



Church Website

## NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT - 12 DECEMBER 2021**



Contactless Giving

Parish Team: Fr Michael O'Boy (Parish Priest) Fr Jonathan Stogdon (Assistant Priest)  
Rev. Steve Pickard (Deacon) Rev. Brendan Day (Deacon) Mrs Angela Gray (Parish Administrator)  
Safeguarding Lead: Mary Harber / stalbanssg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk / 07976 277059  
*We are a Fairtrade parish*

**Clergy Appointments** It was announced during the week that Cardinal Vincent has appointed Fr Jonathan as Assistant Priest to the shrine church of Our Lady of Willesden in North West London. Fr Jonathan's last weekend with us will be the Christmas Weekend of 25/26 December. At the same time the Cardinal has appointed Fr Andrew Bowden, currently Assistant Priest in New Southgate, as Assistant Priest here at St Alban and St Stephen. Fr Andrew will take up his appointment the weekend of 8/9 January. As we give thanks for Fr Jonathan's work among us, I would ask you to keep both him and Fr Andrew in your prayers as they prepare for their forthcoming moves.

*Fr Michael writes...* The recent Parish Assembly considered ways in which we might improve the quality of our Welcome, Worship and Witness. One of the ways in which we are called to witness to our faith is by putting that faith into action, into concrete deeds. Participating in initiatives such as *You Can Be Santa* is one way of concretely expressing the love which Christ calls us to have for our brothers and sisters. So too is the generosity that characterised your giving to last weekend's appeal on behalf of our Parish SVP. Firstly, I want to say thank you. Thank you for giving so generously at a time of year when there are so many demands on your resources.

For me this generosity is of a piece with the way in which many of you involve yourself in various projects around the city, projects which are not attached to us or to any particular church, but which are a concrete expression of love. One of the things we committed to at the Parish Assembly was highlighting the ways in which we put our faith in action. Here, one of our parishioners writes of the service he is involved with.

### **Centre 33 Supporting homeless and disadvantaged people**

St Albans may seem a prosperous and inclusive city, but the reality is that there are a wide range of people living at the margins and needing practical support. Centre 33 is one of the organisations providing such help over more than 40 years and it has been actively supported by parishioners and indeed by the parish itself.

Centre 33 helps people who are rough sleeping or sofa surfing, who are in insecure or inadequate accommodation, or who have had these experiences and still value our support and friendship. Our aim is to provide somewhere warm and welcoming, where visitors can get hot meals and drinks, a shower and second-hand clothes; in essence, we aim to be somewhere where they might feel they belong.

Centre 33 is run entirely by volunteers and over the years many parishioners have supported Centre 33 as volunteers (cooking and serving food etc.) and as trustees. The parish has provided practical support such as collecting food and clothes. And for five years, Centre 33 was a chosen charity for the parish and received financial support. The people who use Centre 33 need support and also they need to see that people in St Albans care for them. For parishioners, Centre 33 offers the chance to provide practical support for people struggling with their lives and the opportunity to work with like-minded people of other faiths and none to that end. More information is available on the [website](#).

Covid has restricted our service; currently we are only able to provide a take-away meal service. We strongly hope we will be able to return to our broader service before too long. Please pray for those we serve and those who do the serving.

**Synod Journey** There has been a tremendous response from Individual and Groups to the Synod survey - we reckon between 150 and 200 people have participated. We have just started collating the comments and will give further feedback in the New Year when that is complete.

**Pray and participate:** As we enter the next phase of our Synodal journey we give thanks for Pope Francis' vision and the opportunity to voice our opinions on the future of the Church.

**Justice, Peace & the Integrity of Creation Team (JPIC)** Lord, we give thanks for the work of those who face challenges & defend human rights & our common home. Help us in the building of a more inclusive world.

## LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS

**Booking for Christmas Masses** There will be four Masses on Christmas Eve at 5.00pm, 7.00pm, 9.00pm and 11.00pm and three Masses on Christmas Morning at 8.00am, 9.30am and 11.30am. This year there will be no particular children's Mass but the first three Masses will be designated as 'family' friendly. The 11.00pm will begin promptly at 11.00pm. There will be no service of carols beforehand.

