



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT - 27 NOVEMBER 2022



Contactless Giving

Parish Priest: Fr Michael O'Boy - Assistant Priest: Fr Andrew Bowden

Deacons: Rev. Brendan Day and Rev. Steve Pickard (*Retired*)

Parish Administrator: Mrs Angela Gray - Catechetical Coordinator: Mrs Joan Egenes

Safeguarding Lead: Mary Harber / stalbanssg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk / 07976 277059

We are a Fairtrade parish

Fr Michael writes... Already, the world at large is busying itself in preparation for the 'seasonal' festivities ahead, witness the various adverts telling us which supermarket offers the best Christmas dinner; but ours is not the celebration of a 'season', rather it is the celebration of a person, Jesus Christ. This Sunday, the first Sunday of Advent, the Gospel warns us to be alert and stay awake - not for the next best buy, not for Santa, and not, as it happens, for the birth of Christ. No, it calls us to be prepared for Christ's return in power and glory at the end of time. 'You too must stand ready because the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect'.

It may be that we are setting our minds to the task of cards and presents. More likely, amidst the current economic challenges, these are things we might be worrying about, but these are not the Lord's concern. On that final day, when he appears in power and glory, he will not be concerned with the cards we did or didn't send, he won't even be asking where his card was, still less will there be a forensic examination of the presents we gave, the decorations we put up, or the dinner that was cooked. No, on the contrary, he will ask a very simple question; what was it that you did with the life and the gifts I gave you. Were you swept up in the world and its concerns, or did you, as Paul reminds us to in today's second reading, heed my word and example, putting me on like armour and allowing me and my ways, not the ways of the world, to be your security and protection.

To help you reflect on the Scriptures through Advent, either individually or as part of a group, visit the Advent Section on the parish [webpage](#). Among other resources, you will find each of the Sunday gospels and a set of questions to reflect on.

Church Cleaning A couple of parishioners have begun a Friday Cleaning Group, meeting in Church between at 8.30am and 10.00am, and readying the church for the weekend Masses. If you would like to join them, sparing a half hour, an hour or whatever you can, you would be welcome to do so.

Christmas Day Takeaway Lunch If you would like to receive a takeaway Christmas Day lunch please contact the parish office, giving your name and address and how many meals are needed.

Christmas Posters Now available in the Porch. Please take one to display and help spread the true meaning of Christmas.

Carols by Candlelight - Friday 23 December 7.30pm - Musicians and Singers Needed! Musicians, singers and readers are warmly invited to join us for this popular service. Please email cbcstalbans@rcdow.org.uk or text to 07840 367555 if you would like to be involved. Practices: 26 November 2-4pm singers, 3 and 10 December 2-3.30pm singers, then 4-5.30pm musicians, 17 December 2-5.30pm singers and musicians together, Dress rehearsal including readers 22 December 7.30pm.

Advent Talks During Advent we ponder again the mystery of the incarnation when our Lord humbled Himself, taking on our humanity, and entered our time and space to scatter the darkness of evil and show us the way of righteousness.

You are warmly invited and encouraged to attend two Advent talks being delivered by Father Andrew on Thursday 8 December at 7pm: The new Adam and Thursday 15 December at 7pm: The new Eve.

Tea and coffee will be served from 7pm in the parish hall. The talk will start promptly at 7.15pm and with questions should be approximately an hour. This talk is suitable for everyone but those who have just completed the Catholicism programme are especially encouraged to attend, as these topics complement and expand some of the discussions had.

Celebrate@Home Advent Family pack Brimming with ideas and resources to keep you and your family busy, praying and making the most of this great liturgical season. Please see <https://www.celebratetrust.org/onlinefamilyactivitypacks>.

JPIC Prayer Holy Spirit, by your light you guide us towards the Father's love. Inspire world leaders to prioritise peace and the common good. In your mercy, hear our prayer.

LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS

Sacrament of Baptism The next baptism preparation courses will be held on Saturday 28 January 2023 at 11.30am. Please see our [website](#) or [email](#) Fr Andrew at andrewbowden@rcdow.org.uk with any enquiries.

