

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*

Nineteenth Sunday of the Year 9th August 2020

In our First Reading today from the First Book of the Kings, Elijah has an amazing experience of God out in the wilderness - not in the wind, an earthquake or fire but in the sound of a gentle breeze. In the present heatwave, a gentle breeze creates such a soothing feeling! It is like a whisper in your ear or a heartbeat...and God is there! Elijah's life had been in peril and so he escaped into the middle of nowhere. After this incident, the prophet hears a word from God summoning him to prophesy. He cannot bask in the revelation given; there is a job to be done. How often in our lives do we yearn to rest in a happy, exhilarating moment desperate for it not to come to an end? Yet, the next move can open us up to something even greater.

I am fortunate to have had some days off, catching up with family and friends and having a time of rest and refreshment. My next-door neighbour in Edgware came to the front door and asked me if I was back for good! NO!! There's a job to be done! The question I have been pondering is: 'What is the task...what does God want me to do?' We are not back to where we were this time last year. We are unsure of where we will be next summer. Nothing has trained me for this! As priest I am called to proclaim the Gospel, to celebrate the Sacraments, to be in your midst. This is a totally new situation in history where so many are aware of the Lord's presence in a myriad of new ways and are content with what they have discovered; others have been able to return to church albeit with a mode of celebration which is totally novel. Nevertheless there are countless people desperate to 'hear' a word and do not know where to turn. Friends and family, work colleagues and strangers might now need YOU to be the source of this Good News from Jesus. Reflect on a time when you have felt God close to you. Ask yourself 'How did I know he was really there?' Find words to express what you felt. And be ready to respond to someone with your lived experience!

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In our Gospel reading from St. Matthew, there is the wondrous scene of Jesus walking on the water and inviting Peter to come. When Peter has his gaze fixed on the Lord, he is safe and manages. Once his attention is arrested by the force of the wind, he panics and cries out to Jesus. The hand of the Lord is there to grab hold of him lovingly and firmly. The reaction of Peter's companions in the boat is one of awe as they bow before Jesus and say, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.' The Peter who happily jumped out of the boat at Jesus' summons is, I am sure, transformed by the knowledge that the Lord had been there for him. We are walking on the water. We can take fright and despair. We need to look intently at Jesus and learn from him.

May God bless each one of you. Fr. Tony and I continue to pray for you. May you find time to get away literally or just through a change of routine. Let us all be ready for the tasks which lie ahead for every person. With much love, *Fr. Norbert*

PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF MASS IN WELWYN GARDEN CITY As the Sunday Obligation has been suspended, you are free to come to any of the Masses. There is streamed Mass on Sunday at 10am. There is the capacity for people to come more than once in the week if they wish. **Face coverings must now be worn.**

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

As you arrive there are stewards outside to make sure people respect distancing and to take contact details (name and phone number which will be held securely for 21 days). Stewards sanitise hands on entry. More stewards lead you to places. People must sit in their 'bubbles', that is as couples, families or households. We have single chairs for individuals. We ask that you only sit or stand in your place and do not use the kneeler. Once the church has reached its capacity, we are not be allowed to admit any more. Parents are asked to keep a watchful eye on their children at all times. Remember toilets are not available. The galleries in both churches will not be open. There are no Mass-books or printed newsletters. Give yourselves time to park and prepare to enter the church - arrive EARLY!

The structure of the Mass has been simplified so that people are not in an enclosed place for longer than 30 minutes: no singing or music, no 2nd Reading or Bidding Prayers, no Gloria or Creed, no collection, Offertory procession or Sign of Peace, no Communion from the Chalice, no altar servers, no lighting of votive candles. At the time of Holy Communion, the priest says to the whole congregation 'The Body of Christ' to which you all respond 'Amen'. Only the priest receives at that point. After the Blessing and Dismissal, stewards guide people from their benches to the front of the sanctuary, keeping distance at all times. Those who wish to receive Holy Communion may only receive in the hand with no words uttered by priest or communicant and then you leave the church - in Holy Family by the doors either side of the sanctuary, and in Our Lady's by the side door on the left and by the 'Holy Door' at the back on the right. Even those not receiving Holy Communion must follow this flow. As you exit the church, the stewards sanitise your hands. We have been told that you cannot congregate outside but must make your way home. We ask you to respect the stewards who are your fellow parishioners and are doing their best to facilitate the whole process.

