



Church Website

## 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

YouTube: youtube.com/c/SsAlbanandStephenCatholicChurch

**TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - 27<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020**



VirginMoney Giving

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

Rev. Steve Pickard (Deacon) Mrs Angela Gray (Parish Administrator)

Safeguarding Lead: Mary Harber / stalbanssg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk / 07976 277059

*We are a Fairtrade parish*

### Lockdown Survey - Parish Feedback (Part Two)

In this second feedback on the parish lockdown survey, we consider resources, parish activities and finances. Thank you for your responses, the results of which are summarised below, and also for the very helpful suggestions that have been incorporated in the action points.

#### Resources

*Question: Which resources have you used to pray at home?*

Unsurprisingly 85% used some combination of missal, prayer book, bible, or rosary to assist with daily prayer accessed online or through hard copy. It was mentioned that parishioners were thankful that the daily mass readings were included in the bulletin; the most commonly used other aids were Bible Alive, Universalis, Sacred Space, and Magnificat. Others found You Tube helpful - Fr Wang's being the most popular. 30% engaged in more meditation and reflection through different types of prayer, spiritual books and online sites.

#### Action

- Whilst the links for online Masses in the bulletin and on the website were well received, having another list of resources to support individual faith practice (TV, online, paper) would be welcome should restrictions remain in place.

#### Parish Activities during Lockdown

*Question: Please state any parish activity you have taken part in during lockdown?*

It is great to note that 40% of respondents had supported other parishioners through phone calls, delivery of bulletin, helping with shopping, etc. It was evident that impromptu actions supplemented anything organised by the parish. 35% donated to foodbanks and/or helped the homeless projects Open Door / Centre 33. It was more sobering to note that 40% either didn't reply or stated none, suggesting that they hadn't taken part in any parish activity.

*Question: Please mention any ideas about other activities that the parish could have organised.*

Around 30% had suggestions, mostly centred around support and networking, mainly through greater use of technology.

#### Actions

- Links to services and talks on the Diocese of Westminster website have been posted in the bulletin, perhaps these and similar could have a greater profile
- Fr Michael & Fr Julian are planning a programme of four live streamed Advent Talks that may lead to similar broadcasts in the future
- Support is always available through contact with the presbytery, but perhaps this needs to be stated more explicitly in these circumstances.
- Please also refer to ideas on upgrading communication as mentioned in last week's feedback.

#### Finances

Sadly, as everyone knows, the implications of the pandemic and lockdown are far reaching and parish finances are not immune to this. Final analysis of the responses shows that over 60% thought that the message of the impact on finances had not been stated strongly enough or had failed to be recognised - with only 2% thinking it had been overstated. As well as sharing more about current 'maintenance' costs, e.g. Bell Tower guttering and sacristy roofs, we have already begun to register more about the impact which COVID has had on parish finances in the newsletter. Alongside the fall in income, which has been partially augmented by the furloughing of staff, COVID has necessitated an increase in expenditure on cleaning materials and PPE for stewards. It has also seen a significant outlay of just over £8,000 on a new camera/streaming system.

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## Actions

- The parish continues to be very grateful to those who have been able to contribute so far whilst recognising the financial strain which the pandemic has placed on many households.
- Encourage those who are able to set up a monthly standing order. A letter was sent out to all those who have traditionally used offertory promise envelopes to consider giving via standing order.
- Promote on-line donations using Virgin Money Giving. A link is available on the parish website.
- Promote Contactless giving using the new contactless payment point in the porch.
- Facilitate cash donations using the black metal box at the exit.

