December at 11am. All children are welcome to take part.

**ENA RICHARDSON RIP** Ena's Funeral Mass will be at Our Lady's on Monday 9th December at 12.30pm.

**NADINE STALLARD RIP** Nadine's Funeral Mass will be at Holy Family Church on Thursday 19th December at 9.30am. (This means there will not be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament or Confessions after Mass.)

**MARY ROBERTSON RIP** Mary's Funeral Mass will be at Our Lady's on Monday 30th December at 12.30pm.

**IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF OUR LADY** will be celebrated on Monday - Mass in Our Lady's at 9.30am. It is not a Holy Day of Obligation in this country.

**RCIA** for those preparing to join the Catholic Church at Easter continues on Monday at 7.30pm in Our Lady's Sacristy.

**CONFIRMATION** This evening (Sunday) the young people will be making up Christmas gift bags for residents at the YMCA. They will meet in Holy Family Church at 7.15.

**BIBLE STUDY IN 2020** Have you ever wanted to learn more about the bible, but don't know where to start? To mark the Church's 'Year of the Word' we will be running the 'Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible' study programme, which presents the 'big picture' of the Bible from Adam and Eve to Jesus and the Church. It will run on at Holy Family on eight alternate Thursday evenings from 23rd January. Fr Tony writes: "I'm delighted that 16 people have signed up for this programme already. As places are limited, please let me know as soon as possible if you are interested in coming. All welcome!"

**CHRISTMAS HAMPERS for the ELDERLY AND HOUSEBOUND** Hamper packing will take place in the Holy Family Church Parish Room on Fri 20<sup>th</sup> Dec at 7.00pm and delivery the following day 21st Dec (hampers to be collected at 10.00am.) If you would like to help with the hampers in any way by packing or delivering (or if you know of anyone who would benefit from receiving a hamper) please contact Sally Kee 07870 402510, Caroline Sherar 07929 709901, Ann Power 07732 974780 or Joss Innocent Landers 07757 753426. Your response in previous years has been amazing and we're hoping this year will be the same as the recipients are always truly delighted to receive their hamper but also to know that we as a parish are thinking of them at this sometimes lonely time of year is the best gift of all.

**THANK YOU** A huge thank you from the children of Our Lady Catholic Primary School to all the parishioners who so kindly donated statues, rosaries and prayer books for use in school. The response was amazing and we are all very grateful for the generosity of so many. Our RE tables look wonderful and you are all in our prayers. We wish you all a very Happy and Holy Christmas.

**PRIEST'S REFERENCES** Parents seeking a Certificate of Catholic Practice for their child's entry to Reception Class or Nursery are invited to sign up for an appointment with Fr. Norbert in Our Lady's Church on Monday 9th December 3.30 - 5.30pm. Please ring Kathryn Hubbard on 01707 322579 or email parishsec@stbonaventure.org.uk to book a 5-minute appointment. Parents are asked to fill out a yellow 'Extra Form' available at the back of the churches, to bring their child and wait in the church to be called. Thank you.

**SPECIAL NEEDS MASS** A huge 'Thank you!' to everyone involved in last weekend's Mass. There was a wonderful feeling of God's presence at Mass radiated in the gifts of so many and a brilliant time afterwards. The next Special Needs Masses will be on Saturday 7th March and Saturday 2nd May at 6pm.

**CARDINAL** Our Cardinal, Vincent Nichols, celebrates 50 years of Priesthood on Saturday 21st December. His Golden Jubilee Mass will be at the Cathedral at 10.30am.

**ALTAR SERVERS** Please sign up for the Christmas Masses on the sheets in each sacristy. St. Stephen's Day on Thursday 26th December is your day! Come to the 10 o'clock Mass at Holy Family. There'll be something in the Parish Room afterwards for everyone.

**MARRIAGE** Any couples who wish to get married in Welwyn Garden City or elsewhere should contact Fr. Norbert. The Marriage Preparation Day will be on Saturday 28th March. Couples marrying in 2020 or 2021 are invited.

**MONTHLY ADORATION** The next 'Restoration' Holy Hour will be on Friday 13th December at 7.30pm. The Holy Hour includes Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, worship music, reflections and silence. All are welcome.

**NATIVITY PLAY AND CAROL SERVICE AT ST. BONAVENTURE'S** next Sunday 15th December at 4pm. Rehearsals are this Sunday 2.30pm- 4pm, Tuesday 3.45pm - 5pm and Saturday is the dress rehearsal at 3pm. There is also a Children's Mass next Sunday.