First Holy Communion 2022/23 For those registered there is a parent/guardian only meeting at 7.30pm on Friday 2 December in the Hall. The programme begins on 14 January.

Marriage Preparation If you are intending to get married, please note the Diocese requires at least six months' notice. Couples are expected to complete a marriage preparation course the next of which will take place in January 2023. If you hope to marry in 2023 please [email](#) Fr Michael at 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 being added to the bulletin.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Open Door Charity's Winter Beds Project (WBP) This year the WBP will run from December to March and we are looking for more volunteers who will receive full training and ongoing support. If you would like to be involved, please email winterbedsproject@opendoorstalbens.org or email Colin Hull at cchandco@btconnect.com to hear his experience of volunteering with the WBP. For more information see the parish [website](#) or posters in the porch.

Christmas Day Takeaway Lunch We hope to provide a takeaway lunch on Christmas Day for anyone in the parish who is in need. We already have a volunteer cook, but we need volunteer drivers to deliver the meals and people to help clear away after cooking at approx. 12.30pm to 1.15pm. If you can help deliver the meals or clear away after cooking on Christmas Day please contact the parish office.

OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

Food Bank If you would like to support the foodbank currently being run by the Salvation Army here in St Albans donations of non-perishable food items (cans and dried goods) can be left in the cardboard box in the porch.

Live Simply Thanks to everyone who came to share ideas about Living Simply on Saturday 18 November. We had a very good launch to parish planning. We will contact everyone who asked to be kept informed. If anyone would like to volunteer now for our communications team or be added to the contact list, please contact Mary at marytharber@gmail.com, with email heading 'Live Simply'.

Faith and Family Group The 'Faith & Family group' meets in the parish hall on the first Tuesday of each month at 10.45am. Activities for under 5s. All welcome.

Coffee and Tea After Mass Coffee and tea is available in the Parish Centre coffee bar after 11.30am Mass on the first Sunday of the month and after 6pm Saturday evening Mass. Coffee and tea is also available in the Parish Centre coffee bar after 10am Mass each Monday. All welcome.

Toddlers' Playgroup - Monday 10.30am - midday For pre-school age children and their carers, termtime only. Join us in the hall for toys, books, games, singing, drinks & snacks. To help, please contact David Markham on 07543 400650.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Christmas Cards for those in Prison This weekend we are invited to write our first name only on Christmas cards for people in prison. Cards are available in the Church porch.

St Saviour's Advent Procession with Carols Sunday 27 November 5pm. All are welcome at this event.

Churches Together in Marshalswick Christmas Food Bank Collection Saturday 3 December 9.30-11.30 at Budgens, The Quadrant. To volunteer contact Maureen or Christine 07900 260190 /07788 968654.

Traidcraft Fairly traded goods will be on sale after all Masses at the Church over the weekend of 3/4 December. Alongside our usual selection of items, we have a good choice of Christmas cards and luxury chocolates - ideal as gifts or to indulge yourself with. Please come and have a look. Also available after Mass at Marshalswick Mass Centre on 11 December.

Knit and Natter Our next meetings be on 6 and 20 December from 2.15-4pm. All welcome. We are making blankets for the Salvation Army and heart decorations to send to Care Homes. The hearts are part of the St Albans Anna Chaplaincy project delivering messages of love this Christmas to each care home resident in St Albans.

Parish Christmas card stall We will have a stall at the market all day Wednesday 7 December when we will distribute our parish Christmas cards to greet St Albans residents and as an invitation to our Christmas celebrations. Please join us for no more than 30 minutes on the day to help. If you can do so, please email marytharber@gmail.com or phone 07976277059 to join the rota.

CWL Christmas Meeting Thursday 8 December in Room 1, 2-4 pm cost £3. Come and enjoy mince pies and sherry, Christmas themed talk, raffle, quiz and carol singing.

BINGO 9 December In aid of LIFE, at 8.00pm in the Parish Hall. Admission is 50p and refreshments are included. Everyone is most welcome. Many thanks for the support at our last Bingo evening. The total raised for the Knights of St.Columba was £105.00.

