

NEWS BULLETIN - Ss ALBAN & STEPHEN

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Items for the bulletin by Noon on Wednesdays. We are a Fairtrade Parish.

SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – 23rd February 2020

Parish Team: Fr Michael O'Boy (Parish Priest) Fr Julian Davies (Assistant Priest)

Rev. Steve Pickard (Deacon)

Safeguarding Lead: Mary Harber / stalbansg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk / 07882 566 020

Fr Michael Writes... In June we look forward to welcoming back the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart to celebrate 120 years of service in this parish and to the people of St Albans as a whole. As you will be aware we have been thinking how best to celebrate and remember their contribution. Physically, two ideas have come to the fore. One centres on the relocation and refurbishment of the shrine to the Sacred Heart, and the other the replacing of the wooden doors at the front of the church with glass doors. My hope is that we might be able to accomplish both of these projects with the initial emphasis on the relocation and refurbishment of the shrine to the Sacred Heart.

Alongside this physical commemoration of the Missionaries life and ministry here in St Albans, others have asked that the memorial of their contribution has a practical or pastoral aspect to it. To this end, it is proposed that we hold an annual retiring collection in support of an international MSC project one year, and a local charity, associated with the MSCs time in St Albans, the next. Each year the Parish Pastoral Council would be asked to nominate the work / cause to be supported. In this first year it is proposed that the emphasis be on a local project and that the collection be taken up over the weekend of the 20/21 June when we will be celebrating the Solemnities of the Sacred Heart and St Alban.

Of course, the 'physical' memorial will come at a cost. To date the estimated cost of the work on the Sacred Heart shrine stands at between £7 - 10,000 and I am proposing that we meet these costs out of existing reserves. In the near future, and as part of a planned giving campaign, the accounts for last financial year will be presented to the parish. It will be seen from these that we have an outstanding loan of just under £35,000 on the Parish Centre, and that last financial year we ran a budget deficit of just over £70,000, reducing our reserves or savings to £220,000. This, it should be stressed, was largely because of the installation of the new Church boilers, but it does show how reserves, even relatively healthy ones, can be swallowed up in works over which there is little choice.

Currently, the only way of showing that the church is open is by leaving the doors wide open which, in the winter months, as the weather in these last couple of weeks has shown, is not a practical option. In replacing the current front doors with glass doors the hope is that the front of the church will look more welcoming, that its being open for people to come in will be more readily apparent, and that light will be thrown across the outside front of the church which is generally very dark. For me the sense of welcome, of being 'open' to the world, rather than closed in or cut off, is central to our being a missionary community. A warm glow will achieve a whole lot more than a cold front.

The initial estimate for the refurbishment of the wooden doors, and their replacement with glass doors, stands at between £20 - £25,000. Part of this cost covers the etching of a design into the glass which will reflect our dedication to Ss Alban and Stephen and acknowledge the ministry among us of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. In due course, once we have a set of drawings for the doors, and a clearer idea of all the costs and work involved, we will launch an appeal for the refurbishment of the Church doors which should also give us an opportunity to improve the lighting across the outside front of the Church. Meanwhile, I have posted on the Church Noticeboard the proposals for the new Sacred Heart Shrine. I would welcome your feedback on the proposals for the Sacred Heart Shrine and for the refurbishment of the front doors.

Way of the Cross Every Saturday morning during Lent at 9.30 am, you are invited to follow the Way of the Cross in Church. Led by different groups within the parish, each week will have a different theme but all will help us make a spiritual pilgrimage through contemplation of the 14 stations of the Passion of Christ.

Lenten prayers Ash Wednesday opens Lent, a season of fasting and prayer, which prepares us for Christ's Resurrection on Easter Sunday. The ashes, symbolising the dust from which God made us, will be distributed at the 7am, 10am and 7pm Masses on the 26th February. Please note that parking will not be available in Loreto College on Ash Wednesday.

**MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS
SEVENTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME**

Saturday 22 February

6.00pm Richard Field (RIP)

Sunday 23 February

8.00am Donor's Intentions

9.00am M'Wick John Baxter (Anniv.)

John Fisher School

9.30am People of the Parish

11.30am Thomas Keily (Anniv.)

4.00pm Polish Mass

7.00pm Hinda Ditri & Pinelli Domenica
(Anniv.)

Monday 24 February - feria

10.00am Deceased members of the MacDonald
Family

10.30 - 11.30 am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

7.00pm Private Intentions

Tuesday 25 February - feria

10.00am Ann Screene (RIP)

Wednesday 26 February - ASH WEDNESDAY

7.00am Donor's Intentions

10.00am Private Intentions

7.00pm Brigid Costello (RIP)

Thursday 27 February - Lent feria

10.00am Philomena Lines (Ints)

Friday 28 February - Lent feria

10.00am Funeral Mass for Jose Ezcurra

7.00pm You Can Be Santa Team's Ints.

