

NEWS BULLETIN - SS ALBAN & STEPHEN

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

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – 9TH 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... The Society of St Vincent de Paul, widely known as the SVP, is a world-wide organisation committed to bringing help and support to the poor, the elderly, the sick and the lonely, and indeed most circumstance where relief can be brought to disadvantaged people. It was founded in the mid-18th century by a Frenchman called Frederic Ozanam and dedicated to the 17th century priest St Vincent de Paul, a Frenchman like Ozanam. St Vincent de Paul was renowned for his love, compassion and giving to the poor, whose work was a by-word for Christ's teaching. The SVP is an international organisation but it has a quiet, typically unsung presence, in many parishes where the local members gather together in what are called Conferences. Each conference is made up of lay men and women, mostly, but not necessarily, Catholic, who are not required to have any special skills, other than a willingness to bring relief to those in need.

The first reading for this Sunday invites us to share our bread with the hungry, shelter the homeless, clothe the poor and do away with the yoke, the clenched fist and wicked word. Then it says 'will your light shine like the dawn' and 'rise in the darkness'. This invitation to do away with the yoke is another way of saying that our help should be unconditional, that we should not attach any pre-conditions to it, that it should leave those who benefit from it, completely and utterly free. In the words of today's psalmist, the help we afford others should be disinterested or open handed.

The point is reiterated in the gospel where Christ reminds us that we have been created by God to shine in the sight of others. No one, he says, lights a lamp, creates something, for it to be hidden away. And here too, the doing of good works, is central, not because there is anything in it for us, but because our good works, our 'shining' so to speak, might lead others to praise the God who created us. 'In the same way your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give praise to your Father in heaven'.

Today, therefore, it seems fitting to give thanks to God for the presence and work of the Society of St Vincent de Paul, a work or 'shining' that we will acknowledge at our 11.30 Mass. It may well be that this way of witnessing to Christ, of giving straightforward practical help to families and individuals in need, is something you are interested in. If so, you can always drop a note into the presbytery addressed to Fr Michael or Fr Julian, asking to be put in touch with the Conference that meets here.

Communion Under both Kinds For some time now we have been looking to extend the regular practice at Marshalswick and the weekday practice in the main church of offering Holy Communion under both kinds. Having recruited some new Eucharistic Ministers, the intention, from the beginning of March, is to offer communion under both kinds at the Saturday Vigil Mass as well as the 8 am and 7 pm Masses on Sundays. Once there are enough Eucharistic Ministers the hope is to extend this opportunity to both the 9.30am and 11.30am Masses.

Volunteers Needed With the introduction of Communion under both kinds there will be an increase in the amount of cloths that need washing. Could you give about an hour and a half a week or every two weeks to help? It would involve taking the cloths home and then washing and ironing them. If you are interested please put your name and contact details on a piece of paper, mark the envelope 'Sacristy Linen' and post through the presbytery door. Alternatively please send an email with the same information to stalbans@rcdow.org.uk

Year of The Word Starting on Saturday, 15th February at 10.45am, there will be a monthly session in the parish centre on Saturday mornings to reflect on St Matthew's Gospel. The sessions will follow the Catholic Bible School 'Matthew's Gospel' booklet to help discussion. No prior knowledge is required. The Saturday sessions will be held on the following dates: 15th February, 28th March, 25th April, 9th May, 27th June, 18th July, 19th September and 17th October. Further details on the leaflets in the porch.

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

Saturday 8 February

6.00 pm Deceased Members of Logan & Fitzsimons families

Sunday 9 February

8.00am Herbert Buckingham (RIP)

9.00am M^W Wick Ainsley Lambert (Anniv.)

John Fisher School

9.30am Anne Byrne (RIP)

11.30am Private Intentions

4.00pm Polish Mass

7.00pm Thomas Williamson (RIP)

Polish Mass at 4 pm on 2nd & 4th Sundays of Month

Monday 10 February - St Scholastica, Virgin

10.00am John Lovelly (RIP)

10.30 - 11.30 am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

10.30 - 11.30 am Confessions

7.00pm Ellen Huckle (Anniv.)

