

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*

Easter Sunday 12th April 2020

As I write this newsletter, we are leaving Good Friday and about to enter into Easter weekend. However, we cannot reach Easter Sunday and the glory of Resurrection without first the experience of Holy Saturday. It seems so unfair! It would be wonderful to skip a day and go from the Cross straight to the Victory of Jesus rising from the dead. Holy Saturday is a day of 'lockdown'; all we can do is be still, take stock and wait. Every other year we would be busy getting our churches ready with the decoration of flowers, having made sure all is spick and span; Baptismal fonts ready for the freshly blessed Water and Holy Oils impatient for unction; rehearsals galore for musicians and singers, practices for servers and candidates for the Easter Sacraments. Now these important preparations have been put on hold, awaiting a happier, more appropriate time. As many are discovering, having more time isn't always the answer to a life of busy-ness! We want to be preoccupied with jobs, with leisure on *our* terms - *we* want to be in control.

Jesus teaches us through Holy Saturday that even he stopped; he rested as his body lay in the tomb. If you think back to the account of Creation from the Book of Genesis, God rested on the Seventh Day - Saturday. God had completed all he had wanted to do in his work of Creation. He looked at it and it was very good. This Holy Saturday in the midst of the enforced but necessary lockdown, take time to rest and see the good around you. Witness the sacrificial giving of so many frontline and key workers and give thanks to God for them. Continue, in spite of the devastation of the coronavirus, to discover God's hand in the beauty of Creation around you. Allow the total submission of Jesus to enrich you with patient watchfulness and courageous perseverance. Happy Holy Saturday!

THEN...on Easter Day, burst forth with the Lord from the Tomb! Ponder what it will be like to leave the state of lockdown, with healing and peace of mind restored. The Risen Lord is in our midst with New Life, perfect Love and a desire to walk with us every step of the way on the long road ahead. Fr. Tony and I wish a Happy and Blessed Easter to you all: those on your own, perhaps separated from loved ones, the amazing people serving the sick and society, the bereaved who are grieving, adults and children worried about your future prospects. May the Light of the Risen Lord shine upon you!

With love and prayers, *Fr. Norbert*

LIVESTREAMING

We are live-streaming using the YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMRar5c56VdIMK7v7aQLaRg/>

BLESSING OF FOOD Holy Saturday at 2pm

On Holy Saturday many communities across the globe normally come to church to bless their food for Easter in special Easter baskets. We have followed this tradition in Welwyn Garden City for some time. This year, with present circumstances, this won't be possible. However, all are invited to attend an online Blessing of Food Service on the YouTube channel above led by Father Norbert at 2 pm on 11th. Even if it has not been your own tradition, why not join others at this time and ask God's blessing on your Easter food? Despite challenging times, let's continue building our church community! For more information, call Michal on: 07825021746.

W sobotę wiele wspólnot na całym świecie zwykle przychodzi do kościoła, aby pobłogosławić swoje jedzenie i wielkanocne kosze. Ze względu na COVID-19, nie możemy fizycznie uczestniczyć w błogosławieniu jedzenia, jednak wszyscy jesteśmy zaproszeni do udziału w nabożeństwie internetowym, które będzie prowadzone przez Ojca Norberta i odbędzie się w sobotę 11 kwietnia o 14:00. Mimo trudnych czasów, kontynuujmy budowę naszej wspólnoty kościelnej! Aby uzyskać więcej informacji, zadzwoń do Michała: 07825021746.

'FURLOUGH' The Diocese has asked that all paid lay employees should be put on furlough to protect their jobs through the present crisis and allow them to have sufficient income to support their families. To this end Kathryn Hubbard will for now be on furlough which means that she cannot carry out any responsibilities or voluntary work as Parish Secretary. Any queries or communications should be sent to Fr. Tony or Fr. Norbert. We are grateful to Kathryn for her hard work and look forward to things going back to normal in the future.

MASS INTENTIONS Fr. Norbert and Fr. Tony will celebrate the weekday Mass Intentions as far as is possible. On Sundays the Mass will be celebrated for the 'People of our Parishes'. Any intentions we cannot celebrate will be carried over. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

This week Masses have been celebrated for Patrick Pierce's Intentions, Miriam Harte's Intentions, Daniel Pierce's Intentions, Eveline Guerin's Intentions, Mike Cade (sick), Callaghan Family's Intentions, Jim Bradley RIP, Chris Doocey RIP

PARISHIONERS WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY

Funeral Services will only be conducted at the graveside or at crematorium until further notice with only immediate family attending.

Stefan Jurek RIP

Phyllis Connolly RIP

Ray Wilkinson RIP

Piotr Bujnarowski RIP

Fr. John Helm RIP

Molly Jones RIP

Brian Archer RIP

BAPTISMS, CONFIRMATIONS, FIRST COMMUNIONS, WEDDINGS are now on hold until the situation changes.

