



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT - 5 DECEMBER 2021



Contactless Giving

Parish Team: Fr Michael O'Boy (Parish Priest) Fr Jonathan Stogdon
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

Carols by Candlelight

Faced with the uncertainty surrounding the new and possibly further variants of the corona virus, and the possibility of increased restrictions, it has been decided to record Carols by Candlelight on Saturday 11 December at 4pm and to broadcast the Service closer to Christmas. Members of the parish are welcome to attend, but attendance will be limited to 150 people and pre-booking will be required. You will need to be seated by 3.45 pm. Booking will open at 9am on Monday 6 December and, if you would like to attend, please pre-book a place using our [online form](#). If you have no means of accessing the internet, please call the parish office 01727 853585 between 9am & 1pm Monday - Friday. Seats will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

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.

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 on Tuesday 14 December with further details in next weekend's newsletter.

St Stephen's Day - Sunday 26 December 2021

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.

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.

Synodal Journey Thanks again to the many people who have responded to the invitation by Pope Francis to voice their opinions on the future of our Church. We are just starting the analysis of the surveys which will take some time! Should you still have a survey to complete please do send it in this weekend to enable us to compile the feedback to the Diocese and to you in the New Year.

Pray and Participate We thank the Holy Spirit for inspiring our responses to the listening phase of our Synodal journey together.

SACRAMENTS AND LITURGY

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.

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](#).

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](#)'.

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.

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.

You Can Be Santa The 'You can be Santa' team would like to thank everyone for another absolutely magnificent response to this year's appeal. We are delighted to say that we will be providing gift vouchers to 193 children and 17 adults with either special needs or living in a refuge. Thank you too for the many messages of support and to those volunteers who are delivering the vouchers.

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.

Christmas Cards for People in Prison We have joined with the Christians of St. Albans in sending Christmas cards to people in prison. The Parish Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation team have signed our cards as it was not possible for parishioners to do so because of Covid.

Traidcraft Fair traded goods will be available after all Masses on 4/5 December. All proceeds go to Cafod. We are now able to accept credit/debit card payments. Please come and look at our range of foods, beverages, confectionery and Christmas cards/gifts; all support is greatly appreciated. For more details, or to place and order - contact Maureen 765549, grabecki@hotmail.com.

Fr Jimmy Golden Jubilee Fr Jimmy Stubbs MSC who served in our parish from 2012 until 2019 will be celebrating his Golden Jubilee of his ordination on the 18 December and a Mass for his intentions will be said at our 11.30am Mass on Sunday 12 December. The Lay Associates of the MSCs invite you to send him messages of congratulations and good wishes by posting cards or letters into the Presbytery clearly marked Fr Jimmy, or by sending electronic messages to hearttoheartstalbans@gmail.com. Please send messages in by 5 December so we have time to collate them and post to Cork in good time.

Christmas Day Takeaway Lunch- DRIVERS NEEDED It has been decided that 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.or.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, please email the parish office stalbans@rcdow.or.uk heading the email 'Christmas Day Takeaway Lunch- DRIVER'.

C.W.L. Tuesday 7 December after 10am mass. Come and enjoy mince pies and sherry for a pre-Christmas get together also a Christmas quiz. Cost £5

Knit and Natter The next meetings for the knit and natter group will be held on 7 & 21 December. Everyone welcome.

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.

BINGO - by The Knights of St. Columba, at 8.00pm in the Parish Hall on Friday 10 December in aid of "LIFE" Admission is 50p, to include refreshments. Everyone welcome.

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, 765549. If you wish to order a copy of the book, please use the link - [Friends of the Holy Land booklet](#).

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.

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. Could you help? The AFF group will meet for just one and a half 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 heading the email 'AFF'.

PARISH SCHOOLS

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 if you wish to book a place. Full details on how to apply can be found on our [website](#).

St John Fisher School Consultation The Governors of St John Fisher Catholic Primary School have recently taken the decision to initiate the consultation process regarding the acquisition of academy status and joining the existing All Saints Catholic Academy Trust. The governors have produced a booklet on the implications of becoming an academy which is available on the school's [website](#). The closing date for consultation is 10 December 2021.

