



Church Website

## NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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**SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – 9 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)

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

*We are a Fairtrade parish*

*Fr Michael writes...*

**Thank You** First and foremost and I want thank those who have responded to the vision document on 'Welcome, Worship and Witness' either individually or as part of one of the feedback sessions that have gathered more recently. If you have not yet had chance to feedback on the vision, please do so as soon as possible: I want to be sure that as many parishioners as possible have input. The Vision document is still available on the parish website home page and hard copies are available in the porch.

**Next Steps** I very much hope that the opportunity for feedback has achieved something of what an ordinary parish assembly would have achieved; allowing people to share ideas about the way forward. Certainly, the feedback thus far has given me much food for thought, but I don't propose to respond individually to the individual or group feedback that I have received. However, the Assembly planning group has asked an independent external facilitator, who has worked with many parish groups, to provide a report summarising the mood of what has been received and highlighting any particular issues or ideas that stand out for her. I hope to share this report with you by the end of May.

In light of the feedback and this report a set of 'next steps', with specific suggestions for the way forward, will be presented to the Parish Assembly under the three headings of Welcome, Worship and Witness. My hope is that the Assembly will be an opportunity to reflect on how we might go about implementing these next steps and the 'facilitating' groups who will flesh out the detail of what it is to be a welcoming, worshipping and witnessing community.

**Time and Date of the Parish Assembly** via Zoom on 12<sup>th</sup> June and / or physical meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 11am to 1pm. Please hold both dates in your diary for now.

**Format of the Parish Assembly** Each of the priority areas will be introduced using a short video clip after which I will briefly propose the 'next steps' (drawn together in light of the feedback already received). There will then be an opportunity for initial reactions. After we have gone through each of the priority areas participants will be invited to join one of three interest groups 'welcome, worship or witness' to continue the discussion on the 'next steps' for that particular priority and its facilitating groups. After these break-out sessions there will be an invitation to volunteer for membership of one or other of the facilitating groups - an invitation which will also be extended to parishioners unable to participate in the Assembly itself.

**Finally** It is possible that the forthcoming Parish Assembly and the reflection on the suggested priorities and next steps will suggest a change in the existing pattern of strategy groups and make-up of the Parish Council. As such the Assembly will be asked to endorse the following proposal:

- That the new Parish Pastoral Council be made up of a representative from each of the new facilitating groups
- That a mechanism needs to be found whereby the representation of the facilitating groups on the Parish Pastoral Council is balanced by representation of the individual Saturday evening/Sunday Parish Masses
- That one of the first tasks of the next Parish Council will be a review and revision of the existing constitution.

**Right to Life** We pray for all unborn children diagnosed with disabilities, we pray for protection for them and their mothers from the pressures of society to have an abortion, and that they would instead experience overwhelming support by all who surround them. 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 no longer asking people to book places at weekday or weekend masses and seats at all public masses will now be 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 and bring it with you.

**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** The 2020/21 programme has now begun and registration has finally closed. If you have registered and have not received the emails containing the links to the last three 'Parent Inputs' please contact the parish office on [stalbans@rcdow.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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](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 (care or nursing home permitting). Currently we are not allowed into Watford General Hospital (01923 244366.) 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

**Priests' Training Fund** Thank you for your generosity in relation to the Priest Training Fund collection. The total amount received from the collection was £1,168.85.

**Holy Places** The total collected by the parish was £235.95.

**Catholic Communications Network** The Catholic Church celebrates World Communications Day on 16 May. It's a day when we pray for those who work in the media and we have a second collection after Mass next weekend to support the Church's important work in this area.

**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=RzNkNm5vY1p6SDlBUUN3UkxEbnZ5QT09>

**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.

**Bethlehem to Nazareth Virtual Pilgrimage - Supporting vulnerable children in the Holy Land** - A group of parishioners are walking 84 miles following a virtual pilgrimage route from Bethlehem to Nazareth before Pentecost Sunday. The walk is to raise funds for the Friends of the Holy Land appeal to enable vulnerable children to receive an education, without which, they can end up living on the streets. A big thank you to everyone who has sponsored already: over £1,500 has been raised to date. If you would like to donate to our Parish Team, please click [here](#) to access the fundraising site or by post a donation in an envelope through the presbytery door, marked 'FHL Virtual Pilgrimage'. If you would like to join the pilgrimage team and help raise funds, please click on the link above and follow the guide. You will be able to walk at your own pace and you will be most welcome. Thank you - Anne Myles, David Myles, Helen Bassill, Melanie O'Neill, Mike White, Richard O'Neill, Sheila Clegg, Sylvia White.

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

**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.

## OUR SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY

**Thy Kingdom Come: Lighting up the world in prayer - 13 to 23 May** Once again, alongside other Catholic dioceses, the Diocese of Westminster pleased to be participating in this timely ecumenical initiative to help us reflect more deeply on our journey with Christ and personal call to discipleship. A variety of rich Catholic resources are available for use in our parish communities, which can enable us to prepare more fully to celebrate the great Feast of Pentecost. Please click [here](#) for a link to the website. In a year that has been beset by many personal challenges and worries, we hope that these resources may provide a useful source of spiritual nourishment and reflection.

