



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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21 April 2024 - FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



Contactless Giving

Parish Priest: Fr Michael O'Boy - Assistant Priest: Fr John Casey

Deacon: Rev. Brendan Day

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

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We are a Fairtrade parish

Fr John writes...

Today, the fourth Sunday of Easter, is also known as Vocations Sunday or the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. In his message for today Pope Francis says: 'The World Day of Prayer for Vocations invites us to reflect on the precious gift of the Lord's call to each of us, as members of his faithful pilgrim people, to participate in his loving plan and to embody the beauty of the Gospel in different states of life,' see <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/papal-message-for-vocations-sunday-2024>. Perhaps traditionally we have thought of vocations as relating only to priesthood and religious life. However, if the lay faithful don't live out their vocation, there won't be vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Vocations are fostered and nourished within the whole Christian community. This is the first World Day of Vocations that I celebrate as a priest, and as I do, I recall all the prayers and support I received from parishioners during my vocational journey.

Living out our vocation isn't a burden or a duty. Pope Francis assures us that it 'is the surest way for us to fulfil our deepest desire for happiness.' I am happier now than I have ever been in my life. Every vocation contains sacrifice that comes from love. I think of parents who sacrifice and work hard for their children, who spend wakeless nights nursing sick children back to health. I think of grandparents who give so generously in their later years to their children and grandchildren, as well as to the Church and the wider community rather than just enjoying their retirement for themselves. I think of those who are single or widowed in our communities who reach out to others rather than isolating themselves. I think of all our clergy and religious who give their lives to serve Jesus according to their particular vocation.

Priest Training Fund This weekend there is a second collection in support of the Priest Training Fund. This fund pays for the priestly formation of the seminarians training for the priesthood. There are currently 49 men studying at Allen Hall seminary, 13 of whom are from our own Diocese. We also have one seminarian in Valladolid and one at the Beda College in Rome. There are a further two on a propaedeutic year. Last year 3 deacons were ordained for Westminster Diocese. The Priest Training Fund also supports the ongoing enrichment and formation of our ordained priests. Your gift ensures we can provide training for these men responding to Christ's call to dedicate their lives to serve God's people. Please be as generous as you can. Please also pray for vocations and for all our priests. If you do not have a donation envelope, plenty are still available at the back of the church. You can use the QR code to make your donation online or visit www.rcdow.org.uk/donations. Thank you for your generosity.

Understanding the Mass 'One of the most basic truths about the Mass is that it is an encounter with Jesus Christ. Christianity is not a philosophy or a set of ideas, but rather a relationship with the person of Christ. In the Mass, in a privileged way, we meet Him, listen to Him, respond to Him, commune with Him' (Bishop Robert Barron). Join us in the Parish Hall as we walk through the Liturgy of the Mass with Bishop Barron on three Thursday evenings - 9, 16 and 23 May. Soup and a roll will be served at 7.30pm, followed at 7.45pm by showing the DVDs and discussion, and aiming to finish before 9pm. Everyone is welcome. Not to be missed!

Offertory Promise Envelopes The new Offertory Promise Envelopes are now available for collection from the presbytery. We cannot leave them on open display because the labels include personal data. Please ask one of the priests after Mass on Sunday for your box of envelopes if you can't get to the parish office during the week.

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.

LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS

Enquiry A group for those who wish to explore the Catholic faith further with the possibility of being baptised/received into the church or, for those of you who are already baptised Catholic, with a view to being confirmed. Please [email](#) or speak with Fr John.

Sacrament of Baptism The next baptism preparation course is Saturday 11 May at 11.30am. To register or to arrange a date for baptism please collect a form from Fr Michael or Fr John after any of the weekend masses.

Monthly Youth Mass, first Sunday of the month at 6pm Calling all young people year 7 to year 12 who would like to participate in any capacity (musicians, singers, readers, collecting, welcoming, offertory) at the monthly youth mass. Please email stalbancc@rcdow.org.uk with your name and parents' email address to contact going forward.

