



Church Website

## NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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16 & 23 February 2025 - SIXTH & SEVENTH SUNDAYS 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

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*We are a Fairtrade parish*

*Fr Michael writes...* As an undergraduate and post-graduate I tended to move accommodation every year. I found myself in a variety of houses, some better than others, but as I write this front piece I am reminded in particular of two houses I lived in while in my second and third years as a post-grad. Among the various housemates I shared with over these two years there were two Muslim women, both from Malaysia. What I remember vividly about both was the way in which they kept Ramadan, observing the fast from sunrise to sunset. It was no mean achievement. Compared to it my Lenten observances, my giving up of this or that, paled.

Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent will soon be upon us. It's a time for us to reflect on our relationship with God, to use prayer, fasting and alms giving as a means of turning back to him. For me there have been too many Lents when my resolutions were a last minute thing, hurriedly put together ... worse still there have been Lents when I have found myself considering what I hadn't had since Ash Wednesday and asking 'could that be the thing to give up?' Of course Lent is not necessarily or only about giving things up, but this is not the point I want to make. More simply, I want to encourage you to put Lent on your agenda now and to begin asking yourself what it is you will do in the way of prayer, fasting and almsgiving to turn back to the Lord.

**Ash Wednesday** This year Ash Wednesday falls on Wednesday 5 March. Masses at St Alban and St Stephen will be at 7am, 10am & 7pm. Masses at St Bartholomew will be at 9.30am, 12 Noon & 7pm.

**Palms** The ashes for Ash Wednesday are traditionally made using the Palms from the year before. If you have a palm from last year please bring it to the church and deposit it in the box provided in the porch.

**Bulletin** There will be no bulletin next weekend owing to staff holiday.

**Help needed setting up the altar** Thanks to all those who have volunteered to help set up the Altar and tidy it up after Mass. However, there are still some Masses that are not covered. It is not an onerous task and there are guidelines and photos which make it clear what to do. If you think you could help ease this burden on our priests please talk to Fr Michael or Fr John or email the parish office.

**Racial Justice Sunday - 16 February** The theme for [Racial Justice Sunday](#) is: "Pilgrims of Hope: Our Journey Together Towards Racial Justice". Catholics across England and Wales are invited to reflect on the collective journey towards racial justice in our schools, parishes and the wider society. Bishop Paul McAleenan says: "2025 is a very special year. It marks both a Year of Jubilee and the 30th anniversary of Racial Justice Sunday." This year, we invite the Catholic community to reflect on the journey towards racial justice - past, present and future - by asking: 'How far have we come, where are we now and what remains to be achieved?' Just as pilgrims must prepare for their journey and be properly equipped, we, too, need all that is necessary to propel us towards racial justice - the mind of Christ; examination of our progress and of the challenges that remain; a willingness to learn from one another together; and prayers for and on the journey."

**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. The Adult Faith Formation Group will show the first series of 'The Chosen' in the Parish Centre on Thursday mornings after 10am mass, beginning on 27 February and finishing after 6 episodes on 3 April. Each session will last about an hour and a half, including refreshments and discussion. If you would like to join, please give your name to the parish office by phone or email during office hours.

**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 March 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 10am 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.

**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](mailto: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

**AFF Group - Lenten talks** Dr Pia Matthews will be speaking - 7.30pm to 9pm as follows:

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 (first Sunday of the month).

**Clean warm, adult clothes and sleeping bags needed for Centre 33** Centre 33 provides hot meals and a warm and welcoming place to meet for anyone in need or homeless in St Albans. We are in need of clean, warm, second hand jumpers, jackets, coats, casual trousers, gloves and woolly hats for men and women visitors. Clean sleeping bags are also needed. If you have spare any of these items in good clean condition, please leave them in the marked box in the porch. Please do not donate any other items. Thank you.

**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 10am Sunday Mass during school term time, after 12 noon 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)

**Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation group** We meet on the third Thursday of each month. Our next meeting is at 7.30pm on 20 February in the Parish Centre. All welcome.

**The Parish Friends Knit & Natter Group** We will be meeting in the Parish Centre on 25 February 1.30-3.30pm. All are welcome. Contact Helen Bassill 07860 830340.

