



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - 13 FEBRUARY 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

Lent - Let God Be Bigger

Fr Michael writes ...

Year on year the onset of Lent can come as something of a shock. Not because I don't know it's going to happen, and not because of any self-imposed austerity, but more because I haven't given it much thought. It's all too easy to get to Shrove Tuesday, so called Pancake Day, and wonder in a kind of blind panic what my Lenten resolution is going to be. The opportunity we have post-pandemic is to build back better. Perhaps we can apply this maxim to Lent, preparing for Lent by really thinking through what it is we will do.

As you know, I spent a good many years as a student and as a student I lived in all too many student houses. One of the rewarding characteristics of those houses was the diversity of the people who lived in them. Oftentimes, when I reflect on Lent, I am minded of the student houses I shared with Muslim friends and how their observation of Ramadan completely re-shaped their daily routine. In comparison, my own observation of Lent can be rather half-hearted. Far from reshaping the pattern of my daily life, the resolutions which make up my lent, can be chosen precisely because they can be fitted in, leaving daily life much as it is.

This year the 40 days of Lent will start on Wednesday 2 March. As we look to Holy Week and Easter, celebrating Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, the invitation is to let God be a bigger part of our lives. It seems to me that one of the ways in which we can do this is to prepare our Lent, not to let it creep up on us and take us by surprise, but to think it through beforehand. In the coming weeks the weekly bulletin and parish website will include suggestions as to how we might journey through Lent, how through Prayer, Word and Action we might take up the invitation to **Let God Be Bigger**.

To assist us with our preparation there will be a time of Eucharistic adoration on Thursday 24 February. We will pray for the parish as a whole, that for each and every one of us, this coming Lent will be a time of renewal, of building back better. We will begin with Mass at 6pm and conclude at 7.30pm. During this time the church will remain open with an open invitation to passers-by to join us.

Synod Feedback The summary of our Parish's feedback document to the Diocesan Synod process is now available at the back of church. As the Diocese are keeping all parish replies confidential, this document will not be placed on the website. However, if you are unable to source a copy, please do contact the parish office.

Justice, Peace & the Integrity of Creation Team (JPIC) All Catholics are encouraged to mark Racial Justice Day, today, by praying the words of Pope Francis taken from his encyclical letter 'Fratelli Tutti', On fraternity and Social Friendship: Come, Holy Spirit, show us your beauty, reflected in all the peoples of the earth, so that we may discover anew that all are important and all are necessary, different faces of the one humanity that God so loves.

LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS

'Little Lights' Children's Liturgy Owing to the half-term break please note that there will be no Children's Liturgy on Sunday 13 February or Sunday 20 February. The next Children's Liturgy will be on Sunday 27 February.

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.

RCIA Catechists We need to build up a small group of committed adult volunteer catechists for our RCIA program to be able to successfully run our 'Journey In Faith' program. Please contact me, Deacon Steve, for an initial discussion on 01727 863925 or on stephenpickard@gmail.com. It is a ministry of love and joy that will build upon your own faith experiences. You do not need a degree or diploma, just an open heart. So please contact me and I will outline how we propose to start this 'journey' together.

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.

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

Knit and Natter The Knit and Natter group will meet between 2-4pm on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month starting from Tuesday 8 February. Please do a lateral flow test before you come. Everyone is welcome.

Bingo Friday 11 February at 8.00pm, by the Knights of St. Columba, in the Parish Hall in aid of Mary's Meals. Admission is 50p including refreshments. All are welcome.

Men's Breakfast 19 February The parish men's group are continuing our breakfast gatherings to learn more about the creed. We will meet in the parish centre from 8.15 for coffee, croissants and banter. At 9am we will watch a video on the Nicene Creed, looking at some of the parts which refer to Jesus. This is 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.