7.30-8.30 pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

7.40-8.40 pm Confessions

Saturday 29 February - Lent Feria

9.30am Stations of the Cross

10.00am Marek Stankiewicz (RIP)

10.30-11.30 am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

10.30-11.30 am Confessions

11.30 am Benediction

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Saturday 29 February

6.00pm Private Intentions

Sunday 1 March

8.00am People of the Parish

9.00am M'Wick Arthur & Catherine Ball (Anniv.)

John Fisher School

9.30am Jack Madden (RIP)

11.30am Peter Doran (RIP)

7.00pm Angelo Ortone (Anniv.)

*Please note that Mass intentions may change
at short notice to accommodate funerals*

PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches Together in St Albans, this week we pray for the leaders and members of St Leonards, Sandridge

For the Sick in Our Parish

For those who have died recently: Jose Ezcurra, Rose Doyle, Celia Dunne and Ella Vellacott.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time: John Baxter, Hindra Ditri & Pinelli Domenica, Arthur & Catherine Ball, Thomas Keily, Elizabeth Harding, William Rigg, Ernest & Mina Gaufrond and Angelo Ortone.

The Funeral Mass for Jose Ezcurra will take place on Friday 28 February at 10am.

*May their souls and the souls of all the faithful
departed through the mercy of God rest in peace*

THANK YOU

For your generosity in last week's offertory.

Spam Emails There have been a number of spam emails impersonating Fr Michael being sent to parishioners. Do not reply. The email addresses currently being used are 'parishoffice5465@gmail.com' and 'missionarypriest1001@gmail.com', however there may be more. If you are in any doubt about any emails you receive supposedly coming from either of the priests or the administrator, then the best thing to do is to call the office. Further to this, all emails and phone numbers have been removed from the parish website. If you would like to make an enquiry about any message then please contact the parish office on 01727 853585 or email stalbans@rcdow.org.uk

Cafod Lunch an amazing £530 was raised at last Saturday's soup and film lunch. Many thanks to all who supported the event and who helped in any way. All the money will go towards the parish's support for the poor and needy around the world. From the parish J&P group.

Mothers' Prayers will meet on Monday 9th March at 8pm. Anyone wishing to pray for children is welcome. Information from email; office@mothersprayers.org

Faith sharing during Lent The latest diocesan faith-sharing booklet - *A Word for Lent* [£3] - invites us to see salvation gradually unfold in our own lives, as well as in the lives of the Gospel women and men, whose stories are as relevant today as they were 2000 years ago. Beautiful works of art accompany us on each stage of our journey through *A Word for Lent*. Whether alone or in a group, these Lent Sunday Gospel reflections provide stimulating insights and ways into deepening personal prayer and commitment to Jesus. We are invited to obtain a booklet and encouraged to use it during Lent to help us consider what we can do to grow after the mind and heart of Jesus. Booklets are available in the Church and at John Fisher Mass Centre. If you would like to join a confidential small group during Lent, then please contact Stan for more information.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Men's Film Night The men's film night for the spring term is on Friday 28 February in the Parish Centre. This month we are showing "Eight days a week" a documentary of the Beatles early years when they were on tour, directed by Ron Howard. You can join us for drinks and pizza from 7.30pm and then we will watch the film at 8.30pm. You are very welcome to bring one or two friends along. For more details, please contact Richard.

St Patrick's Day Tea Party Parish Friends invite all parishioners to a St Patrick's Day Tea Party in the church hall on Sunday 15th March from 3-5pm. Entertainment will be provided by Peter and Damien Fahy and Irish coffee will be served. Lifts can be arranged. All donations will go to CAFOD. Guest and Helpers Lists will be available in the porch and Marshalswick mass centre from next weekend. For catering purposes please add your name to the Guest list if you will be attending the party or to the Helpers list if you can provide help or food on the day.

New year, new prayer life? Why not consider joining a small group to pray and share your thoughts and experiences in strict confidence. A friendly group meets on alternate Tuesday evenings at 8pm in the café area of the Hall. Dates for our next few meetings are 3rd, 17th and 31st March. No need to book, just turn up.

The Catholic Women's League will be holding their AGM on Tuesday 3 March after the 10am Mass in the Parish Hall. Soup and roll afterwards. Reminder subs (£23) now due. 100 club £5 if you wish to be included in the prize draw.

Global Healing. This short exploration, over two sessions in the church hall, of the papal encyclical *Laudato Si'* invites each of us to look at the world anew and encourages us to make small but meaningful changes to the way we live in relation to our delicate home. Session 1: Saturday 7th March 10.45-12.45. Refreshments to start. Three short film clips, each with a short discussion time. Session 2: Sunday 29th March. 2.00-5.15pm. "Before the flood" - a National Geographic documentary film - followed by refreshments, group discussion and examination of practical responses. All are welcome. No need to book. More details from Stan.

Beginning Experience Weekend, a healing weekend for men and women who are separated, divorced or widowed will be held from 3rd to 5th April 2020 at the Domus Mariae Centre, Chigwell, Essex. For details please contact Freda 01322 838415 or Maura 01322 551503 or email johnbrotherton@hotmail.co.uk.

Interfaith in Herts - On 24th February at 8pm, the current High Sheriff of Hertfordshire, Sarah Beazley is coming to speak at St Paul's Church. Sarah has focussed much of her year of service developing interfaith relationships in our county and will share her wisdom with us. For more information, see the poster at the back of the church.

