



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

14 Beaconsfield Road, St Albans, AL1 3RB

Office Hours Monday-Friday 9am-1pm Tel: 01727 853 585

E-mail: stalbans@rcdow.org.uk Website: www.albanstephen.org

YouTube: youtube.com/c/SsAlbanandStephenCatholicChurch



Contactless Giving

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (GAUDETE SUNDAY) - 11 DECEMBER 2022

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 ... I have just arrived back from a week's break, part of which I spent in Devon. Before going I had the great joy of sharing with Deacon Steve and his wife Terry the parish's 'thank-you' presentation marking Steve's retirement from 'active' ministry. We will look to having a Thanksgiving Mass and celebration in the new year, once Steve has fully recuperated. In the meantime both he and Terry write:

From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you all so very much for the generous gift that Fr Michael passed to us last Friday to mark my (our) retirement from active ministry. How this was 'secretly' carried out over the past few weeks we cannot fathom but, there are obviously 'secret squirrels' working throughout the parish! If all works out, we hope to put this to good use in visiting Our Lady at St Bernadette's shrine in Lourdes in July.

Your prayers, as always, are lifting us up whilst we go through our 'little blip' but, rest assured, I shall be back to annoy you all in the new year. May God the Father, Jesus our saviour and the Holy Spirit grant you all peace and joy this Christmas; and be assured of our love.

Deacon Steve and Terry.

Penitential Service 14 December 7pm Advent is a penitential season, a time to take up the Baptist's call to repentance, and to prepare a way for the Lord. On Wednesday 14 December at 7pm there will be a Parish Penitential Service during which there will be an opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Alongside Fr Michael & Fr Andrew, two visiting priests will also be available for individual confessions which will be heard following a brief Liturgy of the Word and examination of conscience. Confessions will be accompanied by a time of Exposition which will conclude with Benediction around 8.20pm. If you would like to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation in preparation for Christmas please make use of this opportunity. Additional confession times are advertised in the Christmas Services card available in the porch.

Help needed for Christmas Services We are still short of Readers, Eucharistic Ministers, Welcomers and Collectors for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses. The Christmas Eve masses are at 5pm, 7pm and 10pm. The Christmas morning masses are at 8am, 9am, 9.30am and 11.30am. If you can help, please contact the parish office.

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.

Advent Collection for the Foodbank - 10 and 11 December As we approach the celebration of Christmas we want to try to ensure those who need to this food are also able to celebrate Christmas so we will hold a special collection of groceries and toiletries for the Salvation Army foodbank this weekend. If you have forgotten to bring something along this weekend you can always add it to the foodbank collecting box in the porch during the week.

Advent Talk 15 December: The New Eve 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 the second of the Advent talks being delivered by Father Andrew. 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>.

Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Prayer Loving Father, in this season of Hope & Peace, thank you for all the good that is done in our world to help those in need. In your gentleness, touch all your people with your love. Come Lord Jesus, come.

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.

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@opendoorstalbans.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

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

Christmas card market stall Many thanks to all who helped with the market stall on 7 December by attending to distribute cards but also with ideas and suggestions. We had a good day talking to shoppers and introducing our church.

YOU CAN BE SANTA 2022 Thank you everyone for your tremendous generosity and support in making the YCBS 2022 scheme such a success. The Santa Team are currently delivering gift vouchers to over 200 children. The children are all known to us through our Parish schools, the SVP, the Life House and individual parishioners. We are also supporting children from the St Albans Refuge, Home Start and the Intensive Family Support Team. In addition 18 adults with either special needs or living in a refuge, along with residents of the Catholic Workers' Farm will also

receive a Christmas voucher. Thank you once again, your donations really make a difference. The Santa Team

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

Traidcraft Items available at Marshalswick Mass Centre this Sunday 11 December. We have a good range of Christmas cards, luxury chocolates and the usual range of fairly traded goods. All proceeds are donated to Cafod to help their work in the developing world.

Mothers' Prayers The Mothers' Prayers Group will meet in room 2 on Monday 12 December at 8pm. Anyone wishing to pray for children is welcome. Information from, office@mothersprayers.org.

Knit and Natter 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. For queries, please contact Helen on helenbassill@ntlworld.com or 07860 830340

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.

Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation (JPIC) - there will be no meeting in December.

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.

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.

Youth adults 18-35 On Saturday 17 December, NYMO will be hosting an extended young adult brunch at the Church of Our Lady Help of Christians, in Luton. If you are aged 18-35 years old you are invited to join the team for a brunch and some incredible teaching. See <https://nymo.org/brunch/> for more details

Bulletin Next weekend's bulletin will be the last before Christmas. Our first bulletin of 2023 will be available on the weekend of 14/15 January.

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. Your opinion would be very helpful. If you would like to take part in any of the three Zoom focus groups: Thursday 1, Tuesday 6 and Wednesday 7 December from 6.30-7.45pm. 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/Vgxvakd-8Ug>

Watford Hospital Chaplaincy Weekly Advent Reflections on Zoom Each Sunday evening you are invited to join us for 30min of reflection on the weekly themes of Advent. For more information, please email Deacon Anthony.

Memories Café - bereavement and loss drop-in support sessions Every Monday 11am to 1pm at Watford Hospital Chaplaincy. Memories Café offers a chance to meet with others who understand the experience of loss. It is a space to talk about the pain of bereavement and find mutual support and encouragement when you need it most. For more information please email: westherts.spiritualcare@nhs.net.

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 10 December - VIGIL MASS FOR SUNDAY

6pm Mass Anne O'Meara (Ints)

Sunday 11 December - THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Gaudete Sunday)

8am Mass Annie O'Hare (Ints)

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

9.30am Mass John and Anna Cronin (Ann)

11.30am Mass Brendan Hollywood (Ann)

6pm Mass Mickie Clancy (Ann)

Reading 1, Isaiah 35:1-6,10, Psalm 145(146)

Reading 2, James 5:7-10, Gospel, Matthew 11:2-11

Monday 12 December - Advent feria

10am Mass Steve and Terry Pickard (Ints)

7pm Mass Bridie Byrne (RIP)

Reading 1, Numbers 24:2-7,15-17

Psalm 24(25), Gospel, Matthew 21:23-27

Tuesday 13 December - St Lucy

10am Mass Ita Major (RIP)

Reading 1, Zephaniah 3:1-2,9-13

Psalm 33(34), Gospel, Matthew 21:28-32

Wednesday 14 December - St John of the Cross

10am Dorrie Humphries (RIP)

7pm Advent Penitential Service

Reading 1, Isaiah 45:6-8,18,21-25

Psalm 84(85), Gospel, Luke 7:19-23

Thursday 15 December - Advent feria

10am Mass John and Nora Doran (Ann)

Reading 1, Isaiah 54:1-10

Psalm 29(30), Gospel, Luke 7:24-30

Friday 16 December - Advent feria

7pm Mass Donald de Cruz (Ann)

Reading 1, Isaiah 56:1-3,6-8

Psalm 66(67), Gospel, John 5:33-36

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

Saturday 17 December - Advent feria

10am Mass Bridie Byrne (RIP)

10.30 - 11.30am Exposition with opportunity for Confession

Reading 1, Genesis 49:2,8-10

Psalm 71(72), Gospel, Matthew 1:1-17

Saturday 17 December - VIGIL MASS FOR SUNDAY

6pm Mass Matthew and Elie Kiley (Ints)

Sunday 18 December - FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8am Mass Graham Smith (RIP)

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

9.30am Mass Francesca Yeadon (Ints)

11.30am Mass Mary Curran (RIP)

6pm Mass Mike Lyons (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 7:10-14, Psalm 23(24)

Reading 2, Romans 1:1-7, Gospel, Matthew 1:18-24

PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches Together in St Albans this week we pray for all the members of the City Churches of St Albans.

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 Andrew Blaney, Agnes Jordan, Lim Liong Wie, Ita Major, Bridie Sayers and John Williams.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Mickie Clancy, John and Anna Cronin, Donald de Cruz, John and Nora Doran, Brendan Hollywood, Jim Lewis, Patrick McGoohan and Jim Moore.

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 10 December at 2pm, with refreshments afterwards. All are warmly invited. Please email cantonmassea@gmail.com for details or see the flyer at the back of the church.