



Church Website

## NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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**13<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - 27 JUNE 2021**



VirginMoneyGiving

Parish Team: Fr Michael O'Boy (Parish Priest) Fr Julian Davies (Assistant Priest)  
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*We are a Fairtrade parish*

### 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE RESTORATION OF THE PERMANENT DIACONATE - 3 JULY

*Deacon Steve writes...* It seems appropriate as we approach the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its restoration to pen a few words about the permanent diaconate, especially as one of our parishioners, Brendan Day, hopes to be ordained as a permanent deacon on Saturday 24 July in Westminster Cathedral.

The diaconate is not new to the Church. St. Irenaeus discovers its beginnings in the Acts of the Apostles (6:1-6) which speaks of 'seven good men' to assist the apostles in their mission. Deacons played a prominent role in the Early Church, assisting the earliest bishops and popes. In 1 Tim 3:1-13 there is a formal description of the office of the deacon and how bishops and deacons are to act, while the early Church Fathers wrote extensively about the important role and function of the deacon. By the 4th century the roles of deacon and priest changed gradually due to the legalization of Christianity and rapid growth of the Church. In the absence of a bishop, priests were given increasing authority over local communities, creating a greater demand for priests. From around the seventh century onwards the Permanent Diaconate went into decline becoming 'a steppingstone to priesthood' and losing its distinctiveness.

During World War II discussions arose in the priest cell blocks of German concentration camps, such as Dachau, about the need to reinstitute the permanency of the diaconate, making the order as present as it was in the ancient Church. The theological discussion continued and at the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) it was determined that the permanent diaconate be reinstated (restored).

Like bishops and priests, deacons are 'ordinary' ministers of Holy Communion and, in addition to preaching and assisting at the altar during the Eucharist, may officiate at baptisms, marriages and funerals, and administer blessings. Historically, deacons had a unique relationship with the bishop, serving as his eyes, ears and mouth, but it is clear from very early on that they had a particular role with regards to charity. In 258AD therefore, when the deacon and martyr, St. Lawrence, was asked by the Roman authorities to reveal the Church's treasures, he gathered together the poor and the sick, describing them as 'the treasures of the Church'. Thus in 1972 Pope Paul VI stated that the Permanent Diaconate should be the driving force for the Church's service towards the local Christian communities and a 'sign or sacrament of the Lord Jesus himself who came not to be served but to serve.'

In 1993 Pope St John Paul II reminded us that, *'The deacon in no way diminishes the role of lay people .... On the contrary, the deacon's tasks include that of promoting and sustaining the apostolic activities of the laity'*.

More recently, Pope Francis has spoken at length about the diaconate. Referring to the earliest deacons, he reminded us that they were not chosen because they were experts in business, but because they were honest men of good repute, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom; and that the ministry of service they were ordained to through the laying on of hands is to be understood as a gift, not a job, a contract or a function.

Deacons are not second-level priests. They are part of the clergy called to live their vocation in and with their family. As the Catechism reminds us, they have a particular identity, and are indelibly marked at ordination, just as bishops and priests are marked at ordination, and all of us at baptism; *'Deacons share in Christ's mission and grace in a special way. The Sacrament of Holy Orders marks them with an imprint (character) which cannot be removed, and which configures them to Christ, who made himself the 'deacon or servant of all''*.

I have been a permanent deacon for twelve years. It has been truly wonderful to serve in our parish and diocese. Calling on the intercession of St Stephen and St Lawrence, deacons and martyrs, let us pray for all deacons and deacons to be. May they be faithful in their service to the Word and the poor, sharing the love which Christ first gave to us through the Holy Spirit at our baptism.

## 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 in church will be augmented by musicians from Marshalswick whilst their Mass centre is closed. Unfortunately, singing by the choir or congregation is not permitted.

**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. Please put paper containing contact details in the labelled black box in the porch. If you make a visit during the day, we ask that you use the cleaning materials available to sanitise the seat and surfaces you have touched.

**Home Communion** 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:parishoffice@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](mailto: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](mailto:juliandavies@rcdow.org.uk).

**Confirmation 2021** The entry for this year's delayed confirmation course for 2021 is now closed. The enrolment mass will be on September 26th at 6pm.

**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

**Parish Assembly 3 July** We had hoped to have a face to face meeting on Saturday 3 July for those who could not attend the virtual session on Saturday 12 June. One of the reasons for this additional face to face meeting on 3 July was to cater for those who do not have access to zoom. This being so, and to enable those without access to the relevant technology to participate, we have decided to re-schedule the face to face meeting and to hold it in the Parish Centre at 7.30pm on Friday 23 July. Of course much depends on the relaxation of current restrictions, but I very much hope that we can hold this meeting before the Summer break.

Some of those who attended the virtual assembly indicated a willingness to join one of the following: a Social Committee, Communications Group, Adult Faith Formation Group, Parish Friends, Youth and Young families Group.

Once we have held the face to face meeting in July, and assuming the consensus established at the virtual meeting remains, we will look to recruiting additional members of these parish groups. Moreover, we will look to establish three of the four working parties mentioned in the proposed pastoral priorities. One to consider the experience of new parishioners, another to look at the Church Porch and frontage and a third to consider the re-development of the Presbytery. The final working party, looking at the Church itself, will be formed in 2022.

