

WELWYN GARDEN CITY



ST. BONAVENTURE



**OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



HOLY FAMILY

*Parish Priest: Fr. Norbert Fernandes Assistant Priest: Fr. Michael Mannion
Parish Secretary: Kathryn Hubbard*

Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas 2009



A Christmas Message from Archbishop Vincent Nichols:

During Christmas we have in our minds the image of the crib. It is a picture of simplicity and poverty. Yet it is rich in meaning and bears much reflection, from many points of view. This scene contains all the elements of our created world. The hay and straw of the stable represent the fruit of the cultivated earth. The ox, ass and the sheep are the animal kingdom. At the centre is the person of Jesus. And, without ever romanticising poverty, there is a certain harmony between all these elements. Each one has its place. Each one has its space. And all serve the well-being of the weakest and most vulnerable person, the new-born child.

This simple reflection may have a special resonance at a time when we are intensely conscious of the fragility of our world and the threats to its stability. Today we have to find a balanced and sustainable relationship between ourselves and the natural world, and between all people who share this planet. Unless we do so the chances of peace in our world are slim and the careless exploitation of our environment will continue. These right relationships have to begin in our homes, just as the readings we have heard suggest: respect between the generations, patience with each other, sensitivity to each other's wishes and needs. Indeed the crib reminds us that we are really dependent on each other, on the created world and on God. Only when this dependence is acknowledged have we a hope of realigning ourselves and our way of living into something more appropriate to the needs of each other and of our environment.

Of course over Christmas we have been spending hard-earned income in order to express our love and thanks for each other. We must also have felt the pressures of advertising and expectation to spend more than we could afford. Yet, at the end of

the day, in our family celebrations what counts is sincerity rather than extravagance, sensitivity rather than excess. When this is understood, then we can probably live far more simply without any loss of enjoyment. Then we can be more attentive to how much we consume, to what we throw away, to what we have to give to the poor and to ways in which we can care for the environment. The crib, then, is a lesson in right living, in the regard we have for each other, in our support for the poor and in our care for the created world.

Through the Incarnation, the birth of the Eternal Word of God into the family of the stable of Bethlehem, God is with us - Emmanuel. Because He shares in our human life, then we can share in His divine life. This is the miracle of our salvation. May *God bless you and your families this Christmas.*

ADVENT RECONCILIATION SERVICE for our three churches will be on Monday 21st December at 7pm at Holy Family. Come and share in the beauty of the Sacrament of Reconciliation in readiness for Christmas. If you have not been to Confession for a long time, don't worry! There will be a number of priests available to help you.

ST STEPHEN'S DAY Mass for the servers of the area is on Saturday 26th December at 10am at St. Bonaventure's. Servers are asked to come with their albs or cassocks and cottas and vest in the front room of the Presbytery before Mass. There will be refreshments in the Parish Hall afterwards for everyone.

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY will be celebrated on Sunday 27th December. Please bring a bottle of wine (or soft drink) and a plate of finger food for the reception which will follow the 10am Mass at Holy Family Church.

CRIB SERVICE Come along with your children to a short and informal Crib Service at St. Bonaventure's on Monday 21st December at 3.45pm. We place the figures in the crib, have a story and then decorate the Christmas tree. We will also have a practice for the tableau for our **Children's Christmas Mass** at 6pm.

A PART-TIME ADMINISTRATOR REQUIRED A part time administrator is required for the Interfaith Group to undertake general duties and administrative support to enable the efficient operation of the group. The post will be for one year starting early 2010. Hours are flexible approximately two half days per week. This is a paid position. Please phone 01707 324828 for further information.

ST. BONAVENTURE'S COFFEE GROUP Collect your new rotas from the back.
REFRESHMENTS AFTER MIDNIGHT MASS If you can help with serving refreshments after Midnight Mass at St. Bonaventure's please let Kathryn know.

CWL CHRISTMAS QUIZ The CWL are running a Christmas Quiz. £1 for a sheet of questions which will be available at the back of church. A fun thing to do over Christmas!