**World Day of Migrants & Refugees – 27<sup>th</sup> September** - Pope Francis has chosen 'Forced like Jesus Christ to flee' as the title for this year's message which focuses on the pastoral care of internally displaced people. Currently some 41 million worldwide. The message originates in the experience of the young Jesus and his family as displaced persons and refugees. Over the coming months, the theme will be developed in six sub-themes: to know in order to understand; to draw near so as to serve; to listen in order to reconcile; to share and thus to grow; to involve in order to promote; and finally, to collaborate and therefore to build. Each month, information, reflections, and multimedia aids will be offered as means of exploring and expressing the theme chosen this year by the Holy Father: 'Forced like Jesus Christ to flee'. Visit [www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/world-day-of-migrants-refugees-2020/](http://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/world-day-of-migrants-refugees-2020/)

## Report from the PPC meetings on 12<sup>th</sup> August and 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020

The PPC has continued to meet monthly during the lockdown using Zoom technology.

**Opening of church for private prayer and celebration of public Mass:** An additional Sunday Mass has been introduced. Sunday Mass times are now 6pm Saturday, 9.30 am, 11.30 am & 7pm Sundays. Stewards will be asked to remind people that it is essential to comply fully with the Covid-19 safety rules. The priests and PPC are very grateful to the stewards who were thanked for their work to keep our church safe. Additional stewards are needed.

**Funerals and Weddings:** A maximum of 30 'invited guests' are allowed at funeral and wedding services.

**Sacraments:** First Holy Communion, RCIA, Baptisms, Weddings and Funeral liturgies have been celebrated. Confirmation has been scheduled for 4 dates in November and December. Sacrament of Reconciliation is available on request at the presbytery.

**Live Streaming of Mass going forward:** Installation of the new cameras is complete and streaming of 10am Mass using the new technology will begin on 10 September. Technology is now in place to broadcast services to overspill areas in the Parish Centre.

**Christmas:** Christmas Masses and other services will be streamed. The possibility of involving parishioners in the liturgies will be explored.

**Advent talks:** Fr Michael and Fr Julian have been asked by the Mission team to give the Advent talks this year. The talks will probably be given to a small socially distanced audience and streamed to the wider parish in their homes.

**Parish Assembly:** Options to hold a virtual parish assembly, early in 2021 will be explored. Technology enables talks, break out discussions, group feedback, and Q&A sessions. A series of shorter sessions - say for 1-2 hours- on particular topics, could be held over several weeks.

**Survey of parishioners on support during the lockdown:** Between 10-13% of our parish (of 1200 Mass attendees) responded to the survey, although it is estimated that it may have reached around 500 people on the parish email distribution list and 50 others who received a paper copy. It was noted that only a small proportion of feedback (25 people) came from people under 50. Feedback has been positive: generally, people who needed support felt that they have received it. More feedback on the survey feedback will be presented in the bulletin.

**Church Property Management:** The need for further work on the Bell Tower has been identified so scaffolding will remain for some weeks. There is also the need for essential maintenance work in the presbytery.

**Parish Administrator:** We are delighted to welcome Mrs Angela Gray who will start work on 7<sup>th</sup> September.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 7.45pm

## PARISH LIFE

**Baptisms** It is a joy that public baptisms have resumed in recent weeks. Congratulations to the following children who were baptised recently: George, Reggie, Jonah and Orla. If you are interested in baptism for your child please drop an email to Fr Julian [juliandavies@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:juliandavies@rcdow.org.uk) or contact the parish office.

**First Holy Communion** We recently celebrated just over fifty First Holy Communion. Some families have been in touch to ask whether it would be possible to hold any additional First Communion Masses and these have been arranged for Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> October. If any families would like their child to celebrate First Holy Communion as part of a group on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup> October please email [stalbans@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:stalbans@rcdow.org.uk)

**Confirmation** There will be eight masses for this year's confirmation rather than one. The times are 11.30 and 2.30 on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and December 5<sup>th</sup>. An email has been sent out asking parents to choose their first three preferences. It is possible if you haven't received it that the email went into spam. Please email Fr Julian ([juliandavies@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:juliandavies@rcdow.org.uk) with the dates)

We would like to thank those candidates who have sent in the requested letter to Fr Michael. If you have not done so it would be appreciated if you could do so within the next few weeks. Details of the letter can be found on the church website, searching sacraments, then confirmation, then 'write a letter' among the assignments which candidates were asked to embrace during the lockdown.

