

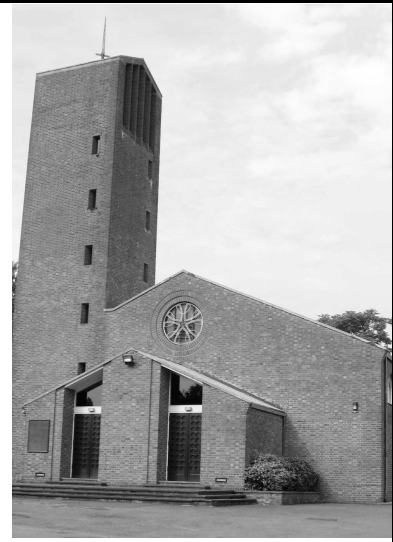
WELWYN GARDEN CITY



ST. BONAVENTURE



**OUR LADY,
QUEEN OF APOSTLES**



HOLY FAMILY

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

***Third Sunday of the Year
24th January 2010***

In May 2008 I was asked by the Vicar General, Monsignor Seamus Murphy, to come to Welwyn Garden City to be Parish Priest of St. Bonaventure's, Our Lady's and Holy Family. I was told by Bishop George Stack that my task would be to bring together the three parishes in such a way that there would be one parish with three churches. What was made very clear to me by them both was that there was no blueprint and that it would be a huge challenge. The Bishop also expressed the wish that I should find ways of engaging the Catholic Church in the Garden City with other Christian Churches, with other Faiths and with the Civic authorities. I said: "Yes" and arrived in October that year. Subsequently, Fr. Joe Boward and Fr. McCoy were no longer able to help in our churches and sadly Fr. Bill McConalogue died last June. Fr. Michael Mannion arrived as the Assistant Priest in November.

Last July we had a big meeting which was open to everyone. Many people with a variety of opinions and from diverse backgrounds came and shared their views and experiences. As a consequence, the number of Sunday Masses across the Garden City was reduced and then the weekday Masses reorganised. A review was promised and this will be on **Wednesday 10th February at 7.30pm** in Our Lady's Hall. The Bishop has asked me to outline some areas which will form the basis of the discussions to which *everyone* is invited to contribute. The Bishop himself will be at the meeting.

1. What are some of the **positive outcomes** of the changes? Some say to me that they are meeting people they have not seen in ages. They are enjoying going to Mass in different churches and that the experience of a 'full' church on a Saturday evening/Sunday is good.

2. What are the challenges we face? The three parishes have their own histories, traditions and ways. The church buildings have unique characteristics. How do we bring together the Garden City and the villages (which are within Holy Family's boundaries) in a way which feels natural and does not lose the specific identity of each congregation/parish? From an organisational point of view, how do we keep all three going financially as independent units or should there be just one bank account? The Parish Pastoral Councils of St. Bonaventure's and Holy Family have not met probably for at least two years; Our Lady's has a Parish Forum. What structures do we need for each church and for the three-as-one?

3. What are our **aspirations**? What is our vision of where we want to be in a year's time or in ten years' time? What will help us to achieve this? We need to keep in mind what the Diocese has asked of us all - priests and people.

4. What have been the major **disappointments** of the changes? I know that there has been strong feeling about the loss of Masses. Some cannot understand why there has had to be this 'bringing together' in the first place. Others worry about the long-term future of their particular church.

I invite you all to the review. I hope that many of you will come. We need to listen to each other's experiences as well as share our own. We will also have to be realistic about what is possible and be constructive in our approach. We all have the joy of following **Jesus Christ**. Through the power of his **Spirit**, we *will* find a way forward. Our task is to build up the Kingdom of **God** and to draw others to Jesus Christ. Let us pray hard and strive to discern God's call to us.

May God bless you all. *Fr. Norbert*

HAITI EARTHQUAKE There will be a special retiring collection for Haiti this weekend to support the people of Haiti as they try to rebuild their lives after the devastating earthquake. The money will be sent to CAFOD. We know you will be generous. Thank you. If you can Gift Aid please fill in your details the back of the CAFOD envelope (we are hoping these will have arrived in time).

