



Church Website

## NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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**CHRIST THE KING - 22 NOVEMBER 2020**



VirginMoneyGiving

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*

**Parish Council Meeting 11 November 2020** The PPC has continued to meet monthly during the lockdown using Zoom. For a summary of its November meeting please [click here](#). In particular, please note that discussion on preparing a **virtual liturgy for children** is ongoing and that plans are underway to offer a **takeaway Christmas Day lunch** to those who would usually have attended the Christmas Day lunch in the Parish Centre. There will be a **Penitential Service** on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December involving a liturgy of the Word, Homily and Examination of Conscience. This will be followed by a time of Adoration. The Sacrament of Reconciliation itself will be offered by appointment. There is a desire to form a communications group to work with Fr Michael to develop a **communications strategy**. An appeal will be made for interested parties. The **next PPC meeting** will be held on Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> December at 5pm.

### Advent Talks: Towards Christmas and Beyond

This year's Advent talks will be given by Fr Michael and Fr Julian. The immediate aim of the series is to reflect on our current situation, through the lens of the Christmas story, but it is also hoped that they will stimulate our preparation for next year's Parish Assembly and the formation of our pastoral priorities. They will be streamed at 8pm as follows:

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November - Witness by Faith

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December - Walking in Hope

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December - Worship and Charity

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December - Windows: Within and Without

Please [click here](#) for a link to the livestream page which you can also access via the website homepage.

Following each talk there will be an opportunity for questions, but in addition, after the first three talks, there will be a series of Zoom discussion groups on the following Friday afternoon at 1pm, Friday evening at 8pm, and Sunday afternoon at 12.30pm. To join the discussion group meetings on Zoom, please click on the following link, using meeting ID: 963 0384 6300 and passcode: 210940:

<https://zoom.us/j/96303846300?pwd=TmNIWUQ5YzNPMXByTktVTnNMY2tDUT09>

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The church is open for **Private Prayer**, during which the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed, as follows:

**Mornings** Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday 11 am - 12 Noon

**Evening** Thursday 7 - 8 pm

In his recent letter to all parishes Cardinal Vincent Nichols said, "At this difficult moment, we ask that, as a Catholic community, we make full use of our churches as places of individual prayer and sources of solace and help." The Cardinal also ask that we, "...sustain each other in our patterns of prayer, joining a national shared moment of prayer each day at 6pm, and observing the Vigil of Christ the King as a day of prayer for the ending of this pandemic. "

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#### Please Note:

- All our Masses and the times of Private Prayer are streamed. Please see the parish website or [click here](#) for a link.
- If you or anyone you know might appreciate a call or conversation, please contact the Parish Office by phone or by email and let us know.
- Make a determined effort to visit the parish website - where we have published a list of useful resources and where you will find the latest bulletin to read. If you would like to be added to the newsletter distribution list please contact the Parish Office with your email details. If you do not have access to the website or email it may well be possible to deliver a paper copy. Again, please contact the Parish Office.

## SACRAMENTS AND LITURGY

**Baptisms** Please contact Fr Julian for baptism enquiries at [juliandavies@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:juliandavies@rcdow.org.uk).

**First Holy Communion & Confirmation 2021** Parents and guardians for those due to celebrate their First Holy Communion (Year 3 and above) and Confirmation (Year 10 and above) next year are invited to register. This year we are asking people to register online. Please go to the 'Sacraments' tab of the parish [website](#) and click on either 'First Communion' or 'Confirmation' where you will find the relevant registration point. *Please note that if your son or daughter was a part of last year's programme but has yet to receive Holy Communion or be Confirmed, there is no need to register again.*

**Sacrament of Reconciliation** If you are in need of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, please contact the Presbytery. Confessions will be held in the open air and will observe social distancing.

**Anointing of the Sick** The current restrictions allow for end of life care, so it is possible for those who are dangerously ill to be anointed at home or while in residential care (should the care or nursing home permit this). Currently we are not allowed into Watford General Hospital. If somebody is admitted into Watford General, or any hospital, and they wish to be visited or anointed please contact the hospital chaplaincy. Where the person is incapacitated, the request will need to come from their next of kin. The hospital number for Watford General is 01923 244 366.

