

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

14 Beaconsfield Road, St Albans, AL1 3RB

Office Hours Monday-Friday 9am-1pm Tel: 01727 853 585

e-mail: stalbans@rcdow.org.uk Website: www.albanstephen.org

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

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – 24 May 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 / 07976 277059

We hear a lot of talk about the 'new normal' peddled by the pundits but I have to confess I don't know what such normality means. If, as I suspect, it is another effort at social engineering telling us how we should live our lives, then we have ceased to be human beings and are well on the road to becoming not the children of the free but the automatons that the prophets of doom have long predicted. Now please don't misinterpret what I am saying. It is part of our civic responsibility to abide by the sensible dictates of our governments whose primary concern (and God given responsibility) should be for the welfare of their citizens. It is also part parcel of our Christian love of our neighbour to take especial care that we do nothing which could hazard the health of others. We cannot disassociate heath from salvation. We see this in the very word 'sozo' which can be interchangeably translated as salvation or heath. It would be totally contradictory to our gospel principles and our love of the Lord if we said that the only important thing is to save the soul. To hell with the rest. That would be heresy as it would deny the importance which our faith attaches to the importance of the human body, such as the honour God bestows upon it through the Virgin Birth... or the truth of our future Resurrection (the raising not some of disembodied soul but a spiritualised body)...or the respect with which we treat the human body at and after death...or the compassion of our Lord to those who suffered during his earthly ministry and who suffer now...or the glorious history of the Church in alleviating suffering of various kinds through medical relief, welfare programmes and providing basic sustenance. 'Is it better to save life or to kill', Jesus sternly trounced on his critics who didn't like the fact that he healed on the Sabbath day. This is a divine principle non-negotiable, enshrined in the commandments and the foundations of all meaningful civilization. Infact the gospel has its premise in the fact that everything that God has made is good, and that includes our body of flesh and soul. Not only that ...God has so honoured it that He entered into this human flesh to become one of us, and transformed it into his likeness through so doing. 'O Lord we believe that the Saviour of the human race is with you in your glory'. As today's collect reminds us, because Jesus has ascended we can proclaim with joy that our humanity, wounds and all, has a place in heaven and through that we can know

God's power to make whole. For us Christians the new normal is, and always has been, the new creation. 'Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away: behold the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation'. In the different landscape after the gradual easing of restrictions I pray that our ministry of reconciliation will be even more normative than before. I hope that the more positive things that have occurred as a result of this pandemic crisis will continue. That we will take more time to listen, more time to reflect; that we will appreciate more what makes life sustainable; that we will treasure family and neighbourly life more; that we will be more compassionate as a society and speak up more and act more lovingly for those who habitually live with insecurity and fear; that we would intervene more to safeguard vulnerable jobs; that we would be more internationally aware; that we would appreciate the nobility of human work more, and that we would understand more what serving and worship means in its most grounded, divine sense. Liturgy after all means the work of the people of God ('leiturgia') and our liturgical windows need a spring clean for liturgy has never been that which takes place only within our homes or sacred spaces. As St Josemaria Escriva the founder of Opus Dei ('Work of God') reminds us, 'there is something holy, something hidden hidden in the most ordinary situation, and it is for each one of (us) to discover it'. Let us pray for the Holy Spirit to do just that, to enable us to manifest the glory of our Ascended Lord in the time left to us on earth, faithfully witnessing to his redeeming love in whatever situations we are graced to find ourselves. This is our ever new normal and be prepared, it may involve touching the untouchables. The first Christians might understand if you didn't share the kiss of peace....or may be not!