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY will be marked on Wednesday 27th January by a ceremony in Hatfield (between Queensway and Link Drive) at 11am. All are most welcome to attend.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE SICK The annual Diocesan Mass will be at Westminster Cathedral on Saturday 13th February at 3pm. The Sacrament of the Sick will be administered during the Mass. Archbishop Vincent Nichols invites especially the sick and infirm to come. If you feel you need priority seating in the Cathedral, please let Fr. Norbert know as soon as possible.

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS **St. Bonaventure's Finance Committee** meets at 7.30pm on Monday 1st February. **Our Lady's Finance Committee** meets at 7.45pm on Tuesday 2nd February. **Holy Family's Finance Committee** meets at 10.30am on Friday 12th February. All meetings are in the presbytery of the respective churches.

EDUCATION SUNDAY To mark Education Sunday next weekend, Holy Family Primary School will be leading the 10am Mass at Holy Family Church and Our Lady Primary School will be leading the 12noon Mass at Our Lady's. We will be welcoming children and their parents, staff and governors.

MEETING FOR ALL PARENTS OF FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CHILDREN The first of these meetings takes place at 7.30pm this Wednesday 27th January in Our Lady's Church (please note that the meeting is not in the lounge of the parish centre as previously stated).

CWL MEETING There is a Catholic Women's League meeting this Tuesday 26th January at 7.45pm in Our Lady's. All are welcome.

OUR LADY'S FORUM To avoid clashing with the Review Meeting, the next meeting of the Forum has been rescheduled to Tuesday 2nd March at 7.45pm in the sacristy.

CONFIRMATION 2010 We ask all young people of our three churches who wish to be confirmed to fill out an application form available at the back of each church and return to Fr. Norbert or Fr. Michael by Sunday 7th February. Once we know how many candidates there are, the Preparation Course and its venue can be worked out. Candidates for Confirmation should be at least in Year 9 of secondary school.

NEED ANY JOBS DOING? If you have need of a general handyman/gardener who is a skilled tiler and patio layer please contact Janet Lewis who has the details. Phone 01707 326346.

ST. BONAVENTURE'S CHILDREN'S TUESDAY GROUP Meets Tuesday 3.45pm - 4.45pm in the parish hall. All welcome.

LATELY DEAD The following parishioners have recently died. We offer our sympathy and prayers to their families and friends.

PHYLLIS COUGHLAN R.I.P. Funeral Mass is at 12noon on Tuesday 26th January at Our Lady's Church.

BRIDGET WOODMAN R.I.P. Funeral Mass is at 10.30am on Friday 29th January at Our Lady's Church.

PATRICK (PADDY) COOK R.I.P. Funeral Mass is at 11am on Tuesday 2nd February at Our Lady's Church.

BRIDGET GARDINER R.I.P. Funeral Mass is at 11am on Friday 5th February at St. Bonaventure's.

PATRICIA TAYLOR R.I.P. Funeral Mass is at 12noon on Friday 12th February at St. Bonaventure's.

SWIM FOR THE ISABEL HOSPICE Sunday 21st February at Haileybury College Pool, Hertford Heath. Leaflets at the back of St. Bonaventure's Church

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION)

St. Bonaventure's Saturday 10.30am - 11am

Our Lady's Saturday 5pm - 5.30pm

Holy Family Friday 7.30pm - 8pm

CONTACTS

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Holy Family Church
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MASS TIMES IN WELWYN GARDEN CITY

SUNDAY MASSES

Saturday	6pm	Our Lady's	Confessions 5pm - 5.30pm
Sunday	8am	St. Bonaventure	
	10am	Holy Family	
	12noon	Our Lady's	
	6pm	St. Bonaventure	

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday	9.30am	Our Lady's	
Tuesday	9am	St. Bonaventure	
	12noon	Funeral Mass Phyllis Coughlan R.I.P.	Our Lady's
	7pm	Our Lady's	
Wednesday	9.30am	Holy Family	
Thursday	9.30am	Our Lady's	
Friday	9am	St. Bonaventure	
	10.30am	Funeral Mass Bridget Woodman R.I.P.	Our Lady's
	7pm	Holy Family + Exposition, Benediction + Confessions	
Saturday	10am	St. Bonaventure	Confessions 10.30 - 11am



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