Tuesday 11 February - feria

10.00am Chris McCarthy (RIP)

Wednesday 12 February - feria

10.00am John & Bridget Munnelly (Anniv.)

7.00pm Josephine Scanlan (Anniv.)

Thursday 13 February - feria

10.00am Eileen Gannon (RIP)

11.30am Funeral Mass for a Parishioner of St Bartholomew's Church

Friday 14 February - Ss Cyril, Monk & Methodius, Bishop, Patrons of Europe

10.00am Mary Curran (RIP)

7.00pm Sheila Aylward (Anniv.)

7.30-8.30 pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

7.40-8.40 pm Confessions

Saturday 15 February - feria

10.00am Jenny Mapleston (RIP)

10.30-11.30 am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

10.30-11.30 am Confessions

11.30 am Benediction

SIXTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

Saturday 15 February

6.00pm Lucile Dionne (RIP)

Sunday 16 February

8.00am Private Intentions

9.00am M^W Wick Ken & Mary Neal (Anniv.)

John Fisher School

9.30am People of the Parish

11.30am James Smith Anniv.

7.00pm Pat & Cammel Moloney (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 Minister and members of the Marshalswick Baptist Free Church.

For the Sick of Parish

For those who have died recently: Barbara McSweeney Kathleen Horan, Anne O'Toole, Jose Ezcurra, Roy McGoohan, Eric Hopkins and Mary Reynolds (Fr Charles Sweeney's sister)

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Stan Phillips, Leonardo Venetico, Sheila Aylward, Thomas Kiely, David Webb, Rory Webb, Ines Quinteros, Giuseppe Campanella, Lilly Renahan, Bridie & Eric Orchard, Myra Myers, Linda Ditri, Pinelli Domenica, Ainsley Lambert and Nan Collins.

The Funeral Mass for Eric Hopkins will take place on Tuesday 18 February at 12noon at St Thomas More Church in Wheathampstead.

The Funeral Mass for Roy McGoohan will take place on Wednesday 19 February at 10am.

The Funeral Mass for Anne O'Toole will take place on Friday 21 February at 10am.

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.

This Weekend of Sunday 9th February the Catholic Church in England and Wales will celebrate Racial Justice. The theme is: "You are at the heart of the Church". It will celebrate the Contribution travelling communities make to the church in England and Wales. It is an opportunity for all Catholics to pray for, reflect on, and respond to racial justice matters within the church and wider society. Racial justice Sunday should encourage proactive discussion on overt and covert forms of racism experienced by fellow Catholics from the travelling communities.

Spam Emails There have been a number of spam emails impersonating Fr Michael being sent to parishioners. Do not reply. The email address currently being used is 'parishoffice5465@gmail.com'. 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.

"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."

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.

Ministers of The Word Do you have a clear speaking voice? Could you join our rota of readers who proclaim The Word of God at weekend Masses? More readers are urgently needed to read approximately once a month. If you can help, please contact either Allan allane@cybaea.com or Melanie mjoneill5@btinternet.com

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

New Parishioners' Welcome We would like to invite all new parishioners to join our priests and members of the Parish Pastoral Council and other fellow parishioners for refreshments after all masses on Saturday evening and Sunday this weekend of 8th and 9th February. We look forward to meeting you!

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.

The next **knit and natter** session will be held on Tuesday 11th February from 2.30 - 4pm in Room 1 of the Parish Centre. We are a friendly group and new members are always warmly welcomed.

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.

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.

Mothers' Prayers Mothers' Prayers will meet on Monday 10th February in room 2 at 8pm. Anyone wishing to pray for children is welcome. For information email; office@mothersprayers.org.

Symbols of Faith Workshop: Preparing for the Sacraments and Participation in the Liturgy for people with learning disabilities. A Workshop that trains individuals in the preparation of children and adults with special needs for the sacraments, using symbolic catechesis. The Workshop will be held at St Mary & St Joseph's Parish Centre, 186 St John's Road, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 1NR on Saturday 22nd February, 10am-2pm. Details are available from Finola Ryan at finolaryan@rcdow.org.uk / 07525 812518

Soup and film lunch: Saturday 15th February from 12 noon in the Church Hall. Tickets £2 - available after Masses, all welcome. To support the CAFOD Lent family fast day you are invited to enjoy a simple meal in solidarity with the poor of the world. This will be followed by "The Boy in the Striped Pajamas", cert 12: based on Irish novelist John Boyne's novel, this family film balances childhood innocence against the background of the Holocaust within a middle class German family. This event is organised by the Parish Justice and Peace Group.