Monthly 9.30am Family Mass on the last Sunday of the month. There is no Children's Liturgy on the last Sunday of each month. Instead, the children are invited to sit on the carpet at the front of the church while the Mass itself is geared towards their participation. There is a short social afterwards and we need volunteers to help. If you can help please speak with Deacon Brendan.

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. Please [email](#) Fr Michael for details.

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. From time to time names are removed from the sick list, but generally speaking it is a list that grows as people ask to have names included, but not removed when those concerned have recovered or are much improved. To help us manage the prayer list going forward it is proposed to include a sick person's name for 8 weeks and to remove their name thereafter, unless the request to have their name included is renewed.

OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

Migrants' toiletries collection We need donations of toiletries, shampoos, deodorants and sanitary [towels](#) for local migrants. Please leave in the box in the Church porch labelled 'For Migrants'.

St Albans Food Bank Donations of non-perishable food items (cans and dried goods) can be left in the box in the porch. All donations are very welcome, but there is a particular need for long life milk, long life juice and tinned fruit at the moment.

More details of the St Albans Food bank can be found using this [link](#). There will also be a food collection box at Marshalswick Mass Centre the first Sunday of the month.

OUR PARISH GROUPS AND EVENTS

Parish Groups and Events Please see our the ['Parish News'](#) webpage for details of parish groups and events.

Coffee and Tea After Mass Coffee and tea are available in the Parish Centre coffee bar after 9.30am Sunday Mass during school term time, after 11.30am Mass on the first Sunday of the month and after 6pm Saturday evening Mass. Coffee and tea is also available after 10am Mass each Monday. All are welcome.

Faith and Family Group The 'Faith & Family group' meets in the parish hall on the first Tuesday of each month (not August) at 10.45am. Activities for under 5s. 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, contact David Markham on 07543 400650.

Fair trade Our regular parish Fair Trade stall will be open after Mass at Marshalswick Mass Centre on 14 April. All profits go to CAFOD and the sales benefit those in the Developing World through improved wages, education and health. Your support is much appreciated and life-giving.

The Parish Friends Knit and Natter Group We will be meeting in the Parish Centre on Tuesdays 23 April and 7 May from 2.15 to 4pm. All are welcome to join us. Contact Helen Bassill 07860 830340.

A Day in Cambridge: An Interreligious Tour - Wednesday 24 April The day will begin with a tour of the Woolf Institute, an organisation at the forefront of Christian, Jewish & Muslim dialogue. From here, we will visit the Cambridge Central Mosque (the "Eco-Mosque"). The mosque has been inspired by Islamic & English religious architectural traditions and is underpinned by sustainable, ecological values. The day will then finish with Evensong at King's College Chapel. The day is free, but you are asked to make your own travel arrangements.

C.W.L. 2pm Thursday 2 May A talk from Father John "A Journey of Discovery" All welcome members, guests and visitors. Cost £3 to include refreshments.

Men's Breakfast Saturday 11 May The first Men's Breakfast after Easter will be on Saturday 11th May. The theme this year is how science supports our Christian faith, rather than undermines it. We will be watching a talk given by Professor Francis Collins, who led the Human Genome Project which led the decoding of DNA. Professor Collins began his path to becoming a Christian after talking to a hospital patient.

PARISH ADMINISTRATION

We will meet in the Parish Centre from 8.15am for coffee, croissants and conversation, followed by the video on Francis Collins followed by an opportunity to conclude with a short discussion on the themes emerging. If you would like more details please just turn up on the Saturday morning or email d4dstalbins@gmail.com.

Clarence Park walk & picnic – Saturday 18 May All are invited to a short walk from noon followed by a BYO picnic from 1pm. Weather permitting. Suggested £5 donation to CAFOD on the day. Meet by the Bandstand. If you'd like to join the walk/picnic WhatsApp group e.g. in case of cancellation or changes – please email your phone number and name to grabecki@hotmail.com. Leave picnic/chairs etc with our group, stroll round the park as much as you like with friendly fellow parishioners and share lunch later. Ends around 2pm. All ages welcome – please supervise your own children. For more information, email as above. Arranged by the parish JPIC group.

