



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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5 January 2025 - THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD



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 / stalbenssg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk / 07976 277059

We are a Fairtrade parish

Fr Michael writes...

As a parish 2025 offers some exciting developments. In mid-January our pairing with St Bartholomew's will come into effect and after Easter we hope that the long planned and hoped for extension of the church porch, and refurbishment of the church forecourt, will commence. If all goes according to plan, the works will take somewhere in the region of five months. Our pairing with St Bartholomew's and the works ahead will mean our pulling together more and more, not simply with the people of St Bartholomew's, but also among ourselves. For example, to enable Fr John and myself to sustain the revised Mass schedule we will need volunteers to run the sacristy - setting up before and tidying up after - weekday and Sunday Masses. Moreover, where there are builders, there will be a lot more dust and a lot more dirt, and in order to use the church at weekends we will need to add to the existing team of volunteer cleaners. So, if you are looking for a New Year's resolution, or you have recently retired or are looking to volunteer, remember your parish may have what you are looking for. Remember, also, that our schools are in need of Foundation Governors.

Wishing you and those dear to you every health and blessing in 2025.

Changes to Mass Times from Monday 13 January 2025 Please follow [this link](#) for a copy of the letter from Fr Michael to all parishioners. It gives more detail about the revised mass schedule set out below. It also details the times for Confessions, Benediction & Exposition and those changes that may be needed in the event of only one priest being available. Further details are also available on the 'Mass Times' and 'Parish News' pages of our parish website while copies of the letter from Fr Michael are available in the porch or from the parish office.

Sunday Mass Schedule (from 18/19 January 2025):

5pm (Vigil Mass)	St Alban & St Stephen
6pm (Vigil Mass)	St Bartholomew's
8am	St Alban & St Stephen
8.30am	St John Fisher School, Marshalswick
9.30am	St Bartholomew's
10am	St Alban & St Stephen
12 Noon	St Alban & St Stephen
6pm	St Alban & St Stephen

Weekday Mass Schedule (from 13 January 2025):

Monday 10am	St Alban & St Stephen	Tuesday 10am	St Alban & St Stephen
Monday 7pm	St Alban & St Stephen	Tuesday 12 Noon	St Bartholomew's
Wednesday 12 Noon	St Bartholomew's	Thursday 10am	St Alban & St Stephen
Wednesday 7pm	St Alban & St Stephen	Thursday 12 Noon	St Bartholomew's
Friday 12 Noon	St Alban's Cathedral	Saturday 10am	St Alban & St Stephen
Friday 7pm Mass	St Alban & St Stephen		

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.

OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

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.

St Albans Winter Beds Project Located at Marlborough Rd Methodist Church. This Project depends on volunteers and helps keep people off the streets overnight during the coldest months. Volunteers are needed to cover either

morning or evening shifts and each shift is usually up to 2 hours long. Even one shift a month would be a help. Help with laundry also required. Final volunteer training session 8-9.30pm on Wednesday 8 January at Marlborough Road Church Hall. Please just turn up or email Colin Hull on cchandco@btconnect.com for more details.

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. Due to preparations for the Turkey and Tinsel New Year lunch there will be no coffee and tea after 9.30am Mass and 11.30am Mass this Sunday 5 January.

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. Thank you so much for your support.

Parish Friends Turkey and Tinsel New Year lunch on Sunday 5 January 2025 12.30-3pm All senior parishioners are invited. Please let Helen know if you would like to attend or if you can offer a lift 07860 830340. If you can offer help by preparing vegetables for us to cook on the day or if you can make a dessert please contact Joanna 07960 519789. Help on the day either in the kitchen or setting up the hall would also be appreciated.

BINGO - 8pm Friday 10 January in the Parish Centre for the Knights of St. Columba, St. Albans. Admission is 50p and includes refreshments. Everyone is most welcome.

Fair trade Our parish fair trade stall will be open at all Masses at church over the weekend of 11/12 January and 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.

The Parish Friends Knit & Natter Group We will be meeting in the Parish Centre on 14 January 1.30-3.30pm. All are welcome. Contact Helen Bassill 07860 830340.

Jumble Sale - 10am Saturday 18 January - proceeds to St Bart's HCPT Group for Easter 2025 pilgrimage - 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 January - queries to Barbara Bliss (01727 873672).

Word on Fire UK Bible Conference 21 - 22 February 2025 Join Bishop Robert Barron and thousands of other Catholics from across the UK for Evangelisation & Culture: The Bible to gain a deeper appreciation of the Bible and its relevance to the Church's mission today. Excel Centre, East London. Speakers Include: Bishop Robert Barron, N.T. Wright, Prof. Tracey Rowland and more. For information please see here.

Jubilee Pilgrimage to Walsingham for the Feast of the Annunciation 25 March Join us on a coach leaving from St Bartholomew's, St Albans, for a beautiful pilgrimage experience. Holy Mass will be celebrated in Walsingham at 12 noon in the Basilica, followed by Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction. We will walk or ride (if preferred) the Holy Mile and visit the site of the original Holy House and pray the Prayer for England. The cost is £25 for adults and it is free for children. Please contact Rosemary Roscoe 07723 546642 or Margaret Leahy margleahy@gmail.com for further details.

