



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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PENTECOST SUNDAY - 23 MAY 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

Fr Michael writes... The Bishops of England and Wales have issued further guidance in light of the changes to the current lockdown restrictions. From Monday 31 May the church will be open during the day for private visits. Those entering the church, either for Mass or a private visit will still need to observe the expected social distancing and wear a face mask. You will also be asked to sanitise your hands on entering and leaving the building and to sign in, leaving a name and contact detail. **We would ask, if at all possible, that people use their mobile phone and the QR code provided to register via NHS Test and Trace.**

Masses From Monday 31 May, with the exception of the Sunday Mass at Marshalswick, the full schedule of public Masses will be re-introduced. This will include the Saturday Morning Mass (as from 5 June) and the Sunday 8am Mass (as from Sunday 6 June).

Holy Communion People at home will be invited to say the prayer for Spiritual Communion but the prayer itself will not be led by the priest at the altar. The words 'The Body of Christ' will be re-introduced at the moment Holy Communion is given. When numbers demand it, Extra Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion will be asked to assist with Holy Communion. If the numbers attending Mass make it feasible, Holy Communion will be distributed at the normal time, but where there are larger numbers, the current practice of distributing Holy Communion at the end of Mass will be continued.

Collection We continue to encourage people to set up standing a standing order as the means of making their weekly contribution or to consider making it electronically via Virgin Money Giving. A contactless point in the porch makes it easy to give by card. Baskets will however be available at the back of the church for people to make cash donations.

Confessions The priests continue to be available by appointment but will also hear confessions face to face in the foyer of the Parish Centre on Saturday mornings from 10.30 am during the holy hour which will be re-introduced after Mass.

Stewards We are immensely grateful to all our stewards for all they have done. Despite the changes there is still a need to sanitise the church on a daily basis, to ensure that people observe distancing and best practice, and that we do not exceed our capacity. So, we continue to need volunteer stewards, and it's not too late to volunteer your assistance. Please email the parish office if you would like to help.

Capacity The number of guests permitted for a wedding is now 30 while the number of guests for a funeral is determined by the capacity of the church. Our capacity is currently set at 78 but can increase slightly and safely depending on the number of households that are present.

Home Communion We are now permitted to make home visits for the distribution of Holy Communion. The bishops have issued guidelines and Fr Julian will be writing out to all the Extra Ordinary Ministers who take Holy Communion to the housebound to share these guidelines with them.

Finally, in preparation for the forthcoming Parish Assembly, we will pray the Parish Assembly [prayer](#) as part of the intercessions at each Mass. Copies of the prayer will be distributed at Masses this weekend and it will also be available on our parish website.

Marian Month of May Pope Francis has invited Catholics and Marian Shrines around the world to dedicate the month of May to a marathon of prayer for an end to the Covid-19 pandemic. Let us join in prayer with Pope Francis and with people across the globe to dedicate the Marian month of May to praying for an end to the pandemic.

Right to Life As we celebrate the feast of Pentecost, we recall the fruits of the Spirit that are present in our lives. We pray that in our church's mission to serve the poor, broken and unborn, it would be anchored in love, joy, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Lord hear us.

SACRAMENTS AND LITURGY

Public Masses the following Masses are open to all:

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

We are not asking people to book places at weekday or weekend masses and seats at all public masses are available on a first come, first served basis. Please note that this may mean that capacity is reached at the busier masses, such as the Saturday evening mass and the 9.30am mass on Sunday morning. The situation will be kept under review and all masses will continue to be live streamed.

Please use the NHS Track and Trace App to record your presence in church. If this is not possible, please write your name and contact email address or phone number on a piece of paper before you come to mass and bring it with you.

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 has now begun, and registration is closed. If you have registered and have not received the emails containing the links to the 'Parent Inputs' (the most recent being in relation to chapter three), please contact the parish office on stalbans@rcdow.org.uk. If your child is part of the group from 2019/20 who will be celebrating First Holy Communion in July, and you have not yet submitted your date and time preferences, please do so as soon as possible.

Adult Confirmation If you have not yet received the sacrament of confirmation as an adult, and would like to, please contact Fr Julian at juliandavies@rcdow.org.uk, or via the parish office.

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 (care or nursing home permitting). If someone 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 NEWS

Virtual Coffee Mornings are back. It will not be long before we can meet again for a coffee and a chat after Mass, but if you can't wait, join us on-line on Sundays 10.30 - 11.00am for an informal chat. Just copy the link below into your browser or open your Zoom App using Meeting ID 930 9372 9386 / Passcode 998690 and don't forget to bring a mug of your favourite brew! Hope to see you on Sunday!

