



Church Website

## NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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**23 March 2025 – THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT**



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 ...* At the Rite of Election, the Cardinal chose and blessed adults drawn from across the Diocese, including our own parish, of adults preparing for Baptism and full initiation into the Church at Easter. Now called 'The Elect' these adults have entered into the final period of purification and enlightenment – which is marked on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of Lent, at the 12-noon mass with the celebration of 'The Scrutinies'.

When we scrutinise something, we look into it deeply, minutely and carefully and the scrutinies also do this in a spiritual way. The Church comments, 'they are rites for self-searching, and repentance ... they are meant to uncover, then heal, all that is weak, defective or sinful in the hearts of the elect; to bring out, then strengthen, all that is upright, strong and good ... they are celebrated in order to deliver the elect from the power of sin and Satan, to protect them against temptation, and to give them strength in Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life. These rites should therefore complete the conversion of the elect, and deepen their resolve to hold fast to Christ and ... love God above all'. The scrutinies are also meant for us – inviting us to support those preparing for the sacraments, but also to assist us in deepening our own conversion to Christ and renewal of our own baptismal promises at Easter.

The three scrutinies are each linked to episodes recounted in St John's Gospel found in your missals as the alternative Gospel Year A. On the Third Sunday p163, we hear of the encounter between Christ and the woman at the well. We shall pray that the Elect, 'like the woman of Samaria, will review their lives before Christ and acknowledge their sins, and awaiting the gift of God, they will long with all their hearts for the living water that brings eternal life'. On the Fourth Sunday p. 172 we hear John's account of Jesus' healing of the man born. The focus being baptism and the granting of enlightenment. Finally, on the Fifth Sunday of Lent, p.179 we hear how Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, in which the scrutinies will focus on the baptism that raises us up to eternal life with Christ.

Please keep those to be baptised and received at Easter in your prayers, that they will grow in wisdom and love as they prepare to profess their faith in Christ. Amen.

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**Holy Week and Easter Services** Please see the [Holy Week page](#) of our website for details of all our Holy Week and Easter Services, both here and at St Bartholomew's. Times for Confessions before Easter are also listed there. Our Parish Easter Card is currently being produced and will also contain details of services and confessions.

**Music for Holy Week** Again this year, there is an open invitation to all musicians and singers from the various masses, as well as to those who do not regularly sing or play, to come together and provide the music for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. There will be rehearsals in the near future, but for now, if you can commit for Holy Week please email the parish office at [stalbands@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:stalbands@rcdow.org.uk) saying that you would like to be involved with the Holy Week music, stating whether you are a singer or musician and, if the latter, indicating what instrument you play.

**Romero Week** This year marks the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St Oscar Romero's martyrdom. As in previous years St Alban's Cathedral will be hosting a service of Evensong this Sunday afternoon 23 March at 6pm to mark the occasion. Sr Gemma Simmonds CJ will preach.

**Market Stall: Parish Easter Cards** Volunteers are wanted to spend 30 minutes between 8.30am and 3.30pm at the market on Wednesday 9 April to distribute invitations to our Easter celebrations. Please contact Mary to volunteer. 07976277059.

**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

**Way of the Cross during Lent** Every Saturday in Lent at 9.30am, the Way of the Cross will be followed in Church before 10am Mass with a different emphasis each week. In honour of Mother's Day, on the 29 March the Stations will be Mary's Way of the Cross. You can also view the Stations online and the text will be available to help you reflect on this journey through our Lord's passion and death.

**Easter Garden** We are commemorating our deceased loved ones in a special way in our Easter Garden again this year by writing their names on bamboo butterfly shapes and planting them around the rose garden in front of the presbytery. These will be close to the three empty crosses, a symbol of the new life Christ won for us in his resurrection. If you would like to remember deceased family or friends in this way, please send us their names clearly marked 'Easter Garden' either by posting the details through the presbytery door or by emailing the parish office [stalbens@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:stalbens@rcdow.org.uk)

**Sacrament of Baptism** The next baptism preparation course is Saturday 10 May 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.