### November Masses for the Holy Souls

**Thursday 26 November 10.00 am**

Deceased Victims of Violence

**Sunday 29 November 11.30 am**

Deceased Spouses

**Monday 30 November 10.00 am**

Deceased Brothers and Sisters

**Children's Liturgy online** There are lots of resources that offer our children the opportunity to listen and respond to the Sunday Gospel. Please see, for example, the Diocese of Westminster [website](#) or visit the CAFOD [website](#) which provides a virtual Children's Liturgy, a children's liturgy resource and an accompanying illustration to colour. You can also download this week's 'Liturgy of the Word with Children' from the Diocese of Westminster [here](#) or from our website, under [Groups - Liturgy](#).

**The Mark 10 Mission** is a brand-new project created by a team of young lay people to share the Gospel with children. The episodes are completely free and have been used in many primary schools across the country each week since September. Please click on [this link](#) to see those episodes available. A new episode is added each Friday.

## PARISH LIFE

**Christmas day takeaway lunch invitation** If you, or someone you know, wishes to receive a Christmas day lunch delivered to your home, please contact David on 07543 400650 or email [dave\\_markham@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dave_markham@yahoo.co.uk) by 7th December.

**Christmas day lunch - call for help!** We have a cook, but help would be appreciated to plate up food, to wash up afterwards and for drivers to deliver the meals please. Drivers must be DBS checked. If you would like to help, or offer lifts, please contact David on 07543 400650 or email [dave\\_markham@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dave_markham@yahoo.co.uk).

**Communications** Do you have an interest in how we as a parish community communicate, not only among ourselves, but with the world at large? Do you have skills and experience that may help? Would you like to be part of a Parish Communications Group? Would you be willing to join a communication strategy group? If so, please email Fr Michael at [michaeloboy@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:michaeloboy@rcdow.org.uk)

**Parish Men's Group, meeting up in November** The challenges of COVID-19 mean that the parish men's group is now online. Physically meeting is not practical, so we are going to be holding calls over Zoom. Our next call will be on Saturday 28 November at 9am when we will discuss St Ignatius, founder of the Jesuits, and his teachings. If you would like to join us or just find out more about the group then please contact Richard on 07976 252309 or [D4dstalbans@gmail.com](mailto:D4dstalbans@gmail.com) for more details.

**Join a virtual on-line prayer group** Several parish groups have continued to meet on-line using Zoom, since the start of the pandemic. All would welcome new members. These include several of the 'Small Groups' which are currently following the six weekly sessions of the 'According to Thy word' booklet, but afterwards will resume sharing on scripture/other faith topics, typically every two weeks.

Details of those groups currently meeting are as follows:

- Mondays 8pm (two per month) Richard Exact on 07976 252309
- Tuesdays 2-3.30pm Mike and Sylvia White on 01727 854596 and [whitemw@talktalk.net](mailto:whitemw@talktalk.net)
- Alternate Tuesdays 7.30pm Stan Grabecki on 765549 and [grabecki@hotmail.com](mailto:grabecki@hotmail.com)
- Wednesdays 7.30pm Brendan Roche - A new group set up at the start of the pandemic (contact the parish office on [stalbans@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:stalbans@rcdow.org.uk)).
- Saturday 9am Parish Men's Group currently sharing on the lives of the Saints. Richard Exact on 07976 252309 and at [D4dstalbans@gmail.com](mailto:D4dstalbans@gmail.com)

**THE GOD WHO SPEAKS Campaign** - The Bishops' Conference have decided to extend *THE GOD WHO SPEAKS* campaign through to January 2022! The campaign seeks to celebrate, share and live out our faith through deeper engagement with the Scriptures. CaFE's *BIG PICTURE* Bible course is a recommended resource for the campaign and over 60 people in our parish completed the course, recording prayers, revelations and notes inside their journals.

Lots will have studied those writings and discovered a message unique to themselves, perhaps a sense of purpose or calling, or an answer to prayer.

For anyone wishing to unpick the golden thread in those journals Fr Michael & Fr Julian are very willing to talk about this. Simply book an appointment at the parish office on 01727 853585 and we will see where it leads, don't forget to bring your *BIG PICTURE* journal.

