



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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19 January 2025 – SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



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 / 07976 277059

We are a Fairtrade parish

Fr Michael writes...

This Sunday's gospel recounts the changing of water into wine at the Wedding Feast at Cana. It was the first of Jesus' miracles and it inaugurated his public ministry. As I write I am very conscious that this weekend marks a new beginning for both myself and Fr John in our priestly ministries, as well as for the Catholic Parishes of St Albans, as our being paired with St Bartholomew's gets underway.

Of course a parish is its people and in today's gospel it is people, and in particular their need, who and which calls forth Christ's ministry. Mary, his mother, instigates things. Ignoring Christ's retort that his hour had not yet come, she turns to the servants and tells them 'do whatever he tells you', and so, in filling the water jars with water, these servants collaborate with Christ in the manifestation of his glory.

Whatever we have done and however we did it, and whatever we will do and however we do it, our first task is to manifest Christ's glory - to fill not empty the jar - and so draw others to faith. Please God, in all that lays ahead this is what we, the Catholic Parishes of St Albans will do together; our common thread, all that binds us together, the desire to reveal Christ, to make him known. Please pray for me. Please pray for Fr John. Please pray for our parish communities.

Peace Sunday This coming Sunday, 19 January, is Peace Sunday, a day to reflect on Pope Francis' message for the World Day of Peace. Pope Francis' theme for this day in 2025 is 'Forgive us our trespasses: Grant us your peace'. The message speaks of how we must listen to the 'pleas of an endangered humanity', how the year of Jubilee inspires us to seek the liberating justice of God in our world and how by 'opening our hearts to our brothers and sisters, we will restore God's justice on earth' and 'move forward to achieve the goal of peace'. Prayer cards produced by Pax Christi on this theme will be available at the back of the church for everyone to take.

HOPE: The Autobiography of Pope Francis Pope Francis originally intended this book to appear after his death, but the needs of our times and the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope have moved him to make this work available now. HOPE is the first autobiography ever to be published by a Pope. Written over six years, it starts in the early years of the twentieth century, with Pope Francis's Italian roots and his ancestors' courageous migration to Latin America, continuing through his childhood, the enthusiasms and preoccupations of his youth, his vocation, adult life, and the whole of his papacy up to the present day. HOPE includes a wealth of revelations, anecdotes and illuminating thoughts. It represents the 'story of a life' and but also a touching moral and spiritual testament that will be Pope Francis's legacy of hope for future generations. (ISBN-13 978-0241764107).

Please note that weekday and weekend mass times have now changed. Please visit our parish [website](#) for details of revised times from Monday 13 January 2025 or take a copy of the revised mass times from the porch.

Welcome to 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

Sacrament of Baptism The next baptism preparation course is Saturday 8 February at 11.30am. To register or to arrange a date for baptism please speak to Fr Michael or Fr John after any of the weekend masses.

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, children are invited to sit on the carpet at the front of the church and the Mass itself is geared towards their participation. There is then a short social. If you can help please speak with Deacon Brendan.

RCIA Group 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

Monthly Youth Mass, third Sunday of the month at 6pm Calling all musicians who would like to be involved in the monthly Youth Masses. We would like to build a band of regular singers and musicians. The commitment is playing at Sunday 6pm Mass most third Sundays of the month and attending an 8pm practice in the church the Thursday evening before. Please email stalbanscc@rcdow.org.uk if interested or if you would like more information.

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 list. Names will be included for eight weeks, unless the request to have their name included is renewed.

Sunday sung Masses From when the Mass schedule changes on the weekend 18/19 January, musicians who currently serve the 11.30 Mass will serve the 12 noon Mass on Sundays, with choir and organ on 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, and cantor and organ on 2nd, 4th and, when applicable, 5th Sundays, as previously.

OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

AFF Group - Save the date Our Lenten talk schedule is something you are not going to want to miss. Dr Pia Matthews will be speaking on the following dates 7.30pm to 9pm:

Friday 7 March 2025 – Assisted Suicide

Friday 21 March 2025 – A Just War?