Fr Julian

Our 10.00 am daily masses are being live streamed. For information about this please see back of this leaflet

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Sunday 24 May - SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY

Masses will be offered for Sajish Kandaramath (Anniv) and the People of the Parish
Reading 1, Acts 1:12-14
Responsorial Psalm, 26
Reading 2, First Peter 4: 13-16
Gospel, John 17: 1-11

Monday 25 May - St Bede the Venerable

Masses will be offered for Michael Rochford & Timmy O'Sullivan (Anniv) and Elizabeth O'Leary (Anniv)
Reading 1, Acts 19: 1-8
Responsorial Psalm, 67
Gospel, John 16: 29-33

Tuesday 26 May - St Philip Neri

Masses will be offered for the Larmer family's Intentions and John Yuill (RIP)
Reading 1, Acts 20: 17-27
Responsorial Psalm, 67
Gospel, John 17: 1-11

Wed 27 May - ST AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY

Masses will be offered for Celia Dunne (RIP) and the deceased members of the Gray family
Reading 1, Thessalonians 2:2-8
Responsorial Psalm, 116
Gospel, Luke 10: 1-9

Thursday 28 May - Easter feria

Masses will be offered for Catherine Mannion (RIP) and Anne Moor-Lawor (RIP)
Reading 1, Acts 22: 30;23:6-11
Responsorial Psalm, 15
Gospel, John 17:20-26

Friday 29 May - Pope St Paul VI

Masses will be offered for Philomena Lines (RIP) and Sr Frances (Anniv)
Reading 1, Acts 25: 13-21
Responsorial Psalm, 102
Gospel, John 21: 15-19

Saturday 30 May - Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

Masses will be offered for Gerald Kennedy (RIP) and the Holy Souls
Reading 1, Acts 28: 16-20, 30-31
Responsorial Psalm, 10
Gospel, John 21: 20-25

Sunday 31 May- **PENTECOST** - Masses will be offered for the People of the Parish and the intentions of Rita Capparelli and family. The Masses for the deceased members of the Bergin & Cawley families will be said on Tuesday 2 June, for Tom and Nellie Lawless (Anniv) on Thursday 4 June and Terry Mahabir (Anniv) on Friday 5 June.

PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches together in St Albans, during Christian Aid Week, we pray for and with communities across the world who are most vulnerable to coronavirus.

For the Sick in our Parish and all those suffering from
Coronavirus

For those who have died recently: Karen Brennan, Michael Castiello, Ana Isabel Paz, Anne Coakley, Claudio Frascchetti, Annie Coakley and Brian Albert Moore

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Sajish Kandaramath, Michael Rochford, Timmy O' Sullivan, Elizabeth O'Leary, Tom and Nellie Lawless, Terry Mahabir, Dorothy Salisbury and Sr Frances.

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 stalbens@rcdow.org.uk and ask for details of how you might give by standing order.

Virtual Prayer Group A virtual prayer group which met each evening in Holy Week at 7.30 pm continues to meet on Sunday and Wednesday evenings, also at 7.30 pm. If you would like to take part, please contact Brendan Roche at bkroche@me.com

Parish Update 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 stalbins@rcdow.org.uk requesting the Parish Update. Also, please visit the Parish Website 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.

Delivery of paper bulletin: If you know anyone who does not have access to the internet but would like a paper copy of the Bulletin and Gospel reflection, please provide their details to 853585 or stalbins@rcdow.org.uk

Safeguarding & DBS Checks Although many aspects of parish life have had to be put on hold there are still things we can be doing to prepare for when things are up and running again. If you are a volunteer and work with children or vulnerable adults, you need to have an up to date DBS in place. If you do not have a DBS or do not have an up to date one, issued within the last 3 years, why not use this period to complete the necessary paperwork. Much can be done on-line. Please contact Mary Harber at stalbinsg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk / 07976 277059

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

Rosary Fr Julian writes: I am wondering whether you would consider joining me each day in saying the Rosary intentionally. We could establish a powerful prayer chain connecting each of our households. We will be reinforcing our community together, praying into the issues which face us and interceding on behalf of those who are most vulnerable at this time. How you pray the chaplet is up to you. The important thing though is that we pray intentionally and meditatively
SUNDAY: For all suffering from the virus. For those who have died and those mourning them
MONDAY: For all doctors, nurses and other health professionals working in hospitals
TUESDAY: For all working in hospices, care and nursing homes, social and domestic carers
WEDNESDAY: For all ambulance crews, paramedics, emergency services and those keeping routine postal, transport and civic services functioning
THURSDAY: For those facing domestic abuse or violence, lack of shelter or food, or loss of livelihood.
FRIDAY: For those keeping schools and shops open, and producing and delivering vital supplies
SATURDAY: For wisdom for scientists in seeking solutions and the government in their response

Walsingham on-line Retreat An online retreat given by Mgr John Armitage is available on the walsingham.org.uk website.

