



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

**FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - 31 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*

*Fr Julian writes...* I'm writing this the day after Holocaust Memorial Day, and two days after the end of the so-called Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. What these events mark has a bearing on our identity as Christians, yet so often they can be sidestepped as irrelevant. Our remembrance of the one and our prayers for the other can degenerate into mere tokenism, and quite understandably. In fact they cannot be left to one day or one week. What they profile...the need for greater love for our fellow human beings and for our fellow Christians...goes to the very heart of our faith and what it means to love Our Lord.

For me the relationship between the Holocaust and Christian Unity is graphically underlined by a postcard which I have in my possession. It was written during the 1930s from a Lutheran pastor in Berlin to a member of his congregation. His name was Martin Niemoeller and he would become one of the fiercest critics of the Nazi regime. Like so many German pastors and priests, like so many German Christians, Niemoeller saw Hitler as the answer to the country's ills. It was only later when Hitler's true colours were shown, that Niemoeller openly opposed the regime, resulting in his imprisonment and near death. In retrospect, he deeply regretted that he had not stood up for the Jews and challenged the evils of Nazi ideology earlier. Like so many Christians he came belatedly to realise that the destruction of Jewry was the inevitable prelude to the destruction of the Church. The horrific experiences of WW2 convinced him, as it did many others, that what divided Christians was nothing compared to their united interest against the evils of the destructive ideologies of the modern age. Out of this shared experience was born the great ecumenical initiative to affirm and seek greater unity among Christians. At its heart was St John XXIII's desire to build bridges with the separated brethren of the Church so central to the vision of Vatican 2. For post-war Christians there came also the painful realisation that a supposedly strong yet superficial Christian culture had not only been inadequate to prevent the rise of Nazism, but had unwittingly and wittingly, over many generations, fuelled it by stigmatising those whom the Church should have recognised as their elder brothers and sisters. This doesn't mean that the Church should not evangelise. The Father draws both his prodigal sons - the elder and the younger - to repentance, but it does mean that our evangelism loses all credibility if we do not recognise the image of God in others and be prepared to stand and suffer with them, wherever and whenever. Niemoeller's words ring true today as then:

First they came for the Communists  
And I did not speak out  
Because I was not a Communist  
Then they came for the Socialists  
And I did not speak out  
Because I was not a Socialist  
Then they came for the trade unionists  
And I did not speak out  
Because I was not a trade unionist  
Then they came for the Jews  
And I did not speak out  
Because I was not a Jew  
Then they came for me  
And there was no one left  
To speak out for me.

**Prayer from Right to Life UK** "For all going through difficult pregnancies, we pray for an overwhelming sense of hope and joy to fill their lives, and for increased support to be given by their family, friends, and local communities. Lord hear us."

## LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS

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

**Marriages** Please contact Fr Michael for marriage enquiries by emailing him at [michaeloboy@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:michaeloboy@rcdow.org.uk).

**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.

## PARISH LIFE

**Parish Virtual Coffee Morning Sundays 10.30 - 11.00am**  
Come and join a parish coffee morning for a chat each Sunday starting on 31 January. By necessity at present, we'll have to meet virtually using Zoom, so please use the details below. If you haven't used Zoom before, just click [here](#) or copy the link below into your browser and enter the Meeting ID and Passcode when prompted. Hope to see you on Sunday!

<https://zoom.us/j/93093729386?pwd=RzNkWm5vYlp6SDlBUUN3UkxEbnZ5QT09>

Meeting ID: 930 9372 9386 Passcode: 998690

**Racial Justice Sunday - 31 January 2021.** This year's Racial Justice Sunday is more important than ever. The effects of the Coronavirus pandemic, the killing of George Floyd, and the powerful message on fraternity and equality by Pope Francis in *Fratelli Tutti* speak of the need to actively oppose racism and pursue racial justice with renewed vigour. The theme is '*A Time to Act*'. Racial issues and inequalities were identified nationally and internationally in 2020 generating awareness, emotion and outrage. In light of this, Racial Justice Sunday 2021 is particularly significant. Please click [here](#) for a reflection from the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and [here](#) for a message from Bishop Paul McAleenan, the Lead Bishop for Racial Justice.