Friday 28 March 2025 – Conscience in a Modern World

Dr Pia Matthews is a senior lecturer at St Mary's University, Twickenham, and a lecturer at Allen Hall, our Diocesan

Seminary, in Chelsea. She gained a BA/MA in Law from Cambridge University, a BTh (Theology) from St John's Seminary and Surrey University, and an MA in Bioethics from St Mary's. She currently teaches on the MA Bioethics and Medical Law programme, and on the FD Healthcare Practitioners Ethics, Theology and Care at St Mary's; and in marriage and family life at Allen Hall. In 2015, she was appointed an expert to the XIV Ordinary General Assembly Synod of Bishops by Pope Francis.

Migrants' toiletries collection We currently need donations of toiletries, shampoos and baby wipes, adult toothbrushes, deodorants for women, bars of soap, baby shower gel and shampoo. Please only donate requested items.

St Albans Food Bank Donations should be non-perishable food and can be left in the box in the porch. There is a particular need for long life milk, long life juice and tinned fruit. More details of the St Albans Food bank can be found using this [link](#). There is also a food collection at Marshalswick Mass Centre on the first Sunday of the month.

Clothing Collection Donations of warm men's clothing is needed for local migrants. Donations can be left in the Migrants' Collection box at the back of the church. Please only donate items which you would be happy to give to a family member or friend. Many thanks for all that you do to support the local migrant community.

OUR PARISH GROUPS AND EVENTS

Parish Groups and Events Please see our ['Parish News'](#) webpage for more 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 are also available after the 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, term time only. Join us in the hall for toys, books, games, singing, drinks & snacks. To help, contact David Markham on 07543 400650.

Prayer Group on Wednesday evenings A number of parishioners meet on Wednesday evenings via Zoom to reflect on the scripture readings for mass the following weekend and to say the evening prayers of the church. If you would like to join our friendly and informal group, please [email](#) the parish office or call Melanie (07900 051956)

SVP Vinnie Packs The SVP are distributing over 10,000 homeless packs (Vinnie Packs) during the extreme cold

weather. 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.

Fair trade Our parish fair trade stall will be open after Mass at Marshalswick Mass Centre on 19 January. Many thanks to everyone who supported this venture during 2024. £1,500 has been donated to Cafod.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18 – 25 January The service of prayer for Christian Unity will be held at 4pm on Sunday January 19 at Greenwood Church, 149 Watford Road, Chiswell Green.

The Parish Friends Knit & Natter Group We will be meeting in the Parish Centre on 28 January 1.30-3.30pm. All are welcome. Contact Helen Bassill 07860 830340.

A Year of Hope: An Introduction to the Jubilee Year with the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development 2025 is a Jubilee year, but what does that mean? Catholic talk show host and author Nana Churcher, and CAFOD's Simon Giarchi will be hosting Fr Jan Nowotnik (Director of Mission for the Bishop's Conference), Christine Allen (CAFOD's Director) and Kayode Akintola (CAFOD's Head of Africa) and more for a lively start to the Jubilee. With a special appearance by Catholic band Ooberfuse. Saturday 18 Jan, 10:30am-midday, online. All welcome. Register here for free: cafod.org.uk/jubilee.

Migrants' Meals Volunteers needed on Thursday 30 January from 11.30am. The parish will be hosting four local migrants while they use our kitchen. Parish volunteers provide welcome and support but do not cook. This is a friendly and interesting event. If you can help at all during the day please call Mary on 07976277059 for information.

Men's Breakfast Saturday 1 February The first Men's Breakfast for 2025 is on Saturday 1 February. We will gather in the Parish Centre from 8.15 for coffee, croissants and conversation, followed at 9am by a 30 minute video on the background to the Gospel of St Luke and the recent passages covered in the Sunday Gospels, and conclude with a short discussion on the themes emerging, finishing just before 10am. If you would like more details please email d4dstalbans@gmail.com, message Richard on 07976 252309 or just turn up on the Saturday morning.

Mass for the Sick at Westminster Cathedral – 2pm on 8 February On Saturday 8 of February we will be holding our Mass for the Sick at the Cathedral at 2pm, celebrated by the H.E. Cardinal Vincent Nichols, during which Anointing of the Sick will be offered. Tickets are in three categories:

1. Wheelchair users who require anointing
2. Walking sick who require anointing
3. Those assisting the sick, who do not require anointing.

If you would like to attend, please email the parish office by 24 January.

BINGO A big Thank You for the support to our recent Bingo evening. Despite the freezing weather, £100.00 was raised for the Knights of St. Columba. Our next Bingo evening will be on Friday 14 February at 8pm in the Parish Centre.