**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](mailto:email) Fr Michael for details.

**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.

**Help needed setting up the altar** Thank you to all those who have volunteered to help set up the Altar and tidy it up after Mass. We are still looking for help at the 10am Saturday morning mass and the 10am Sunday mass. It is not an onerous task and there are guidelines and photos which make it clear what to do. If you can help please talk to Fr Michael or Fr John or email the parish office.

## OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

**Thanks from the Parish Friends Group** We would like to thank all those who helped to make the Patrick's Day Tea Party such a success. Over 80 people attended and £350 was collected for Cafod. Heartfelt thanks go to Peter and Damian who gave us great entertainment all afternoon. Thank you also to the cake makers. What a great selection we had. A wonderful afternoon all round.

**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).

**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.

**Chant Schola Group** 'Gregorian chant holds pride of place, as it is proper to the Roman Liturgy' - so said the documents of Vatican II. The cantors have been singing the chant in its old and newer forms for several years now at the 11.30/12 noon Mass on Sundays. Several parishioners have enquired about joining a chant schola, and the cantors would now like to see if we can form a group - as is proper - as a bridge to full congregational participation in the chant. Experimental sessions of 45 minutes will be held in the choir loft at 7.30pm on Tuesday 1 and Thursday 3 April. No experience is required beyond the ability to hold a tune together with others, and full tuition will be offered in effective voice production, musicianship and the history and conventions of the chant. If you are interested but can't attend either preliminary session, please contact Jeremy White [spodehouse@hotmail.com](mailto:spodehouse@hotmail.com) or text him on 07999 957665.

**Join CAFOD's Big Lent Walk in the Jubilee Year** You are invited to join CAFOD's Big Lent Walk and journey together with Catholics in England, Wales and Scotland as Pilgrims of Hope in this Jubilee Year - walking 200km over 40 days during Lent. Journey to one of the churches or shrines designated as places of pilgrimage in our diocese as part of your Big Lent Walk. Sign up [here](#).

## 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 5pm 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)

**The Chosen** The Adult Faith Formation Group are showing the first series of 'The Chosen' in the Parish Centre on Thursday mornings after 10am mass, from 27 February and finishing after 6 episodes on 3 April. Each session will last about 1 ½ hours, including refreshments and discussion.

**Mercy Associates Meeting Tuesday 25 March after the 10am Mass** We will be meeting in Room 1 of the Parish centre and Sr Maura will be with us.

**The Parish Friends Knit & Natter Group** We will be meeting in the Parish Centre on 25 March 2-4pm. All are welcome. Contact Helen Bassill 07860 830340.

**Circle of Friends March 2025 Tea 2-4pm 26 March - St Barts' Parish Hall** Parishioners and friends of St Barts or St Alban and Stephen's who are living alone or would like to join for a tea and a chat are welcome to attend. The tea gives an opportunity to meet with others and an activity will be included. There is no charge but a small donation is appreciated. It would be helpful if you can let Maureen Kelly know if you will be attending or are in need of a lift: 07860 283743 or [stars2004@btinternet.com](mailto:stars2004@btinternet.com).

**AFF Group - Lenten talk 7.30pm to 9pm Friday 28 March Parish Centre- Conscience in a Modern World.** Dr Pia Matthews, the speaker, is a senior lecturer at St Mary's University, Twickenham, and a lecturer at Allen Hall, our Diocesan Seminary, in Chelsea. All welcome.

**Blessing for new Mothers 30 March** All expectant mothers and those whose babies have recently arrived (less than a year) are invited for a special blessing on Mothers' Day, Sunday 30 March at the 10am Mass. You and your partners are also then warmly invited to tea/coffee after Mass and a brief chat on the Sacrament of Baptism - what it is and what to think about ahead of time.

**C.W.L. Thursday 3 April at 2pm** A talk about Agatha Christie entitled "Murder, Mystery and Morality" All are welcome. Cost £3 to include refreshments.

**BINGO** Many thanks for the support for our recent Bingo evening. Including donations, the amount raised was £160.00 for the Knights of St. Columba. Our next Bingo evening will be on Friday 11 April.