**Westminster Record** The Westminster Record provides news and features about all areas of Catholic life - in homes, parishes and schools - which takes place in North, West, Central and East London as well as Hertfordshire. Produced by the Diocese of Westminster Communications Office. The latest issue contains photos of Brendan Day's institution as Acolyte and can be read for free online [here](#).

**Sheila Doohan (RIP)** Sheila was born in Adeleide Street, St Albans in 1929 and was baptized at Ss Alban and Stephen, where she remained an active parishioner for the rest of her life. She was a supporter of Pro Life, a eucharistic minister, a member of the Neo Cats and she also cooked and shopped for Fr Michael Fitzgibbon, during his time as a priest in the parish. Sheila passed away on 18 January and her funeral will take place at Ss Alban and Stephen on 22 February.

**Traidcraft update.** Despite COVID-19, sales of Traidcraft goods came to approximately £3,000 in 2020 and this allowed us to send £500 to CAFOD, which is particularly pleasing as their income dropped enormously last year. It is still possible to buy Traidcraft goods and this can be done in a Covid-secure way by ordering through Maureen at [grabecki@hotmail.com](mailto:grabecki@hotmail.com) or on 765549. We aim to place an order twice a month, so if your item is not immediately available from our stock, it hopefully will not be long before it can be obtained. Thank you to all those parishioners who have kept us, Traidcraft and CAFOD going in these troubled times.

**CAFOD Lent fast day. Friday 26 February, 2021.** This Lent, the focus of the appeal is on the supply of clean drinking water, something we all take for granted. Abdella lives in a remote part of Ethiopia where it took him 10 hours a day to collect water for his family - see short video at [cafod.org.uk/lent](http://cafod.org.uk/lent). His village has now benefitted from a solar water pump. CAFOD would like to reach more vulnerable communities around the world and to provide other vital support. If you would like to donate, please go to [cafod.org.uk/give](http://cafod.org.uk/give) or text LENT to 70460 [£10 plus standard rate message]. More details from Stan on 765549 or at [grabecki@hotmail.com](mailto:grabecki@hotmail.com)

**CAFOD Walk for Water 40-day challenge.** To help walk alongside Abdella this Lent, Maureen and Stan Grabecki have challenged themselves to walk 10,000 steps each, every day, for 40 days from Ash Wednesday. If you would like to sponsor them, please drop an envelope marked 'CAFOD challenge' into the presbytery, with a cheque made payable to CAFOD. Alternatively you can donate and find more information at [justgiving.com/maureen-stan-grabecki](http://justgiving.com/maureen-stan-grabecki).

**CAFOD Daily Walk Something positive this lent** Could you walk 10000 steps either on one day or everyday this Lent? The walk could be a sign of your solidarity with all those who do not have access to a safe water source and who have to walk for water each day. Find out more or sign up online at [cafod.org.uk/Fundraise/Walk-for-Water](http://cafod.org.uk/Fundraise/Walk-for-Water) and go the distance this Lent to help to end water poverty.

**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 October 2020 this had increased to £9,044.80 a month.

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.

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

## OUR SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY

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

**CAFOD - Your Support in Action** Join CAFOD online on Saturday 30 January from 10.30am to 12.30pm and listen to CAFOD's representative live from Ethiopia talking about how your support is enabling communities gain access to clean water. For a registration link and further information, contact [westminster@cafod.org.uk](mailto:westminster@cafod.org.uk)

**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 click [here](#) to donate.

**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.

**Caritas Volunteer Fair "Step Forward in Love"** Online Event on Wednesday 10 February from 11am to 1pm. Whether you want to try volunteering for the first time or are looking for a new role, come and find out what volunteering opportunities are out there at the moment. Please register [here](#) to join in.

## 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 [stalbins@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:stalbins@rcdow.org.uk).

**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.

Please note that we are currently booking mass intentions for masses taking place from the beginning of June 2021.

**Weekly bulletin** During this lockdown period, the 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. 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.