Christian Aid Week Market Saturday 18 May Churches Together in Marshalswick 10am -1.30pm St Mary's Church Sherwood Avenue – Refreshments, Lunch, Live Music, Book, Plants, Cakes, Children's Activities, Fairtrade Raffle

Help Your Marriage Retrouvaille supports couples with difficulties in their marriage. The programme helps spouses re-awaken their love, trust and commitment. There is no group work or therapy. 14-16 June in Welwyn Garden City. Contact us on 07887 296983 or 07973 380443, retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com or www.retrouvaille.org.uk

The Alban Pilgrimage Sunday 22 June Join the community at St Albans Abbey for this spectacular celebration of Britain's first saint! With 12ft puppets and pilgrims re-enacting Alban's life and martyrdom through the streets of St Albans, all are welcome to join us on this very special occasion. Visiting groups of all denominations are especially welcome.

Lourdes Pilgrimage 19 - 26 July 2024 – Registration for the Westminster diocesan pilgrimage led by Cardinal Vincent Nichols is now open via the [application form](#) or by contacting the Pilgrimage Office on 020 7798 9173. Options to travel by plane, train or coach are available and there are many volunteering opportunities for those wishing to serve. All applications need to be submitted by Tuesday 30 April.

Good Counsel Network On Saturday 27 April, which is the 56th anniversary of abortion becoming legal in Britain, please pray and fast for the end of abortion in this Country. Normally we would ask you to fast from all food except bread and water for the day, but as it is still the Easter Season, you might choose instead to fast from a particular food or luxury, e.g. chocolate, alcohol, cigarettes, TV. Through God's grace we have seen thousands of Mothers in our counselling centre continue their pregnancies in very difficult circumstances. Please help us to help save lives with your prayers, fasting and support.

Mass Intentions Mass intentions can be booked by phoning or visiting the parish office from 9am to 1pm any weekday. Outside of these times, please [email](#) the parish office to request a mass intention. 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 masses can be booked up to a year in advance and the next masses available for booking are in September 2024** Intentions may have to be moved with little notice to accommodate funerals. The suggested diocesan donation, which contributes to the stipends of the priests of our parish, is £10 per mass.

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 hire charges and the range of facilities available.

Gift Aid If you are a UK taxpayer and have previously signed a gift aid declaration, but no longer pay UK tax, please contact the parish office and let us know. If you have stopped paying tax, we can no longer claim gift (25p in every pound). If you do not pay sufficient UK tax and gift aid is claimed on what you give, then HMRC may seek reimbursement from the parish. If you have signed a gift aid form, your offertory donations need to come from a bank account in your name only or a joint bank account on which you are also named.

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.

Contactless Donations If you register as a gift aiding donor on one of our two contactless devices, please ensure you add both your first and surname, in full, and your full address, including road name, so that your gift aid declaration meets the standards for gift aid reclaim required by HMRC.

Gift Aid If you are a UK taxpayer and have previously signed a gift aid declaration, but no longer pay tax, please contact the parish office and let us know, as we cannot claim gift aid on your giving (25p in every pound). If you do not pay tax and gift aid is claimed on what you give, HMRC may seek reimbursement. If you have signed a gift aid form, your offertory or building fund donations need to come from a bank account in your name only or a joint bank account on which you are also named. The 2023/24 tax year ended on 5 April 2024 and we will be submitting our gift aid claim for 2023/24 shortly. Please phone or email the parish office with any queries or to notify us of any changes in circumstance.

