



Church Website

**NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN**  
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 YouTube: <https://youtube.com/c/SsAlbanandStephenCatholicChurch>  
**5 May 2024 - SIXTH 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  
 Safeguarding Lead: Mary Harber / [stalbanssg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk](mailto:stalbanssg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk) / 07976 277059  
*We are a Fairtrade parish*

*Fr John writes...*

The Headlines across Tuesday's media focussed on the unprecedented alert sent to primary and secondary teachers across Britain about pupils being targeted in Sextortion Scams. The National Crime Agency reported that children as young as five are at risk. Overseas gangs are luring children online, tricking them into believing that they are in genuine relationships or friendships. The worrying trend noted by the NCA is that the gangs are then demanding children to share intimate images of themselves on a webcam. Blackmailers are then threatening to release these photos, either real or fake, to friends and family. Children's Social media accounts are being hacked. The NCA advises all victims not to pay, but to block the offender and inform the police. This cruel exploitation of young people is a distressing reminder of the ways in which people can exploit people.

In today's gospel we are challenged to understand that God has no favourites, that his love is universal, that he freely communicates his love and spirit to all who accept him. The fullness of this love is expressed in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit. Through baptism, we become children of God, each of us have been begotten by the love of God, and with this gift that we each receive we are challenged to love just as Jesus loved in the giving of himself on the Cross, freely and unconditionally.

We remain in his love, Jesus says, by keeping his commandments, especially the great commandment to love one another as he has loved us, but the sad reality is that people do not always choose to remain in the Lord's love. Refusing to love as he loved, we have an ability to cut ourselves off from the Lord, from the love he offers freely and unconditionally, and thereby the joy, the complete joy, that Christ's being alive in us promises.

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**Recommissioning of Ministers of the Word and of the Eucharist** We are very blessed in our parish to have many volunteer Ministers who read during Mass and Ministers who distribute the Eucharist at Mass and to our housebound parishioners. Each year we recognise their dedication and invite them to renew their commitment to service. Our Ministers of the Word will be recommissioned at all Masses at the Feast of Pentecost (19 May) and our Ministers of the Eucharist will be recommissioned at all Masses on the Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi 2 June)

**Priests Training Fund** A total of £1,199.76 has been donated to the Priest Training Fund. Thank you for your generosity.

**School Governors wanted** St John Fisher Catholic Primary School is seeking to recruit Governors to ensure high standards of achievement for all children and young people in the school by setting the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction; holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent. This is an exciting opportunity to support our school community and play a role in a vibrant and collaborative Trust that is in the process of expansion and development. For more information please see [here](#) and to register your interest please contact [governance@ascat.co.uk](mailto:governance@ascat.co.uk) or complete the online register of interest form on the [ASCAT website](#)

**Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation Group Prayer** We pray for all refugees and their families and for an end to the wars, poverty and human rights abuses that drive people to become refugees in the first place.

**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 8 June 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 [stalbanscc@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:stalbanscc@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 [parish office](#). Permission from the person being prayed for, or their next of kin, must be obtained before being added to the bulletin. Those added to the sick list will be included for eight weeks and then will be removed, unless the request to have their name included is renewed.

**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.

## 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.

**CAFOD Pentecost novena** If you would like to join this novena between the Ascension and Pentecost click [here](#).

## 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.

**Fairtrade** Our monthly Fairtrade stall will be available after all Masses at the church this weekend and after Mass on 12 May at Marshalswick Mass centre. We continue to add new lines, so please take a moment to look at the range we have available. By supporting Fairtrade you can directly help farmers and their families across the world lead a better life.

**The Parish Friends Knit and Natter Group** We will be meeting in the Parish Centre on Tuesdays 7 and 21 May from 2.15 to 4pm. All are welcome to join us. Contact Helen Bassill 07860 830340.

**Bingo** Many thanks for the support to our recent Bingo evening. The amount raised, and donations, for The Catholic Children's Society, came to £150.00. Our next Bingo evening will be on Friday 10 May at 8pm in the Parish Hall.

**Men's Breakfast Saturday 11 May** The first Men's Breakfast after Easter will be on Saturday 11 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. 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 [d4dstalbens@gmail.com](mailto:d4dstalbens@gmail.com).

**Concert for Christian Aid 7.30pm Saturday 11 May** Marshalswick Baptist Free Church, Sherwood Avenue, St Albans, An evening of diverse entertainment with a retiring collection for the work of Christian Aid.

**Mothers' Prayers** We will meet at 8pm on Monday 13 May in room 2. Anyone wishing to pray for children is welcome. Information from [office@mothersprayers.org](mailto:office@mothersprayers.org).

**Clarence Park walk & picnic - Saturday 18 May** Everyone is invited to meet by the bandstand and join the friendly group walk from noon, 'Bring Your Own' picnic at 1pm and finish around 2pm. Leave picnic, chairs etc. with our group; walk as much or as little as you like or see if you can find Fr Tom's bench by the cricket field. Please check the [Parish News](#) page of the website on the evening of Friday 17 to see if the walk has been called off due to bad weather. All ages welcome and please supervise your own children. Suggested £5 per family donation to CAFOD on the day.

