



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

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT - 21 MARCH 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

Statement from the Presidency of the Bishops' Conference on the National Day of Reflection for COVID-19 Tuesday 23rd March 2021

We welcome the designation of Tuesday 23rd March as a National Day of Reflection to mark the anniversary of the first national lockdown with a minute's silence at midday and doorstep vigils of light at 8pm.

We ask you all to make this not only a Day of Reflection but also a Day of Prayer. In reflection we ponder on all that has taken place; in prayer we bring this to our Heavenly Father. For all who live by faith in God, reflection and prayer always go hand in hand. Prayer completes reflection. Reflection informs prayer. Prayer opens our life to its true horizon. Without prayer we live in a foreshortened world and are more easily swamped by its clamour and tragedy. Throughout this difficult year, so many have been inspired by prayer, so much effort sustained in prayer, in every place. So let us make the 23rd March truly a day of prayer.

March 2020 was the first time our churches had to be closed. It is our hope that on this day, every one of our churches will be open. We invite everyone to enter a church on this day, to reflect and pray in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. We know this will involve an extra effort, but this can be part of our important contribution to a significant moment in the life of our country. Indeed, we ask that you might invite a friend, neighbour or colleague to come to church with you as you make this visit.

There is so much on which to reflect and include in our prayer.

We reflect in sorrow on all those who have died, whether family members, friends or those unknown to us personally. We pray for them, asking our Father to welcome them into their heavenly home, the destiny for which God first gave us the gift of life.

We reflect with compassion on all those who have suffered during this last year, whether through illness, stress, financial disaster or family tensions. We pray for their ongoing resilience, courage and capacity to forgive.

We reflect with thanksgiving for the generosity, inventiveness, self-sacrifice and determination shown by so many in this most difficult of times. We pray for them, thanking God for their gifts and dedication, whether they are scientists, politicians, health workers, public servants of every kind, community leaders or steadfast family members and friends who continue to show such love and compassion.

We reflect in hope that, as the pandemic is controlled and we open up our lives again, we will gather in the lessons we have learned and build our society into a better shape, more compassionate, less marked by inequalities, more responsive to needs and deprivation. We ask for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen us in this endeavour, whether we are focussing on overcoming family breakdowns, economic recovery, or building political consensus.

Christian prayer is, of course, centred on Jesus Christ, the one who is "lifted up" before us "so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him" (John 3.13). We pray with Jesus, in him and through him, for he is the one who carries us, and our prayers, into the embracing presence of his Father. He is our comfort in sorrow, our strength in the face of need, our rejoicing in the gifts we celebrate and our hope in the face of the weighty darkness of death.

May Tuesday 23rd March be a great day of prayer that this pandemic comes to an end and that the gift of God's Holy Spirit will carry us all forward to a new and better life, both here and in the world to come.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, President and Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP, Vice-President

SACRAMENTS AND LITURGY

Public Masses From Saturday 20 March the following Masses will be open to the public:

- Saturday 6pm Mass
- Sunday 9.30am, 11.30am & 7pm Masses
- Monday 7pm Mass
- Tuesday 10am Mass
- Wednesday 7pm Mass
- Thursday 10am Mass

There is no need to pre-book a seat at weekday Masses, and places are available on a first come, first served basis.

Initially at least we are asking people to pre-book their seat at Sunday Masses. Please note that pre-booking can only be done from Monday morning for the following weekend. In order to pre-book a place for weekend masses, please email the administrator by the Thursday beforehand at stalbins@rcdow.org.uk.

Please only phone to book a place if you have no access to the internet and please ring during office hours Monday-Thursday 9am-1pm as our administrator continues to work mainly from home. All masses continue to be live streamed.

Stations of the Cross for Lent The Lent Penitential Service, incorporating Stations of the Cross as the examination of conscience, will be live-streamed from our Church on Saturday 20 March at 10am. The text of the service will be available on the website (under 'Week 5') to enable people to pray and reflect upon. The Stations for Saturday 27 March (see 'Week 6') have been prepared by the Justice and Peace Group and feature CAFOD's Way of the Cross.

