



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - 6 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

Fr Michael writes...

This weekend we are able to present a summary of what was heard during the listening undertaken in the parish in preparation for the forthcoming Synod of Bishops due to take place in Rome in October 2023. Thank you to everyone who participated in any way to the parish's synodal journey - either through prayer, individual replies, participating in, or organising, a group or parish meeting. The response was indeed heartening. Thank you in particular to Sara and Ian Nash who have co-ordinated the process here at Alban and Stephen and compiled the synthesis returned to the diocese. Copies of the feedback returned to the diocese have been included with this weekend's Newsletter, are available at the back of church, and will be e-mailed to all those who have given us an email contact. If you are unable to source a copy, and would like to view our response, please contact the parish office.

In initiating the preparation for the synod of Bishops one of the Holy Father's concerns was to initiate a process of listening, encouraging us to make 'listening' part and parcel of our everyday parish life. One of the ways in which we are currently doing this is through the 'Belong & Believe' series running on Mondays. It may be that you were unable to join this current series, but the hope is that we will run it again, giving as many as possible the opportunity, to share their reflection on what it is that makes for a vibrant parish community.

In today's gospel, Jesus asks Simon Peter to put out into the deep and pay out his nets for catch. It cannot have been easy for Simon Peter to hear these words. He and his colleagues, had just spent all night fishing without catching anything, they must have been fed up and exhausted, but be that as it may, they heed what Christ has to say, paying out their nets and being rewarded with a catch that surpassed all their expectations.

Imagine, for a moment, that Simon Peter ignored what Christ had to say. Imagine his saying to Jesus 'we have been out all night, we caught nothing then, and we will catch nothing now'. So often this can be our response, as individuals or as a community; past failures - something which Simon Peter alludes to - and the refusal to try again can get in the way of our hearing what the Lord is calling us to. As we crawl out of the pandemic, it seems to me that today's gospel has something very definite to say to us; challenging us to listen, to pick ourselves up, dust ourselves down and begin again.

Journeying in Faith We hope to re-launch our Journeying in Faith group for adults. This group, led by Deacon Steve, usually meets on a Thursday evening. It may be for you, a friend or relative if they or you:

- Are curious about the Christian way of life
- Want to become a Christian e.g. Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation
- Are the spouse/partner of a Catholic and want to know more about joining the Catholic community
- Want to complete your Catholic initiation e.g. to be Confirmed in your faith
- Want to share and know more about your faith as a Catholic

Please contact Deacon Steve Pickard on 863925 or e-mail stephenrpickard@gmail.com or any of our priests on 01727 853585 or e-mail stalbens@rcdow.org.uk.

Pray and Participate: We pray that across the Diocese the listening phase will continue in accordance with Pope Francis' original vision. We also pray that the Diocesan facilitators are inspired by the Holy Spirit as they collate the responses from the parishes.

Justice, Peace & the Integrity of Creation Team (JPIC) As pandemic restrictions on association and movement ease we pray that our journeys bring us closer together but we are mindful of how travel can impact the world we all depend on.

LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS

Marion Miller (RIP) The funeral Mass for Marion Miller will be held on Friday 11 February at 11am. Her son, Fr Philip Miller, will preside. Marion was a lifelong parishioner, being baptised, receiving first communion as well as being confirmed and married here at St Alban & St Stephen. Marion played an active part in so many aspects of parish life and was the parish secretary/administrator for seven years 1986 - 1993. Her remains will be received into the church on Thursday 10 February at 4.30pm. As we commend her to God, praying for the repose of her soul, as well as for Geoff and the family at this time, we give thanks to God for the ways in which we as a community have been blessed by her friendship, faith and witness.

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. With that in mind, I would welcome you contacting me, Deacon Steve, for an initial discussion on 01727 863925 or on stephenrpickard@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.

Confirmation 2022 Fr Andrew will be in contact shortly with those who have registered for this year's course.

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.

Traidcraft Traidcraft goods will be available after all Masses this weekend and at St John Fisher Mass Centre on Sunday 13 February. Please try to support this fair-trade venture if you are able to. All proceeds go to CAFOD. More details from Maureen on 765549 or grabecki@hotmail.com.

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 on Saturday 19 February from 8.15 for coffee, croissants and banter. At about 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.

Developing Our Faith as Adults Our Parish Assembly highlighted the need to promote and facilitate ongoing faith formation for adults beyond sacramental preparation. The Adult Faith Formation 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.

OUR WIDER COMMUNITY

Mary's Meals We would like to thank everyone in the parish for their wonderful generosity. We spoke at the end of each Mass on 22/23 January and were genuinely surprised by the total given - a terrific £1,916.86. As a result 120 children will be fed one good meal every day in their place of education for a whole school year. God bless you.

