



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

14 Beaconsfield Road, St Albans, AL1 3RB

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SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT - 4 DECEMBER 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 Andrew writes... Advent is a time to heed the call of St John the Baptist who, echoing the voices of the prophets of old, urges us to prepare a way for the Lord. In Advent we are preparing to celebrate the first coming of Christ which, of course, has already happened over 2,000 years ago and at the same time we are also preparing ourselves for his second coming which will happen at the end of time. But the way that we prepare ourselves for these two comings is primarily by opening ourselves to the third way in which Jesus comes to us, which is here and now, in our hearts and in our lives. And St Paul speaks about this in our second reading at mass this Sunday when he says to the Philippians that his prayer for them is that their love for each other may increase more and more and that that love will improve their knowledge and deepen their perception. What he means is that by opening our hearts in love for one another we begin to see more clearly how Christ comes to us in our neighbour, especially those in need, and when we open our hearts to Christ in this way, we truly prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of the Word made flesh in the poverty and simplicity of the stable and we truly prepare ourselves for his glorious return.

Here's one very practical way in which we can put that love into action this Christmas; by contributing to the **Advent Collection for the Foodbank - 10/11 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 foodbank on 10 & 11 December. When you are out shopping this week please add one extra item to your basket and bring it with you when you come to mass at the weekend. Please ensure that these are products that can be stored in a cupboard not a fridge because we are unable to handle the chilled groceries. Your generosity at this time will be a real gift for those who are struggling, thank you.

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.

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: 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.

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 Dear Lord, help us to challenge greed & inequality & stand up for all among us in desperate need of food especially in East Africa.

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

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.

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 after all Masses at the Church this weekend and at Marshalswick Mass Centre next 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.

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

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.

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. 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 3 December – VIGIL 2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

6pm Mass Mike Lyons (RIP)

Sunday 4 December – 2ND 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

Monday 5 December – Advent feria

10am Mass Holy Souls

7pm Mass Evelio Azcona (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 35:1-10

Psalm 84(85), Gospel, Luke 5:17-26

Tuesday 6 December – Advent feria

10am Mass Catriona McLoughlan (RIP)

Reading 1 Isaiah 40:1-11

Psalm 95(96), Gospel, Matthew 18:12-14

Wednesday 7 December – St Ambrose

10am Mass Steve and Terry Pickard (Ints)

7pm Mass Holy Souls

Reading 1, Isaiah 40:25-31

Psalm 102(103), Gospel, Matthew 11:28-30

Thursday 8 December – THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, Patron of the Diocese

10am Mass Tom Timmins (RIP)

Reading 1, Genesis 3:9-15,20, Psalm 97(98),

Reading 2, Ephesians 1:3-6,11-12, Gospel, Luke 1:26-38

Friday 9 December – Advent feria

11am Mass Funeral Mass for Mary Miskell

7pm Mass Jerh Murphy (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 48:17-19

Psalm 1, Gospel, Matthew 11:16-19

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

Saturday 10 December – Blessed Virgin Mary of Loreto

10am Mass Seamus Moore (RIP)

10.30 – 11.30am Exposition with opportunity for Confession

Reading 1, Ecclesiasticus 48:1-4,9-11

Psalm 79(80), Gospel, Matthew 17:10-13

Saturday 10 December - VIGIL 3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

6pm Mass Anne O'Meara (Ints)

Sunday 11 December – 3RD 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

PLEASE PRAY

Together with Churches Together in St Albans this week we pray for the minister and members of the Christ Church 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 Lim Liong Wie, Mary Miskell, Bridie Sayers.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Mickie Clancy, John and Anna Cronin, Brendan Hollywood, Pat and Caroline Judge, Jim Lewis 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 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.