Attendance at these Masses will be limited to 150 and you are asked to pre-book your place. Booking will open at 9am on Tuesday 14 December. To register, please click on the 'Christmas Services' box on the homepage of our website or follow this [link](#).

**St Stephen's Day -26 December** On Sunday 26 December there will be Masses at 8.00am, 9.30am, 11.30am & 6.00pm in the main church and at 9.00am at Marshalswick. People will not need to book for these Masses.

**Marshalswick Masses** There will be no Marshalswick Mass on Christmas Day as the likely numbers will make it difficult to maintain social distancing. There will however be Mass on St Stephen's Day, Sunday 26 December, at 9.00am. Please note that the school wish to carry out essential maintenance work in early January, so there will be no Sunday morning Masses at Marshalswick on 2 and 9 January.

**Mass Attendance** As is our current practice, those attending services at St Alban and St Stephen and at St John Fisher, Marshalswick are asked to wear a face mask (unless medically exempt), to sanitise their hands on entering and leaving the building, to socially distance and to receive communion on the hand. Those who do not wish to receive on the hand should come up to Holy Communion last.

**Sacrament of Baptism** The next baptism preparation course is to be held on Saturday 26 February at 11.30am. Please email Fr Jonathan at [jonstogdon@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:jonstogdon@rcdow.org.uk).

**First Holy Communion 2022** Parents and guardians of children currently in Year 3 or above are invited to register their child online before 31 December via the parish [website](#). The classes for the children will begin on Saturday 22 January with a parent meeting on Friday 14 January at 7.45 pm. Further details will be emailed shortly to those who have registered for the First Holy Communion.

**Confirmation 2022** Parents and guardians of those due to celebrate their confirmation next summer (currently year 10 or above) are invited to register online before 31 December via the parish website. Please go to the 'Sacraments' tab and click on '[Confirmation](#)'. Confirmation classes will begin on Sunday 27 February. Further details will be emailed shortly to those who have registered for Confirmation.

**Marriage Preparation** If you are intending to get married, please note the Diocese requires at least six months' notice

and couples are expected to complete a preparation course. Please email Fr Michael on [michaeloboy@rcdow.org.uk](mailto: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.

## PARISH NEWS

**Christmas Posters** - are now available in the porch. Please take one to put in a window.

**Christmas Day Takeaway Lunch- DRIVERS NEEDED** The Christmas Day lunch will again be offered as a takeaway meal this year, providing there are enough volunteer drivers to deliver the meals. If you would like to receive lunch on Christmas Day, please email the parish office on [stalbans@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:stalbans@rcdow.org.uk) heading the email 'Christmas Day Takeaway Lunch'. If you could collect a meal from the parish hall at 1pm on Christmas Day and deliver it to a parishioner locally, and you have a current DBS check in place, please [email](#) the parish office heading the email 'Christmas Day Takeaway Lunch - DRIVER'.

**Coffee and Tea After Weekend Mass** Coffee and tea will be available in the Parish Centre coffee bar after 11.30am Mass on the first Sunday of the month. Coffee and tea is also available after the 6pm Saturday evening Mass. Can you help make and serve the refreshments, once a month? If so, please contact the parish office.

**Parish Friends** Parish Friends are holding their next meeting at 7.45 on Wednesday 8 December in the Parish Centre. All are welcome to join us.

**Advent Reflection for Women** Ladies, you are invited to a shared Advent liturgy and reflection on Saturday 11 December at 10:30am in the Church Hall. Tea/Coffee, Soup and bread rolls will be served, finish at 12:30pm.

**Praying together over Advent.** You are invited to join a small group of parishioners who meet in the Cafe area of the Hall at 7.45pm: our next meeting is 14 December. We will be looking at the life of the Holy Family at the time of the birth of Jesus, what life is like today in the Holy Land and examining our own lives. Our starting point is the Annunciation and we will be using the beautiful Friends of the Holy Land Advent & Christmastide booklet. Our group is confidential, you can come when you are able and there are no expectations on anyone. More details from Stan [grabecki@hotmail.com](mailto:grabecki@hotmail.com), 765549. If you wish to order a copy of the book, please use this [link](#).