Our current Parish Pastoral Council will have its final meeting in July and my hope is that the nucleus of the new PPC will be formed in the early autumn. Initially the new PPC will be made up of representatives from the interest groups outlined above but going forward will be augmented by a representative from each of the Sunday Masses.

**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.

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

**Day for Life** The retiring collection last weekend raised £653.40. Thank you for your generosity.

**Peter's Pence** The retiring collection next weekend will be for Peter's Pence. This is a worldwide special collection and goes to support the international ministry of the Holy See, in particular its charitable and philanthropic work – special aid is given in the Holy Father's name to dioceses and religious communities in particularly poor and needy parts of the world.

## OUR SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY

**The Alban Pilgrimage 2021** The Alban Pilgrimage will re-enact the story of Alban, Britain's first saint, and Amphibalus this 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!

**Ss Alban and Stephen School** are looking for a dinner lady, an after-school club manager and a teaching assistant. Please contact the school for further details.

## SUPPORTING OUR PARISH

**Envelope Offertory Donors** Those parishioners who currently make their offertory donations via planned giving envelopes will have received a letter this week asking them to confirm that they still wish to donate in this way. If you have not been contacted, please get in touch with the parish office.

**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 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** 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 [stalbins@rcdow.org.uk](mailto: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 October 2021 and the Diocesan suggested donation is £10.

**Right to Life** We pray for our government, that their willingness and ability to support pregnant women would increase and that they would anchor themselves in the desire to protect all human life. Lord hear us.

**St Paul - 29 June** Originally known as Saul, he was a Roman citizen and Pharisee, presiding over the persecutions of the early Christians and present at the martyrdom of St Stephen. He experienced a powerful vision that caused him to convert to Christianity while on the road to Damascus. Taking the name Paul, he travelled the world preaching ceaselessly. From the East, he returned to Rome and was arrested and beheaded in 67AD by Emperor Nero. He is the patron saint of missionaries, evangelists, writers, journalists, authors, public workers, rope, saddle and tent makers.

## MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

### Sunday 27 June - 13<sup>TH</sup> 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)

Reading 1, Wisdom 1:13-15, 2:23-24, Psalm, 30

Reading 2, 2 Corinthians 8:7,9,13-15, Gospel, Mark 5:21-43

### Monday 28 June - St Irenaeus

10am Funeral Mass for Margaret Christoforou

7pm Mass Victor William Francis Marks (RIP)

Reading 1, Genesis 18:16-33, Responsorial Psalm, 103

Gospel, Matthew 8:18-22

### Tuesday 29 June - SS PETER AND PAUL and St Peter, Prince of Apostles, Patron of the Diocese

10am Mass People of the Parish

Reading 1, Acts 12:1-11, Responsorial Psalm, 34

Reading 2 Timothy 4:6-8,17-18, Gospel, Matthew 16:13-19

### Wednesday 30 June - feria

10am Funeral Mass for Debra Cooper

7pm Mass Mary Steele (Ann)

Reading 1, Genesis 21:5,8-20, Responsorial Psalm, 34

Gospel, Matthew 8:28-34

### Thursday 1 July - DEDICATION OF THE CATHEDRAL (1910)

10am Mass Noreen Donoghue (Ann)

Reading 1, Genesis 22:1-19

Responsorial Psalm, 115, Gospel, Matthew 9:1-8

### Friday 2 July - feria

10am Mass Eileen Durie (RIP)

7pm Mass Andrew Fernandez (RIP)

Reading 1, Genesis 23:1-4,19,24:1-8,62-67

Responsorial Psalm, 106, Gospel, Matthew 9:9-13

### Saturday 3 July - ST THOMAS

10am Mass Canon Jeremiah Cronin (Ints)

10.30-11.30am Exposition with opportunity for Confession

Reading 1, Ephesians 2:19-22

Responsorial Psalm, 117, Gospel, John 20:24-29

### Sunday 4 July - 14<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

6pm Vigil Mass Peter Rowland (RIP)

8am Mass Stephanie Newson (Ints)

9.30am Mass Peter Celestine Okoro (RIP)

11.30am Mass People of the Parish

7pm Mass Bob Markham (RIP)

## PLEASE PRAY

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

For those suffering with Coronavirus and for all the Sick including

For those who have died recently including Margaret Christoforou, Debra Cooper 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 Noreen Donoghue and Mary Steele

*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 Irenaeus (130-202) - 28 June** Irenaeus was born in Turkey and emigrated to Lyon, in France, where he became bishop. It is not known whether he was martyred or died a natural death. Whenever we take up a Bible we touch Irenaeus's work, for he played a decisive role in fixing the canon of the New Testament and started the tradition of biblical scholarship.

**St Peter - 29 June** Whatever else St Peter may be, he is not the model of a wise and noble hero. He walks on the water - but then panics and starts to sink. He makes the first profession of faith - and moments later blunders into error and is called Satan by the Lord. If Peter is the rock on which the Church is built, what a fissured and friable rock it is! The choosing of Peter teaches us a lesson: the Church's foundation-stone and its first leader is not all-wise, all-knowing, good, heroic, and beautiful, he is a very ordinary man who makes about as many mistakes as we would in his place and kicks himself for them just as thoroughly afterwards. The Church is not just for saints: it is for confused, impetuous, cowardly people like us - or St Peter. The rock crumbles, the ropes are frayed, the wood is rotten - but despite the fact that the Church is made of such inferior materials, it grows (on the whole) faster than it collapses, and it is grace that holds it together.