**CAROLS IN THE CLOISTERS** Friday 13th Dec 6.30-8.30pm at the Focolare Centre, 69 Parkway, WGC AL8 6JG. An evening of carols for all, everyone welcome! Join with us to sing and celebrate the coming of Jesus! If you have a torch bring it for singing in The Cloisters. Light refreshments will be served after the Carols, all contributions of savoury or sweet finger food most welcome.

**THANK YOU** The CWL would like to thank the generosity of Our Lady's Church. We made the grand figure of £134 on the sale of Cakes to go towards our fund raising.

**ASSISI 2020** Brochures and booking forms are now available at the back of our churches. The pilgrimage will have Christians from WGC to mark the Centenary and will be from Sunday 24th May until Friday 29th May 2020. There will be limited places so if you are interested, please return your booking form to Pax Travel as soon as possible. If anyone needs an electronic version, please let Fr. Norbert know.

**OBERRAMMERGAU** Wednesday 9th - Friday 11th September, 2020. The brochures and booking forms are at the back of our churches. Let Fr. Norbert know if you require an electronic version. Europe was affected by a terrible plague at the beginning of the 17th century. In 1633 the people of the village of Oberammergau in Germany prayed and promised that if the plague left their village, a play commemorating the Passion of Jesus Christ would be performed every ten years. Their prayers were answered and the first Passion Play was performed in 1634.

**CRIB SERVICE** Come along with your children to a short and informal Crib Service at St. Bonaventure's on Tuesday 17th December at 3.45pm. We will also decorate the Christmas tree and have a short practice for those who will be at our Children's Christmas Mass (at 6pm on Christmas Eve).

**TRANSPORT TO MASS** contact Martin Moore on 07768 650660 or Desi Russell on 01707 371399 who will endeavour to arrange a lift for you.

**ST ALBANS** Every Friday at St. Albans Abbey-Cathedral a Catholic Mass is celebrated at 12noon. You are all welcome.

**Fr. Norbert 01707 323234**  
**welwyngdncityeast@rcdow.org.uk**  
 Our Lady's Church  
 141 Woodhall Lane AL7 3TP

**Kathryn Hubbard 01707 322579**  
**parishsec@stbonaventure.org.uk**  
 St. Bonaventure's Church  
 81 Parkway AL8 6JF

**Fr. Tony 01707 327434**  
**welwyngdncitydigs@rcdow.org.uk**  
 Holy Family Church  
 194 Knightsfield AL8 7RQ

**CONFESSIONS**  
 Holy Family: Thursday **10am**  
 St. Bonaventure: Saturday **10.30am - 11am**  
 Our Lady's: Saturday **5pm - 5.30pm.**

**You can read the newsletter on the Website for our 3 parishes**  
**[www.wgc-catholics.org.uk](http://www.wgc-catholics.org.uk)**

**INTERFAITH** The inter faith group will be running a series of events marking Rites of Passage as seen by different faiths. The first of these will take place at Hatfield Fire Stration, AL10 9DA on Tuesday 10th December, 7.15 - 9.30 when the theme will be 'Birth'. All welcome

**CHRISTMAS SERVICES CARD** Please take a card from the back of church listing all the services over Christmas and the New Year.

**NEWSLETTER** Next Sunday's newsletter will cover the Third and Fourth Sundays of Advent so please make sure that any information you send in includes 21st/22nd December. There will then be a Christmas newsletter from 25th December up to Sunday 12th January - the Baptism of the Lord - which concludes the Christmas Season. Again, please think about what needs to be in the newsletter for this period. Thank you.

### MASS TIMES

09 Monday	9.30am	Mass	Our Lady's	Immaculate Conception
	12.30pm	Funeral Mass	Our Lady's	
10 Tuesday	9.30am	Mass	S. Bonaventure	Advent feris
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
11 Wednesday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	Advent feria
12 Thursday	9.30am	Mass	Holy Family	Advent feria
13 Friday	9.30am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	St. Lucy
	7pm	Mass	Our Lady's	
14 Saturday	10am	Mass	St. Bonaventure	St. John of the Cross

### Third Sunday of Advent

<b>14 Saturday</b>	<b>6pm</b>	Mass	Our Lady's
<b>15 Sunday</b>	<b>8am</b>	Mass	St. Bonaventure
	<b>9.30am</b>	Mass	Holy Family
	<b>10.30am</b>	Mass	St. Bonaventure
	<b>11.30am</b>	Mass	Our Lady's
	<b>6pm</b>	<b>Mass</b>	Holy Family



**CHAPLAIN TO THE Q.E.II AND LISTER HOSPITALS:** If you are going into hospital and need a Catholic Chaplain contact **Chaplaincy Office Tel: 01438 285138 (24/7)**  
**Urgent need: 01438 314 333 via text message: 07876 526935.**