PARISH CHRISTMAS HAMPERS Thank you to all who contributed to the Christmas hampers. Hampers are being distributed to elderly and housebound parishioners.

OUR LADY'S CLEANING FOR CHRISTMAS: this will take place on **Tuesday 22nd December at 10am**. Everyone is invited to come and prepare the church for the Christmas Season. Refreshments available!

READERS AND EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS FOR CHRISTMAS Please fill in the lists at St. Bonaventure's if you can exercise your ministry during Christmas. Eucharistic ministers are needed for 9am Christmas Day, and one more reader for readings before Midnight Mass.

FUNERAL MASSES The Funeral Mass for Placy De Souza is at Our Lady's at 11am on Wednesday 23rd December. The Funeral Mass for Carmel Conroy is at St. Bonaventure's at 2pm on Wednesday 23rd December, and the Funeral Mass for Peggy Lindsay is at St. Bonaventure's at 11am on Wednesday 30th December. We offer our prayers and sympathy to the families and friends of the deceased.

SVP ADVENT SALE AND COLLECTION A huge 'thank you' to all those who supported the sale and collection which came to £1047.43.

MOTHER AND TODDLER There is no group now until Wednesday 6th January.

PARISH DIARIES These have been delayed, hopefully they will arrive soon!

CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S SOCIETY Donations at the Crib will go to the Society. £119.02 was raised for the society at St. Bonaventure's Carol Service last weekend.

DAY OF RECOLLECTION There will be a Day of Recollection for newcomers, readers and Eucharistic ministers from all three churches on Saturday 20th March commencing at 9.30am with Mass and finishing at 1pm. Please make a note in your 2010 diary.

LATIN MASS SOCIETY The Latin Mass Society will celebrate Mass at St. Bonaventure's on Tuesday 5th January at 7.30pm. All are welcome.

NEWSLETTER The next newsletter will be on the weekend of 2nd/3rd January which is the feast of the Epiphany of the Lord.

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Holy Family Church

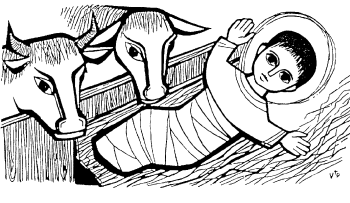
194 Knightsfield AL8 7RQ



CHAPLAIN TO THE Q.E.II HOSPITAL: If you are going into hospital you can contact the R.C. Chaplain, Mrs Bernadette Cassidy, on 07884187463

MASS TIMES FOR 20TH DECEMBER - 3RD JANUARY

21 Monday	9.30am	Our Lady's
22 Tuesday	9am	St. Bonaventure's
	7pm	Our Lady's
23 Wednesday	9.30am	Holy Family
	11am	Funeral Mass Our Lady's
	2pm	Funeral Mass St. Bonaventure's
24 Thursday	9.30am	Our Lady's

	Christmas Eve	5pm	Children's Nativity Mass Our Lady's
		6pm	Children's Nativity Mass St. Bonaventure's
		6.30pm	Children's Nativity Mass Holy Family
		9pm	Mass of the Nativity Our Lady's
		10pm	Mass of the Nativity Holy Family
Christmas Day		11pm	Mass of the Nativity St. Bonaventure's
		9am	Mass with Carols St. Bonaventure's
		10am	Mass with Carols Holy Family
		11am	Mass with Carols Our Lady's

26 Saturday 10am Altar Servers Mass St. Bonaventure's

Feast of the Holy Family

26 Saturday Vigil	6pm	Our Lady's
27 Sunday	8am	St. Bonaventure's
	10am	Holy Family
	12noon	Our Lady's
	6pm	St. Bonaventure's



28 Monday	<u>10am</u>	Our Lady's
29 Tuesday	9am	St. Bonaventure's
30 Wednesday	9.30am	Holy Family
	11am	Funeral Mass St. Bonaventure's
31 Thursday	9.30am	Our Lady's

01 Friday Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (New Year's Day)
10am Our Lady's

02 Saturday 10am St. Bonaventure's

Fr. Michael and Fr. Norbert wish you and your loved ones every blessing this Christmas and happiness in the New Year