Lent CAFOD Fast Day Everyone is welcome to join us for a homemade soup and bread lunch at noon on Saturday 12 March in the Church Hall. This will be followed around 1pm by the film *The Star (U)* - a cartoon version of the Christmas Story with an unusual twist. It is a FREE event with the opportunity to make a donation to CAFOD on the day. This event has been organised by the Parish Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation group. If you are able, you are invited to fast on Friday 11 March in solidarity with the poor of the world and donate any money saved to CAFOD in the retiring collection to be taken over the weekend of the 12/13 March.

St Patrick's Day Tea Party Parish Friends are holding a tea party to celebrate St. Patrick's day in the Parish Hall on Sunday 13 March from 3- 5pm. All parishioners are welcome. We are delighted that Peter and Damien Fahy will be providing the music. If you are able make a cake, offer help on the day, have a Parish DBS and can offer a lift or require a lift please contact Helen 07860 830340 or helen.bassill@ntlworld.com. Please note we will not be holding a raffle.

You Can Be Santa 2021 The YCBS team recently met to review the 2021 scheme. It was another hugely successful initiative; over 200 children enjoyed the gift of a Christmas voucher this year. The children are all known to us through our Parish schools, the SVP, the Life House and individual parishioners. We also supported children from the St Albans Refuge, Home Start and the Intensive Family Support Team. In addition, 17 adults with either special needs or living in a refuge, along with residents of the Catholic Workers' Farm also received a Christmas voucher. Thank you everyone for your tremendous generosity and support in making the YCBS scheme such a success. Your donations really make a difference, as this feedback shows: *'Just received gift vouchers, thank you so much, after an awful year and being furloughed and trying to pay bills.'*

'Having support such as yours does truly make such a difference.'
'Thank you for making the children's Christmas a memorable one.'
'It's so kind of you to do this for me and the children every year.'

Last year we were yet again able to extend the YCBS scheme to Easter when we kept in touch with our families and delivered a small voucher for an Easter Egg to all the children involved in the scheme. We are delighted that we have enough funds left over from Christmas to be able to do this again. As a result of the unfailing generosity of our parishioners, the YCBS scheme has been running for nearly 10 years now, helping to support our local community at Christmas. Many families have been with us since the scheme began and new families are invited to be a part of the scheme every year.

Thank you once again for everything you do to make the scheme such a success. We will look forward to launching the 2022 YCBS scheme later in the year. The Santa Team

OUR WIDER COMMUNITY

Petition to Install a Pedestrian Crossing at Nicholas Breakspear Catholic School - We need your support! We are petitioning the County Council to urgently install a pedestrian crossing and other traffic calming measures outside our school - and we need your help. Please sign the e-petition at [NBS e-petition Pedestrian Crossing](#).

St Michael's Catholic Grammar School - Applications for Sixth Form Entry in September 2022 open until 28 February St Michael's has a large and vibrant Sixth Form which welcomes significant numbers of new students who have studied their GCSEs elsewhere. If you are interested in applying for a Sixth Form place at St Michael's please look at the virtual open evening on our [website](#). Applications can be made online through the Apply NOW button.

Have Fun Helping Others Luton Catenians are organising 'Masquerade - a fun evening of opera' on Saturday 26 February at Holy Ghost Parish Centre, 33 Westbourne Rd, Luton LU4 8JD in aid of NOAH, the Luton-based charity working across Bedfordshire offering hope and support to people struggling against homelessness and exclusion. Whether you are an opera lover or not you will be enraptured by the singing and the joyous occasion, so come along to this light but professionally sung gala evening, at the same time supporting a great cause. Bid in advance to have your favourite song performed in front of you. Win the prize for the best masquerade mask. Make up a group, bring your friends and book tickets at £32 per head via this [link](#). See the poster on the notice board in the porch.

CAFOD's Walk Against Hunger Lent challenge There are 200 million children in the world whose lives are at risk from malnutrition. This Lent, challenge yourself to walk 200km, and help give hunger its marching orders.

Do 5k a day, your way, for 40 days, get sponsored and you'll conquer your 200km target in time for Easter - and help people around the world to live free from hunger. To find out more or take part, go to cafod.org.uk/walk.