We would like to highlight the following key resources:

- **Pentecost Novena:** A beautiful way to prepare ourselves for the joy of Pentecost, This [resource](#) is available as a download, booklet, or podcast.
- **Journey with Mary:** This special [playlist](#) has been created for us to journey with Mary from the Ascension to Pentecost. What would we say, or share with Mary?
- **Praying for 5:** During the novena which 5 friends, family, neighbours, who may be away from the Church, or have yet to discover the love offered them by Jesus would you pray for. Simply do so throughout the day and ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit for them. A simple [Prayer Journal](#) has been produced to support our personal prayer during the novena.
- **For Families:** There are some delightful resources to help families, particularly those with young children praying Thy Kingdom Come. To explore what is on offer please click [here](#).

Please click [here](#) for more information on related events in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire including an ecumenical online service of prayer on 19 May with prayers led by Bishop Paul.

Churches Together in St Albans are also taking part with our annual 24 hour prayer marathon – can you help? Visit <https://ctstalbans.org.uk/> and book a slot to add your prayer time in, and/or join one of the zoom prayer events. There is so much to pray for! Thank you!

**Vaccinations** 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.

**Covid-19 Vaccine Confidence Webinar** A Covid-19 vaccine confidence webinar has been organized for the of Dioceses of Brentwood, Southwark and Westminster, with the cooperation of Hertfordshire County Council and Hammersmith & Fulham Council, and other local authorities. It will take place on Saturday 15 May 2021 from 10am to 11.30am and will feature a panel of eminent medical experts led by Prof Kevin Fenton, Regional Director of Public Health London. The panel will share the latest information on COVID-19 vaccination. There will be an opportunity to ask questions anonymously. To join the webinar, click [here](#) using passcode: 546617.

**CAFOD** As coronavirus brings devastation across India, CAFOD is working with experienced local Church agency, Caritas India, to provide vital support to poor and marginalised 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.

**May Devotion to Our Lady at the Shrine of our Lady of Willesden** This will take place on Sunday 9 May at 3.30pm at the Shrine of Our Lady of Willesden. It will include Holy Rosary and Benediction, with music from the Shrine Singers. Due to Covid Restrictions only a limited number of seats will be available for reservation. The Devotion will be livestreamed. For a link to the livestream and booking of available seats, please click [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. 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 [stalbans@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:stalbans@rcdow.org.uk).

## MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

### Sunday 9 MAY - SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

6pm Vigil Mass Barrie Witchard (RIP)  
9.30am Mass Christina Conefrey (RIP)  
11.30am Mass Nancy & Timothy Donoghue (first ann)  
7pm Mass Patrick Mcconnell (RIP)  
Reading 1, Acts 10:25-26, 34-35,44-48, Psalm, 98  
Reading 2, 1 John 4:7-10, Gospel, John 15:9-17

### Monday 10 May - Easter feria

10am Mass Anthony Murphy (RIP)\*  
7pm Mass Mrs M Coghlan (RIP)  
Reading 1, Acts 16:11-15  
Responsorial Psalm, 149, Gospel, John 15:26-16:4

### Tuesday 11 May - Easter feria

10am Mass Member of the Witchard family (Ints)  
Reading 1, Acts 16:22-34  
Responsorial Psalm, 138, Gospel, John 16:5-11

### Wednesday 12 May - Easter feria

10am Mass Annie Coakley (first anniversary) \*  
7pm Mass Tony Moran (RIP)  
Reading 1, Acts 17:15,22-18:1  
Responsorial Psalm, 148, Gospel, John 16:12-15

### Thursday 13 May - THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

10am Mass Claudio Frascchetti (first anniversary)  
Reading 1, Acts 1:11, Responsorial Psalm, 46  
Reading 2, Ephesians 1:17-23, Gospel, Mark 16:15-20

### Friday 14 May - ST MATTHIAS

10am Mass Anne-Marie Hall (RIP) \*  
7pm Mass Stella Cowley (RIP) \*  
Reading 1, Acts 1:15-17, 20-26  
Responsorial Psalm, 113, Gospel, John 15:9-17

### Saturday 15 May - Easter feria

Reading 1, Acts 18:23-28  
Responsorial Psalm, 47, Gospel, John 16:23-28

### Sunday 16 May - SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

6pm Vigil Mass Fran Beard (RIP)  
9.30am Mass Bernadette Witchard (RIP)  
11.30am Mass Sheila Doohan (RIP)  
7pm Mass People of the Parish  
Live streamed only, no public attendance. \*

## PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches together in St Albans, this week we pray for minister, elders and members of Trinity United Reform Church.

For those suffering with Coronavirus and for all the Sick including

For those who have died recently including Kathleen Angela Barnes, Cesar Lapuente, Marion Nash and Derite Whyte.

(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 Mary Bythman, Frank Burke, Annie Coakley, Nancy Donoghue, Timothy Donoghue, Claudio Frascchetti and Mira Murawski.

*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.

**St Matthias, Apostle - 14 May** Matthias was not one of the Twelve; but after the death of Judas Iscariot, lots were drawn to see which of two candidates should take his place: the choice fell on Matthias. Nothing is known for certain about his subsequent history. Drawing lots to select a candidate for an office was a recognised Jewish custom and was not a substitute for human decision - human beings had chosen Matthias as a candidate- but as a way of putting the final choice into the hands of God. When we attain some responsible position, we would do well to remember that we have got there because of the people we have met and the things we have found ourselves doing, and, more fundamentally, because of the gifts and talents that God has given us. These things are essentially random: like Matthias, we have been chosen by lot.

**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. Please note that we are currently booking mass intentions for masses taking place from the end of September 2021. The diocesan suggested Mass offering is £10.