Thy Kingdom Come Each year, across the world there is an ecumenical wave of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost. Our Bishop Paul McAleen has penned this prayer for Thy Kingdom Come: "Lord Jesus Christ, nothing can limit

you. The doors were closed yet you came to your disciples clothed in risen glory. Wherever we are this Pentecost, even still behind closed doors, we pray with heartfelt faith 'pour out your Holy Spirit upon us'. And may your Spirit come and find a welcome in our open hearts that we may give you glory." As part of Thy Kingdom Come, Churches Together in St Albans are again co-ordinating a 24-hour prayer marathon. This will start with a zoom prayer meeting at 8pm on Friday May 29th and finish with a prayer meeting from 7pm to 8pm on Saturday May 30th. There will be other Zoom meetings that people can join. For most of the 24 hours people can sign up a 30 min slot for their own private prayer, using our *online form* where you can find further details and links for all online meetings.

CaFE Café are making the following online courses freely available for parishioners' personal use: 'The Joy of Hope', 'Let It Be' and 'The Saints'. If you would like to access one of these courses please contact the parish office via email stalbins@rcdow.org.uk saying which course you would like to follow and requesting the relevant password. If you would like to know more about CaFE why not visit their *website*

Love and FEED our Neighbour The Vineyard in St Albans are in desperate need of essential items of food to help more than 80 individuals/families a week who depend on their foodbank. Their FEED project needs your support more than ever in these difficult times, particularly as many vulnerable children will not have access to free school meals at present. Please consider making a money donation to FEED through www.bankuet.co.uk/feedstalbins or food donations can dropped off at The Vineyard Church St Albans, 7 Brick Knoll Park, St Albans, AL1 5UG: Monday -Friday 10am - 4pm. You can also drop off food at their donation points at the St Albans Sainsbury, Morrisons and Waitrose stores.

Compassionate Community Connector Programme: Help during Coronavirus Crisis 020 8207 5115 email: help@communities1st.org.uk or go to their **website** This charity will provide help with Shopping and Telephone Tech Support. If you are feeling lonely or isolated at this difficult time, they will arrange for someone to give you a call. Need to go into hospital? Need someone to look after your pet? They'll try to help.

The Living Room is delivering daily group therapy sessions to clients using Zoom just get in touch via their contact form: www.livingroomherts.org/contact They are still taking calls. If it's an urgent query - from 9am to 12.30pm you can call the Stevenage team (07383 393 459), St Albans (07990 112 033) and (01923 590 159). Check the Living Room website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for more updates and messages.

Mind in Mid Herts are keen to support people to manage stress during this current coronavirus pandemic and prevent the possibility of people developing mental health problems. They have developed new digital wellbeing courses. All on-line giving all the benefits of face-to-face support but in peoples own home. Open to all: www.mindinmidherts.org.uk/support-for-you/digital-courses/ Contact support: 01727 865070; online on www.mindinmidherts.org.uk click on self-referral or email admin@mindinmidherts.org.uk

Support for the Homeless in St Albans Since the introduction of the need to practise social distancing to reduce transmission of Covid-19, support services in St Albans for the homeless have had to change. The Open Door Night Shelter remains open but those living there now have to spend most of their time in their rooms and their afternoon drop-in sessions have had to close. Centre 33 also had to close its premises in Spicer Street. Immediately after lockdown, Centre 33, the Open Door Charity and others put a lot of effort into ensuring that meals were still available for those sleeping rough. At the same time, the Council and others worked hard to find accommodation for rough sleepers. By late March, accommodation had been offered to all those who needed it. Only a few people turned it down. Cooking at Open Door had to stop because the kitchen could not support social distancing. To supplement donations of meals from some local pubs on some evenings, volunteers from the Open Door Charity, the Winter Beds Project and Centre 33 now prepare meals at St Saviour's Church Hall sufficient for all those living at the Night Shelter and the few who are still rough sleeping and who call at Open Door to pick up their meal as a take away.

