



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](mailto:stalbans@rcdow.org.uk) Website: [www.albanstephen.org](http://www.albanstephen.org)

YouTube: [youtube.com/c/SsAlbanandStephenCatholicChurch](https://www.youtube.com/c/SsAlbanandStephenCatholicChurch)

**THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD - 10 JANUARY 2021**



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](mailto:stalbanssg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk) / 07976 277059

*We are a Fairtrade parish*

*Fr Michael writes...* Following the announcement of a new national lockdown I met with the planning group which has assisted me in reaching decisions about how we are to respond to the current pandemic and ensure, as best we can, the safety of those who live, work, volunteer and worship here at St Alban and St Stephen. The current lockdown does not prohibit public worship, but with the institution of a new lockdown and a growing consciousness of just how easily the new strain of the coronavirus can be transmitted, we are clearly in a very different situation to that of March and November of last year.

As you will know our ability to open for public worship is dependent on having stewards to marshal those who attend and sanitise the church afterwards. I am conscious that in the past week several stewards have had to self-isolate at short notice. I am also conscious that volunteering to steward under the current circumstances is a different ask to stewarding under earlier ones and fully understand the decision made by a number to step back from stewarding under the current circumstances.

Under the current lockdown, as throughout this whole pandemic, the obligation to attend Mass remains suspended. Mindful of this, and of the challenge of effectively stewarding public Masses, it seems clear to me and the advisory group, that the most sensible course of action for us as a parish would be to make full use of the streaming capability so recently installed, to urge anyone who is in any way vulnerable to participate in the Mass in this way, and to limit the number of public Masses. I would also ask those who wish to attend a public Mass in these times to limit their attendance to one Mass a week.

There is no need to book for these Masses, but please note that attendance will be on a first come first served basis. We would encourage people to use the NHS Track and Trace App to record their presence in the church, but if this is not possible please will you write your name and email address or telephone number on a piece of paper and give this in at the door. The reason for this change is to reduce the need for conversation and the amount of time people are at the reception desk.

The details and ongoing pattern for Masses from Thursday 7th January will be as follows:

- Thursday 7th January - 10am Mass - Public & Streamed
- Friday 8th January - 10am Mass - Streamed Only
- Friday 8th January - 7pm Mass - Streamed Only
- Saturday 9th January - 10am - Exposition Streamed Only
- Saturday 9th January - 6pm Mass - Streamed Only
- Sunday 10th January - 9.30am Mass - Streamed Only
- Sunday 10th January - 11.30am Mass - Streamed Only
- Sunday 10th January - 7pm Mass - Streamed Only
- Monday 11th January - 10am Mass - Streamed Only
- Monday 11th January - 7pm Mass - Public & Streamed
- Tuesday 12th Tuesday - 10am Mass - Public & Streamed
- Wednesday 13th January - 10am Mass - Streamed Only
- Wednesday 13th January - 7pm Mass - Public & Streamed

These are extraordinary times and I find myself reaching previously unthinkable decisions. I realise that for some there will be disappointment, but I hope you will understand that they are determined by the practicalities of the current situation and a thoroughgoing concern for the well-being of all.

## LOCKDOWN ARRANGEMENTS

**Contacting the parish office** In line with current government advice, our parish administrator is working mainly from home. This means that the phone may not always be manned during parish office hours (9am-1pm, weekday mornings) and you may not get a response to a voicemail immediately. The best way for parishioners to contact the parish office at the moment is by emailing [stalbans@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:stalbans@rcdow.org.uk).

**Weekly bulletin** During this lockdown period, the weekly bulletin will only be available electronically. Parishioners on the newsletter distribution list or parish database will continue to receive an electronic copy of the bulletin each week. It is also available on our website and can be accessed [here](#).

If you would like to receive an electronic copy of the bulletin by email each Friday, please email the parish office and ask to be added to the distribution list. Alternatively you can find a copy on our website

We would ask that, if you know someone who is unable to access the electronic version of the bulletin, you share relevant parish news with them on a regular basis or print them a copy if you can do so in a COVID-19 secure way.

**Mass Intentions** To limit the spread of infection, parishioners will not be able to book mass intentions in person at the presbytery until further notice. If you would like to book a Mass intention please contact the parish office via [email](#). Alternatively you can post an envelope through the presbytery door with the details of the Mass intention (who it is for and why) as well as your name, a contact phone number or email address and your donation. We will then contact you with a suggested mass date. The diocesan suggested Mass offering is £10.

**Keeping in touch** The parish website will continue to be updated with latest news and information. If you have something you would like to be added to the bulletin or the news section of the website, please contact the parish office.

All of our masses are livestreamed via our YouTube channel which can be accessed via our website or by clicking [here](#).

You can also find support and useful resources on the Liturgy Group section of our website by clicking [here](#).

The parish also has a Facebook group which provides support and updates and currently has over 370 members. You can join this group by clicking [here](#) or by searching Facebook for SS Alban and Stephen Catholic Church.

## LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS

**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) this year are invited to register [online](#) via the website. 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 confession, please contact the Presbytery. Confessions will be held in the open air and observe social distancing.

**Anointing of the Sick** Current restrictions allow for end of life care, so those who are dangerously ill can be anointed at home or while in residential care (should the care or nursing home permit). Currently we are not allowed into Watford General Hospital (01923 244366) If somebody is admitted to hospital and wishes to be visited or anointed please contact the hospital chaplaincy. Where the person is incapacitated, the request must come from their next of kin.

**Mass at St Albans Abbey** Mass on Fridays at 12.00 noon at St. Albans Abbey will resume again on Friday 8 January. Because this Mass is celebrated in the Nave, which can accommodate 150 people socially distanced, there is no need to pre-book to attend. You just need to wear a face covering.

## PARISH LIFE

**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 will be sharing on scripture/other faith topics, typically every two weeks. Details of groups currently meeting are as follows:

- Mondays 8pm (2 x per month) Richard Exact 07976 252309
- Alternate Tuesdays 2-3.30pm Mike and Sylvia White (01727 854596; [whitemw@talktalk.net](mailto:whitemw@talktalk.net))
- Alternate Tuesdays 7.30pm Stan Grabecki ([grabecki@hotmail.com](mailto:grabecki@hotmail.com); 01727 765549)
- Wednesdays 7.30pm Brendan Roche - A new group set up at the start of the pandemic (contact the parish office [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 - 07976 252309; [D4dstalbans@gmail.com](mailto:D4dstalbans@gmail.com))

**The Winter Beds Project** The Winter Beds Project is looking for volunteers. If you think you might be able to help with coordinating volunteers, setting up and greeting guests, cleaning and checking out guests or laundry, please email [winterbedsproject@opendoorstalbans.org](mailto:winterbedsproject@opendoorstalbans.org)

**Parish Pastoral Council** Please [click here](#) for a report from the latest PPC meeting. The next meeting is on 13 January

**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).

**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** 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.

**Donating to our Parish** In view of the current lockdown please consider making your offertory contribution by standing order if you do not already do so. If you would like to gift aid your donations, but have not yet completed a gift aid form, please think about doing so. Between January and March 2020, the average total received by standing order 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. Please see our [website](#) or click [here](#) for a standing order and gift aid form. In light of the current restrictions, your donations matter more than ever. Thank you for your continued generosity.

## SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY

**Certificates of Catholic Practice for Primary and Secondary School Admissions** Due to the current lockdown restrictions, it will not be possible for Fr Michael to sign Certificates of Catholic Practice on 11 January as planned. Please email the presbytery if you need a Certificate of Catholic Practice for your child.

**Anna Chaplain (chaplain to the elderly)** in St. Albans under the auspices of Hatfield Road and Marlborough Road Methodist Churches. Full or part time (~ 20hr pw) for five years. Work ecumenically in partnership with ministers and lay volunteers to help meet the spiritual needs of older people in the city of St. Albans using the model of the Gift of Years / Anna Chaplain initiative of the Bible Reading Fellowship. Lay or ordained people can apply. Please visit our [website](#) for job description. Closing date 5 Feb 2021. Interviews on 18/19 February 2021.

**The Adventures of a Biblical Translator**, a live stream talk by Dom Henry Wansbrough, editor of the New Jerusalem Bible and the recently published Revised New Jerusalem Bible. The event can be accessed live on Saturday 23rd January from 11am to 12:30 by going to the [website](#) of SS. Peter & Paul Catholic Church, Ilford and clicking on 'Live Stream - Remote Events'. A recording will be available subsequently on [www.whatgoodnews.org](http://www.whatgoodnews.org).

**Volunteer with CAFOD** CAFOD Westminster is looking for volunteers, who care about global poverty, to help us inspire others to act here, so we can tackle poverty and injustice across the developing world. Are you a people-person who would relish involving and encouraging others? Are you a good communicator who would enjoy speaking about our work in a Parish or School? Please get in touch with us on [westminster@cafod.org.uk](mailto:westminster@cafod.org.uk) or 020 8449-6970 to find out more and book a place on one of our CAFOD online information sessions.

**Mary's Meals "Double the Love" Appeal** Until 31 January 2021, donations made will be matched by a funder, up to a total donation value of £2 million. So now, for just £7.95 (£6.36 if gift-aided), we can feed a child at school, in one of the world's poorest countries, every day FOR A YEAR. Please donate via [www.marysmeals.org.uk](http://www.marysmeals.org.uk).

**Invitation to CaFE's Bible Course - THE BIG PICTURE** Lockdown provides the ideal opportunity for us to take up this inspirational course which is a recommended resource for the Bishops' Conference Year of the Word initiative called 'The God Who Speaks'.

Course leader, Tim from CaFE comments, "We have discovered that this course allows God to speak to us through the scriptures to highlight a message for us individually. Some have found a new vocation or purpose; others have recognised a new or renewed significance in their life."