Easter Garden Conscious that so many of us have lost loved ones to coronavirus and other causes this year, we would like to commemorate them in a special way in our Easter Garden. We will be planting bamboo flower shapes with the names of our deceased loved ones written on them around the rose garden in front of the presbytery. These will be close to the three crosses and will be a symbol of the new life with Christ promised by the resurrection.

If you would like to remember your loved ones in this way, please send their names into the office clearly marked 'Easter Garden' either by emailing the parish office or by posting the details through the presbytery door.

Holy Week Posters These are available in the Porch. Please take one to put in a window.

Holy Week Services All our Holy Week Services will be streamed but if you wish to attend in person you will need to pre-book a seat. Bookings for Holy Week will be taken from Tuesday 16 March. Again, please email your booking request to the parish office at stalbins@rcdow.org.uk and only phone if you have no access to the internet.

To enable as many people to attend as possible we would ask that people limit themselves to one of the services held during the Triduum itself i.e. on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday.

- **Palm Sunday:** Saturday Vigil at 6pm, Sunday Masses at 9.30am, 11.30am & 7pm
- **Maundy Thursday:** Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper 8pm
- **Good Friday:** Stations of the Cross 10am, Celebration of the Passion 3.00pm, Stations of the Cross 6pm
- **Holy Saturday:** The Easter Vigil 8pm
- **Easter Sunday:** 9.30am, 11.30am & 7pm

The Bishops of England and Wales, in line with what has been received from the Congregation in Rome, have issued guidance on the Holy Week services, which will inevitably be different due to Covid restrictions. For example, we are unable to have our normal processions, the washing of the feet, individual veneration of the cross, votive candles or communal singing.

Music for Holy Week Services We are delighted that our musicians have volunteered to lead some of the Holy Week services. Following Government and Bishops' Conference guidelines, strict safety measures will be taken to safeguard everyone present. Singing will be kept to a minimum to ensure the brevity of services and no congregational singing is allowed. Musicians will be situated in the choir loft and Perspex screens will be erected so there can be no transmission of aerosols to the congregation below, all surfaces will be sanitised after the service.

The following services will contain music:

- **Palm Sunday:** 11.30 Mass Led by Julia
- **Maundy Thursday:** 8pm Mass Led by Julia
- **Good Friday** 3pm Passion Led by Charlotte and group
- **Holy Saturday** 8pm Easter Vigil Led by Brendan R & gp
- **Easter Sunday** 9.30am Mass Led by Peter B-L and family

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 The 2020/21 programme will begin after Easter and an email has been sent out to the parents of all candidates with further details on the programme. Those 2019/20 candidates who are yet to make their First Holy Communion have also been emailed. Please contact the parish office on stalbins@rcdow.org.uk if you feel you should have received either email but have not done so.

Adult Confirmation A course will be starting after Easter. If you have not yet received the sacrament of confirmation as an adult, and would like to, please get in touch with Fr Julian juliandavies@rcdow.org.uk, or ring the parish office.

Marriages Please contact Fr Michael for marriage enquiries by emailing him at michaeloboy@rcdow.org.uk.

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

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 NEWS

Parish Pastoral Council Please click [here](#) for a summary report from the latest meeting of the PPC on 10th March. A copy can also be accessed from our website.

Parish Virtual Coffee Morning Sundays 10.30 - 11.00am Click [here](#) to join a parish coffee morning for a Zoom chat each Sunday. Alternatively copy the link below into your browser (Meeting ID 930 9372 9386 / Passcode 998690):
<https://zoom.us/j/93093729386?pwd=RzNkNm5vY1p6SDIBUUN3UkxEbnZ5QT09>

The Bible Timeline Course Have you tried to read the whole Bible and given up? Do you feel it's too big and complicated? Then come and join us on the Bible Timeline Course, a FREE world-famous course delivered online LIVE by Mauro Iannicelli from the "Come and See" evangelisation ministry. Mauro will walk us through the books of the Bible which tell the story of salvation history from Adam and Eve to Jesus Christ. Starts on 7th April 2021 at 7 to 8:40pm (Eight Wednesday evening sessions). To register and for further details, click this [link](#).

CAFOD "Big Walk for Water" By 20 March, Maureen and Stan will have completed 28 days of their Lenten challenge and have walked over 150 miles each; so far donations amount to £2000 - a fantastic total. Many, many thanks to all the generous donors to this vital cause, supplying fresh drinking water to remote communities in the poorest parts of the world. If you would like to donate, please click [here](#).

