



Church Website

## NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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**SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - 14 FEBRUARY 2021**



VirginMoneyGiving

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

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

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*We are a Fairtrade parish*

*This week Cardinal Vincent has sent us a pastoral letter encouraging us to mark Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent in our own homes. His letter can be read in full by clicking [here](#). The following is an edited version.*

This year receiving ashes in church is going to be difficult. Yes, our churches are safe if the protective measures are fulfilled. But we must all be very careful about travelling too far. Some churches will...be open for the celebration of Mass as usual. But I have asked them not to make extra provision for Ash Wednesday. We must be so careful and cooperative in the measures we must take, to protect ourselves and to protect others.

...Receiving ashes is an outward sign of an inner step, a movement of the heart towards our beloved Lord. This year I invite you to concentrate...on this inner, spiritual movement than on its outward manifestation in the imposition of ashes...(and to)...celebrate Ash Wednesday at home, with your family, in the household or 'support bubble' of which you are a part....Spend some time praying in a way that you know...(making)...this a prayer of your heart for God's mercy upon this world struggling to cope with the terrible pandemic...

...Please do not hesitate, within your household or 'bubble', to bless each other...(and)...to remember together our need of the good Lord. Together, and through each other, he wants to comfort and reassure us of his loving presence. If, on this day, we set aside every pretence that we can do everything of ourselves, then we create in our hearts and lives the space for God's grace and strength to find a home in us.

...Open your hearts to the gift of God's presence to support, comfort and strengthen you. This year, it may be best to do this, not by going to church, but by sharing the prayer, the blessing and this moment of dedication within the love of your family and friends.

1. Gather together and start with the Sign of the Cross.
2. Read the Gospel the Gospel for today Matthew 6.1-6 and 16-18.
3. Say together the following prayer:

'Lord God, with all our hearts we beseech you: have mercy on your people; spare your people; strengthen all people in the struggle against the havoc of this pandemic. Lord our God, without you we are so weak and our courage so limited. Give us your strength; give us your love; give us wisdom and skill to continue this fight. Spare your people, O Lord we pray. Comfort those who mourn and gather into your kingdom all who have died. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord, who died and rose to life, who lives and reigns with you, for ever and ever. Amen.'

4. Make the Sign of the Cross on each other's forehead using the following words:

'Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.'

or 'Repent, and believe in the Gospel'.

5. Pray together: The Our Father; the Hail Mary; each one with his or her own prayer or intention.
6. Conclude with the 'Glory be to the Father...'
7. Give each other a sign of peace.

**Right to Life** We pray for all unborn children diagnosed with disabilities, we pray for their protection and that of their mothers from the pressures of society to have an abortion, and that they would instead experience overwhelming love and support from all who surround them. Lord hear us.

## LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS

**Ash Wednesday** Mindful of the Cardinal's letter in which he discourages the extra provision of Masses and also encourages us to mark the beginning of Lent at home Masses will run as per our existing schedule i.e. with the morning Mass being streamed but not open to the public, and the evening Mass being both streamed and open to the public. Attendance is limited to 58 people and places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

**Stations of the Cross for Lent** This year's Stations of the Cross will be live-streamed from Church on Saturday mornings at 10am during Lent. The text of the service will be available via our website to enable people to pray and reflect on a different theme each week as prepared by groups in the parish. The Stations this week will focus on "Reflecting on a Pandemic".

**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.

**First Holy Communion** This year's programme will begin after Easter and an email has been sent to the parents of all candidates with details of the programme. Please email the parish office if you have not received this communication.

**Confirmation** We hope to celebrate the sacrament of confirmation for last year's confirmands (postponed due to the lockdown) on May 8th and 15th, at 11.30 am and 2.30 pm on both. A digital form will be sent out before long inviting date preferences.

**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.

**Prayers for the Sick** If you would like to include someone in the prayers for the sick please contact the presbytery.

## PARISH LIFE

**SearchandStudy.org** There is a wealth of Catholic material out there but it can be quite hard to find. [Searchandstudy.org](http://Searchandstudy.org) is a Catholic website which helps you to browse, search or reference Catholic stuff from the Bible to popes, councils, the Catechism saints and more.

**Parish Virtual Coffee Morning Sundays 10.30 - 11.00am** Come and join a parish coffee morning for a chat each Sunday. 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. Please enter the Meeting ID 930 9372 9386 and Passcode 998690 when prompted.

<https://zoom.us/j/93093729386?pwd=RzNkWm5vYlp6SDIBUUN3UkxEbnZ5QT09>

**Join a Faith Sharing Group this Lent** These will meet virtually and journey through the weeks of Lent using *Holy Week Voices from the Holy Land* a resource for individual or group reflection. If you would like to find out more please contact Mike & Sylvia at [whitemw@talktalk.net](mailto:whitemw@talktalk.net). Hard and digital copies of the resource can be ordered using the following link <https://rcdow.org.uk/faith/news/holy-week-voices/> and are priced at £7.99.

**Strength to Strength: The practical benefits of daily prayer** This four session CaFE course aims to give practical help to anyone who wishes to pray more in their daily lives and is inspired by the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It is hoped to run the course as a parish group via Zoom on Monday evenings at 8pm during Lent beginning on 22 February. Each session lasts approximately 40 mins with mid-point group discussion. If you would like to join please email Melanie at [mjoneill5@btinternet.com](mailto:mjoneill5@btinternet.com).