Baptism Preparation Session On Saturday 29th February 11.30-1.00 will take place the next baptism preparation session for parents seeking baptism for their children. If you have attended one for a previous child, you do not need to attend it again though you may wish to do so. Please meet in the coffee area.

Meet a Medieval Monk from St. Albans A Talk by Peter Godwin, an Abbey Guide and member of the Knights of St. Columba, in Rooms 1 & 2 of the Parish Centre, commencing at 8.00pm on Monday, 9th March. There is not a charge and everyone is invited.

Cafod Lenten family fast day - we are all invited to take part in a simple meal on Friday 6th March to support CAFOD's Lenten family fast day. Any money saved can be donated to the second collection for CAFOD which will be taken over the weekend of 7/8th March. This year our donations will be used to help fund local people who save and support the health of the world's poorest families. Gift-aid envelopes will be available in the church for those who pay income tax and who wish to increase the value of their donation by 25%. More details from Stan. Placed by the parish J&P group.

AROUND AND ABOUT

Easter Season Painting Competition - 2020 The Knights of St Columba (KSC) is again sponsoring a National Easter Season Painting Competition. Entry is free and is open to Catholic Junior Secondary and Senior pupils in three age groups, from 8 to 18 years. Entry details have been circulated to art departments in St Albans and district Catholic schools and details can also be found on posters and flyers display in the church porch and at St John Fisher school Mass centre. Prize awards will be made at KSC National, Province and St Albans stages. The closing date for receipt of entries, to school/college art departments is Monday 23 March 2020. Further details available.

The Climate and Other Challenges - Continuing the discussion. the Churches Together Winter Forum Hatfield Road Methodist Church 133b Hatfield Road, St Albans AL1 4JX on the corner of Glenferrie Road. On February 24th, after a short AGM from 7.45 – 8.15 pm there will be refreshments and a lively discussion. 200 people came to our Autumn Forum which laid out a blueprint for the next 10 make or break years. What do we think our response should be? An interactive and lively discussion. Come and have your say. www.ctstalban.org.uk

Thinking Lunch On Thursday 5th March 2020 the Revd Antony MacRow Wood will talk to us on the subject 'can credit unions play a significant part in promoting financial inclusion?' before a discussion. Drinks provided, but please bring your own sandwiches. Join us at 12.30-1.30pm at Marlborough Road Methodist Church, St Albans AL1 3XG.

The SVP are **distributing 11,500 Vinnie Packs** containing cold weather essentials to the homeless this winter. Please could you consider sponsoring packs at a suggested donation of £3.50 per pack? Donations can be sent to Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ with cheques made out to SVP or by bank transfer to Nat West sort code 60-60-04, account no. 4608 8237. Thank you so much for your support.

Faith in Politics is a Catholic Parliamentary and Public Affairs internship scheme for recent university graduates, which offers a foundation of Catholic faith and spiritual formation for those who believe that they may have a vocation to public service in politics or public affairs. Importantly their journey begins and ends with a retreat, and spiritual guidance is an integral part of the year. Applications for Faith in Politics 2020-21 are now open for those in their final year at university. Applications close on 28 February 2020.

SCHOOLS

The Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School is seeking part-time invigilators for their summer exams. Please refer to their website for details <https://www.cvms.co.uk/Staff-Vacancies/>

St. Columba's College, the independent Catholic boys' day school in St Albans, will be holding a Prep Open Afternoon on Tuesday 3rd March 2020 between 1:30pm and 2:30pm. To register for this event please complete the registration form on our Visit Us page on the school's website, www.stcolumbascollege.org or contact the Admissions Registrar, Mrs Hilary Causer: admissions@stcolumbascollege.org or 01727 892040

FAO Past pupils/parents/staff of St John Fisher School St John Fisher PTA are holding a spring ball on Saturday 14th March at St Michael's Manor hotel in St Albans. Five years on from our last very successful 'Fisher 50' Ball, we would like to hold another to raise funds for an additional classroom. We would very much welcome a reunion of past pupils, parents and teachers/staff and your partners. St Michael's Manor is a beautiful venue. The cost of a ticket is £50 per person which includes a welcome drink, three course meal, wine on the table and a disco. We can seat you with friends, or if you would like to put your own table of 8-10 people together, even better! If you are interested please contact the PTA

AND FINALLY

The Dowry of Mary Pilgrimage to Westminster - Saturday March 21 The touring statue of Our Lady of Walsingham will make a final 3-day visit (19th-21st March) to Westminster Cathedral just before the re-dedication of England as the Dowry of Mary at Walsingham on the Feast of the Annunciation. A group from the parish will be setting off from St Albans City station, following 10am Mass. If you are interested in joining the March 21 pilgrimage, please email or telephone.

Annual Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony, Westminster Cathedral, Saturday 30th May 2019 at 3pm. The Cardinal will be inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese who are celebrating their 5th, 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th, and 60th (and every year over 60) wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2020. If you are celebrating an anniversary, please give your parish clergy the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number, if no email).