**Jumble Sale 10am Saturday 18 May** Proceeds to St Bart's HCPT Group - good quality jumble - lots of bargains - donations most welcome (but no large or electrical items, thank you). Please leave in St Bart's Parish Centre entrance hall, Vesta Avenue, St Albans, between 9am and 8pm on Friday 17 May. Queries to Barbara Bliss 01727 873672.

**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.

**The Alban Pilgrimage Saturday 22 June** Please 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.

**Parish Friends Outing** We are hoping to run a day trip to Bletchley Park on Friday 30 August. Bletchley Park was once the top-secret home of the World War 2 code breakers. The approximate cost (coach fare, entry fee and tip for the coach driver) is likely to be in the region of £37 per person depending on the number going. If you would like to go, please can you register your interest no later than Friday 17 May by contacting Cath White on 07961 364922 or via emailing [cathwhite@gmail.com](mailto:cathwhite@gmail.com). You can also leave a note at the presbytery marked 'Parish Friends - Bletchley Park'. If you register your interest please let us have your name, contact number and email address if you have one.

## PARISH ADMINISTRATION

**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 October 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.

**Offertory Promise Envelopes** The new Offertory Promise Envelopes are 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.

## MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

### Saturday 4 May - VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY

6pm Mass Consecration of the Church in 1977

### Sunday 5 May - SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

8am Mass Paul and Mary Watkins (Ints)

9am Mass People of the parish

*(John Fisher School Marshalswick)*

9.30am Mass Karen Brennan (Ann)

11.30am Mass Evelio Azcona (RIP)

6pm Mass Margaret Mann (RIP)

Reading 1, Acts 10:25-26,34-35, 44-48, Psalm 97(98)

Reading 2, 1 John 4:7-10, Gospel, John 15:9-17

### Monday 6 May - Easter feria

10am Mass Deacon Brendan Day (Ints)

*No evening Mass - Bank Holiday*

Reading 1, Acts 16:11-15, Psalm 149

Gospel, John 15:26-16:4

### Tuesday 7 May - Easter feria

10am Mass Paul and Ursula Finnigan (RIP)

Reading 1, Acts 16:22-34, Psalm 137(138)

Gospel, John 16:5-11

### Wednesday 8 May - Easter feria

10am Funeral Mass for Pat Brennan

### Wednesday 8 May - VIGIL OF THE ASCENSION

7pm Mass Isabel Ball (RIP)

Reading 1, Acts 17:15,22-18:1, Psalm 148

Gospel, John 16:12-15

### Thursday 9 May - THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

10am Mass Liz Henry and family (Ints)

7pm People of the parish

Reading 1, Acts 1:1-11, Psalm 46(47)

Reading 2, Ephesians 4:1-13, Gospel, Mark 16:15-20

### Friday 10 May - Easter feria

7pm Mass Susanna Mole (RIP)

Reading 1, Acts 18:9-18, Psalm 46(47)

Gospel, John 16:20-23

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

### Saturday 11 May - Easter feria

10am Mass Assunta Dipre (RIP)

*10.30am Confessions and Exposition*

Reading 1, Acts 18:23-28, Psalm, 46(47)

Gospel, John 16:23-28

## MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

### Saturday 11 May - VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY

6pm Mass Annie Coakley (Ann)

### Sunday 12 May - SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

8am Mass Christina Hunter (RIP)

9am Mass Joyce Eastham (Ann)

*(John Fisher School Marshalswick)*

9.30am Mass People of the parish

11.30am Mass Sheila Taylor (RIP)

6pm Mass Terry Mahabir (Ann)

Reading 1, Acts 1:15-17,20-26, Psalm 102(103)

Reading 2, 1 John 4:1-16, Gospel, John 17:11-19

## PLEASE PRAY

With Churches Together in St Albans this week we pray for all the members of Vineyard Christian Fellowship.

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 Macdonald, Samantha Rodell and Seiglinde Wilson.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Karen Brennan, Annie Coakley, Joyce Eastham, Fr Brendan Hanley MSc and Terry Mahabir.

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

## Forthcoming Funerals

Pat Brennan - Funeral Mass 10am Wednesday 8 May

Felicity French - Funeral Mass 10am Thursday 16 May

Colin Macdonald - Funeral Service Noon Friday 17 May

Seiglinde Wilson - Funeral Mass 10am Wednesday 22 May

Samantha Rodell - Funeral Mass 10am Thursday 23 May

**Mass in Cantonese** Once a month at 2pm at Our Lady of Lourdes in Sawston, Cambridge, CB22 3HJ. Dates in 2024: 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](mailto:cantonmassea@gmail.com).

**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 by emailing her on [laura.cox.london@gmail.com](mailto: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 these materials saying they bring "remarkable graces to many."