Parish Film Event Parish Friends will be showing the film "Paddington 2" on Sunday 11 December in the Parish Hall. Light refreshments will be served at 2.30pm and the film will start at 3pm. Popcorn will be provided for children. An

afternoon for all the family and everyone is welcome. If you require a lift please contact Helen Bassill 07860 830340.

Turkey and Tinsel Lunch Parish Friends will be hosting a Turkey and Tinsel lunch for senior parishioners on Sunday 8 January 12.30-3pm. Lifts can be arranged. Helpers and drivers (with DBS) appreciated. Contact Helen on 07860 830340 or helenbassill@ntlworld.com to attend or help.

Lourdes 2023 The next Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes will run from 21 - 28 July 2023. If you are interested (no commitment at this stage) in making the pilgrimage as part of a parish group please contact the parish office. There are a number of ways to get involved in the pilgrimage. In particular, the organisers are looking for doctors, nurses and helpers (aged 18+) to work in the St Frai, the pilgrims' hospital. They are also looking for younger volunteers or Redcaps (aged 15-20) to assist with more able pilgrims. For more information contact wdlpyouth@rcdow.org.uk.

OUR PARISH SCHOOLS

Primary, Secondary and Nursery School Certificates of Catholic Practice For those parents and guardians who need to obtain a certificate of Catholic Practice to accompany their child's application for a school or nursery place, Fr Michael will be available at the presbytery at the following times:

- Tuesday 13 December 3.30-6.00pm
- Wednesday 11 January/Friday 3 February 7.30-9.00pm

No appointment is necessary and children need not attend.

Ss Alban and Stephen Schools' PTA Fundraising Event - Wreath Making Workshop 7.30pm Thursday 1 December in the parish centre hall. Cost £25 a ticket including all materials, tuition, a glass of mulled wine and a mince pie! Email ssaspta@gmail.com to book your place.

Nicholas Breakspear Sixth Form Open Evening 6-8pm Monday 28 November nbs.herts.sch.uk

Nicholas Breakspear School are consulting on proposed changes to their admissions arrangements for 2024/2025 Among the proposed changes is the requirement of a Certificate of Catholic Practice. Responses to the revised arrangements, the detail of which can be found [here](#), are invited, and should be submitted to the Student Transition Coordinator by email at westerdalea@nbs.herts.sch.uk or by post to the school address Nicholas Breakspear Catholic School, Student Transition Coordinator, Colney Heath Lane, St Albans, AL4 0TT by Friday 6 January 2023.

OUR WIDER COMMUNITY

CAFOD World Gifts: Give a gift of hope this Christmas - In Advent, let's share the promise of hope that has been made to us with our sisters and brothers around the world. You can buy CAFOD's World Gifts for family and friends this Christmas online at <https://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk/> or pick up a catalogue in church. World Gifts such as "super

soup kitchens", "trees for life", or "water for a family" will help transform lives in a world filled with challenges.

Christmas Celebration - Music & Readings for Christmas An event in aid of Westminster Cathedral. Tuesday 20 and Wednesday 21 December 7.30pm at Westminster Cathedral. For tickets go to www.westminstercathedral.org.uk.

Vinnie Packs The SVP are distributing over 10,000 Vinnie Packs containing cold weather essentials to the homeless this winter. Please could you consider sponsoring packs at a suggested donation of £4.10 per pack? Donations can be sent to Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ with cheques made out to SVP or by bank transfer to Nat West sort code 60-60-04, account no. 4608 8237 . Thank you!

Synod of Bishops extended Pope Francis has announced that the Synod on Synodality will be extended to 2024. The two sessions of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops will take place from 4 to 29 October 2023, and in October 2024, bringing together bishops from across the world to discuss and prepare a document to counsel the Pope. Pope Francis explained that he made the decision "in order to have a more relaxed period of discernment."

Can you help in some market research? This year is the 10th anniversary of Caritas Westminster, the social action arm of the Diocese. We are inviting anyone who would be interested to be part of a focus group happening in the coming fortnight to get in touch. There are three Zoom focus groups to choose from: Thursday 1, Tuesday 6 and Wednesday 7 December from 6.30-7.45pm. Your opinion would be very helpful. If you would like to take part, please email Julie Christie-Webb, Caritas Fundraising Manager, to register, at juliechristiewebb@rcdow.org.uk

Caritas Westminster If you would like to see a brief film about the work of Caritas Westminster please follow this link: <https://youtu.be/Vgxxvkd-8Ug>

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.