**Parish Friends - Coffee After Mass 14 December** Parish Friends invite you to join us for refreshments after 10am mass on Tuesday 14 December. All welcome.

**Live Nativity Trail 18 December** On 18 December between 12 & 3pm, you can journey through St Albans, meeting and hearing from the nativity characters, who will be there to

## PARISH SCHOOLS

greet you throughout the day. At each stop on the trail (see [map](#)) you will get a stamp. Bring your fully stamped trail to the Cathedral to see the nativity scene brought to life like never before. Trails can be collected for free on the day only from the Cathedral, St Peter's Church or any of the stops along the trail (St Albans Museum and Gallery, the Beech House, St Peter's Church, Marlborough Road Methodist Church and Dagnall Street Baptist Church).

**Fr Jimmy Stubbs, MSC Golden Jubilee** Please pray for Fr Jimmy as he celebrates the Golden Jubilee of his ordination on 18 December. We have sent many cards and messages of congratulations and love to the nursing home in Cork where he is now living and pray he will enjoy this special day.

**Knit and Natter** It has been decided not to have any more Knit and Natter meetings until the New Year.

**Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation Group** The next gathering of the Justice, Peace & Integrity team (JPIC) will be in the Sacred Heart Centre on 20 January 2022. Please follow this [link](#) for some sustainable Christmas ideas you might find useful.

**Help the homeless** The Salvation Army are supporting on average 20 homeless people a day. They would welcome financial and practical support to help them continue to provide meals and food parcels. Their church bank details are Acct name: Satco General, Acct no: 00178123, Sort code: 60 01 73, Reference ST05 (this is essential to track down the fund). Evening meals are provided by Centre 33. Of the 20, some are living in the Bricket Wood Car park, some are sofa surfing, some are too poor to buy food and so come to the Salvation Army for food parcels, some live in the various local hostels so also need food parcels. The Salvation Army ask for donations of tins of soup, tuna, tinned meats and baked beans. Their guests also desperately need warm socks, warm jackets, practical shoes, warm jumpers, sleeping bags, scarves, hats and gloves. Please deliver food and clothing donation to their headquarters in Victoria Street, St Albans any Wednesday between 10am and 12pm. Many thanks for your generosity.

**Developing Our Faith as Adults** Our Parish Assembly highlighted the need to promote and facilitate ongoing faith formation for adults beyond sacramental preparation. A key aspect of formation is the need to deepen our understanding of the Mass. The Adult Faith Formation group will investigate ways to address this, in addition to organising parish retreats and pilgrimages, coordinating Lent and Advent courses, and promoting the small prayer communities in our parish. The AFF group will meet for 1.5 hours each month either via Zoom or by face to face meeting in the Parish Centre. If you are interested in planning adult faith formation in our parish, please email the parish office on [stalbans@rcdow.or.uk](mailto:stalbans@rcdow.or.uk) heading the email 'AFF'.

**St. Alban & St. Stephen Catholic Primary School & Nursery** The application process for Reception & Nursery admissions in 2022-23 is now open. Please join us at our Open Morning on 15 December from 9.30-11.00am to find out more. Please email [admin@ssaas.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@ssaas.herts.sch.uk) if you wish to book a place or visit our [website](#).

## OUR WIDER COMMUNITY

**Caritas Advent Giving Calendar** - Our Advent Giving Calendar is an advent calendar with a difference. Each day a different item is suggested for donation to a local food bank or food project. Please leave any donations at the back of the church and they will be distributed to local foodbanks. The calendar can also be accessed by clicking [here](#).

**Young Adult Advent Retreat** The FCJ Sisters are holding an Advent Retreat for young adults (people aged 18-35) on Saturday 18 December from 10.30am to 2.30pm at the FCJ Spirituality Centre in Somers Town. The day will include some input, a time of prayer and reflection and sharing with others on the theme of Advent. [Email](#) to book a place.

## PARISH ADMINISTRATION

**SVP Second Collection** £1430.24 was raised from this collection last weekend. The Society of St Vincent de Paul is most grateful for the outstanding contribution to our funds through the recent collection. The generosity shown surpassed our expectations at these difficult times, and it enables us to do much more for those in need this Christmas than we had anticipated. Thank you very much.