The Chosen 'The Chosen' is a historical drama series based on the lives of Jesus and those who knew him, set against the backdrop of Roman oppression in 1st century Israel. The drama draws on our knowledge of Jesus from the gospels and suggests what may have been some of the back stories of the characters around at that time. You may recall that a deeply moving Christmas episode was shown in the parish in December. If there is sufficient interest in watching the drama and some discussion afterwards, the Adult Faith Formation Group proposes to show the first series of The Chosen on Thursday mornings after 10am mass, beginning on 27 February and finishing after 6 episodes on 3 April. Each session will last approx. 90 minutes, including tea and coffee. If you would like to join in, please give your name to the parish office by email stalbans@rcdow.org.uk or telephone 01727 853585 9am - 1pm Monday to Fridays.

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 April 2025.** 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.

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. 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.

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Saturday 18 January – VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY

5pm Mass Terry and Peggy Rankin (Ann)

Sunday 19 January – SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

8am Mass Brenda Smyth (RIP)

8.30am Mass Ken and Mary Neal (Ann)

(John Fisher School, Marshalswick)

10.00am Mass Vito La Monica (RIP)

12 Noon Mass Rosalea Vetere (RIP)

6pm Mass People of the parish

Reading 1, Isaiah 62:1-5, Psalm 95(96))

Reading 2, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, Gospel, John 2:1-11

Monday 20 January – feria

10am Mass Zbigniew Frosztęga (Ann)

7pm Mass Paddy Neary (RIP)

Reading 1, Hebrews 5:1-10, Psalm 109(110)

Gospel, Mark 2:18-22

Tuesday 21 January – St Agnes

10am Mass Edward Sumner (RIP)

Reading 1, Hebrews 6:10-20, Psalm 110(111)

Gospel, Mark 2:23-28

Wednesday 22 January – feria

10am No Morning Mass

7pm Mass Margaret Chandler (RIP)

Reading 1, Hebrews 7:1-3,15-17, Psalm 109(110)

Gospel, Mark 3:1-6

Thursday 23 January – feria

10am Mass Mary and Michael Flavin (Ann)

Reading 1, Hebrews 7:25-8:6, Psalm 39(40)

Gospel, Mark 3:7-12

Friday 24 January – St Francis de Sales

10am No morning Mass

7pm Mass Giovanni Battista Fabrizi (Ann)

Reading 1, Hebrews 8:6-13, Psalm 84(85)

Gospel, Mark 3:13-19

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

Saturday 25 January – THE CONVERSION OF ST PAUL

10am Mass Mary Curran (RIP)

10.30am Confessions and Exposition

Reading 1, Acts 9:1-22, Psalm 116(117)

Gospel, Mark 16:15-18

Mass in Cantonese Once a month at 2pm at Our Lady of Lourdes in Sawston, Cambridge, CB22 3HJ. All welcome. For more details, please see the porch flyer or email 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. 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.

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Saturday 25 January – VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY

5pm Mass Kathy Fahy (RIP)

Sunday 26 January – THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

8am Mass Kevin Fahy (RIP)

8.30am Mass People of the parish

(John Fisher School, Marshalswick)

10.00am Mass Frank and Bridget Hunt (RIP)

12 Noon Mass Niall Kieran (RIP)

6pm Mass Adrian Donoghue (Ann)

Reading 1, Nehemiah 8:2-6,8-10, Psalm 18(19), Reading 2, 1 Corinthians 12:12-30, Gospel, Luke 1:1-4,4:14-21

PLEASE PRAY

United with Churches together in St Alban we pray for the intentions of the week of prayer for Christian Unity 18-25 January.

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 Irene Bryant, Inacio Da Fonseca, Eric Darby, Antonia Lamonaca, Gerard O'Neill and Thomas Screene.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Adrian Donoghue, Giovanni Battista Fabrizi, Mary and Michael Flavin, Zbigniew Frosztęga, Thomas and Gretta McGovern, Roy McGoohan, Ken and Mary Neal, Terry and Peggy Rankin and Patricia Scanlan.

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

Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation Prayer God of love, show us our place in this world as channels of your love for all those we meet & for all the creatures of this earth. Forgive us our trespasses & give us your Peace.

Diocese of Westminster Annual Report and Accounts 2023 A copy of the Diocesan annual report and accounts is available to view in the parish office. Copies can also be viewed [online](#).