If you would like to attend a THE BIG PICTURE course via Zoom in the New Year please register your interest with our parishioner, Tim Stevens, by emailing [tim@faithcafe.org](mailto:tim@faithcafe.org). It is okay to attend the course for a second time, everyone is welcome. Let us see what more God has to say to you.

**Fr Alan Neville MSC - new mission** Fr Alan's vocation as a Missionary of the Sacred Heart has changed direction, literally. He has stepped down from his work as Vocations Director of the MSCs and is moving to South Sudan to be a teacher/chaplain/development worker in a Loreto girls' school in Rumbek, South Sudan. The journey itself will take four days and Fr Alan has asked for our prayers for his new challenge and the people he will meet. The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart have long supported the work done by the Loreto sisters in their school which is just starting to welcome back the students and the teachers, after six months' absence, from their different places of quarantine.

**National Youth Sunday** This Sunday, the Feast of Christ the King, the Church in England and Wales celebrates National Youth Sunday. On this day, we celebrate the young people in our parish and community and all the gifts and talents they share with us. The theme for this year's NYS is 'Together'. This weekend especially, we pray for the young people of our Parish. For more information, please go to [www.nationalyouthsunday.com](http://www.nationalyouthsunday.com).

**Job Opportunities at SPEC Retreat Centre** We are currently recruiting a Programmes Senior Retreat Leader. This is live-out job role which will be crucial to restarting our retreat programmes once we start emerging from the restrictions imposed on us by the pandemic. More information and an application form can be found [here](#).

**Sick & Retired Priests' Fund** The recent collection for Sick & Retired Priests raised £400.00. Thank you for your support and please keep our sick and retired priests in your prayers.

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

**Contactless Giving Point** A contactless giving point is now located in the Church porch. To make an offering using contactless giving select the amount you wish to donate and tap the top of the machine with your mobile phone or card.

**Standing Orders** In view of the current lockdown we would ask you to consider making your offertory contribution by standing order if you do not already do so. This reduces the handling of cash and overcomes the challenge of people not being physically in church. If you would like to gift aid your donations, but have not yet completed a gift aid form, please consider doing so. To find details of how to set up a standing order or complete a gift aid form, please click on the 'Donate to the Parish' button on the home page of the [website](#) or by emailing or phoning the Parish Office.

In 2019 we received on average £6,788.05 a month in standing orders. Between January and March 2020, the average total was £6,724.25 a month. By June 2020 this had increased to £7,765.14 a month and, in October, it stood at £9,044.80. Thank you to those who have traditionally given via standing order and to those who have set them up in more recent months.

## SCHOOLS

**Certificates of Catholic Practice for Primary and Secondary School Admissions** Fr Michael will be available at the Presbytery on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 4-6pm. No appointment is required and forms will be provided by Fr Michael. It is not necessary for your child to be present.

**St John Fisher Catholic Primary School - for children starting school in September 2021.** Families with children born from 01/09/2016 - 31/08/2017 will be able to apply for a place in Reception. The online application process is now open and closes on the 15th January 2021. Please see the school website [admissions page](#) for further details. You can also see a virtual tour of the school, as well as a message from Mrs O'Donnell, the Headteacher.

**St Columba's College Entrance Assessments for entry in September 2021** Prep School (4-11 years) assessments are taking place on Saturday 9th January 2021, or by arrangement with the Admissions Registrar. The deadline for 11+ and 13+ applications for September 2021 entry is Friday 27 November. The 11+ assessments are on Saturday 5 December 2020, and 13+ assessments and interviews are on Saturday 9 January 2021. The Sixth Form application deadline is Monday 14 December 2020. St Columba's College is an independent Catholic day school for pupils aged 4-18 years in St Albans. We welcome students of all faiths and none. We will be welcoming girls into the Sixth Form and Lower Prep from September 2021, followed by a phased transition to co-education. Parents can apply on our [website](#), or by contacting the Admissions Registrar, Mrs Hilary Causer, on 01727 892040 or by emailing [admissions@stcolumbascollege.org](mailto:admissions@stcolumbascollege.org).

## MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

### Sunday 22 November - CHRIST THE KING

6pm Vigil Mass Holy Souls

9.30am Mass People of the Parish

11.30am Mass Antonio Visconti & Giuseppe D'Auria

7pm Mass Holy Souls

Reading 1, Ezekiel 34: 11-12, 15-17, Responsorial Psalm, 23

Reading 2, 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28

Gospel, Matthew 25:31-46

### Monday 23 November - Feria

10 am Mass Tom Bagge (RIP)

7 pm Mass Martin McDonagh (Ints)

Reading 1, Apocalypse 14:1-5

Responsorial Psalm, 24, Gospel, Luke 21:1-4

### Tuesday 24 November - St Andrew Dung-Lac & Companions

10 am Mass Karen Brennan (RIP)

Reading 1, Apocalypse 14:14-19, Responsorial Psalm, 96

Gospel, Luke 21:5-11

### Wednesday 25 November - Feria

10 am Mass Mario D'Andrea (RIP)

7 pm Mass Ann Stewart (Ints)

Reading 1, Apocalypse 15:1-4, Responsorial Psalm, 98

Gospel, Luke 21:12-19

### Thursday 26 November - Feria

10 am Mass Holy Souls

Reading 1, Apocalypse 18:1-2, 21-23, 19:1-3,9

Responsorial Psalm, 100, Gospel, Luke 21:20-28

### Friday 27 November - Feria

10 am Mass Alessandra Vassalli (RIP)

7 pm Mass Billy O'Driscoll (RIP)

Reading 1, Apocalypse 20:1-4, 11-21:2

Responsorial Psalm, 84, Gospel, Luke 21:29-33

### Saturday 28 November Memoria BVM

Reading 1, Apocalypse 22:1-7

Responsorial Psalm, 95, Gospel, Luke 21:34-36

### Sunday 29 November 1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT

6pm Vigil Mass Marg & Brian Battles, Bridie & Jimmy Brady

9.30am Mass Francis Peter Hughes

11.30am Mass People of the Parish

7pm Mass William Tunney (RIP)

## PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches together in St Albans, this week we pray for the leaders and members of the Forest Town Church.

For those suffering with Coronavirus and for all the Sick including

For those who have died recently including Pat Pearce.

The Funeral Mass for Pat Pearce will be on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December at 10am. Attendance is limited to 30 invited mourners.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Cliff Staniforth.

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

### St Andrew Dũng-Lạc & his Companions - 24 November

Andrew Dung-Lac, a Catholic convert and priest, was one of 117 people martyred in Vietnam between 1820 and 1862. Members of the companions group gave their lives for Christ from 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and were beatified on four different occasions between 1900 and 1951. All were canonised by Pope St John Paul II in 1988. The first permanent mission in Vietnam opened at Da Nang in 1615 ministering to Japanese Catholics who had been driven out of Japan. Severe persecution began in 1820 and around 300,000 Catholics were killed or subjected to great hardship. The last of the martyrs were 17 laypersons, one of them a 9-year-old, executed in 1862. That year a treaty with France guaranteed religious freedom to Catholics, but persecution persisted. By 1954, some 670,000 Catholics in the north had been forced to flee to the south. In 1964, there were still 833,000 Catholics in the north, but many were in prison. In the south, Catholics were enjoying the first decade of religious freedom in centuries. During the Vietnamese war, many Catholics in the north suffered greatly and moved to the south. Now reunited, the entire country is under Communist rule.

**Christ the King - 22 November** The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe was instituted by Pope Pius XI in 1925, the 16th centenary of the Council of Nicaea at which the doctrine of the consubstantiality of Christ with the Father was defined. The Pope asserted that the most effective defence against the destructive forces of the age is the recognition of the kingship of Christ; and, furthermore, a feast which is celebrated every year by everyone is a far better way of deploying that defence than any number of books written by learned people. First, we do; then we come to understand what it is that we are doing. Each of us has been anointed with holy oil at baptism, as priest, prophet and king. The feast of Christ the King is thus a good moment to reflect on our kingship and on what "king" means and how to be one. Understanding the feast makes us understand our own call better. The responsibility of a king is to care for his subjects, which is why we are obliged to act as custodians of creation. How far that responsibility takes one can then be seen in the King of the Universe, who is simultaneously the ruler of all and the servant of all. He rules in triumph; and he rules from the Cross.