Only the priest prepares the vessels for Mass and the ciboria (with hosts) have their lids on until Holy Communion is distributed at the end.

After each Mass there are cleaning teams to sanitise everything which has had human contact and to prepare the church for the next Mass. Any property left behind has to be disposed of. Priests have been told not to greet their people for the sake of everyone's protection. We have purchased masks, plastic aprons and gloves for stewards and cleaners as well as sufficient sanitising and cleaning materials.

Some of you may not feel ready to return because of health issues or because you care for someone who is vulnerable. Others might still be afraid and this is totally understandable.

If you think you have the virus, please do NOT come and put others at risk. COVID 19 symptoms: a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature), a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24

hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual), a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.

At each Mass last week there were many volunteers who acted as stewards and helped clean afterwards. If you can offer support, please send your name to Fr. Tony or Fr. Norbert. As the weeks go by, some may be away so the availability of extra hands would be appreciated.

CONFESSION On the days when public Mass is celebrated, Fr. Tony and Fr. Norbert will NOT be able to hear Confessions before or after Mass. However, ring Fr. Tony on 01707 327434 or Fr. Norbert on 01707 323234 if you would like to make an appointment for Confession. The Sacrament will be outside the church building with priest and penitent standing; every attempt will be made to keep distance and reduce the risk of infection either way, while respecting the confidentiality of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The church will NOT be open for prayer after. We ask you to have patience and generosity of spirit if things get complicated time-wise!

ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY in this country will be celebrated on Sunday 16th August.

NEW HALL The ‘practical completion’ of our joint Parish Hall has happened! There are a few jobs to be done in the coming days and then there will be a period of 12 months’ warranty. On Friday the keys were handed over to Fr. Norbert! There have been so many years of preparing the scheme with various plans and alterations. The people of our three parishes have generously supported all that has been undertaken not only in ideas and enthusiasm but also financially. There is a loan which will need to be paid off. In due course we will look at the best ways of approaching this. We have considered many possible names for the hall. One put to me not so long ago was ‘The Trinity Hall’. It is a good suggestion as it highlights three (parishes), is explicitly Christian and intimates a reaching out to those around us just as God offers life and love and community to so many. What do you think? Please let me know. For now we can only admire the Hall from a distance. Soon, I pray, we’ll be able to celebrate with a formal opening ceremony and innumerable gatherings. Thank you for your encouragement.

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR WEEK BEGINNING 9TH AUGUST

Saturday 8th August St. Dominic (1170 - 1221) *Spanish Priest who founded the Order of Preachers (Dominicans)*

Habakkuk 1:12 - 2:4 God has made his people an instrument of justice

Matthew 17:14-20 A man pleads with Jesus: 'Lord, take pity on my son...'

Sunday 9th August NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1 Kings 19:9, 11-13 God is present in the sound of a gentle breeze

Romans 9:1-5 Paul's yearning to help the people of Israel

Matthew 14:22-33 Jesus walks on the water and calls to Peter with the word 'Come!'

Monday 10th August ST. LAURENCE (Martyred 258) *Deacon in Rome*

2 Corinthians 9:6-10 God loves a cheerful giver

John 12:24-26 'Wherever I am, my servant will be there too'

Tuesday 11th August St. Clare (1193 - 1253) *Influenced by St. Francis of Assisi and foundress of the Poor Clares who live a life of poverty and simplicity*

Ezekiel 2:8 - 3:4 The sign of the prophet eating the scroll

Matthew 18:1-5, 10, 12-14 'Who is the greatest?' - a child!

Wednesday 12th August

Ezekiel 9:1-7, 10:18-22 The glory of the Lord leaves the Temple

Matthew 18:15-20 'Where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.'

Thursday 13th August

Ezekiel 12:1-12 The sign of the exile

Matthew 18:21-19:1 'How often must I forgive...?'

Friday 14th August St. Maximilian Kolbe (1894-1941) *Franciscan Priest who died in Auschwitz in place of another prisoner*

Ezekiel 16:1-15, 60, 63 God loves his people; they reject him.

Matthew 19:3-12 The teaching of Jesus on marriage