**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.

**St Paul Miki (1564/6 - 1597) - 6 February** Paul was born in Japan and joined the Society of Jesus, successfully preaching the gospel to the Japanese people. During the persecution of Catholics, he was arrested with 25 others. Mocked and tortured, they were taken to Nagasaki, bound to crosses and stabbed with lances. Paul preached his last sermon from the cross, and it is maintained that he forgave his executioners, stating that he himself was Japanese.

## MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

### **Sunday 31 January - FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

6pm Vigil Mass Stan Penstone (RIP) \*  
9.30am Mass People of the Parish \*  
11.30am Mass Paddy Moffitt (RIP) \*  
7pm Mass Annie Coakley (RIP) \*  
Reading 1, Deuteronomy 18:15-20, Resp. Psalm, 95  
Reading 2, 1 Corinthians 7:32-35, Gospel, Mark 1:21-28

### **Monday 1 February - Feria**

10am Funeral Mass for John Rowland\*  
7pm Mass Joe and Pat Collins (Ints)  
Reading 1, Hebrews 11:32-40 Responsorial Psalm, 31  
Gospel, Mark 5:1-20

### **Tuesday 2 February - THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD**

10am Mass Ben Lavelle (RIP)  
Reading 1, Malachi 3:1-4 Responsorial Psalm, 24  
Gospel, Luke 2:22-40

### **Wednesday 3 February - Ss Laurence, Dunstan and Theodore**

10am Funeral Mass for Patrick Anthony Mcconnell \*  
7pm Mass Fr Henry Twohig MSC (RIP)  
Reading 1, Hebrews 12:4-7, 11-15  
Responsorial Psalm, 103, Gospel, Mark 6:1-6

### **Thursday 4 February - Feria**

10am Mass Funeral Mass for Bernadette Witchard \*  
Reading 1, Hebrews 12: 18-19, 21-24  
Responsorial Psalm, 48, Gospel, Mark 6:7-13

### **Friday 5 February - St Agatha**

10am Funeral Mass for John Stevens \*  
7pm Mass Holy Souls \*  
Reading 1, Hebrews 13:1-8  
Responsorial Psalm, 27, Gospel, Mark 6:14-29

### **Saturday 6 February - St Paul Miki & companions**

10am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament \*  
Reading 1, Hebrews 13:15-17, 20-21  
Responsorial Psalm, 23, Gospel, Mark 6:30-34

### **Sunday 7 February - FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

6pm Vigil Mass Tony Moran (RIP) \*  
9.30am Mass People of the Parish \*  
11.30am Mass Peter Celestine Okoro (RIP) \*  
7pm Mass Padraig Butler (RIP) \*

\* Live streamed only, no public attendance.

## PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches together in St Albans, this week we remember in prayer the millions of people murdered in the Holocaust, under Nazi Persecution, and in the genocides which followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur.

For those suffering with Coronavirus and for all the Sick including

For those who have died recently including Charles and Nellie Attard, Honora Barrett, Doreen Butler, Cynthia Chrimes, John Darby, Carmen Del Romero, Sheila Doohan, , Thomas Doyle, David Anthony Francis, Concettina Giubba, Giuseppe Giubba, Encarnacion Gonzales Jurado, Hermie Haniff, Patrick Mcconnell, Sandra Mosley, Miguel Ortega, Patricia Porter, John Rowland, Renee Rumble, Mollie Screene, Peter Smith, Daphne Snaith, John Stevens, Dolores Walsh and Bernadette Witchard.

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

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Greg Bryce and Nora King.

*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 and activity sheet 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.

**Presentation of the Lord - 2 February** Celebrates Mary and Joseph taking the 40-day old Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem to present him to God, in accordance with Jewish law. This story is also the fourth Joyful Mystery of the Rosary.

**St. Agatha - 5 February** Also known as Saint Agatha of Sicily, was born around 231 and was tortured and martyred around 251. She is the patron saint of Sicily, bell founders, breast cancer patients, Palermo, rape victims, and wet nurses. She is also considered to be a powerful intercessor when people suffer from fires.