Mass Intentions The best way to book mass intentions is to email the parish office or phoning 9am - 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 2023 and that intentions may have to be moved with little notice to accommodate funerals. The suggested diocesan donation is currently £10 per mass.

Financial Results and Report for the year ended 31 December 2021 A summary of our parish income and expenditure for 2021 is now available in the Church porch and on the 'Your Donations' page of our website.

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Saturday 26 November - VIGIL OF FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

6pm Mass Pauline, Bella & Johnny Taites (RIP)

Sunday 27 November - FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8am Mass Bridie Byrne (RIP)

9am Mass People of the Parish (*St John Fisher School, M'wick*)

9.30am Mass Holy Souls - Remembering especially deceased parents and grandparents

11.30am Mass Deceased family & friends of Sieglinde Wilson

6pm Mass Michael Walsh (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 2:1-5, Psalm 121(122)

Reading 2, Romans 13:11-14, Gospel, Matthew 24:37-44

Monday 28 November - Advent feria

10am Mass Mary Miskell (RIP)

7pm Mass Emilio and Concetta Viscogliosi (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 4:2-6

Psalm 121(122), Gospel, Matthew 8:5-11

Tuesday 29 November - Advent feria

10am Mass Evelio Azcona (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 11:1-10

Psalm 71(72), Gospel, Luke 10:21-24

Wednesday 30 November - ST ANDREW

10am Mass Josephine (Jo) Gleeson (Ann)

7pm Mass Holy Souls

Reading 1, Romans 10:9-18

Psalm 18(19), Gospel, Matthew 4:18-22

Thursday 1 December - Advent feria

10am Mass Sr Maura Halpin (Ints)

Reading 1, Isaiah 26:1-6

Psalm 117(118), Gospel, Matthew 7:21,24-27

Friday 2 December - Advent feria

10am Mass Pat and Caroline Judge (Ann)

7pm Mass Tessa Brooks (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 29:17-24

Psalm 26(27), Gospel, Matthew 9:27-31

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

Saturday 3 December - St Francis Xavier

10am Mass Dorothy Cooney (RIP)

10.30 - 11.30am Exposition with opportunity for Confession
Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26

Psalm 146(147), Gospel, Matthew 9:35-10:1,5,6-8

Saturday 3 December - VIGIL OF SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

6pm Mass Mike Lyons (RIP)

Sunday 4 December - SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8am Mass Callum Gathard (RIP)

9am Mass Rose McCormac (RIP) (*St John Fisher School, M'wick*)

9.30am Mass People of the Parish

11.30am Mass Pat Roache (RIP)

6pm Mass Terry Rivers (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 11:1-10, Psalm 71(72)

Reading 2, Romans 15:4-9, Gospel, Matthew 3:1-12

PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches Together in St Albans this week we pray for the pastor and members of the St. Albans Pentecostal Assembly of God.

For those suffering with Coronavirus and for all the Sick

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 Mary Miskell and Sr Denise SSCJ.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Vera Doherty, Jo Gleeson, Mark Gomm, Pat and Caroline Judge, Patrick Mannion and Patrick McGoohan.

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace

Welcoming all new parishioners!

Please see the [page](#) on our website with useful information for those who are new to our parish. Please complete our online **New Parishioner Registration 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.

Little Lights - Children's Liturgy during 9.30am Sunday Mass

If you can help with the Children's Liturgy please get in touch with Marta via yeadonmarta@gmail.com

Please click [here](#) for this week's 'Liturgy of the Word' for Children leaflet and the latest worksheet from the Diocese of Westminster.

Mass in Cantonese

This will be held once a month at Our Lady of Lourdes in Sawston, Cambridge, CB22 3HJ. The next mass will be celebrated on Saturday 12 November at 2pm, with refreshments afterwards. All are warmly invited. Please [email](#) for details or see the flyer in the Church porch.