



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT - 28 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)

Safeguarding Lead: Mary Harber / stalbanssg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk / 07976 277059

We are a Fairtrade parish

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL - Report from the meeting on 10th February 2021

The PPC has continued to meet monthly during the lockdown using Zoom technology.

Advent and Christmas Services: The Advent Talks were very well received and attracted much larger audiences than usually come to the parish hall. The virtual Christmas services worked well, and the PPC thanks everyone involved in the arrangements, particularly the musicians. The position of the crib under the main altar was a great success, as was the outside crib which was viewed by parishioners and passers-by.

Lent and Easter Services: Because of the pandemic lockdown, there were no additional public masses on Ash Wednesday. Ashes were made available in envelopes, for people to use at home. Depending on government rules, some Holy Week services may need to be streamed only. It is hoped that similar arrangements used for Christmas will be implemented. On Easter Sunday, it is planned to have one streamed Mass with music and a further two public Masses with no music. There will be a Penitential Service on Saturday, 20th March at 10am. Stations of the Cross will be streamed on the evening of Good Friday. Stations of the cross will be streamed each Saturday during Lent at 10am.

Lent Talks: Parishioners are encouraged to join one or more of 3 suggested opportunities to deepen faith during Lent: join a Faith Sharing Group; participate in the CaFE course Strength to Strength; journey with the Lenten Bible Series.

Parish Assembly: The Assembly will be held on Saturday, 12th June, by Zoom if we are still unable to gather physically. Fr Michael has drafted a vision, based on the thoughts expressed in the Advent talks and highlighting areas of priority for the parish going forward. This has been published in the Bulletin and on the website and via the parish email distribution list, and parishioners will be invited to give feedback during late February and March. Suggestions will be reviewed and the vision refined as needed in April. During May we will develop a proposed structure of the PPC to focus on agreed priorities for the parish over the next 3 years. In the June Assembly, we can seek parishioners who are committed to help develop implementation plans for the priorities and elect the new PPC members.

Mass Schedule: The Re-opening Planning team met in early February and agreed that the current schedule of public Masses (Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 10am and Monday and Wednesday evening at 7pm) will continue given the ongoing lockdown.

Confirmation: It is hoped that last year's Confirmands will be confirmed before Pentecost. This year's Confirmands will begin their course towards Autumn.

First Holy Communion: It is planned to have First Reconciliation by the Summer and First Holy Communion in the Autumn.

Finances: The accounts for 2020 have been submitted for Diocesan approval.

CAFOD Family Fast Day: Friday, 26th February. An appeal has been made via the Bulletin.

Sunday Parish Virtual Coffee Morning: continues at 10.30am to 11am via Zoom.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, 10th March 2021 at 7.45pm

Right to Life We pray for all considering abortion. We pray that the love and kindness of those around them would support pregnant women everywhere to continue with their pregnancy and find peace and joy in what the future holds. Lord hear us.

LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS

Stations of the Cross for Lent These will be live-streamed from our Church on Saturday mornings at 10am during Lent. The text of the service will be available [here](#) or via our website to enable people to pray and reflect on a different theme each week. Stations for Week 2 have been prepared by the Mission Group and will focus on "Christ has died, Christ is Risen, Christ will come again". Stations for Week 3 will focus on 'Care and Community.' Parish Friends will use the Stations from "Holy Week Voices from the Holy Land," the book recommended by the Diocese to read during Lent. It is an inspiring Way of the Cross to use during this coronavirus pandemic.

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.

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.

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

Vision Statement Looking towards the forthcoming Parish Assembly Fr Michael has set out a vision statement for our pastoral priorities going ahead. The full version of this can be found on our website, under 'Parish News'. For the summary version, published in last week's bulletin, please click [here](#). Fr Michael would welcome your comments and feedback. Please email him directly, using the subject header 'Vision', at michaeloboy@rcdow.org.uk.

Cardinal's Lenten Appeal 2021 The Cardinal thanks you for your generous support for the Cardinal's Lenten

Appeal, especially throughout the unprecedented events of 2020. Your donations help fund initiatives in parishes, schools and charities in four mission areas which are more critical than ever. **Marriage and Family Life:** enriching and supporting marriages, the essential building block of society and the Church. **Youth and Evangelisation:** helping young people as they grow in their relationship with God and deepen their Catholic faith. **Caritas Westminster:** putting faith into action by serving those in need. **Education Service:** supporting our schools. This year, the Cardinal is asking us to think about families who are struggling to put food on the table. Poverty is deepening across our Diocese and the need for foodbanks and supermarket vouchers has accelerated. Please click [here](#) to donate online or download a donation form [here](#).

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=RzNkWm5vYlp6SDlBUUN3UkxEbnZ5QT09>

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. Hard and digital copies of the resource can be ordered using the following [link](#) 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.

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.

CAFOD Lenten Family Fast Day If you would like to donate to last Friday's Fast Day Appeal - this year to supply clean drinking water, please either drop an envelope marked "CAFOD fast day collection" into the presbytery or donate [online](#) or text LENT to 70460 [£10]. Please pray for those in such need.

CAFOD "Big Walk for Water" Maureen and Stan will hopefully have completed 10 days of their 40-day walking challenge by Saturday 27th. They are raising money for CAFOD to supply clean drinking water to isolated communities in the most remote parts of the Third World by walking 5 miles each for the days of Lent. So far people have promised over £900, including gift aid. It is not too late to make a donation; if you would like to contribute, please go to their [JustGiving](#) page or drop an envelope in to the presbytery marked "CAFOD Challenge" with a cheque made payable to CAFOD. Please see the [Parish News](#) section of our website for an article on Stan and Maureen's challenge.