**Lenten Bible Series** Journey with us on this series of talks, led by Mauro Iannicelli from *Come and See* evangelisation ministry. Mauro will walk you through the forthcoming Sunday Gospel with in-depth teaching and stimulating questions. You will experience Sunday Mass in a new way! Starting on Wednesday 10 February with a talk on 'Prayer - with a rule of life' and followed by six weekly sessions breaking open each Lenten Sunday Gospel. All talks online from 7pm - 8.30pm. To register and for further details, visit [www.comeandsee.org/lent](http://www.comeandsee.org/lent).

**CAFOD Lent fast day. Friday 26 February** 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 each walk 10,000 steps 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 at [cafod.org.uk/Fundraise/Walk-for-Water](http://cafod.org.uk/Fundraise/Walk-for-Water) to help to end water poverty.

**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.

**Westminster Record** This publication provides news and features about all areas of Catholic life in homes, parishes and schools in London and Hertfordshire. Produced by the Diocese of Westminster Communications Office, the Lent 2020 issue contains photos of Brendan Day's institution as Lector and all issues can be read for free online [here](#).

**Parish Safeguarding Support Officer** The Diocese of Westminster is now recruiting for a Parish Safeguarding Support Officer to join the central safeguarding team. This is a full time position and the job advert and job description can be found on the RCDOW [website](#). The closing date for applications is 18 February.

**Mass at St Albans Abbey** Every Friday at 12.00noon Mass is celebrated by a Roman Catholic Priest. There is no need to pre-book to attend. You just need to wear a face covering.

## SUPPORTING OUR PARISH

**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.

**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.

## 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 [stalbands@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:stalbands@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. If you would prefer a weekend or a morning/evening weekday mass, please note that on the envelope also. 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 end 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 380 members. You can join this group by clicking [here](#) or by searching Facebook for SS Alban and Stephen Catholic Church.

## MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

### Sunday 14 February – SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORD TIME

6pm Vigil Mass Mario D'Andrea (Ann)\*  
9.30am Mass John Bernard Freed (RIP) & Anthony John Freed (RIP) \*  
11.30am Mass Christopher and Melissa Ryan (Ints) \*  
7pm Mass People of the Parish \*  
Reading 1, Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46, Resp. Psalm, 32  
Reading 2, 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1,  
Gospel, Mark 1:40-45

### Monday 15 February – Feria

10am Funeral Mass for Giuseppe Giubba \*  
7pm Mass Noreen Carolan (RIP)  
Reading 1, Genesis 4:1-15,25  
Responsorial Psalm, 50, Gospel, Mark 8:11-13

### Tuesday 16 February – Feria

10am Funeral Mass for Encarnacion Gonzales Jurado \*  
Reading 1, Genesis 6:5-8,7:1-5,10  
Responsorial Psalm, 29, Gospel, Mark 8:14-21

### Wednesday 17 February – ASH WEDNESDAY

10am Mass Stan Penstone (RIP) \*  
7pm Mass Mary Roche (RIP)  
Reading 1, Joel 2:12-18, Responsorial Psalm, 51,  
Reading 2, 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2, Gospel, Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

### Thursday 18 February – Lent feria

10am Mass Donor's 'Thanksgiving' Intention  
Reading 1, Deuteronomy 30:15-20  
Responsorial Psalm, 1, Gospel, Luke 9:22-25

### Friday 19 February – Lent feria

10am Funeral Mass for Concettina Giubba \*  
7pm Mass Mollie Lerwill (RIP) \*  
Reading 1, Isaiah 58:1-9  
Responsorial Psalm, 51, Gospel, Matthew 9:14-15

### Saturday 20 February – Lent feria

10am Stations of the Cross – Reflecting on a Pandemic \*  
Reading 1, Isaiah 58:9-14  
Responsorial Psalm, 86, Gospel, Luke 5:27-32

### Sunday 21 February – FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

6pm Vigil Mass Stan Penstone (RIP) \*  
9.30am Mass People of the Parish \*  
11.30am Mass Jacque Leonard (RIP) \*  
7pm Mass Zbigniew Frosztega (Ann)\*

\* Live streamed only, no public attendance.

## PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches together in St Albans, this week we pray for the the members of the Living Waters International Christian Fellowship St Albans.

For those suffering with Coronavirus and for all the Sick including

For those who have died recently including Charles and Nellie Attard, Joe Borg, Doreen Butler, Carmen Del Romero, Sheila Doohan, Thomas Doyle, David Anthony Francis, Concettina Giubba, Giuseppe Giubba, Encarnacion Gonzales Jurado, Hermie Haniff, Winifred King, Bob Markham, Ciara McMahon, Daphne Snaith, Francis Steven, Dolores Walsh.

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

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Mario D'Andrea, Sheila Aylward, Harold Elliott, Zbigniew Frosztega, Ernest Gaufruid, Hermina Gaufruid, Jessie Harris, Eric Hopkins, Oswald McCarthy, Lily Nicholson and Stan Phillips.

*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 worksheet from the Diocese of Westminster.

**Virtual Children's Liturgy from CAFOD** in addition to their downloadable weekly children's liturgy resources, CAFOD 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.

**Ash Wednesday** In the Gospel for Ash Wednesday, Jesus tells his followers not to show off their fasting and to pray in the inner rooms of their homes. These words take on new meaning this year - unable to be marked by ashes, restricted to our homes, our prayers are private but no less fervent. This year we mark our hearts and not our heads. May the loss of traditional Ash Wednesday observance be the first thing we let go in deepening our Lenten journey. As we begin our walk with Jesus to the cross and resurrection, we unite our mortality and limits to Christ's own suffering and passion in order that we might enjoy his divine life as well. To mark the beginning of your journey this Lent, trace a cross on your forehead and repeat the ancient words, "You are dust and unto dust you shall return".