Bingo in the Parish Hall by the Knights of St. Columba, on Friday, 14th February, at 8.00pm to raise funds for the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Admission is 50p towards refreshments and everyone is most welcome. Thank you to all that attended our last Bingo evening. £120-00 was raised for the funds of the Knights of St. Columba.

Journeying with the Bible Fr Javier Ruiz-Ortiz PhD and Sr Monica Cardona PhD are running a series of talks for the Year of the Word on the Bible. All sessions will take place at Vaughan House, 46 Francis Street, SW1P 1QN. Please register at livingfaith@rcdow.org.uk (Suggested donation £5). The final topic and date is:

- Where does the Bible come from and when did it take place? 11 February, 7-8.30pm

CAFOD information afternoon - Wednesday 12nd February 2.30-4pm. CAFOD will be hosting a supporter's information afternoon with a guest speaker, Christine Allen, Director, who has first-hand experience of our work overseas. Come and hear how CAFOD is helping communities, thanks to your support. Meeting will take place from 2.30 - 4pm at CAFOD's Volunteer Centre, 1st Floor, Church of Christ the King, 29 Bramley Road, Oakwood, N14 4HE Bookings required and taken on 0208 449 6970 or e mail westminster@cafod.org.uk

Catholic Leadership Retreat - Join us at the SPEC Retreat Centre on Saturday, 7 March 2020 as we explore what it means to be a young Catholic leader. With guest speakers including Dame Mary Richardson, Brendan Thompson of Catholic Voices, Mark Besford of Young Christian Workers, Mike Roche of Alpha UK and others, we will cover topics such as resilience, how to use our time effectively, where our identity comes from and how to impact our peers. Please see the poster for more details.

AROUND AND ABOUT

Finding Silence at Worth Abbey, Sussex 27- 30 April 2020 Led by a Benedictine monk, a fully catered 3-night stay for anyone wanting to experience silence. You don't have to be Catholic. Cost £195 (£165 concession) per person for single room or £165 per person for a shared room. The booking deadline and final payment are due by Monday 30 March. Complete a booking form from the back of the Church or contact krystyna@faithknowledge.org Tel. 751094

Free English Conversation Class for Ladies Every Monday afternoon in the Parish Hall between 1 and 2.30pm, help is offered to Ladies whose first language is not English; relaxed conversation or help with grammar as required. Contact Sara on sara.nash1@ntlworld.com for further information.

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. More information can be found at www.faithinpolitics.org.uk. Applications close on 28 February 2020.

Hospital Chaplaincy If you are admitted to hospital please let a member of hospital staff know that you would like a chaplain to visit you.

St Francis of Assisi Catholic Ramblers' Club the Catholic Rambler's Club invites new members to join it in 2020, with weekly walks taking place in South-East England, accessible by public transport. Membership is open to all walkers who are happy to respect their Catholic ethos. For further details, please visit www.stfrancisramblers.ukwalkers.com or email stfrancisramblers@gmail.com

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 rosemary.roscoe@gmail.com or telephone 07723 546642.

Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine, 04th May 2020. £649.00 per person sharing. Price includes flight with 10kg hand luggage, all transfers, 4 nights' in Knock House Hotel with breakfast and dinner. All excursions included. Lunches on days out. Single supplement £100. Contact Patricia on 01268762278 or 07740175557 or email knockpilgrimages@gmail.com.

SCHOOLS

St. Columba's College, the independent Catholic boys' day school in St Albans, will be holding a 'Stay and Play' session in the Prep School on Friday 14th February 2020 between 9am and 10:30am. Boys aged 3+ years are invited to join current Reception pupils for activities, including 'Forest Friday' while their parents have a tour of school and meet with staff. For more information, please see the school's website www.stcolumbascollege.org or contact the Admissions Registrar, Mrs Hilary Causer: admissions@stcolumbascollege.org

AND FINALLY

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).