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

Parish Assembly dates for your diary As you may recall, our Parish Assembly is scheduled to be held virtually via Zoom on Saturday 12 June from 11am. Depending on pandemic restrictions, it may also be possible to hold the Assembly as a physical meeting on Saturday 3 July from 11am in the Parish Centre. We would be grateful if you could keep both dates in your diary at present. Detailed arrangements will be confirmed nearer the time, as government regulations evolve.

Susfest21 The parish is participating in the annual St Albans Sustainability festival again this year. For 2021 we have arranged a walk from the Church to St John Fisher RC School. Our theme is "Live Simply". The walk is a 2.5-mile linear walk and will have "Live Simply" posters tied to trees and lamp posts along the way: each poster will have a message encouraging us to think about living more simply - for the benefit of ourselves, our community and the earth - and to engage children in helping to spot them. Our walk can be completed in either direction and at any time between 1 and 6 June. It is, of course, possible to complete parts of the walk. You are also encouraged to stop for a picnic in Clarence Park, the Wick or in the Sherwood Avenue recreation ground. If you would like to walk it, please follow the link [here](#) or pick up a copy of the map from the church porch. This walk has been arranged by the parish Justice & Peace group.

Bethlehem to Nazareth Virtual Pilgrimage We did it! All 8 parishioners who walked the pilgrimage have reached Nazareth before Pentecost Sunday. Some of the team have even walked back to Bethlehem! You have helped us to raise £2,300 for the Friends of the Holy Land's campaign to raise funds to enable vulnerable children in the Holy Land to receive and education. So far, we have raised enough to cover the costs of educating two children for one year at the School of Joy in Bethlehem. It's not too late to donate: just click [here](#) or post a donation in an envelope through the presbytery door, marked 'FHL Virtual Pilgrimage'. Thank you so much to everyone who has supported this great cause. Anne, David, Helen, Melanie, Mike, Richard, Sheila, Sylvia.

APF (Missio) local secretary for the parish The present local secretary (Tony Hughes) is stepping down after eight years because of mobility problems and we would like to hear from anyone who is interested in taking over from him. Please contact the parish office if you are able to help.

Ministers of the Word On this Feast of Pentecost when the Apostles first received the gift of the Holy Spirit and began to proclaim the Good News of Jesus, we celebrate those in our community who have been called to serve as Ministers of the Word and continue to proclaim the Sacred Scriptures. Ministers of the Word are invited to renew their personal commitment to this service in church at any mass on 22/23 May or in their own homes during the live-streamed Mass.

Parish Pastoral Council Please click [here](#) for a summary report from the meeting of the PPC on 10 March.

OUR SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY

Christian Aid Week 2021 This focused on the climate crisis, which is already having a big impact on the poorest countries and their citizens. For instance, there are communities in Kenya where families struggle to survive without a reliable water source. Every day, they walk further, dig deeper and build stronger to survive. Donations can be made via this [link](#). Or grab a cuppa and say the [tea-time prayer](#) in support of Christian Aid.

Vaccination cost By now, many of us will have had one or two jabs. We are lucky. Yet much of the world remains unvaccinated. If possible, please consider donating the cost of your jabs to help others in need. Please click [here](#) to donate or google COVAX for further information.

CAFOD Appeal As coronavirus brings devastation across India, CAFOD is working with experienced local Church agency, Caritas India, to provide vital support to poor and marginalized communities. Donations to CAFOD's Coronavirus Appeal will help Caritas India distribute PPE kits to frontline health workers, promote COVID & vaccine awareness campaigns, and set up isolation & quarantine centres. You can donate online [here](#). Please keep praying for the people of India and all affected by the pandemic.

Update from the London Jesuit Centre The London Jesuit Centre offers:

- an opportunity for prayer, Saturday Retreats at 2.00-4.30pm. The next one is 19 June.
- Retreats in Daily Life in June and in July.
- Brian Purfield's 'Introduction to the Bible' beginning on 21 June. He is offering morning or evening classes. Booking has opened - please click this [link](#) for details.

We are also delighted to announce that, following the easing of lockdown restrictions, the Heythrop Library, one of the largest specialist theology and philosophy libraries in Europe, is now open Mondays to Thursdays.

Christian Bookshop The 'Way Inn' bookshop in Berkhamsted is keeping the presence of a specialist independent Christian shop in our High Street. We are pleased to welcome old friends and new at our shop behind the Post Office, where we offer gifts and a wide range of cards for every occasion including Baptism, Holy Communion & Confirmation.

