



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN
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SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - 16 JANUARY 2022



Contactless Giving

Parish Team: Fr Michael O'Boy (Parish Priest) Fr Andrew Bowden (Assistant Priest)
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We are a Fairtrade parish

Fr Andrew writes...

Last Sunday marked the end of the liturgical season of Christmas, and so the crib was removed and everything in the church is green once again, indicating that we are now in what the church calls 'Ordinary Time'. Indeed, most of you will have removed your Christmas trees and decorations and returned to work and school after the holidays. Some of you may be very glad to be back to normal (over the weekend one parishioner said to me that she was glad Jesus didn't have a brother!) Some of you might find this time of year a bit depressing. Apparently, this Monday is known as 'Blue Monday' as it is supposed to be the most depressing day of the year.

Whether you're feeling blue or even a little green from yuletide over indulgence, this 'Ordinary Time' that we have now entered is not in fact just back to normal. Ordinary Time is not just a period between great feasts when nothing much happens. Just because the Christmas festivities are over, we don't forget all about the great generosity of God's love in sending us His Son, rather we continue to carry that mystery in our hearts and begin to see how it may transform our ordinary, everyday lives. And the colour green that the church uses in Ordinary Time even helps us to understand the richness of this time. Green is the colour of hope and of new life and growth. The Christmas trees and holly that many of us brought into our homes over Christmas are all green. In fact, they are ever-green. And that is the keynote of Ordinary Time. God has come among us, as one of us, in Jesus Christ to call us to friendship with him. And that call is evergreen. The same Jesus whom we adored in the manger now calls to us, telling us that his Kingdom is close at hand. Jesus renews that call to us every day in the ordinary circumstances of our lives, even when we are deaf to it, even when we turn away from Him. He keeps gently calling to us. And that evergreen call of Jesus is the reason for our hope.

On a personal note, I would like say a big thank you for the very warm and friendly welcome I received last weekend on my arrival. This is clearly a very special parish community and I am privileged to have the opportunity to become a part of it. When I said goodbye to the people of my last parish on my last Sunday with them, which was the 2nd Sunday of Christmas, I made my prayer for them the words of St Paul in the second reading on that day. And I make those same words my prayer for you too at the beginning of Ordinary Time and as I begin my ministry among you; "May God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit." *Ephesians 1:17-18*

God bless.

Fr Andrew

Justice, Peace & the Integrity of Creation Team (JPIC) For Peace Sunday let us reflect on finding peace in my own heart, my own home and in how I react to those I meet.

Synod Your responses to the Synod process have been collated and will be sent to the Diocese in the next few days. The Diocese will then synthesise the replies from all parishes in readiness for the parish representatives' meeting in mid-February.

Pray and participate We give thanks for all those participating in the Synodal journey, and pray for the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit as the local listening phase reaches the next stage of the Diocesan journey.

LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS

Ministers of the Word wanted Would you like to help the congregation to hear the word of God and take part in active ministry? Then please consider reading at Mass. You do need to be able to speak clearly with reverence and conviction - training will be given to anyone interested. Perhaps you used to read and now feel able to recommence your ministry? If you could commit to reading approximately once a month, please send your details and the time of the Mass you normally attend to the parish office.

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 andrewbowden@rcdow.org.uk with any enquiries.

Confirmation Masses this weekend The families with young people being confirmed this weekend should have received an email last week containing organisational details for the Confirmation masses. If you have not received this email, please contact Fr Michael on michaeloboy@rcdow.org.uk. A post Confirmation session is envisaged for February or March.

First Holy Communion 2022 The classes for the children will begin on Saturday 22 January with a meeting for parents and guardians only on Friday 14 January at 7.45pm. An email has been sent to those who have registered online.

Confirmation 2022 Confirmation classes will begin on Sunday 27 February and will take place every two weeks. Further details will be emailed 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. The next preparation course is in February. 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. Permission from the person being prayed for, or their next of kin, must be obtained before we are able to include their name in the bulletin.

PARISH NEWS

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.

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.