OUR SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY

Maundy Thursday Watching Until Midnight From 8pm until midnight on Maundy Thursday, 1 April 2021, everyone in our diocese is invited to join in prayer, paying a virtual visit to the Diocesan Shrine of the Blessed Sacrament at Corpus Christi, Maiden Lane, using this [link](#).

Safeguarding DBS Administrator (part time position) – Diocese of Westminster An opportunity has arisen for a suitably experienced and qualified individual to join the diocesan Safeguarding team.

The post holder will assist the DBS Officer and Safeguarding Co-ordinator. Please click [here](#) for a job specification and to apply online. The closing date for applications is 26 March.

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](#).

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.

PARISH ADMINISTRATION

Contacting the parish office In line with current government advice, our parish administrator is working mainly from home. This means that office phone may not always be manned and you may not get a reply to a voicemail immediately. The best way to contact the parish office at the moment is by emailing stalbans@rcdow.org.uk.

Mass Intentions. 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 contact you with a suggested mass date. Please note that we are currently booking mass intentions for masses taking place from mid-August 2021. The diocesan suggested Mass offering is £10.

Weekly bulletin Currently the bulletin is only 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](#).

Please keep in touch with parish news and updates via our website and social media.

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Sunday 21 March – FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

6pm Vigil Mass People of the Parish

9.30am Mass Joseph Finch (RIP)

11.30am Mass Mary Curran (Ann)

7pm Mass Ann Lynch (First Ann)

Reading 1, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Responsorial Psalm, 51

Reading 2, Hebrews 5:7-9, Gospel, John 12:20-33

Monday 22 March – Lent feria

10am Mass Anne Quinn and family (Ints) *

7pm Mass Kathleen Quinn (RIP)

Reading 1, Daniel 13:41-62

Responsorial Psalm, 23, Gospel, John 8:1-11

Tuesday 23 March – Lent feria

10am Mass Sumner family (Ints)

Reading 1, Numbers 21:4-9

Responsorial Psalm, 102, Gospel, John 8:21-30

Wednesday 24 March – Lent feria

10am Mass Patricia Falloon (RIP) *

7pm Mass Fr Peter Scott (Ints)

Reading 1, Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95

Responsorial Psalm, Daniel 3, Gospel, John 8:31-42

Thursday 25 March – THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

10am Mass Joan Edwards (RIP)

Reading 1 Isaiah 7:10-14, 8:10, Responsorial Psalm, 40

Reading 2, Hebrews 10:4-10, Gospel, Luke 1:26-38

Friday 26 March – Lent feria

10am Funeral Mass for Susan Lannon *

7pm Mass Mary Keily (RIP) *

Reading 1 Jeremiah 20:10-13

Responsorial Psalm, 18, Gospel, John 10:31-42

Saturday 27 March – Lent feria

10am Stations of the Cross - Week 6 *

Reading 1, Ezekiel 37:21-28

Psalm, Jeremiah 31: 10-13, Gospel, John 11:45-56

Sunday 28 March – PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

6pm Vigil Mass Elizabeth Lines (First Ann)

9.30am Mass Floryse Chan-Fat (Ann)

11.30am Mass People of the Parish

7pm Mass Mary Jozwiak (First Ann)

* Live streamed only, no public attendance.

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

PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches together in St Albans, this week we pray for the minister and members of Marshalswick Baptist Free Church.

For those suffering with Coronavirus and for all the Sick including

For those who have died recently including Fr Vincent John Crewe, Susan Lannon and Mary McHugh.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Mary Baxter, Joan Boak, Peter Cawdery, Floryse Chan-Fat, Mary Curran, Elizabeth Foley, Mary Jozwiak, Elizabeth Lines, Ann Lynch, Robert Mifsud and Fr Sandy Murray MSC.

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.

Right to Life Today we celebrate World Down's Syndrome Day. We pray especially for the current attempts in Northern Ireland to protect babies with Down's syndrome from abortion, that elected representatives would pursue the protection of rights for all people with disabilities, and that babies with Down's syndrome are loved and protected equally. Lord hear us.

Have you read and responded to Fr Michael's 'Vision' Statement? Please click [here](#) to read it in full.