



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN
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EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - 27 FEBRUARY 2022



Contactless Giving

Parish Team: Fr Michael O'Boy (Parish Priest) Fr Andrew Bowden (Assistant Priest)
 Rev. Steve Pickard (Deacon) Rev. Brendan Day (Deacon) Mrs Angela Gray (Parish Administrator)
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We are a Fairtrade parish

Lent - A time for moving towards God by Prayer, Word and Action

This coming Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. Forty days of preparation for our celebration of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. It is a short period when there are lots of opportunities for us to try to make God a bigger part of our lives.

On Ash Wednesday everyone is asked to abstain from meat (much easier these days with so many vegetarian options), while those over 18 and under 60 are also expected to fast from food, having one main meal and two light snacks. Abstinence and fasting are a way of bringing us back to God. As we deny ourselves we are invited to fill the space that denial creates with God. Ash Wednesday is traditionally marked by the imposition of ashes. Remember, says the liturgy, you are dust and unto dust you shall return. Remember that your being - your past, present and future - is always and everywhere in the hands of God, a God who has the power to create, to give life, out of nothing. Here at St Alban & St Stephen the ashes will be distributed at the morning and evening masses, 10am & 7pm.

Our Lent leaflet includes many suggestions as to what you might do during Lent to allow God to be a bigger part of your lives. One possibility is doing 'The Stations of the Cross' during which we recall the final hours of Jesus' life by visiting the 14 carvings or paintings depicting Christ's Passion that traditionally hang on the walls of Catholic churches. This devotion has its roots in the pilgrimages people began to make to Jerusalem. When such pilgrimage was no longer possible, people used works of art to bring both the story and sites of Christ's passion and death into their churches.

During Lent we will travel the Stations or Way of the Cross in church every Saturday morning at 9.30am. This will be followed by the 10am mass as normal. Each week will have a particular emphasis, with the Way of the Cross being travelled on Saturday 5 March having as its emphasis 'times of difficulty'. If you cannot make it to church, you can always join in this prayerful journey through our Lord's passion and death via stream by visiting our home page or YouTube channel at albanstephen.org. If you would like to follow the text of the service, this can be found on the parish website. Visit our home page at albanstephen.org and click on the Lent banner/tab or use the QR code provided here.



Alongside CAFOD's customary Lenten Family Fast Day on 13 March Lent offers two further opportunities for practical giving. One is to contribute non-perishable food goods to the Food Bank box in the Church Porch (which will be used to support the Salvation Army's outreach to local individuals and families), the other is to contribute to the Cardinal's Lenten Appeal. The appeal is used to support parishes and Caritas Westminster in their work with people in need and on the margins across the diocese of Westminster. Two short films showing the impact which the Cardinal's Appeal and Caritas Westminster's have made can be found at CardinalsLentenAppeal.org.uk

Finally, there is still time to sign up to the weekly book club that we are running during Lent. We will be reading 'Let Us Dream' recently written by Pope Francis. The book addresses the impact of the Covid pandemic on society in terms of what we see, what we choose to do about it and how we might respond. If you would like to join with other parishioners in reading this book, then you can sign up on the parish website (www.albanstephen.org/lent-reading-group) or use the QR code provided here.



Father Andrew and I are looking forward to journeying through Lent with you in the coming weeks.

LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS

Stations of the Cross On 5 March at 9.30am, the Stations of the Cross in times of difficulty will be celebrated in church; everyone is welcome to attend. This will be followed by Mass and exposition. You can also view the Stations online via a link from the home page of our website and the text will be available to help you reflect upon this prayerful journey through our Lord's passion and death.

Easter Garden We will be commemorating our deceased loved ones in a special way in our Easter Garden again this year. We will write their names on bamboo flower shapes and plant them around the rose garden in front of the presbytery. These will be close to the three crosses and will be a symbol of the new life with Christ promised by the resurrection. If you would like to remember your deceased family or friends in this way, please send their names into the office clearly marked 'Easter Garden' either by emailing the parish office at stalbans@rcdow.org.uk or by posting the details through the presbytery door.

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 16 April at 11.30am. Please email andrewbowden@rcdow.org.uk with any enquiries.

Post Confirmation Celebration Those young people who recently celebrated their Confirmation have been invited to join Fr Michael and the catechists for a pizza evening on Friday 18 March 7.30-9.00pm. An email has been sent to all parents and guardians about this event. If you have not yet replied to this email, please could you do so by 11 March.

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.

Catholic Women's League The CWL will meet after the 10am Mass in Room 1 on Tuesday 1 March. Fr. Michael will be giving us a talk ready for Lent. Everyone very welcome.

Knit and Natter The knit and natter group will meet on Tuesdays 8 March and 22 March from 2.30-4 pm. We are in the process of knitting vests for babies in Africa, squares for blankets and hats and scarves for the homeless. Everyone welcome and please note new time..

BINGO - On Friday 11 March, by the Knights of St. Columba, in the Parish Hall in aid of The Catholic Children's Society. Admission is 50p and includes refreshments. Everyone is most welcome.

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 the weekend of 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.

Batchwood Prayer Group Request If you have a copy of either Fr Richard Nesbitt's Holy Week Voices from the Holy Land and/or Henri Nouwen's The Good Samaritan would you mind either selling them or lending them to the Batchwood prayer group? If so, please contact Mary on 07976 277 059.

The Spiritans Mission Appeal 2022 There will be a retiring collection at all masses this weekend to support the work of

the Spiritans. The Congregation of the Holy Spirit is a Catholic, religious congregation founded in France in 1703. Also known as the Spiritans, their mission for over 300 years has been to evangelize the poor and marginalized all over the world. Today they have nearly three thousand priests, brothers and Lay Spiritan Associates. With missions in sixty countries around the world, they are involved in many diverse ministries including education, parish work, and refugee ministry. A representative from the Spiritans will be speaking at all masses this weekend.