Men's Breakfast 22 January Following on from our breakfast gatherings in the autumn, we are restarting these post-Christmas, with the first one planned for Saturday 22 January. We will meet in the parish centre from 8.15am for coffee, croissants and banter. We will use the main hall, rather than the rooms downstairs as this is better ventilated. At about 9am we will watch a video on the Nicene Creed, part of a series narrated by Bishop Robert Barron, and aim to finish at 10am. This is a great opportunity to learn more about this prayer which is central to the Sunday mass and to the key parts of our catholic beliefs.

YOU ARE INVITED... to a showing of CaFE's new resource BELONG & BELIEVE - How our Celtic past can help us today. A five-week series of Celtic wisdom to help strengthen our faith, build our community and refresh us in our mission in these times. Save the date in your diary Monday 24 January when the films will show live in the parish hall after Mass at 10.45am, also live at 7.45pm or by online Zoom at 7.45pm and for our further Mondays that follow. Please register if you wish to join in any of the showings by emailing the parish office on stalbins@rcdow.org using BELONG & BELIEVE as the email title.

Knit and Natter Due to the high numbers of omicron cases at the moment knit and natter will not resume before February at the earliest. When we do meet up please will everyone do a lateral flow test before they come. If anyone has difficulty obtaining lateral flow test kits please contact Helen 07860 830340 and I will try to get them for you.

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 stalbins@rcdow.org heading the email 'AFF'.

Peace Sunday 16 January This Sunday is Peace Sunday and there will be a retiring collection this weekend to support the work of Pax Christi. This year Pope Francis asks us to think about 'Education, work and dialogue between

generations: tools for building lasting peace'. In this country we have an active Catholic peace movement in Pax Christi, which does a great deal of good work to promote peace and nonviolence through parishes, schools and social media. Pax Christi needs our support to keep going. If you'd like to make a donation, small or large, here is the [link](#). If you'd like your personal donation to be counted towards your parish contribution, please give your parish name and town in the 'Additional Information - Order Notes' box on the checkout page. Cheques made payable to 'Pax Christi' can be sent to Pax Christi, St Joseph's, Watford Way, London NW4 4TY.

To mark Peace Sunday please take home a prayer card printed by Pax Christi. Cards for children to colour are also available in the porch.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Each year from 18 to 25 January is a week (or octave) of prayer for Christian unity. It's a response to Jesus' prayer that we may be one. There are a number of ways in which you can get involved.

- Service of Prayer for Christian Unity - Come to the CTSA online Unity Service at 4pm on Sunday 23 January. Come and worship with Christians from other churches and discuss journeying together to Follow the Star
- Candle Exchange - Join with Trinity URC for a candle swap after the 9:30 Mass on Sunday 23 January
- Visit Another Church - There are 30 different churches in St Albans. Why not visit a different one and see how other Christians do things?

There is a list of churches with a map [here](#). Many can be visited online.

Mary's Meals Next weekend there will be a retiring collection to support the work of Mary's Meals and a representative from Mary's Meals will be speaking about the work of the charity at all masses.

PARISH SCHOOLS

Loreto College, St Albans Consultation The Governors of Loreto College recently agreed to propose some changes to the admissions criteria for 2023/24 - the full details are available on the school website on the Secondary Transfer [page](#). The school would welcome any written comments that you may wish to make. These should be sent to Mrs S Williams at the address above (or via email to swilliams@loreto.herts.sch.uk) by the closing date of the formal consultation, 9am on 31 January. The school will not be able to acknowledge or respond individually to comments, however, they will be taken into account when the Full Governing Body meet at the end of the period of consultation, the 2023/24 Admissions Criteria will be determined by 28 February.

OUR WIDER COMMUNITY

Scripture Festival 3 - 5 February The God Who Speaks You are invited to our God Who Speaks Festival at St Albans Cathedral from 3 to 5 February.

We hope that all pilgrims, whether from schools, parishes, or just visitors to the Cathedral will have an encounter with Christ through His Word at this three-day event. From 10am to 4:00pm we be offering different ways of exploring the Word of God in prayer, through activities and our intellect. A variety of content providers will join us over the three days and help us to engage with Scripture using your mind, heart, and soul.

Following on from the Synodal Pathway, this could be the perfect opportunity to consider what is on offer for people who want to know more about the Bible in their local area. Please see [here](#) for information.

