



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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12TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - 20 JUNE 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 Julian writes...

Sometimes I remind those asking for baptism that seeking baptism or being baptised is a criminal offence and can earn the death penalty in certain countries of the world. This withdrawal of life is in stark contradiction to the free offer of life in Jesus Christ and his victory over death to those who repent and follow him, which is the essence of baptism.

Today we remember one of our patron martyrs, the proto-martyr of England, St Alban who underwent a baptism of water and blood near here in the third century AD by being executed for sheltering a Christian priest and refusing to worship pagan idols.

When it comes to matters of conscience whether it be the conviction of one's faith on this or any other issue, one has to follow conscience. A conscience which doesn't respect God given life is no conscience. Recent moves to further withdraw the right of life to the weakest members of our society is a violation of conscience. No Christian should become an accessory to the denial of the very basic rights and innate dignity of our neighbour whether through human trafficking, slavery, abortion or any other means at the hands of what St John Paul II described as the prevailing culture of death. If Christ died for us and offers us life in all its fullness, then he did so not just for the physically healthy but for all, including those who are seen as the most dispensable members of society.... the impoverished, the elderly, the sick, the yet to be born, and by implication you and me.

With Pope Francis we denounce the 'tyrannical dominion of an economic logic that excludes and sometimes kills, and of which so many today are victims, beginning with our elderly'. We consider our societies to be so civilised yet in this respect they are depraved, dehumanising and morally bankrupt.

This Sunday we celebrate the annual Day of Life, which St John Paull II inaugurated to profile the gift of life from conception to natural death. We are invited to highlight care for the sick and dying, and promote respect for life in all its vulnerability. We can do this not least by giving generously to the special collection today which will be distributed by the Bishops to relevant concerns, and by praying for the overthrow of Baroness Meacher's bill.

While the heroic efforts in the pandemic to value and save life is to be applauded, the intensifying attempts to legalise assisted dying currently in process stand in sharp contradiction. The 'false compassion' of assisted dying as Pope Francis calls it, is an unjust response to 'the immense value of the sick person', who deserves to be treated with love, dignity and proper palliative and spiritual care until the point of natural death.

As Christians, to cherish the memory of the martyrs such as Alban but to close our eyes to the encroaching massacre of holy innocence around us is little more than collaborating with the forces of darkness not light.

St Alban pray for us....

Welcoming all new parishioners Please see the new [page](#) on our website which we hope will welcome and provide useful information for those who are new to our parish. We also have a new online New Parishioner Registration Form which can be found on that webpage. Please complete this short online form if you have not already registered as a new parishioner at Ss Alban and Stephen so that we can add you to our parish records and welcome you to our parish community.

SACRAMENTS AND LITURGY

Mass With the exception of the 9am Sunday Morning Mass at Marshalswick and the Friday evening Exposition, we have returned to the usual pattern of weekday and Sunday Services All Masses are open to the public and no advance booking is required.

Hand Hygiene and Distancing We continue to ask people to wear a face mask, to sanitise their hands on entering and leaving the church, to maintain their distance from others and to record their presence by either using the NHS Trace & Trace app, bringing a piece of paper with your name and contact details on it, or using one of our Visitor Cards.

Seating Capacity The seating capacity for the church is determined by the need for distancing and is influenced by the number of individuals and households present at any one time. Following a meeting of our Re-opening Planning Group the seating capacity has been fixed at between 120-150, with a maximum of 6 people or 1 household per bench.

Holy Communion Going forward the distribution of Holy Communion at our weekday Masses will take place at the usual time. At weekends however it will be distributed after the final blessing and there will be two distribution points at the front. When coming up for Holy Communion please do not crowd into the centre aisle. Please process up a row at a time and in an orderly way, maintaining single file and a distance from the person in front.

Offertory Collection We continue to encourage people to give by Standing Order, Virgin Money Giving or by using the contactless point in the porch, however if you wish to make a cash offering as you leave, please use the box next to the font or the baskets/buckets at the church door.

Music at Mass We are delighted that we have been able to reintroduce music into the liturgy at most weekend Masses, although the 6pm and 8am Masses will continue to be quiet celebrations. Our regular groups and singers in church will be augmented by musicians from Marshalswick whilst their Mass centre is closed. Unfortunately, the choir are not currently able to participate, and no congregational singing is allowed.

Private Prayer The church is open from 8am until 7pm or after evening Mass. People are welcome to visit at any time, but will need to sign in either by using the NHS Track and Trace app, bringing a piece of paper with your name and contact details on it, or completing a Visitor's Card. If you make a visit during the day, we ask that you use the leaning materials available to sanitise the seat and surfaces you have touched.