Consultation on the Admission Arrangements 2026/27 of Nicholas Breakspear Catholic School Please see [here](#) or view the notice in porch for more information.

St Alban and St Stephen Catholic Primary School and Nursery Please click [here](#) for admissions information or to book a tour. The application deadline for Reception is Wednesday 15 January 2025 and we warmly welcome application from all families. Families with a child born between 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022 are warmly invited to apply for a Nursery place for admission in September 2025. The application window closes on 25 February 2025. We offer a combination of 15 and 30 hour provision depending on your child's needs. Please complete the Nursery Application and Options Forms which can be requested by emailing the School Office at admin@ssas.herts.sch.uk.

2025 - 'In a Year' Catholic Podcasts and YouTube Channels <https://media.ascensionpress.com> has links to 'Bible in a Year', 'Catechism in a Year' and (new for 2025) 'Rosary in a Year' Podcasts and [YouTube Channels](#). These include a

reading/prayer plan. You can follow at your own pace and be part of a global community of Catholics looking to understand and deepen their faith. Additionally, there are lots of videos, podcasts and resources on the Catholic faith.

PARISH ADMINISTRATION

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

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.

Mass intentions affected by the change in mass times For the most part masses intentions for the masses impacted by the change in mass times will be transferred to its new time i.e. those booked for 9.30pm on a Sunday morning will be moved to the new 10am mass, those booked for the 6pm Saturday evening mass here at St Alban & St Stephen will be moved to the 5pm mass on Saturday evening. The masses where there is no new equivalent, that is the 10am on Wednesday mornings, the 10am on First Fridays and the Marshalswick masses in August, will need to be transferred to another time or place. Early in the New Year we will contact those whose mass intentions are impacted in this way to arrange a new time for them to be celebrated.

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 4 January - VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY

6pm Mass Thomas Walsh (RIP)

Sunday 5 January - THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

8am Mass Kathy Fahy (RIP)

9am Mass Carol Cahill (Ann)

(John Fisher School, Marshalswick)

9.30am Peter Celestine Okoro (RIP)

11.30am People of the Parish

6pm Mass Marion Miller (Ann)

Reading 1, Isaiah 60:1-6, Psalm 71(72)

Reading 2, Ephesians 3:2-6, Gospel, Matthew 2:1-12

Monday 6 January - Christmas feria

10am Mass John Rowland (Ann)

7pm Mass Des Stack (First anniversary) and Adrian and Maureen Stack (RIP)

Reading 1, 1 John 3:22-4:6, Psalm 2

Gospel, Matthew 4:12-17,23-25

Tuesday 7 January - Christmas feria

10am Mass Maria Del Carmen Romero Fernandez (Ann)

Reading 1, 1 John 4:7-10, Psalm 71(72)

Gospel, Matthew 6:34-44

Wednesday 8 January - Christmas feria

10am Mass Chris Murphy (Ann)

7pm Mass John Darby (Ann)

Reading 1, 1 John 4:11-18, Psalm 71(72)

Gospel, Mark 6:45-52

Thursday 9 January - Christmas feria

10am Mass Evelio Azcona (RIP)

Reading 1, 1 John 4:19-54, Psalm 71(72)

Gospel, Luke 4:14-22

Friday 10 January - Christmas feria

10am Funeral Mass for Christopher L'etandrine

7pm Mass Paddy Neary (RIP)

Reading 1, 1 John 5:5-13, Psalm 147

Gospel, Luke 5:12-16

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

Saturday 11 January - Christmas feria

10am Mass Dom McGee (RIP)

10.30am Confessions and Exposition

Reading 1, 1 John 5:14-21, Psalm 149

Gospel, John 3:22-30

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 11 January - VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY

6pm Mass Harry Vasey (Ann)

Sunday 12 January - THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

8am Mass Kathy Fahy (RIP)

9am Mass People of the parish

(John Fisher School, Marshalswick)

9.30am Mass Joan Hogan (RIP)

11.30am Mass Joanna and David Napper (Ints)

6pm Mass Thomas and Gretta McGovern (Ann)

Reading 1, Isaiah 40:1-5,9-11, Psalm 103(104)

Reading 2, Titus 2:11-14,3:4-7, Gospel, Luke 3:15-16,21-22

Please note that weekend and mass times will change from Monday 13 January 2025 as per the front page of the bulletin and our parish website.

PLEASE PRAY

United with Churches together in St Alban we pray for all members of St Stephen'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 David Goncalves, Christopher L'etandrine, Veronica Smith and Anna-Marie Wilson.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Carol Cahill, John Darby, Maria Del Carmen Romero Fernandez, Thomas and Gretta McGovern, Marion Miller, Chris Murphy, Robert O'Sullivan, John Rowland, Des Stack and Harry Vasey.

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

Veronica Smith (RIP) The family of Veronica Smith have written to inform us that she died in Torquay, Devon on 17 December. Veronica taught at St John Fisher, Marshalswick from 1966-1981, being deputy head from 1979. The Crematorium Service on Monday 13 January at 11:30am is being live streamed with user Name: famo5745 and Password: 145118 at <https://watch.obitus.com>.

Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation Prayer As we await the arrival of The Three Kings, we think of all those people who have to travel long distances through war and displacement and pray that they will find peace and a place to call home.