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.

St Albans Cathedral Adult Learning Programme St Albans Cathedral is pleased to be able to offer a rich and varied Adult Learning Programme which explores topics related to faith, history and culture. Our programme consists of talks, courses and reading groups and, we provide a stimulating and welcoming learning environment which is open to anyone. For more information please visit our [website](#) at or call our Box Office team on 01727 890290.

St Albans Cathedral Library Located above the Welcome Centre at St Albans Cathedral is a modern theological lending library which boasts a diverse collection of theological works. Our collection also includes some works on local history and fiction and anyone is welcome to come and browse or use the space for private study. Membership is required to borrow books and costs £20 a year (local clergy are able to join for free). For more information, please [email](#) our friendly library team. Opening times: 10am-2pm Mon to Fri | 10am-1pm every first and third Saturday.

New Year's Resolution – Volunteer for CAFOD A vital aspect of church is people being willing to share their talents, experience and energy. Could your New Year's resolution be volunteering for CAFOD? We have lots of different ways you can get involved. If you'd like to know more, please get in touch with Tony at tsheen@cafod.org.uk

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.

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 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 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 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 Josephine Bakhita (1869–1947) – 8 February Josephine Bakhita was born in South Darfur (Sudan). Kidnapped and sold in slave markets of Africa, she was rescued by an Italian family, became a Christian and joined the Canossian Daughters of Charity, living the rest of her life at Schio, a small village near Vicenza. She is the patron saint of Sudan and of victims of human trafficking. For many years our parish supported the Bakhita Village (MSC) Project in South Africa which opened in 2002 to care for children orphaned due to AIDS. For the next 15 years more than 150 girls called it home. The home has now closed and transitioned to the Bakhita Outreach Program supporting the most vulnerable children in a home setting with a guardian.

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Saturday 5 February VIGIL 5TH SUNDAY IN ORD TIME
6pm Adrian McFadden (RIP)

Sunday 6 February 5TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

8am Mass Anne Slater (RIP)

9am Mass Frank Phelan (RIP)

(St John Fisher School, Marshalswick)

9.30am Mass Giuseppe Campanella (Ann)

11.30am Mass People of the Parish

6pm Mass James Stack (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 6:1-8, Responsorial Psalm, 138

Reading 2, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11, Gospel, Luke 5:1-11

Monday 7 February - feria

10am Mass Paul Liversidge (RIP)

7pm Mass Peter Celestine Okoro (RIP)

Reading 1, 1 Kings 8:1-7,9-13

Responsorial Psalm, 132, Gospel, Mark 6:53-56

Tuesday 8 February - St Josephine Bakhita

10am Mass Dolores Pasteris (RIP)

Reading 1, 1 Kings 8:22-23, 27-30

Responsorial Psalm, 84, Gospel, Mark 7:1-13

Wednesday 9 February - feria

10am Funeral Mass for Margaret Fitzsimons

7pm Mass Friends and relatives of Peggy Shaw (Ints)

Reading 1, 1 Kings 10:1-10

Responsorial Psalm, 37, Gospel, Mark 7:14-23

Thursday 10 February - St Scholastica

10am Mass Fr Henry Twohig MSC (RIP)

Reading 1, 1 Kings 11:4-13

Responsorial Psalm 106, Gospel Mark 7:24-30

4.30pm Reception of Remains of Marion Miller (RIP)

Friday 11 February - feria

11am Funeral Mass for Marion Miller

7pm Andrew Sumner and family (Ints)

Reading 1, 1 Kings 11:29-32, 12:19

Responsorial Psalm, 81, Gospel, Mark 4:7:31-37

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

Saturday 12 February - Memoria of Blessed Virgin Mary

10am Mass Peter Michael Rowland (RIP)

10.30-11.30am Exposition with opportunity for Confession

Reading 1, 1 Kings 12:26-32, 13:33-34

Responsorial Psalm, 106, Gospel, Mark 8:1-10

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 People of the Parish

(St John Fisher School, Marshalswick)

9.30am Mass Ainsley Lambert (Ann)

11.30am Mass Noel Castelino (RIP)

6pm Mass George Brennan (RIP)

PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches Together in St Albans we pray for the minister and members of St Julian'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 Margaret Fitzsimons, John Kentleton, Paul Liversidge, Marion Miller, Monica Parker.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Giuseppe Campanella, Fr Pat Courtney MSC, Arthur (Paddy) and Celia Dunne, Harold Elliott, Michael Finucane, Jesse Harris, Ainsley Lambert, Bob Markham, Lily Nickolson, Kathleen Quinn and Peter Taylor.

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.