OUR WIDER COMMUNITY

Annual Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony Westminster Cathedral, Saturday 14 May 2022 at 3pm. The Cardinal is inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese, who are celebrating their 5th, 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60) Wedding Anniversary of Catholic Marriage in 2022. If you are celebrating an anniversary, please phone or email the parish office with the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address, phone number and email.

Diocese of Westminster Network meeting for all who welcome and support asylum seekers, migrants and refugees Thursday 10 March 2022, 2pm-3:30pm – online. Join a community of support, hosted by Caritas Westminster. Join a community of support, hosted by Caritas Westminster, to share ideas and skills to help your parish and school become even more of a place of welcome and inclusion for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. At this session we will be hearing from Megan from Schools of Sanctuary, Anjali from Newman Catholic College, as well as Ines from the Notre Dame Refugee Centre and Ed from ESOL provider, Twin. Please sign up on this [website](#).

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. Click [here](#) to find out more.

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 please [email](#) Rosemary or phone 07723 546642.

St David's Day concert The Passage, a Catholic Charity working with the homeless, is holding a St David's Day concert on Thursday 3 March at 7.30pm in Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Square with The London Welsh Male Voice Choir and soloist tenor Ryan Vaughan Davies. All tickets

are £20. Please support the work of this excellent charity. Tickets [here](#) or telephone 020 75921856.

Mary's Meals Mary's Meals has a new job opportunity in the London/South England team. The role of 'Supporter Engagement Officer' is an exciting and varied one which will suit someone with good organisational and people skills. The closing date is 24 February. Job details are [here](#).

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/June 2022 and that intentions may have to be moved with little notice to accommodate funerals. The suggested diocesan donation is currently £10 per mass.

St David (520 - 589) – 1 March David became eminent as abbot and bishop at the site now known as St David's. He is credited with a monastic rule based on the example of the Eastern Fathers, and also with a Penitentiary. He presided at the synod of Llandewibrefi. Monks trained at his monastery evangelized South Wales and made foundations in Cornwall, Brittany and Ireland. St David is said to have sent a Mass rite to Ireland. At his death his contemporary St Kentigern witnessed in vision his entrance into the joy of his Lord. His holy relics that were found hidden in the fabric of St David's Cathedral are now carefully preserved therein. He was canonized by Pope Callistus II in 1123.

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Saturday 26 February VIGIL 8TH SUNDAY IN ORD TIME
6pm Mass James Taylor (RIP)

Sunday 27 February 8TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
8am Mass John Lennon (Ints)

9am Mass Patricia McCarthy (Ann)
(*St John Fisher School, Marshalswick*)

9.30am Mass People of the Parish

11.30am George and Freda Sumner (RIP)

6pm Mass Ferghal Maher (RIP)

Reading 1, Ecclesiasticus 27:5-8, Responsorial Psalm, 92,

Reading 2, 1 Corinthians 15:54-58, Gospel, Luke 6:39-45

Monday 28 February - feria

10am Funeral Mass for Evelio Azcona (RIP)

7pm Mass Michael Theanne (Ann)

Reading 1, 1 Peter 1:3-9

Responsorial Psalm, 111, Gospel, Mark 10:17-27

Tuesday 1 March - ST DAVID

10am Mass Joao Paulo Martins (RIP)

Reading 1, 1 Peter 1:10-16

Responsorial Psalm, 98, Gospel, Mark 10:28-31

Wednesday 2 March - ASH WEDNESDAY

10am Mass People of the Parish

7pm Deceased members of the Logan & Fitzsimons families

Reading 1, Joel 2:12-18, Responsorial Psalm, 51,

Reading 2, 1 Corinth. 5:20-6:2, Gospel, Matthew 6:1-6,16-18

Thursday 3 March - Lent feria

10am Mass Peter Celestine Okoro (Ann)

Reading 1, Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Responsorial Psalm 1, Gospel Luke 9:22-25

Friday 4 March - Lent feria

10am Mass Bridget Kearney (Ints)

7pm Mass Mark Hudson (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 58:1-9

Responsorial Psalm, 51, Gospel, Matthew 9:14-15

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

Saturday 5 March - Lent feria

9.30am Way of the Cross in Times of Difficulty

10am Mass Margaret Bradley (RIP)

10.30-11.30am Exposition with opportunity for Confession

Reading 1, Isaiah 58:9-14

Responsorial Psalm, 86, Gospel, Luke 5:27-32

Saturday 5 March VIGIL 1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

6pm Mass Terence Till (RIP)

Sunday 6 March 1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

8am Mass Norah Doran (Ann)

9am Mass People of the Parish

(*St John Fisher School, Marshalswick*)

9.30am Mass Stan and Teresa McDonald (Ann)

11.30am Ciro, Giuseppa, Isadora and Mario Realmuto (RIP)

6pm Mass Noreen Carolan (Ann)

PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches Together in St Albans we pray for everyone participating in the World Day of Prayer on 4 March.

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, John Baker, Michele Citrano, Ian Fincham, Joyce Flynn, Anne (Nancy) Hudson and James Morrissey.

The Funeral Mass for Evelio Azcona will be on Monday 28 February at 10 am with his remains being received into the church after the Sunday evening mass.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Noreen Carolan, Norah Doran, Patricia McCarthy, Stan and Teresa McDonald, Peter Celestine Okoro, Michael Theanne.

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.