CONNECTING WITH THE VULNERABLE AND NEEDY Many thanks to all those parishioners who have volunteered to help the vulnerable and isolated during these difficult times. We now have a team of people who are happy to do shopping, collect prescriptions, chat on the phone, walk the dog etc. If you need any such help, please do contact Fr Tony, and he will put you in contact with someone who can assist you. Fr Tony can be reached on 01707 327434, or at tonythomas@rcdow.org.uk. *By giving us your contact details you are agreeing that the parishes can use them for the support of vulnerable people during the coronavirus outbreak.*

FOOD BANK New Zion Christian Fellowship continues its Food Bank every Wednesday 9 - 11am. Unfortunately with our churches now closed, we cannot collect items each week. 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.

FROM DIOCESAN CATECHISTS

Diocesan Resources During The Period Of Mass Suspension, including Liturgy & Prayer, Reflection and Faith in Action

<https://rcdow.org.uk/news/resources-during-mass-suspension/>

RCIA

In RCIA groups Elect and Candidates will continue their journey towards Baptism and full communion with the Church. The above resources will be helpful to catechists in supporting their journey and continuing to walk alongside them.

Some Gospel resources:

The Diocesan resource for small groups offers material with opportunities for Gospel reflection, discussion and prayer. The material for the current season is downloadable and also the resources from the last three years. Most have audio versions available.

<https://rcdow.org.uk/faith/small-groups/>

RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Most of the children in our parishes will be at home for potentially a long period of time. The Domestic Church comes to the fore here and we can offer opportunities to enrich the faith life of our families, encouraging parents to spend time talking to their children about our faith while having some fun.

Wednesday Word, familiar to parishes and schools, offers activities that families can do at home. <http://www.wednesdayword.org/>

CAFOD's KidzZone offers games, films, prayers and printable activities
<https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Kidz-Zone>

Also resources for the time of school closures:

<https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Resources-for-school-closures>

CAFOD'S Confirmation resource might be helpful in engaging confirmation candidates in their continuing journey

These two American websites, Catholic Mom and Catholic Icing offer activities and crafts for children & families: <http://catholicmom.com/2020/03/21/when-you-cant-get-to-mass-15-at-home-resources-for-families/>

<https://www.catholicicing.com/coronavirus-home-resources-for-catholics/>

LITURGY OF THE WORD WITH CHILDREN

CAFOD are offering a webinar of a Liturgy of the Word with Children at home. Parents and children are encouraged to join online for prayers and reflection on this Sunday's Gospel. The liturgy will be led by catechists who would usually be leading children's liturgy in their parish and will be based on CAFOD children's liturgy resources. The link to register is:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5095942131288155403> After registering you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar

OTHER RESOURCES

A beautiful prayer/reflection:

<https://www.praytellig.com/index.php/2020/03/20/fasting-then-feasting/>

An article from US Catholic on staying at home during this time:

<https://uscatholic.org/articles/202003/life-under-lockdown-8-ways-handle-staying-home-31994>

Taizé are live streaming evening prayer through their Facebook page each evening at 7.30pm. <https://www.facebook.com/taize>

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR WEEK BEGINNING 11TH APRIL

Why not take out your Bible and reflect on these passages? Or do a Google search!

Saturday 11th April EASTER VIGIL

Genesis 1:1 - 2:2 The account of Creation

Exodus 14:15 - 15:1 The crossing of the Red Sea

Ezekiel 36:16-17, 18-28 God will give a new heart

Romans 6:3-11 When we were baptised we went into the tomb with Jesus

Matthew 28:1-10 Jesus has risen from the dead

Sunday 12th April EASTER SUNDAY

Acts 10:34, 37-43 God raised Jesus to life

Colossians 3:1-4 The life you have is hidden with Christ in God

John 20:1-9 He saw and he believed

Monday 13th April EASTER MONDAY

Acts 2:14, 22-33 God raised Jesus to life and all of us are witnesses to that

Matthew 28:8-15 The women meet the Risen Lord

Tuesday 14th April EASTER TUESDAY

Acts 2:36-41 What must we do?

John 20:11-18 Mary of Magdala told the disciples she had seen the Lord

Wednesday 15th April EASTER WEDNESDAY

Acts 3:1-10 Peter tells the cripple: 'In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, walk!'

Luke 24:13-35 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us?'

Thursday 16th April EASTER THURSDAY

Acts 3:11-26 Faith in the name of Jesus

Luke 24:35-48 Jesus opens their minds to understand the Scriptures

Friday 17th April EASTER FRIDAY

Acts 4:1-12 Jesus is the keystone and the only name by which we can be saved

John 21:1-14 The Risen Lord says to his disciples: 'Come and have breakfast'