Parish Team: Fr Michael O’Boy (Parish Priest) Fr Julian Davies (Assistant Priest)  
Rev. Steve Pickard (Deacon)  
Safeguarding Lead: Mary Harber / stalbanssg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk / 07976 277059

Fr Julian writes…It is sometimes said inaccurately that the story of salvation starts in a garden and ends in a city. Ends? Salvation’s story has no end for those who are being saved. Moreover we look forward to a new heaven and a new earth. At its centre is a city, but it is a luxuriant city, whose trees exist for the healing of the nations. All nations will stream to this garden city, the new Jerusalem. This Jerusalem will be unlike the old for it will be God’s work, not manufactured by men, but from above. This new Jerusalem is the abode of the faithful, the bride of Christ. Hence Jerusalem is the only city which is granted an eternal name and it is also the only city that Jesus asked us to expressly pray for. So like a needle on a compass Jesus was drawn to Jerusalem, and its holy centre, the Temple which God had designated as the primary place of his encounter with mankind. We have accompanied Jesus on his last journey to it. On several occasions we have heard him tell his disciples that he would be betrayed there by his own people, handed over to the nations and be put to death. At present the horror of what would unfold on the last day of the week was far from their eyes. Today on Palm Sunday the crowds and the disciples are caught up in a triumphal outburst of praise. People waved palm branches, clearly identifying Jesus as their liberator, just as their ancestors had done, a century before, when Judas Maccabaeus arrived to free Jerusalem from the nations and to cleanse the Temple. They shouted ‘Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord’, words from 118 welcoming the arrival of the anointed king who would usher in God’s kingdom of peace and righteousness. If this were not iconic enough, Jesus now fully identifies himself as that chosen Messiah, fulfilling Zechariah’s prophecy that the king would arrive on a donkey, the symbolical way in which Solomon and David had entered into Jerusalem. All of this amounted to an enacted parable, whose significance was hidden to those not in the know. But even the ones in the know did not know enough. They had forgotten that Zechariah also talks of a bloody sacrifice that would atone for the sins of the nation. They were deafened to the prophetic words that prophesied that the suffering servant of the Lord would be despised, rejected and that he would offer himself as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world and our salvation. Jesus was entering Jerusalem not to liberate it from the nations but to liberate it for the nations, for when he would be lifted up he would draw not just his own people but all people to himself. Henceforth the events of this week and what follows calls to the whole world to account. May we survey the wondrous cross and find that love so amazing, so divine which demands my soul, my life, my all.

We have begun to send out a Parish Update by email. If you have not been in receipt of these and would like to receive them please email stalbans@rcdow.org.uk requesting the Parish Update. Also, please visit the Parish Website and click on the coronavirus and parish news tabs to keep in touch and see what resources there are to help you. The website now includes a reflection on the Sunday Gospel written by Fr Michael or Fr Julian. Also you will find the Diocese of Westminster website and Vatican Website useful at this time.

Pope Francis’ address to the world on the pandemic, the act of adoration and the litany of supplication can be found on vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-03/urbi-et-orbi-pope-coronavirus-prayer-blessing.html

Live streaming of mass can be found through https://www.churchservices.tv (click on ‘churches’ under menu)

Congratulations to all involved in the Winter Beds Project. You have won the Mayor’s Pride Award for Voluntary Sector contribution to the well-being of the community.

Parish Assembly & MSC Mass
Please note that in view of the Coronavirus pandemic both the Parish Assembly and the Celebration of the MSCs’ time in St Albans will be postponed until 2021.

Please remember to keep your distance from others and to observe proper hygiene…

- Catch it - sneeze into a tissue.
- Bin it – bin the tissue.
- Kill it – wash your hands with soap and water.
- Do not touch your face unless you’ve washed your hands.
### Mass Intentions & Scripture Readings for Holy Week

**Sunday April 5, 2020** Palm Sunday of the Lord’s Passion  
Reading 1, Isaiah 50:4-7  
Responsorial Psalm 22  
Reading 2, Philippians 2:6-11  
Gospel, Matthew 26:14-27:66

Masses offered for the People of the Parish and for Andrew Fernandez (Anniv). The Masses for Milly Yarwood (Anniv), Bertie Curtin (RIP), Tony Druce (RIP) and Patrick McCarthy (Anniv) will be offered privately as soon as possible.

**Holy Saturday** April 11, 2020  
Genesis 1:1-2.2  
Responsorial Psalm 103  
Exodus 14:15-15:1  
Responsorial Psalm Ex 15  
Isaiah 55:1-11  
Responsorial Psalm Is.12  
Ezekiel 36:16-28  
Responsorial Psalm 41  
Romans 6:3-11  
Responsorial Psalm 117  
Gospel Matthew 28:1-10

The Easter Vigil is offered for the People of the Parish

**Easter Sunday April 12, 2020**  
Masses will be offered for Stan Phillips (Anniv) and Helena Cuneen (Anniv). The Mass for Mary Bergin (Anniv) will be said on Monday 13 April and the Mass for the Deceased members of the Moore Family will be said on Tuesday 14 April.