**Newsletter** The final edition of this year's newsletter will be published on 18/19 December with the first edition for 2022 being available on 8/9 January 2022.

**Parish Centre** Please email the parish office with booking requests or queries and visit the [Parish Centre Hire](#) page of our website for more details of facilities available.

**Gift Aid** If you have previously gift aided your standing order or envelope donations but no longer pay tax or are now unable 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.

**Virgin Media Giving VMG**, the online donation platform used by the diocese, closed at the end of November. The diocese will be setting up new online giving tools but the best way to support the parish is by standing order.



## MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

**Saturday 11 December VIGIL 3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
6pm Mass Mickie Clancy (Ann)

**Sunday 12 December THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

8am Mass Terry Wynn (Ints)

9am Mass Bernard Ward (Ints)

(*St John Fisher School, Marshalswick*)

9.30am Mass Francesca Yeadon (Ints)

11.30am Mass Fr Jimmy Stubbs MSC (Ints)

6pm Mass People of the Parish

Reading 1, Zephaniah 3:14-18, Psalm, Isaiah 12

Reading 2, Philippians 4:4-7, Gospel, Luke 3:10-18

**Monday 13 December – St Lucy**

10am Mass Anne Kavanagh (RIP)

7pm Mass James de Souza (RIP)

Reading 1, Numbers 24:2-7,15-17

Responsorial Psalm, 25, Gospel, Matthew 21:23-27

**Tuesday 14 December – St John of the Cross**

10am Mass Funeral mass for Philomena Daly

Reading 1, Zephaniah 3:1-2,9-13

Responsorial Psalm, 34, Gospel, Matthew 21:28-32

**Wednesday 15 December – Advent feria**

10am Mass Brendan Hollywood (RIP)

7pm Mass Donald de Cruz (Ann)

Reading 1, Isaiah 45:6-8,18,21-25

Responsorial Psalm, 85, Gospel, Luke 7:19-23

**Thursday 16 December – Advent feria**

10am Mass Funeral Mass for Jill Barlow

Reading 1, Isaiah 54:1-10

Responsorial Psalm, 30, Gospel, Luke 7:24-30

**Friday 17 December – Advent feria**

10am Mass Sabina Sweeney (RIP)

7pm Mass Matt and Ellie Kiely (Ints)

Reading 1, Genesis 49:2,8-10

Responsorial Psalm, 72, Gospel, Matthew 1:1-17

**Saturday 18 December – Advent feria**

10am Mass Christopher Stewart (RIP)

10.30-11.30am Exposition with opportunity for Confession

Reading 1, Jeremiah 23:5-8

Responsorial Psalm, 72, Gospel, Matthew 1:18-24

**Saturday 18 December VIGIL 4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

6pm Mass Agnes O'Boy (Ann)

**Sunday 19 December FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

8am Mass Holy Souls

9am Mass Maureen Phillips Thanksgiving Intention

(*St John Fisher School, Marshalswick*)

9.30am Mass Graham Smith (RIP)

11.30am Mass Mary Anne Curren (RIP)

6pm Mass People of the Parish

## PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches Together in St Albans this week we pray for the minister and members of St Saviour's Church.

For those suffering with Coronavirus and for all the Sick including

*The names of those we have been asked to pray for are not included in the web version of the parish bulletin for reasons of data protection.*

For those who have died recently, including Jill Barlow, Philomena Daly, Roger Dew, Patrick Geoghegan, Diana Klein, Assunta Potiuk, Emilio Viscogliosi.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Mickie Clancy, Donald de Cruz, Agnes O'Boy and Tony O'Brien.

*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.

## Welcoming all new parishioners!

Please see the new [page](#) on our website with useful information for those who are new to our parish. An online **New Parishioner Registration Form** can be found on the webpage. Please complete this form if you have not already registered as a new parishioner so that we can add you to our parish records and welcome you to our parish community. Thank you to all those who have registered as new parishioners since the start of the pandemic. As soon as we are able, we look forward to being able to have an event to welcome you and your families properly into our parish community.