Covid 19 – a very challenging time for many marriages So much uncertainty around, health, income, employment, vulnerable family members, children, housing. It can be difficult to talk, to listen to support and comfort when there is so much uncertainty. Being together all the time, brings different challenges. Retrouvaille is a programme to support couples, it brings a positive focus, new hope and helps nourish and grow your marriage. For confidential information about Retrouvaille', or to register for the next programme, a Virtual weekend commencing 3 - 6 March. Call or text +44 788 729 6983, [email](#) or visit our [website](#).

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 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. A standing order form can be downloaded [here](#).

Mass Intentions The best way to book mass intentions at the moment is to do so by phoning the parish office between 9am and 1pm any weekday. Donations can be made by posting an envelope through the presbytery door or by making a payment via bank transfer. Our bank account details can be accessed [here](#). Please note that we are currently booking intentions for masses from April 2022 and that intentions may have to be moved with little notice, if a funeral needs to take place on that date. The suggested diocesan donation is currently £10 per mass.

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Saturday 15 January VIGIL 2ND SUNDAY IN ORD TIME
6pm Mass Deceased members of the Connely family

Sunday 16 January 2ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

8am Mass Mary Curran (RIP)

9am Mass Ken and Mary Neal (Ann)

(St John Fisher School, Marshalswick)

9.30am Mass Conway and Mary Lee Berners-Lee (Ann)

11.30am Mass Marcelline Clarke (RIP)

6pm Mass People of the Parish

Reading 1, Isaiah 62:1-5, Responsorial Psalm 96

Reading 2, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, Gospel John 2:1-11

Monday 17 January - St Anthony

10am Mass Ray Ingman (Ann)

7pm Mass Beryl and Jimmie Hensman (Ints)

Reading 1, 1 Samuel 15:16-23

Responsorial Psalm, 50, Gospel, Mark 2:18-22

Tuesday 18 January - feria

10am Mass Thomasina Fitzpatrick (RIP)

Reading 1, 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Responsorial Psalm, 89, Gospel, Mark 2:23-28

Wednesday 19 January - feria

10am Mass Janet Mary Eastham (RIP)

7pm Mass Raymond Bagge (RIP)

Reading 1, 1 Samuel 17:32-33, 37, 40-51

Responsorial Psalm, 144, Gospel, Mark 3:1-6

Thursday 20 January - feria

10am Mass Bernard Ward (Ints)

Reading 1, 1 Samuel 18:6-9, 19:1-7

Responsorial Psalm 56, Gospel Mark 3:7-12

Friday 21 January - St Agnes*

7pm Mass Tony Stack (RIP)

Reading 1, 1 Samuel 24:3-21

Responsorial Psalm, 57, Gospel, Mark 3:13-19

* *On Fridays Mass is celebrated at St Albans Cathedral at 12 Noon*

Saturday 22 January - Memoria of Blessed Virgin Mary

10am Mass Teresa Boland (RIP)

10.30-11.30am Exposition with opportunity for Confession

Saturday 22 January VIGIL 3RD SUNDAY IN ORD TIME

6pm Mass Mary Jones (RIP)

Sunday 23 January 3RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

8am Mass People of the Parish

9am Mass Kathleen McKiernan (RIP)

(St John Fisher School, Marshalswick)

9.30am Mass Zbigniew Frosztega (Ann)

11.30am Mass Pedro and Bolivia de Lasso and Joseph Chunga (Ann)

6pm Mass Christina Conefrey and all deceased members of the Conefrey family (RIP)

PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches Together in St Albans we pray for the leaders and members of the Network 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 Margaret Fitzsimons, Ursula Graddon, Julie Hadnutt, Marion Miller, Ruth O'Gorman, Edward 'Ted' Pearce.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Conway and Mary Lee Berners-Lee, Cynthia Chrimes, Joseph Chunga, Pedro and Bolivia de Lasso, Zbigniew Frosztega, Ray Ingman, Lewis and Frances Lumber, Roy McGoohan, Ken and Mary Neal, Robert O'Sullivan, Harry Vasey.

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 [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.