**Migrants Meals Thursday 26 February:** Help needed on the day please. For information please call Mary 07976 277 059.

**Fair trade Stall** Open after all Masses at Church on 1/2 March and after Mass on 9 March at Marshalswick Mass Centre. Fair-trade Easter Eggs with a special Easter Activity Book are available, plus our usual selection of products. All sales directly help people in the Developing World, and all proceeds are donated to CAFOD.

**Men's Breakfast - Saturday 1 March** just before the start of Lent. We will gather in the Parish Centre from 8.15am for coffee, croissants and conversation, followed at 9am by a 30 minute video on the Lent journey that we are about to begin, we will follow this with a short discussion on the themes emerging, finishing just before 10am

**A Day With Mary: Westminster Cathedral Saturday 1 March** 9.45am to 5.00pm. Further information available [here](#)

**Nicholas Breakspear School Annual Careers Fair** Thursday 13 March, from 9am-3.15pm If you are willing to participate, or would like further information regarding the fair, please [contact](#) our Careers Lead, Shannon O'Toole.

**Parish Friends Tea Party on Sunday 16 March 3- 5pm** to celebrate St Patrick's Day. Once again Peter and Damien Fahy will be entertaining us so we are guaranteed a great afternoon. Everyone is welcome. Offers of homemade cakes and drivers to give lifts will be welcomed.

**Jubilee Pilgrimage to Walsingham for the Feast of the Annunciation 25 March** 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. Coach leaving from St Bartholomew's. £25 for adults, free for children. Details from Margaret Leahy [margleahy@gmail.com](mailto:margleahy@gmail.com) or Rosemary Roscoe 07723 546642.

**Annual Mass of Thanksgiving for Matrimony** On Saturday 17 May at 2.30pm the Cardinal will celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving for couples celebrating their 5th, 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th, and 60th (and any year over 60) anniversary of Catholic marriage. If you would like to attend please inform the Parish Office by Thursday 3 April and include husband and wife's names, wedding date, number of years married, postal address, email (or phone number, if no email).

**The All Saints Catholic Academy Trust (ASCAT) is seeking to recruit Governors for local Governing Boards in Watford, Rickmansworth, Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and St Albans.** The Trust has vacancies for Foundation Governors; Co-opted Governors and Community Governors. For information please contact Christina Reffold, Director of Governance & Compliance at [governance@ascat.co.uk](mailto:governance@ascat.co.uk) or complete the form [here](#).

**Justice & Peace Group Film and soup lunch - Saturday 22 March** Lunch at noon, film at 1pm. This Lent, everyone is invited to have a simple bread and soup lunch and watch Cathy come home [PG] - a moving film about homelessness, unemployment and mother's rights. The event is FREE, but donations [cash or card] to the CAFOD fast day appeal will be taken on the day. - if you can help in any way, please let us know via the Parish Office.

## 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 first masses available for booking are in May 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.

### PLEASE PRAY

United with Churches together in St Albans we pray for all members of the Salvation Army and all members of Churches Together in Marshalswick.

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 Tristan Kilkenny.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Sheila Aylward, Arthur and Catherine Ball, John Baxter, Noreen Carolan, John Comer, Mary Corbett, Ernest and Hermina Gaufrond, Antonio Gramegna, Elizabeth Harding, Angela Kent, Thomas Kiely Ainsley Lambert, Robert Markham, Oswald McCarthy, Patricia McCarthy, Peter Celestine Okoro, Lourdes Pons, Domenico Sellechia and Michael John Theanne.

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

**Justice, Peace & the Integrity of Creation Prayer** We pray for the Church, that we may reflect the rich diversity of God's creation and be a beacon of unity, embracing people of all races, cultures and backgrounds with love and respect. And we pray for those who have suffered from the sin of racism, that they may find healing, justice and strength in God's love, and that their voices may be heard and valued.



## MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

### **Saturday 15 February - VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY**

5pm Mass Mary Curran (RIP)

### **Sunday 16 February - SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORD. TIME**

8am Mass Brother Clement SC (Ints)

8.30am Mass Ainsley Lambert (Ann)

*(John Fisher School, Marshalswick)*

10.00am Mass People of the parish

12 Noon Mass Antonio Gramegna (Ann)

6pm Mass Sheila Aylward (Ann)

Reading 1, Jeremiah 17:5-8, Psalm 1, Reading 2,

1 Corinthians 15:12,16-20, Gospel, Luke 6:17,20-26

### **Monday 17 February - feria**

10am Mass Deacon Steve Pickard (RIP)

7pm Mass John Joyce (RIP)

Reading 1, Genesis 4:1-15,25, Psalm 49(50)

Gospel, Mark 8:11-13F

### **Tuesday 18 February - feria**

10am Mass Kenneth King (RIP)

Reading 1, Genesis 6:5-8,7:1-5,10, Psalm 28(29)

Gospel, Mark 8:14-21

### **Wednesday 19 February - feria**

*10am No Morning Mass*

7pm Mass Lourdes Pons (Ann)

Reading 1, Genesis 8:6-13,20-22, Psalm 115(116)

Gospel, Mark 8:22-26

### **Thursday 20 February - feria**

10am Mass Lilian Eithne Wynne (RIP)

Reading 1, Genesis 9:1-13, Psalm 101(102)

Gospel, Mark 8:27-33

### **Friday 21 February - feria**

*10am No Morning Mass*

7pm Mass Angela Kent (Ann)

Reading 1, Genesis 11:1-9, Psalm 32(33)

Gospel, Luke 8:34-9:1

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

### **Saturday 22 February - THE CHAIR OF ST PETER THE APOSTLE**

10am Mass Frank Donohue (RIP)

*10.30am Confessions and Exposition*

Reading 1, 1 Peter 5:1-4, Psalm 22(23)

Gospel, Matthew 16:13-19

### **Saturday 22 February - VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY**

5pm Mass Rev Steve Pickard (RIP)

### **Sunday 23 February - SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORD TIME**

8am Mass People of the parish

8.30am Mass Arthur and Catherine Ball (Ann)

*(John Fisher School, Marshalswick)*

10.00am Mass Domenico Sellechia (Ann)

12 Noon Mass Thomas Kiely (Ann)

6pm Mass Mary Hallinan (RIP)

Reading 1, 1 Samuel 26:2,7-9,12-13,22-23, Psalm 102(103)

Reading 2, 1 Corinthians 15:45-49, Gospel, Luke 6:17,27-38

## MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

### **Monday 24 February - feria**

10am Mass Mary Corbett (Ann)

7pm Mass Henry Green (RIP)

Reading 1, Ecclesiasticus 1:1-10, Psalm 92(93)

Gospel, Mark 9:14-29

### **Tuesday 25 February - feria**

10am Mass John Williams (RIP)

Reading 1, Ecclesiasticus 2:1-11, Psalm 36(37)

Gospel, Mark 9:30-37

### **Wednesday 26 February - feria**

*10am No Morning Mass*

7pm Mass Agnes Walsh (RIP)

Reading 1, Ecclesiasticus 4:12-22, Psalm 118(118)

Gospel, Mark 9:38-40

### **Thursday 27 February - feria**

10am Mass Marie Brennan (RIP)

Reading 1, Ecclesiasticus 5:1-8, Psalm 1

Gospel, Mark 9:41-50

### **Friday 28 February - feria**

*10am No Morning Mass*

7pm Mass Michael John Theanne (Ann)

Reading 1, Ecclesiasticus 6:5-17, Psalm 118(119)

Gospel, Mark 10:1-12

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

### **Saturday 1 March - ST DAVID**

10am Mass Grace Esperdiana Gonsalves e Pereira (Ints)

*10.30am Confessions and Exposition*

Reading 1, Philippians 3:8-14, Psalm 1

Gospel, Matthew 5:13-16

### **Saturday 1 March - VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY**

5pm Mass Peter Celestine Okoro (Ann)

### **Sunday 2 March - EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORD. TIME**

8am Mass Tom Brosnan (RIP)

8.30am Mass Patricia McCarthy (Ann)

*(John Fisher School, Marshalswick)*

10.00am Mass Bartłomiej Piekarski and family (Ints)

12 Noon Mass Martina Doolan (Ints)

6pm Mass Noreen Carolan (Ann)

Reading 1, Ecclesiasticus 27:4-7, Psalm 91(92)

Reading 2, 1 Corinthians 15:54-58, Gospel, Luke 6:39-45

**Family Resources** Please join us at Little Lights (under sevens) and Children's Liturgy (seven and above) during 10am 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.