Home Communions We are now permitted to make home visits for the distribution of Holy Communion. The bishops' guidelines have been shared with the Extra Ordinary Ministers who take Holy Communion to the housebound.

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](mailto:parish@rcdow.org.uk) the parish office if you would like to help.

Sacrament of Reconciliation Fr Michael or Fr Julian will continue to be available for confession on request. In addition, a priest will be available during the Saturday Holy Hour when confessions will be heard in the downstairs meeting rooms in the Parish Centre between 10.30am and 11.30am.

Sacraments of First Holy Communion and Marriage Please contact Fr Michael for any enquiries by emailing michaeloboy@rcdow.org.uk.

Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation For initial enquiries please phone the parish office or email Fr Julian on juliandavies@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

Day for Life The retiring collection this weekend will be in support of 'Day for Life.' This day, inaugurated by St. John Paul II, presents an opportunity to pray for the gift of life from conception to natural death, to raise awareness of the precious gift of life, and to support the work of protecting life in its most vulnerable stages through the annual collection. This assists prolife organisations who raise awareness, engage in parliamentary work and pastoral outreach. These funds are distributed by the Department of Social Justice of the Bishops' Conference. More information, including a message from Bishop John Sherrington, the Lead Bishop for Life Issues for the Church in England and Wales, can be found on the Parish and Day for Life [websites](http://www.dayforlife.org.uk).

The Alban Pilgrimage 2021 The Alban Pilgrimage will re-enact the story of Alban, Britain's first saint, and Amphibalus on Sunday, 27 June at 3pm. This year the pilgrimage will take the original route from St Michael's Church to St Alban's Cathedral, leaving St Michael's at 3pm. There will be a Pilgrimage Evensong at the Cathedral at 4pm. Hope to see you there!

Parish Pastoral Council Please click [here](#) for a summary report from the meeting of the PPC on 19 May.

OUR SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY

National Day of Prayer and Fasting for Life On Wednesday 23 June, the Vigil of St John the Baptist, please pray and fast for the end of abortion and euthanasia in this Country. On this month's Day of Prayer and Fasting for Life, we are especially asking you to fast and pray for the end of DIY abortions at home. Please join in [here](#) and invite others.

Churches Together Summer Forum: Justice & Prisons - The Churches Together Summer Forum on 23 June 8:00-9:30pm will be on Justice and Prisons. This is a topic very much in the media at the moment. A panel will fill us in on the state of Justice and Prisons and help to answer questions in a general discussion. See [here](#) for details.

Missio Pauline Marie Jaricot, the founder of APF, of which the Red Box is part, is to be officially recognised as 'Blessed' next year. It is the first step towards her being recognised as a saint. The celebration will take place in May 2022 in Lyon, France but celebrations will take place in England and Wales also. Please click [here](#) to see a copy of the latest Missio Impact Report, showing what has been achieved thanks to Red Box holders. The present local secretary of Missio (Tony Hughes) is stepping down after eight years. Please contact the parish office if you might consider taking on this role. Full training and support are available through Missio.

Fratelli Tutti On 4 October 2020, the feast of St Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis released the third encyclical of his papacy. This letter, sent directly from our Holy Father in Rome to Catholics all over the world, is entitled, 'Fratelli Tutti,' meaning "all brothers and sisters," and, according to the Vatican News website, it 'aims to promote a universal aspiration toward fraternity and social friendship.'

The full text of the encyclical can be found [here](#) A study guide, produced by the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns and offering key points and quotes from each chapter of Fratelli Tutti, together with reflection questions, can be found [here](#). The Spring 2021 edition of the Columban Missionaries 'Vocations for Justice' magazine also includes an editorial and further reflection on Pope Francis's encyclical.

'Vocation for Justice' is a 12-page magazine sent out three times a year and is viewable [online](#). Work for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) is at the heart of mission in all of the countries where Columban missionaries are based. The magazine features various articles concerning the four Columban JPIC priorities of Environmental Justice, Migration, Economic Justice and Peace.

Communities for Refugees More than fifty parishes in England and Wales, have welcomed refugee families under the Community Sponsorship Programme, which the Church was actively involved in designing and promoting. The programme was suspended for over a year due to Covid but has now reopened and forms a part of the new UK Resettlement Scheme. Community Sponsorship provides an opportunity, in the words of Pope Francis, to 'welcome, protect, promote and integrate' refugees. On Monday 14th June 6pm - 7.30pm a webinar for Catholics in England and Wales on Community Sponsorship will be hosted by CSAN and Reset. (CSAN is the official agency for Catholic Social Action in England and Wales. Reset is the scheme's national training provider.) To register click [here](#). Pope Francis (World Day for Migrants and Refugees 2021) says, "We are all in the same boat, and we are called to commit ourselves so that there are no more walls that separate us, so that there are no more others, but only one us."