### 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 those suffering with the Coronavirus and for all the Sick: Bernadette Witchard, Mary Miskell, Nancy Falloon, Jeff Tan, Johnny Doran, Eileen Cleary, Mary Malloney, Richard Sumner, Sue Gavin, Jim Moss, Catherine Mannion and Ana Isabel Paz.

For those who have died recently: Philomena Lines, Anne Lynch, John Taylor, Peter Okoro, Lynn Lillywhite, Eileen Drurie, Mary Jozwiaka, William Mackie, Margaret Sweeney, Fr Bryan Jones and Canon Eddie Matthews.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Helena Cuneen, Richard Richardson, Angela Kent, Stan Phillips, Mary Bergin, Andrew Fernandez, Milly Yarwood, Elizabeth Eley and Patrick McCarthy.

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

### Offertory

Several people who usually contribute to the offertory either in cash or by using the offertory promise envelopes have contacted the presbytery asking how they might continue their weekly giving. We do not know how long the current situation will continue for and I am conscious that with the uncertainty the current situation creates, many will be concerned about their jobs and livelihoods. If you are able to – and I genuinely mean ‘if’ - and you wish to continue with your regular pattern of giving you may like to consider giving by standing order. This seems the most sensible way forward as it avoids the weekly handling of both envelopes and cash. If so, please email the parish office at stalkbans@rcdow.org.uk and ask for details of how you might give by standing order.
A Poster Initiative has been launched inviting Christians to put a poster in their windows as a sign of faith and trust in the Lord in these troubled times. It could well encourage those who are downhearted. It is attractive and obtainable at this link: www.cte.org.uk/prayersofhope

Love and Feed our Neighbour - Thanks very much for your magnificent response to the appeal for food and essentials to support the work of the Vineyard in St Albans. Over 100 items were donated ranging from baby food to washing detergent, these goods will greatly help the 80 individuals/families a week served by the Vineyard who depend on their foodbank to feed their families. As our church has now closed due to the government regulations, we are unable to collect goods at present. However, if you do manage to go shopping please consider donating whatever you can spare into the foodbanks available at many supermarkets - if every family could donate just one tin, it would make a huge difference. In the last Mass held at our Church, we heard how we should love our neighbour, keeping our distance being one way, another, of course, is through practical aid. Indeed, Fr Jules Chevalier, founder of the MSCs urged us all to be on earth the heart of God and stressed that our love of neighbour should be tender-hearted and compassionate.

Knit and Natter All knit and natter meetings are cancelled until further notice. Ladies do continue to knit at home - think what can be achieved in 12 weeks. Numerous blankets for the elderly, beanie hats for babies, twiddle muffs for those with dementia and wonderful stripy jumpers for the orphans in South Africa. If you need more wool contact Helen (07860 830340) and I can arrange for some to be delivered to you. Keep safe and well.

Please note that the Confirmation set for May 30th has been postponed.

The Marriage Preparation Course scheduled for April will almost certainly be cancelled. No new enquiries for Marriage preparation will be initiated for the time being. Fr Michael will be in contact with those who have already initiated a marriage enquiry.

Year of The Word: The session planned for 28th March is now cancelled. These remaining sessions reflecting on 'Matthew’s Gospel' are currently scheduled for 25th April, 9th May, 27th June, 18th July, 19th September and 17th October.

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. These meetings are currently suspended. 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.

The Passage is raising funds through the Big Give from 12 noon Tues 3rd December – 12 noon Tues 10th December to support its work Helping Homeless People this winter. Double your Donation, Double your impact. This is a matched giving scheme for online donations. If someone (can be company, individual or trust) gave £10 matched giving of £10 would bring the Gift up to £20 (and for individuals to £22.50 with Gift Aid with higher rate tax relief it may cost the donor less than £10). For more information, ring Andrew Hollingsworth 020 75921886 andrew.h@passage.org.uk.

A Prayer for Spiritual Communion

Dear Guardian Angel,
go for me to the church,there kneel down at Mass for me.
At the Offertory, take me to God,and offer Him my service:
What I am, what I have, offer as my gift.
At the Consecration, with your seraphic strength,adore my Saviour truly present,praying for those who have loved me,for those who have offended me,and for those now deceased,that the blood of Jesus may purify them all.
During Holy Communion,bring to me the Body and Blood of Jesusuniting Him with me in spirit,so that my heart may become His dwelling place.
Plead with Him,that through His sacrificeall people throughout the world may be saved.
When the Mass ends,bring home to me and to every home,the Lord’s blessing.
Amen.