**Sunday & Weekday Masses** Please remember there are a limited number of spaces in church so it is necessary to pre-book a seat. Please contact the parish office by email at [stalbans@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:stalbans@rcdow.org.uk) or by phoning 01727 853585 during office hours (9am-1pm weekdays) to reserve a place.

**Retiring Collection** This weekend, there will be a retiring collection for the Holy Places of Palestine. This collection is requested by the Holy Father and is to support the Christian Community in the Holy Land.

**Cafod Family Fast day - Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October.** We are being invited to participate in this year's Harvest fast day by doing without our usual lunch and enjoying a simple meal instead. This allows us to share in the daily experience of so many people around the world in an act of solidarity. We are also invited to donate any money we might save to Cafod; this year the money raised will go towards the coronavirus appeal 'survive, rebuild, heal'. There will be a collection at Masses over the weekend of 11/12<sup>th</sup> October. Envelopes allowing you to *Gift aid* your donation will be available on 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> October. You can also donate to Cafod via [cafod.org.uk/give](http://cafod.org.uk/give) or by

texting CAFOD to 70085 to donate £10. More details from Stan on 01727 765549.

**Virgin Money Giving** If you would like to donate to the parish using Virgin Money Giving please visit [the website](#) or use the QR code at the top of the newsletter.

**Contactless Giving Point** A new contactless giving point is located in the church porch. For now, the contactless giving point is dedicated to the weekly offertory. If you want to make your weekly offering using contactless giving all you need to do is select the amount you wish to donate and tap across the top of the machine with your mobile phone or contactless card.

**Secondary School Transfer** For those parents & guardians who need to obtain a Certificate of Catholic Practice to accompany their child's Secondary School application Fr Michael will be available between 4 pm and 6 pm on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October and again at the same time on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October. Please call at the Presbytery (Priests' House) beside the Church.

**Loreto College Secondary Transfer 2021** (Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 3RQ) This year it is not possible to hold our usual Open Evening. However, from Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September the school website will showcase a variety of materials, including our 'Open Day Film', to help families learn more about us. Please visit our website at [www.loreto.herts.sch.uk](http://www.loreto.herts.sch.uk) to access this information.

**Good Counsel Network** On Monday 28 September, please pray and fast for the end of abortion and euthanasia in this Country. For details of our live saving work see [www.GoodCounselNetwork.com](http://www.GoodCounselNetwork.com).

**You Can Be Santa 'voucher scheme'** This year 'You Can Be Santa' will run as a voucher scheme. As always the aim of YCBS is to help children/families who may not otherwise enjoy the full spirit of Christmas. The feedback from families who took part last year was very positive. They were very thankful for the generosity of the Parish. So, with the current pandemic in mind we will be asking for donations of gift vouchers only. Sadly, there will be no 'Santa' letters or wrapped presents this year.

**Identifying families of children that might benefit from the scheme** If you are aware of families within the Parish who may appreciate being a part of the scheme please mention it to them. Encourage them to contact YCBS by emailing [stalbansycbs@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:stalbansycbs@rcdow.org.uk) with their full contact details. Assure them that all contact details will be kept in confidence and in accordance with data protection requirements. We will be appealing for voucher donations in October and will be asking for vouchers (in £10 denominations) from the following outlets: Sainsbury's, Argos, Amazon & One4All. For more information please email [stalbansycbs@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:stalbansycbs@rcdow.org.uk)

## MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

### Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September - 26<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY IN ORD TIME World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2020

6pm Vigil Mass - Peters family (Ints)  
9.30am Mass - Brian Huckle (Ann)  
11.30am Mass - Finian Gavin (Ann)  
7pm Mass - Brendan Kearns (Ann)  
Reading 1, Ezekiel 18:25-28; Psalm, 24  
Reading 2, Philipians 2:1-11; Gospel, Matthew 21:28-32