West Herts Hospitals NHS Trust Redevelopment The Trust has launched the second phase of its engagement as it progresses plans for its three hospitals ahead of significant funding for new and refurbished buildings. Public meetings will run through May and provide an opportunity for patients, carers and local people to hear more about the survey results from the first phase and how the trust is responding. Further information is included in the [press release](#). All meetings take place online and include time for the public to ask questions. Meeting dates are as follows:

- Wednesday 19 May 9am
- Monday 24 May 1pm
- Wednesday 26 May 4pm

A new engagement document has also been published detailing the proposed changes on explaining which services are likely to move and which will remain at their current location. Please let us know via the feedback form (deadline midday Wednesday 30 June) anything we can do to reduce the impact of service moves and how we can improve the patient experience through any moves. Meeting links are published on the trust's website. The Trust is also offering to present to local community groups - please contact the redevelopment team via [email](#).

SUPPORTING OUR PARISH

Donating to our Parish 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. Please see our [website](#) or click [here](#) for a standing order, gift aid form and our bank details. 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 stalbins@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. We will contact you with a suggested date. We are currently booking mass intentions for masses from mid-October 2021 and the Diocesan suggested donation is £10.

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Sunday 23 May - PENTECOST SUNDAY

6pm Vigil Mass Freda & Margaret Clancy (Ann)

9.30am Mass Antonia and Francis Loh (Ints)

11.30am Mass People of the Parish

7pm Mass Terry Mahabir (RIP)

Reading 1, Acts 2:1-11, Responsorial Psalm, 104

Reading 2, Galatians 5:16-25, Gospel, John 20:19-23

Monday 24 May - The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church

10am Mass Stella Cowley (RIP) *

7pm Mass Cynthia Chrimes (RIP)

Reading 1, Acts 1:12-14

Responsorial Psalm, 50, Gospel, Mark 10:28-31

Tuesday 25 May - St Bede the Venerable

10am Mass Peter Smith (RIP)

Reading 1, Acts 20:17-27,

Responsorial Psalm, 68, Gospel, John 17:1-11

Wednesday 26 May - St Phillip Neri

10am Mass Fearghal Bergin (Ints) *

7pm Mass Tom Bagge (Ann)

Reading 1, Ecclesiasticus 36:1-2, 5-7, 13-19

Responsorial Psalm, 79, Gospel, Mark 10:32-45

Thursday 27 May - OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE ETERNAL HIGH PRIEST

10am Mass Mary Bergin (Ann)

Reading 1, Hebrews 10:11-18

Responsorial Psalm, 110, Gospel, Mark 14:22-25

Friday 28 May - Feria

10am Mass Eric Gosling (RIP) *

7pm Mass Encarnacion Gonzales Jurado (RIP) *

Reading 1, Ecclesiasticus 44:1,9-13

Responsorial Psalm, 149, Gospel, Mark 11:11-26

Saturday 29 May - Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

Reading 1, Ecclesiasticus 51:17-27

Responsorial Psalm, 19 Gospel, Mark 11:27-33

Sunday 30 May - THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

6pm Vigil Mass People of the Parish

9.30am Mass Deceased members of the Bergin & Cawley families (RIP)

11.30am Mass John Darby (RIP)

7pm Mass Encarnacion Gonzales (RIP)

Live streamed only, no public attendance. *

PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches together in St Albans, this week we pray for all the members of the Vineyard Christian Fellowship.

For those suffering with Coronavirus and for all the Sick including

For those who have died recently including Richard Paul Diffenthal, Leslie Fielding and Angela Tocknell.

(Please note that, from 17 May, attendance at funerals is determined by the capacity of the Church which is under review but currently fixed at 78.)

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Tom Bagge, Mary Bergin, Frank Burke, Freda and Margaret Clancy, Dorothy Salisbury.

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 the latest 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.

Our Lord Jesus Christ the Eternal High Priest This feast was introduced in 2018 and focuses firstly on Jesus' Priestly Office. He is considered the model for believers, and for the clergy, in particular, with priests acting "In the person of Christ". The laity are thus urged to pray that priests would be more like Christ, the compassionate and trustworthy high priest, ever-living to intercede for humanity before The Father.

St Amphibalus Our Parish Assembly prayer asks St Amphibalus to intercede for us. He is the priest sheltered by Alban, England's first martyr during Roman persecution between 209 and 313. The 14th-century Shrine of St Amphibalus, destroyed during the Dissolution in 1539, has just been returned to St Albans Cathedral after a two-year-long restoration [programme](#). The new carving includes a mask-wearing gargoyle. The sub-dean of the Cathedral explains "The masked figure reminds us that the history of St Albans stretches forwards as well as backwards, and pilgrims will be able to mark the latest chapter in the history of this Cathedral alongside Amphibalus and Alban, who were there at the very beginning."