Marlborough Road Methodist Church - Circuit Quiet Day at St Stephen's Church, Watling Street - 26 February As we approach Lent we take this opportunity to 'step aside' and listen to God as we reflect upon some of the Psalms. There will be extended periods of silence, the opportunity (if the weather is kind) to spend time outside, poems and pictures to help our reflection. Please follow this [link](#) for more details.

Pilgrimage to Walsingham 25 March Come and celebrate the Feast of the Annunciation with a coach from St Albans. Holy Mass in Walsingham at 12noon will be celebrated by the Bishop of East Anglia, Alan Hopes, followed by a visit to the Slipper Chapel and a walk along the Holy Mile to the Priory, the original site of the holy house requested by Our Lady in 1061. The cost is £25 and £5 for children. To book or for further info please contact Rosemary 07723 546642 rosemary.roscoe@gmail.com.

PARISH ADMINISTRATION

Hiring the 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 is currently 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 or emailing 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 May 2022 and that intentions may have to be moved with little notice to accommodate funerals. The suggested diocesan donation is currently £10 per mass.

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Saturday 12 February VIGIL 6TH SUNDAY IN ORD TIME
6pm Arthur (Paddy) and Celia Dunne (Ann)

Sunday 13 February 6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

8am Mass Bernard Ward (Ints)

9am Mass Ainsley Lambert (Ann)

(St John Fisher School, Marshalswick)

9.30am Mass People of the Parish

11.30am Mass Noel Castelino (RIP)

6pm Mass George Brennan (RIP)

Reading 1, Jeremiah 17:5-8, Responsorial Psalm, 1

Reading 2, 1 Corinthians 15:12,16-20

Gospel, Luke 6:17,20-26

Monday 14 February - SS CYRIL & METHODIUS

10am Mass George Xeureb Brennan (RIP)

7pm Mass Monica Byrne (RIP)

Reading 1, Acts 13:46-49, Responsorial Psalm, 117

Gospel, Luke 10:1-9

Tuesday 15 February - feria

10am Mass Angela Maher (RIP)

Reading 1, James 1:12-18

Responsorial Psalm, 94, Gospel, Mark :14-21

Wednesday 16 February - feria

10am Mass Steven James (Ints)

7pm Mass Richard Ross (RIP)

Reading 1, James 1:19-27

Responsorial Psalm, 15, Gospel, Mark 8:22-26

Thursday 17 February - feria

10am Mass Andrew Tibbits (RIP)

Reading 1, James 2:1-9, Responsorial Psalm 34

Gospel Mark 8:27-33

Friday 18 February - feria

7pm Mass Maureen Rowland (RIP)

Reading 1, James 2:14-24,26

Responsorial Psalm, 112, Gospel, Mark 8:34-9:1

(On Friday Mass is celebrated at St Albans Cathedral at 12 Noon)

Saturday 19 February - Memoria of Blessed Virgin Mary

10am Mass Golden family (Ints)

10.30-11.30am Exposition with opportunity for Confession

Reading 1, James 3:1-10

Responsorial Psalm, 12, Gospel, Mark 9:2-13

Saturday 19 February VIGIL 7TH SUNDAY IN ORD TIME

6pm Mass People of the Parish

Sunday 20 February 7TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

8am Mass Loreta Cashin (RIP) and Michael Cashin (RIP)

9am Mass Arthur and Catherine Ball (Ann)

(St John Fisher School, Marshalswick)

9.30am Mass Edward Joseph McShane (RIP)

11.30am Paulo, Magdalena and Antonina Cannata (RIP)

6pm Mass Mary Curran (RIP)

PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches Together in St Albans we pray for the minister and members of Greenwood United Reform 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 Evelio Azcona and Monica Parker.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Sheila Aylward, Arthur and Catherine Ball, Arthur (Paddy) and Celia Dunne, Michael Finucane, Elizabeth Harding, Ainsley Lambert, Kathleen Quinn.

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.