St Columba's College application deadlines and entrance assessments for September 2022 entry The application deadline for 11+ and 13+ entry in September 2022 is Friday 3 December. The 11+ assessments will take place on Saturday 11 December and 8 January. The 13+ assessments will be held on Friday 14 January. The deadline for Sixth Form applications is 13 December. Interviews will be arranged by appointment. Prep School assessments for September 2022 entry will be held on Saturday 8 January. We offer Academic and Music Scholarships at ages 11+, 13+ and 16+, and Sports Scholarships at 16+. Means tested Bursaries are also available to Senior School students. Application forms on our [website](#) or by contacting the Admissions Registrar by [email](mailto:) or 01727 892040).

OUR WIDER COMMUNITY

Caritas Advent Giving Calendar - Back due to popular demand! 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](#).

Westminster Diocese's Agency for Evangelisation - online sessions with Fr Richard Nesbitt over Advent and Christmastide. The dates are Tuesday 30 November, Thursday 9, 16 & 23 December, Tuesday 4 January, at 8.00pm. Please register [here](#) beforehand. You will then receive the Zoom link details. The book is available at £9.99 including UK p&p, by emailing [here](#). Also available as an e-book at a price of £7.99, using Issuu. Browse the first chapter of the book [here](#) before you buy.

CAFOD World Gifts Please see our World Gift catalogue on our website worldgifts.cafod.org.uk.

The Passage Christmas Big Give Challenge has kicked off! From 12pm on 30 November to 12pm on 7 December, all donations made to The Passage through The Big Give will be doubled. Our fundraising through public collections, live events, schools and churches is particularly affected whilst the number of homeless people we help has increased. We need your help to support all those homeless people in a desperate situation this winter. For the donations to be doubled, they must be made through the Big Give [webpage](#). **Second collection - SVP** There will be a second collection this weekend to support the work of SVP.

PARISH ADMINISTRATION

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 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 Please be aware that VMG, the online donation platform used throughout the diocese, closed at the end of November. Monthly donations have now been cancelled automatically by VMG. The diocese will be setting up new online giving tools but the best way to support the parish is by standing order.

Justice, Peace & the Integrity of Creation Team (JPIC)
Dear Lord help the millions of people around the world who are unable to grow enough food to feed themselves & their families adequately because of climate change.

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Saturday 4 December VIGIL 2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

6pm Mass Andrew Burke (RIP)

Sunday 5 December SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8am Mass Holy Souls

9am Mass Fintan Bergin (Ints)

(*St John Fisher School, Marshalswick*)

9.30am Mass People of the parish

11.30am Mass Anna and John Cronin (Ann)

6pm Mass Pat and Caroline Judge (Ann)

Reading 1, Baruch 5:1-9, Responsorial Psalm, 126

Reading 2, Philippians 1:4-6,8-11, Gospel, Luke 3:1-6

Monday 6 December – St Nicholas

10am Mass Maureen and Tony McCarthy (Ints)

7pm Mass Peter Celestine Okoro (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 35:1-10

Responsorial Psalm, 85, Gospel, Luke 5:17-26

Tuesday 7 December – St Ambrose

10am Mass Linda Peters (Ann)

Reading 1, Isaiah 40:1-11

Responsorial Psalm, 96, Gospel, Matthew 18:12-14

Wednesday 8 December- THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, Patron of the Diocese

10am Mass Patrick Gilmore (RIP)

7pm Mass Deceased Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (RIP)

Reading 1, Genesis 3:9-15,20, Responsorial Psalm, 98

Reading 2, Ephesians 1:3-6,11-12, Gospel, Luke 1:26-38

Thursday 9 December – Advent feria

10am Funeral Mass for Patrick Mannion

Reading 1, Isaiah 41:13-20

Responsorial Psalm, 145, Gospel, Matthew 11:11-15

Friday 10 December – Advent feria

10am Mass David Canty (Ints)

7pm Mass Rosemary Smith (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 48:17-19

Responsorial Psalm, 1, Gospel, Matthew 11:16-19

Saturday 11 December – Advent feria

10am Mass Holy Souls

10.30-11.30am Exposition with opportunity for Confession

Reading 1, Ecclesiasticus 48:1-4, 9-11

Responsorial Psalm, 80, Gospel, Matthew 17:10-13

Saturday 11 December VIGIL 3RD 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

PLEASE PRAY

This week we pray that Churches together in St Albans will continue to foster understanding between churches and other faith groups in the city.

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, Diana Klein, Patrick Mannion and Edward Riley.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Laurie Blythman, Mickie Clancy, Anna and John Cronin, Nora Doran, Pat and Caroline Judge, Patrick McGoohan, Linda Peters.

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.