CAFOD Daily Walk 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 [here](#) to help to end water poverty.

OUR SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY

Churches Together in Marshalswick Lent Lectures and Discussion Weekly meetings will take place via Zoom at 6.45pm on Sundays during Lent. Click [here](#) to join using Meeting ID: 846 7123 1405 and password: 060730. Alternatively you can watch on [YouTube](#). More information can be obtained from www.ssaviours.org.

St Columba's College - Virtual Prep School Open Afternoon The College will be holding a virtual Prep School (4-11 years) Open Afternoon on Tuesday 2 March at 4.30pm. There will be a live welcome from the Head of Prep, Mr Richard McCann, followed by a pre-recorded virtual tour of the school. There will also be a live Q&A session with key members of our Lower and Upper Prep staff. Girls joined Reception in 2021, as we begin a phased transition to co-education. To register to attend please contact Bella Frost at frost.b@stcolumbascollege.org or on 01727 892060, or register online [here](#).

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 December 2020 this had increased to £9,221.10 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 and Virgin Money Giving A contactless giving point is now located in the Church porch. To make an offering, select the amount you wish to donate and tap the top of the machine with your phone or card.

If you would like to donate 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 to contact the parish office at the moment is by emailing stalbans@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](#) or post an envelope through the presbytery door with the details of the Mass intention (who it is for and why), 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 also. We will then contact you with a suggested mass date. Please note that we are currently booking mass intentions for masses taking place from July/August 2021. The diocesan suggested Mass offering is £10.

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

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 weekly bulletin by email, please email the parish office.

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.

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

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

The parish also has a Facebook group providing support and updates and which now has 391 members. You can join this group by clicking [here](#) or by searching Facebook for SS Alban and Stephen Catholic Church.

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Sunday 28 February - SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

6pm Vigil Mass PJ Conefrey and family (Ints) *

9.30am Mass Essie Cotter (RIP) *

11.30am Mass People of the Parish *

7pm Mass Michael Theanne (First Ann)*

Reading 1, Genesis 22:1-2, 9-18, Resp. Psalm, 116

Reading 2, Romans 8:31-34, Gospel, Mark 9:2-10

Monday 1 March - ST DAVID, Patron of Wales

10am Mass Peter Celestine Okoro (RIP) *

7pm Mass Joao Paulo Martins (First Ann)

Reading 1, Philippians 3:8-14

Responsorial Psalm, 1, Gospel, Matthew 5:13-16

Tuesday 2 March - Lent feria

10am Vanessa Robinson (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 1:10, 16-20

Responsorial Psalm, 50, Gospel, Matthew 23:1-12

Wednesday 3 March - Lent feria

10am Funeral Mass for Carmen del Romero *

7pm Mass Brendan Hollywood (RIP)

Reading 1, Jeremiah 18:18-20

Responsorial Psalm, 31, Gospel, Matthew 20:17-28

Thursday 4 March - Lent feria

10am Mass John Taylor (First Ann)

Reading 1, Jeremiah 17:5-10

Responsorial Psalm, 1, Gospel, Luke 16:19-31

Friday 5 March- Lent feria

10am Funeral Mass for David Anthony Francis *

7pm Mass Patricia Pearce (RIP) *

Reading 1, Genesis 37: 3-4, 12-13, 17-28

Responsorial Psalm, 105, Gospel, Matthew 21:33-46

Saturday 6 March - Lent feria

10am Stations of the Cross - Week 3: 'Care and Community,' prepared by the Parish Friends Group *

Reading 1, Micah 7:14-15, 18-20

Responsorial Psalm, 103 Gospel, Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

Sunday 7 March - THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

6pm Vigil Mass People of the Parish *

9.30am Mass Peter Celestine Okoro (RIP) *

11.30am Mass Noreen Carolan (Ann) *

7pm Mass Renee Yvonne Lucas (First Ann) *

* Live streamed only, no public attendance.

Women's World Day of Prayer (5 March) is an annual worldwide movement of Christian women who come together to observe a common day of prayer. Each year a different country prepares the service. In 2021, it is written by women from the Republic of Vanuatu. The theme is from Matthew chapter 7: "Build on a firm foundation" and the focus is on living wisely. Free prayer guides, activity sheets for children and other information are available [here](#).

PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches together in St Albans, this week we remember the World Day of Prayer on 5 March. We especially pray for the people of Vanuatu, the focus of this year's prayer service.

For those suffering with Coronavirus and for all the Sick including

For those who have died recently including Joe Borg, Carmen Del Romero Fernandez, David Anthony Francis, Winifred King, Bob Markham, Ciara McMahan, Lourdes Pons, Kathleen Quinn, Daphne Snaith, Francis Steven, Peter Taylor.

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

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including John Baxter, Noreen Carolan, Angela Mary Kent, Renee Yvonne Lucas, Joao Paulo Martins, Patricia McCarthy, John Taylor, Michael Theanne and Irmina Zembrzuska.

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.

Children's Stations of the Cross EWTN publish a service for primary age children entitled [The Way of the Cross for Kids](#) in a cartoon format. CAFOD have also produced [Resources and Prayers for Lent for Catholic schools](#) and include a simple [service](#) featuring photographs and information from some of the projects that CAFOD has supported.