



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - 17 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 / 07976 277059

We are a Fairtrade parish

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 runs 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. 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 please phone 0845 050 9428 or email tim@faithcafe.org with your name and phone number.

You Can Be Santa Scheme

The response from our parishioners for donations of vouchers to the 2020 'You can be Santa' scheme was tremendous and many also gave us cash donations as an alternative to vouchers.

We were able to provide £20 worth of vouchers to 165 children. Many of these are known to us from our parish schools, the SVP, the Life House and through individual parishioners. We also supported children from the St. Albans Refuge, families known to Home Start and the Intensive Family Support team. All the vouchers were delivered with a lovely Christmas card from the Parish which the children could colour in. In addition we gave vouchers to the single adults living in the Refuge and 13 adults with learning disabilities.

Our volunteer visitors did a great job, as usual, in ensuring that the vouchers were safely delivered to each family on our list or passed onto those organisations who distributed them on our behalf. As always, when we needed extra or last minute help with the scheme it was there for us. 2020 was a very difficult year for everyone and it has been uplifting to see that the generosity and thoughtfulness that always characterises the 'You can be Santa' scheme was not in any way diminished by the current crisis.

'Thank you for your ongoing kindness' said one mother. 'God richly bless you for everything you've done. I cannot thank you enough....' from another. The Intensive Family Support team told us, 'I just want to say a big thank you for the vouchers your parishioners generously donated. The families really appreciated them and the children were very excited about spending them.'

So a heartfelt thanks to everyone for all their support and to everyone who gave their time, commitment, and donations.

Prayer from Right to Life UK As we open the week of prayer for Christian Unity, we pray especially for our shared calling to protect and preserve all life. We pray that our unity and ecumenical efforts on all life issues would inspire the world to join us in defending the lives and rights of all vulnerable in society. Lord hear us

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.

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. 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 would like something 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](#).

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 by emailing him at juliandavies@rcdow.org.uk.

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 the next of kin.

Peace Sunday (17 January) This year Pope Francis asks us to think about 'A Culture of Care as a Path to Peace'. "How many resources," he says, "are spent on weaponry, especially nuclear weapons, that could be used for more significant priorities such as ensuring the safety of individuals, the promotion of peace and integral human development, the fight against poverty, and the provision of health care." Pope Francis calls on us to "strive daily, in concrete and practical ways, to form a community composed of brothers and sisters who accept and care for one another."

In this country we have an active Catholic peace movement in Pax Christi. Their website suggests many ways we can all promote peace in our daily lives. There are activities for families to do at home, including a 15-minute [peace liturgy for young children](#).

Pax Christi needs our support to keep going. If you'd like to make a donation, small or large, please follow [this link](#). If you'd like your personal donation to be counted towards your parish contribution please give your parish name and town in the 'Additional Information - Order Notes' box on the checkout page. You can also send a cheque payable to 'Pax Christi', to Pax Christi, St Joseph's, Watford Way, London NW4 4TY

PARISH LIFE

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, email winterbedsproject@opendoorstalbans.org

Parish Pastoral Council Please [click here](#) for the most recent meeting report from the PPC.

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 phone or card.

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.

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.

OUR SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY

Certificates of Catholic Practice If you require a certificate of Catholic Practice to accompany an application for a school place please contact the school or parish office for further information on what to do.

Christian Unity 18 to 25 January is the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. You are invited to:

- A Churches Together Herts Prayer meeting on Zoom on 18 January
- A Churches Together Service of Prayer for Christian Unity on Zoom on 24 January
- Take part in the Unity Challenge:
 - Visit a church that you are not used to
 - Ask God to show you how He is at work there
 - Come to the online Winter Forum (preceded by brief AGM) on 8 February and share your experience

Local churches with streaming services include: St Albans Abbey, St Alban & St Stephen RC church, St Sophia (Greek Orthodox), The Vinyard Church and St Luke's C of E church.

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.

The Adventures of a Biblical Translator, a livestreamed 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 23 January from 11am to 12:30pm by going to the [website](#) of SS. Peter & Paul Catholic Church, Ilford and clicking on 'Live Stream - Remote Events'. A recording will be available on www.whatgoodnews.org.

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. Lay or ordained people can apply. Please visit our [website](#) for job description. Closing date 5 Feb 2021. Interviews on 18/19 February 2021.

Lay Chaplain Vacancy St Elizabeth's Centre in Much Hadham, Hertfordshire are looking to recruit a Lay Chaplain to play a pivotal role, ensuring the Catholic identity of the centre is celebrated and developed. For further information please see their [website](#) or click [here](#) for a detailed job advert. The closing date for applications is 10 February and interviews are w/c 22 February.