Friends of the Holy Land Pentecost Appeal The Friends of the Holy Land (FHL) Charity cannot hold many of its usual fundraising events due to the current Coronavirus crisis. Meanwhile, the impact of the virus on Christians in the Holy Land is devastating as so many local people rely on the income from pilgrimages and tourists. The Charity has launched the FHL Pentecost Challenge to raise funds before Pentecost on 31 May. Three long standing supporters have pledged to match fund the first £100,000, so every £1 you donate will have the impact of £2. Please consider making a donation at www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk/pentecost-challenge

Memory: Pope's message for World Communications Day 24 May "So that you can tell your son and grandson" (Exodus 10:2). Life creates history. This theme is chosen by Pope Francis for the 54th World Day of Social Communications celebrated on the Sunday before Pentecost Sunday. He underlines how precious the role of memory is in communication. He stresses that memory is not a "static body", but more like a "dynamic reality". It is through memory that the stories, hopes, dreams and experiences of one generation are passed on to another. At the centre of his message, is the person and their relationships and innate ability to communicate. The Pope asks everyone to make this talent bear fruit: to make communications an instrument to build bridges, to unite and to share the beauty of being brothers and sisters in a moment of history marked by fear, discord and division.

Cardinal's Pentecost's Address

The Cardinal has posted an Address to the Diocese for Pentecost. This is available online at <https://vimeo.com/421046273> and on the diocesan website

Prayers for Christian Denominations Between the Ascension and Pentecost we shall be praying daily at mass for the Christian denominations in our area. 21st: Coptic Orthodox; 22nd: Salvation Army; 23rd: Anglican St Albans Diocese; 24th: URC; 25th: Anglican St Albans Diocese; 26th: Methodist; 27th:

RC Westminster Diocese; 28th: Chs Together Herts; 29th: Baptist; 30th: RC Northampton Diocese; 31st: Anglican St Albans Diocese

Livestream of Mass. Every day at 10 am there is mass being streamed live at the Parish YouTube Channel: **Ss Alban and Stephen RC Church**. Or visit the home page on the **parish website** and click on the link provided. If you have access to a Smart TV you should be able to connect to You Tube from there: search for "Ss Alban and Stephen Catholic Church". If you join the daily streamed Mass, please consider clicking the 'subscribe' box on the parish YouTube channel. Once there are over 100 subscribers, it can be given a user-friendly URL so that it is easy to find the parish channel on YouTube. It will also be possible for reminders of live events streamed from the parish to be sent to you by clicking the notification bell.

Stay Cybersafe in your Zoom Meetings Many parishioners are using technology to hold virtual prayer groups and other online meetings to see and talk to other people during the current lockdown situation. 'Zoom' meetings, in particular, have been a popular mechanism to stay in contact. We are reminded to ensure our meetings are safe by adopting the recommended security guidelines on the Zoom.us website where information is clearly and briefly set out. If you are using a different online service, please check their security advice. Such advice is periodically updated so please check from time to time. There are instances of hackers disrupting meetings which we obviously wish to avoid.

Parish Novena to the Holy Spirit From the Ascension to Pentecost we will be making a nine day Novena to the Holy Spirit using the prayer below. The full novena can be found [here](#)

Lord Jesus, before ascending to your Father you promised to send the Holy Spirit to your disciples.

We ask you now to send your Holy Spirit upon our Parish and give us:

*The Spirit of Wisdom that we may discern the way forward
The Spirit of Piety that we may love you with true devotion
The Spirit of Courage that we may witness to you come what may
The Spirit of Knowledge that we may know you in friendship and love*

The Spirit of Understanding that our minds will be enlightened by truth

The Spirit of Counsel that we may choose the right path to follow

The Spirit of Awe and Wonder that we may be filled with loving reverence for you

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.**