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Saturday 20 April - VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY

6pm Mass Kathleen Crowley (RIP)

Sunday 21 April - FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

8am Mass Fintan Bergin (RIP)

9am Mass People of the parish

(John Fisher School Marshalswick)

9.30am Mass Michael & Joan Finucane (Ann)

11.30am Mass Pat Bambury (RIP)

6pm Mass Holy Souls

Reading 1, Acts 4:8-12, Psalm 117(118)

Reading 2, 1 John 3:1-2, Gospel, John 10:11-18

Monday 22 April - Easter feria

10am Mass Tony Moran (Ann)

7pm Mass Fr Tom Daley (Ints)

Reading 1, Acts 11:1-18, Psalm 41(42)

Gospel, John 10:1-10

Tuesday 23 April - ST GEORGE, Patron of England

10am Mass Brendan Gilhooley (RIP)

Reading 1, Apocalypse 12:10-12, Psalm 125(126)

Reading 2, Romans 5:1-5, Gospel, John 15:1-8

Wednesday 24 April - St Erkenwald and St Melitus

10am Mass Pat Brennan (RIP)

7pm Mass Josephine Munnelly (RIP)

Reading 1, Acts 12:24-13:5, Psalm 66(67)

Gospel, John 12:44-50

Thursday 25 April - St Mark, Evangelist

10am Mass Eileen Vasey (Ann)

Reading 1, 1 Peter 5:5-14

Psalm 88(89), Gospel, Mark 16:15-20

Friday 26 April - St Alphege, Bishop and Martyr

7pm Mass Mary Curran (RIP)

Reading 1, Acts 13:26-33, Psalm 2

Gospel, John 14:1-6

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

Saturday 27 April - Easter feria

10am Mass Enda McLoughlin (Ann) & Tessie Lysaght (Ann)

10.30am Confessions and Exposition

Reading 1, Acts 13:44-52, Psalm, 97(98)

Gospel, John 14:7-14

Forthcoming Funerals:

Pat Brennan - 10am Wednesday 8 May

Felicity French - 10am Thursday 16 May

Seiglinde Wilson - TBA

Colin McDonald - TBA

Mass in Cantonese Once a month at 2pm at Our Lady of Lourdes in Sawston, Cambridge, CB22 3HJ. Dates in 2024: 20 April, 18 May, 15 June, 6 July, 11 August, 14 September, 13 October, 16 November, 21 December. All welcome. For more details, please see the flyer at the back of the church or email cantonmassea@gmail.com.

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Saturday 27 April - VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY

6pm Mass Roger Hagger (Ann)

Sunday 28 April - FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

8am Mass Annie Cawley and Mary Bergin (RIP)

9am Mass People of the parish

(John Fisher School Marshalswick)

9.30am Mass Martin and Bridget Cloherty (RIP)

11.30am Mass Patrick and Bridget Scully (Ann)

6pm Mass Isabel Ball (RIP)

Reading 1, Acts 9:26-31, Psalm 21(22)

Reading 2, 1 John 3:18-24, Gospel, John 15:1-8

PLEASE PRAY

With Churches Together in St Albans this week we pray for all we pray for all the members of St Leonard's Church.

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 all those who have died recently including Pat Brennan, Felicity French, David Grundy, Colin McDonald and Seiglinde Wilson.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Michael & Joan Finucane, Roger Hagger, Tony Harding, Tessie Lysaght, Margaret Markham, Enda McLoughlin, Tony Moran, Clare Moss, Ita and Jack Omahoney, Patrick and Bridget Scully and Eileen Vasey.

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

FAMILY RESOURCES

Please join us at Little Lights (under sevens) and Children's Liturgy (seven and above) during 9.30am Mass on Sundays (term time only). If you can help with Little Lights please get in touch with Laura via laura.cox.london@gmail.com. Please click [here](#) for this week's 'Liturgy of the Word' for Children leaflet from the Diocese of Westminster. The [Wednesday Word](#) is another excellent resource that can be used by families to reflect on the issues and messages present in Sunday Liturgy each week. Cardinal Vincent Nichols recommends using these materials saying they bring "remarkable graces to many."