The journal-based course will be run for our parish with weekly Zoom meetings, and daily readings from your own journal. Many people in the parish have done the course before but that doesn't stop them registering and doing the course again. The course will run on Thursday evenings at 8pm over 12 sessions starting on 14 January 2021.

Brendan Day says of the experience, "The Big Picture helped piece together a lot of things that I sort of knew. I found it quite profound and deeply rewarding. It gave me a deeper understanding of The Word of God."

To see a trailer for the course visit [faithcafe.org](http://faithcafe.org). Each participant will need a course journal with its DVD and free downloads of weekly filmed overviews. These are available with 33% discount for only £10 each delivered within the parish.

To register for the course please phone 0845 050 9428 or email at [tim@faithcafe.org](mailto:tim@faithcafe.org) with your name and phone number.

## MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

### Sunday 10 January - THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

6pm Vigil Mass Catherine Mannion (RIP) \*  
9.30am Mass Tony Moran (RIP) \*  
11.30am Mass People of the Parish \*  
7pm Mass Nancy & Timmy Donoghue (RIP) \*  
Reading 1, Isaiah 55:1-11, Responsorial Psalm, Isaiah 12  
Reading 2, 1 John 5:1-9, Gospel, Mark: 17:7-11

### Monday 11 January - Feria

10am Mass Nigel Appleyard (RIP) \*  
7pm Mass Linda Ellis (RIP)  
Reading 1, Hebrews 1:1-6  
Responsorial Psalm, 97, Gospel Mark 1:14-20

### Tuesday 12 January - St Aelred of Rievaulx

10am Mass Frank Donohue (RIP)  
Reading 1, Hebrews 2:5-12  
Responsorial Psalm, 8, Gospel, Mark 1:21-28

### Wednesday 13 January - St Hilary

10 am Mass Deceased members of the MacDonald family (RIP) \*  
7pm Mass Mary Curran (RIP)  
Reading 1, Hebrews 2:14-18  
Responsorial Psalm, 105, Gospel, Mark 1: 29-39

### Thursday 14 January - Feria

10am Mass Sweeney family (Ints)  
Reading 1, Hebrews 3:7-14  
Responsorial Psalm, 95, Gospel, Mark 1:40-45

### Friday 15 January - Feria

10am Funeral Mass for Vito La Monica \*  
7pm Mass Pamela Curtin (RIP) \*  
Reading 1, Hebrews 4:1-5, 11  
Responsorial Psalm, 78, Gospel, Mark 2:1-12

### Saturday 16 January - Memoria BVM

10am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament \*  
Reading 1, Hebrews 4: 12-16  
Responsorial Psalm, 19, Gospel, Mark 2:13-17

### Sunday 17 January - SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

6pm Vigil Mass Mickie Clancy (RIP) \*  
9.30am Mass Stan & Teresa McDonald (RIP) \*  
11.30am Mass Ray Ingman (RIP) \*  
7pm Mass People of the Parish \*

\* Live streamed only, no public attendance

**Prayer from Right to Life UK** As we celebrate the baptism of our Lord, we recall our own baptism and the promise of life we have gained through it. We pray that all would be given the opportunity to experience life in its fullness, both in this world and the next. Lord hear us.

## PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches together in St Albans, this week we pray for the ministers and members of the Ecumenical Chaplaincy at the Cathedral & Abbey Church of St Albans.

For those suffering with Coronavirus and for all the Sick including

For those who have died recently including Vito La Monica, Brendan McVeigh, Kenneth Goodwin, Rosa Venetico, Cynthia Chrimes, Mollie Screene, Renee Rumble, John Stevens, Tony Boyle, Maria Del Carmen Romero and Peter Smith.

Attendance at funeral masses is currently limited to 30 invited mourners.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Myra Myers, Jose Ezcurra and Henry Vasey.

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

**Virtual Children's Liturgy from CAFOD** CAFOD already have downloadable children's liturgy resources available for most Sundays during the year. Click [here](#) for the latest edition. CAFOD are also offering a virtual Children's Liturgy of the Word at 10am on Sunday as a webinar. Parents and children are encouraged to join online for prayers and reflection on Sunday's Gospel. The liturgy is led by catechists who usually lead children's liturgy in their parish and will be based on CAFOD children's liturgy resources. Click [here](#) for the link to register. After registering you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

**St Aelred of Rievaulx (1110-1167)** Aelred was born in Hexham circa 1109. He was sent into the service of King David of Scotland and rose to the position of Master of the Royal Household. Aged 24 he gave up his secular pursuits and entered the newly founded Cistercian monastery of Rievaulx in Yorkshire in 1133. At 34 he took charge of a new foundation in Lincolnshire but within four years he had returned to Rievaulx as Abbot where he remained for the rest of his life. His writings and his sermons were characterised by a deep love of the Scriptures and by a very personal love of Christ. He was sensitive and understanding in his dealings with his fellow monks and under his direction the monastery at Rievaulx grew to an extraordinary size. The last ten years of his life were marked by a long and painful illness. Aelred has been called the St Bernard of the North.