Thinking Evening: " A Revolution in Nuclear Power - Hope in the Climate Crisis" 2 February, 7.30 for 7.45pm by Zoom. Please click [here](#) for a flyer and more details. This is one of a series of "Thinking Evenings" hosted by Marlborough Rd Methodist Church.

Building Strong Interfaith Relations All are invited to join this Zoom meeting on 19 January at 8pm, organised by the Welwyn/ Hatfield Interfaith Group. The speaker is Bishop Richard Atkinson OBE, Anglican Bishop of Bedford. Click [here](#) for the Zoom link. The meeting ID is 949 3939 9813 and the passcode is 949.

PRAYER FOR PEACE SUNDAY

Lord, you said, "Peace I give you, My Peace I give you".

Bring Peace in our hearts, in our families and in our world. Open our eyes, hearts & minds to your Presence. Come Lord Jesus, come.

Give us peace, healing and forgiveness. Guide us to work towards justice for all people.

Let us be still & know that you are God. Lord we hope & trust in you, our Lord and our God, you who are Love.

Comfort those who mourn and all those suffering as a result of the virus.

Bring peace to all nations. May your Holy Spirit give wisdom to their leaders. We pray particularly for the American people as they welcome a new president, and Uganda as its election results unfurl.

Guide organizations working towards non-violent communication, such as PAX CHRISTI, the international Catholic movement for peace.

Lord we give thanks for your sharing in our humanity and we give thanks for one thing each day. Amen.

From the Parish Justice and Peace Group

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

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 *
Reading 1, 1 Samuel 3:3-10,19, Responsorial Psalm, 40
Reading 2, 1 Corinthians 6:13-20, Gospel, John 1:35-42

Monday 18 January - Feria

10am Mass Fr Dan O'Connor MSC (RIP) *
7pm Mass RCIA Thanksgiving Mass
Reading 1, Hebrews 5:1-10, Responsorial Psalm, 110
Gospel Mark 2:18-22

Tuesday 19 January - Feria

10am Mass Funeral Mass for Kenneth Goodwin *
Reading 1, Hebrews 6:10-20
Responsorial Psalm, 111, Gospel, Mark 2:23-28

Wednesday 20 January - Feria

10 am Mass Dickie Downey (RIP) *
7pm Mass Elaine Gatta (RIP)
Reading 1, Hebrews 7:1-3, 15-17
Responsorial Psalm, 110, Gospel, Mark 3:1-6

Thursday 21 January - St Agnes

10am Mass Funeral Mass for Rosa Venetico *
Reading 1, Hebrews 7:25-8:6
Responsorial Psalm, 40, Gospel, Mark 3:7-12

Friday 22 January - Feria

10am Mass Andrew McIntosh (RIP) *
7pm Mass Sr Mary Dominic (Ints) *
Reading 1, Hebrews 8:6-13
Responsorial Psalm, 85, Gospel, Mark 3:13-19

Saturday 23 January - Memoria BVM

10am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament *
Reading 1, Hebrews 9:2-3,11-14
Responsorial Psalm, 47, Gospel, Mark 3:20-21

Sunday 24 January - THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

6pm Vigil Mass People of the Parish *
9.30am Mass Jan Saxon (RIP) *
11.30am Mass Roy McGoohan (Ann) *
7pm Mass Helena Cuneen (RIP) *

* Live streamed only, no public attendance

PLEASE PRAY

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

For those suffering with Coronavirus and for all the Sick including

For those who have died recently including Tony Boyle, John Darby, Carmen Del Romero, Cynthia Chrimes, Kenneth Goodwin, Vito La Monica, Patrick Mcconnell, Brendan McVeigh, Sandra Mosley, Patricia Porter, John Rowland, Renee Rumble, Mollie Screene, Peter Smith, John Stevens, Rosa Venetico and Bernadette Witchard.

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

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Roy McGoohan, Myra Myers, Lewis and Frances Lumber, Ken and Mary Neal.

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

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

Please click [here](#) for this week's 'Liturgy of the Word' for Children leaflet from the Diocese of Westminster.

Virtual Children's Liturgy from CAFOD CAFOD already have downloadable children's liturgy resources available for most Sundays during the year. They are currently 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 Sebastian - 20 January. St Sebastian joined the Roman Army in 283 AD and served in the Praetorian Guard, converting several prominent individuals to Christianity. This angered the Emperor who ordered him to be killed by having him used as target practice by archers. He was believed dead but was recovered by Irene of Rome, who nursed him back to health. Sebastian then criticised the emperor for his persecution of the Christians which led his being beaten to death. His body was secretly buried in the catacombs beneath Rome. According to historical records, he defended the city of Rome against the plague in 680. It is the symbolic association of arrows with the Black Death, during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, which identifies Sebastian as the patron saint of plague victims.