### Monday 28<sup>th</sup> Sept - feria

10am Mass - Pat and Anthony O'Shea (RIP)  
7pm Mass - Edmond 'Eddie' Mansfield (RIP)  
Reading, Job 1:6-22; Psalm, 16; Gospel, Luke 9:46-50

### Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> Sept - Ss MICHAEL, GABRIEL and RAPHAEL, Archangels

10am Mass - Beryl and Michael Dooley (RIP)  
Reading, Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14; Psalm, 137; Gospel, John 1:47-51

### Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> Sept - St Jerome

10am Mass - Margery Davies (Ints)  
7pm Mass - Mary Kiely (RIP)  
Reading, Job 9:1-16; Psalm, 87; Gospel, Luke 9:57-62

### Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> Oct - St Thérèse of Lisieux

10am Mass - Win and Alvin Hare (RIP)  
Reading, Job 19: 21-27; Psalm, 26; Gospel, Luke 10:1-12

### Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct - The Holy Guardian Angels

10am Mass - Liversidge family (Ints)  
7pm Mass - Margaret Forman (RIP)  
Reading, Job 38:1, 12-21, 40:3-5; Psalm, 138; Gospel, Matthew 18:1-5,10

### Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct - Memoria of BVM

10am Exposition - Priest available for Confessions  
Reading, Job 42:1-6, 12-17; Psalm, 118; Gospel, Luke 10:17-24  
6pm Vigil Mass will be offered for Alec Anderson

### Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> Oct - 27<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY IN ORD TIME

9.30am Mass - Michael Gilbert (RIP)  
11.30am Mass - Quigley family (Ints)  
7pm Mass - Patrick William Curran (Ann) & Mary Curran (RIP)

*For confession please call at the Presbytery*

## PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches together in St Albans, this week we pray for the pastor and members of the New Testament Church of God

For those suffering with the Coronavirus and for all the Sick:

For those who have died recently: Christina Conefrey, Andrew McIntosh, Kenneth Green, Edward Caldeira, Jane Grandesso & Dave Keiley (Chair of Governors at Loreto College.)

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Brian Huckle, Finian Gavin, Brendan Kearns, Patrick William Curran, Hannah Moores, Michael Hughes.

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

**Steward Appeal. The opening of the church for masses requires stewarding. If you are under 70, please consider giving up an hour a week to volunteer. Contact Melanie O'Neill at [mioneill5@btinternet.com](mailto:mioneill5@btinternet.com).**

St Jerome (340 - 420) St Jerome came from Stridon, in modern day Croatia or Slovenia. Attracted by the ascetic life he travelled to the East where he was (unwillingly) ordained a priest. Recalled to Rome to act as secretary to Pope Damasus he later returned to Bethlehem where, with the aid of St Paula and others, he founded a monastery, a hospice, and a school, and settled down to the most important work of his life, the translation of the Bible into Latin. With some revisions his translation is still used today. He wrote many works of his own, including letters and commentaries on Holy Scripture, and was involved in many controversies of the day. When a time of troubles came upon the world, through barbarian invasions, and to the Church, through internal dissension, he helped the refugees and those in need. He died in Bethlehem around 420AD. St Jerome is the patron saint of archaeologists, Biblical scholars, librarians, students and translators.

St Thérèse of Lisieux (1873-1897) Born in Alençon, France 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1873, Marie Francois Thérèse Martin was the youngest of 9 children. Soon after her sister Pauline entered Carmel, Thérèse became seriously ill. Cured, she resolved to enter Carmel and did so with papal permission in 1887 at the age of 15. Little acts of charity and sacrifices led her to a deeper understanding of her vocation. Before her death aged 24 on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1897 she wrote her personal story. This 'Story of a Soul' quickly achieved worldwide circulation. St Thérèse wrote, 'You know well enough that Our Lord does not look so much at the greatness of our actions, nor even at their difficulty, but at the love with which we do them.' Millions have been inspired by her 'little way' of loving God and neighbour. Canonised in 1925 and proclaimed a Doctor of the Church in 1997, she is the patron saint of missionaries. Her parents, Louis & Zélie Martin, were canonised in 2015.