PARISH ADMINISTRATION

Gift Aid We will shortly be submitting our gift aid claim for the year to 5 April 2021. If you have previously gift aided your standing order or envelope donations but are not longer able to gift aid your contributions, please contact the parish office so that we can amend our records.

Donating to our Parish Please consider making your offertory contribution by standing order and gift aiding your donations, if you do not already do 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.

SUPPORTING OUR PARISH

Contacting the parish office Our parish administrator is working from home on Tuesdays and Thursdays and is contactable on 07869 680223 on these days. 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. We will contact you with a suggested date. We are currently booking mass intentions for masses from October 2021 and the Diocesan suggested donation is £10.

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Sunday 20 June – ST ALBAN

6pm Vigil Mass People of the parish
8am Mass Michael Barrett (RIP)
9.30am Mass Peter Celestine Okoro (RIP)
11.30am Mass Giuseppe and Linda Marchese (Ints)
7pm Mass Ita O'Mahoney (Ann)
Reading 1, 2 Timothy 2:8-13, 3:10-12, Psalm, 123
Reading 2, 2 Corinthians 5:14-17, Gospel, John 12:24-26

Monday 21 June – St Aloysius Gonzaga

10am Funeral Mass for Lorna Ashan
7pm Mass Joe and June Borg (RIP)
Reading 1, Genesis 12:1-9
Responsorial Psalm, 33, Gospel, Matthew 7:1-5

Tuesday 22 June – SS JOHN FISHER & THOMAS MORE

10am Mass Giovanni Batista Fabrizi (RIP)
Reading 1, 2 Maccabees 6:18,21,24-31
Responsorial Psalm, 31, Gospel, Matthew 24:4-13

Wednesday 23 June – St Etheldreda

10am Mass Christine Owens (RIP)
7pm Mass Maureen Rowland (Ann)
Reading 1, 2 Maccabees 6:18,21,24-31
Responsorial Psalm, 31, Gospel, Matthew 24:4-13

Thursday 24 June – BIRTHDAY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

10am Mass James Moore (RIP)
Reading 1, Isaiah 49:1-6, Responsorial Psalm, 139
Reading 2, Acts 13:22-26, Gospel, Luke 1:57-66,80

Friday 25 June – feria

10am Mass Margaret Sweeney (RIP)
7pm Mass Bernadette Witchard (RIP)
Reading 1, Genesis 17:1,9-10,15-22
Responsorial Psalm, 128, Gospel, Matthew 8:1-4

Saturday 26 June – feria

10am Mass Eric Harber (RIP)
10.30-11.30am Exposition with opportunity for Confession
Reading 1, Genesis 18:1-15
Responsorial Psalm, Luke 1, Gospel, Matthew 8:5-17

Sunday 27 June – 13TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

6pm Vigil Mass Brian Page (RIP)
8am Mass Michael Barrett (RIP)
9.30am Mass People of the parish
11.30am Mass Jim Pringle (RIP)
7pm Mass Winifred Ann King (RIP)

PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches together in St Albans, this week we pray for the ministers and members of Marlborough Road Methodist Church.

For those suffering with Coronavirus and for all the Sick including

For those who have died recently including Lorna Ashan, Margaret Christoforou, Debra Cooper, Margaret Kitching and Steven O'Leary.

(Please note that attendance at funerals is determined by the capacity of the Church.)

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Maureen Rowland and Ita O'Mahoney

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.

Right to Life As we celebrate Father's Day, we pray for all fathers who are expecting a child. That they would find peace in their changing circumstances and be a source of love and support for the child's mother as they prepare for their child to enter the world. Lord hear us.

St Alban St Alban is widely regarded as the first British martyr. Legends say that he was a Roman soldier at Verulamium. Alban, a pagan, is said to have sheltered a priest called Amphibalus who was fleeing persecution. Alban was so moved by the priest's faith that he asked to be told more about Christianity – a forbidden religion. Alban took the priest's cloak and allowed him to escape. Roman soldiers arrested Alban. Alban refused to sacrifice to the Roman gods and declared: 'I am Alban and I worship and adore the true and living God, who created all things.' The magistrate ordered that Alban should therefore receive the punishment due to the priest. He was taken up a hill to the site of execution where he was beheaded. Legend has it that Alban's head rolled down the hill and where it came to rest a fountain sprang up. Alban's grave became a place of pilgrimage and a shrine remains today in St Alban's Abbey. Alban is the patron saint of converts, refugees and torture victims. The Prayer to St Albans can be accessed [here](#).