**Mothers' Prayers - Room 2 on Monday 14 April at 8pm.** Anyone wishing to pray for children is welcome. Information from : [office@mothersprayers.org](mailto:office@mothersprayers.org).

**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 17 April in the Parish Centre. All welcome.

**HCPT Lourdes Pilgrimage** The St Bart's HCPT group will take requests for Candles and Intentions to Lourdes as part of their Pilgrimage during the week of 21 April. The Intentions will be posted in the Prayer Box sited at the Grotto and the Candles will be lit at the group's service of Light and Reconciliation also at the Grotto. To take part, please write out your intention (please anonymise your intention using a first name or initial only) and place it in an envelope addressed to 'St Barts - Private Intention HCPT'. If you want a Candle to be lit at the Service of Light and Reconciliation please put an offering in a different envelope and mark it 'St Barts - Lourdes Candles HCPT'. These envelopes can be posted through the Presbytery Door on Beaconsfield Road. They will then be delivered to St Bart's.

**Migrants' Meal** Our next meal will be held on Thursday 24 April. We need more volunteers to support this event. If you can spare a couple of hours on the day please call Mary on 07976 277059. You will not be asked to cook; simply to be present to support the cooks. The event starts at about midday and ends at about 5 pm.

**Westminster Cathedral Annual Mass of Thanksgiving for Matrimony 2.30pm Saturday 17 May** 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. 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 and phone number.

**St Barts Baby and Toddler Group** A group is being set up at St Barts at 11am-12.30pm on Thursdays for parents/carers and children aged 0-4yrs. This group will be open to all with no charge. Start date to be confirmed shortly. If you are interested in attending or helping out please contact Lizzie Lizzio at [efkelly88@gmail.com](mailto:efkelly88@gmail.com).

## 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 June 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.

**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.



## MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

### Saturday 22 March - VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY

5pm Mass Sheehan and Guinnelly families (RIP)

### Sunday 23 March - THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

8am Mass People of the parish

8.30am Mass Rosie Duffy (RIP)

(John Fisher School, Marshalswick)

10.00am Mass Pat McNiff (RIP)

12 Noon Mass John Barry Pashley (RIP)

6pm Mass Jack Foley (RIP)

Reading 1, Exodus 3:1-8,13-15, Psalm 102(103), Reading 2, 1

Corinthians 10:1-6,10-12, Gospel, Luke 13:1-9

### Monday 24 March - Lent feria

10am Mass Funeral Mass for Angelika Hughes

7pm Mass Terry Reilly (RIP)

Reading 1, 2 Kings 5:1-15, Psalm 41(42)

Gospel, Luke 4:24-30

### Tuesday 25 March - THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

10am Mass Michael Murphy (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 7:10-14,8:10, Psalm 39(40)

Reading 2, Hebrews 10:4-10, Gospel, Luke 1:26-38

### Wednesday 26 March - Lent feria

10am No Morning Mass

7pm Mass Irene Bryant (RIP)

Reading 1, Deuteronomy 4:1,5-9, Psalm 147

Gospel, Matthew 5:17-19

### Thursday 27 March - Lent feria

10am Mass Savine Lobo (Ints)

Reading 1, Jeremiah 7:23-28, Psalm 94(95)

Gospel, Luke 11:14-23

### Friday 28 March - Lent feria

7pm Mass John Darby (RIP)

Reading 1, Hosea 14:2-10, Psalm 80(81)

Gospel, Mark 12:28-34

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

### Saturday 29 March - Lent feria

9.30am Stations of the Cross

10am Mass Marie Noella Amadis (Ann) and Marie Aline Rangasamy (Ann)

10.30am Confessions and Exposition

Reading 1, Hosea 5:15-6:6, Psalm 50(51)

Gospel, Luke 18:9-14

## MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

### Saturday 29 March - VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY

5pm Mass Eileen Armstrong (RIP), Margaret Gallagher (RIP) and Kathleen Armstrong (Ann)

### Sunday 30 March - FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

8am Mass Annie Cawley and Mary Bergin (Ann)

8.30am Mass Milly Yarwood (Ann)

(John Fisher School, Marshalswick)

10.00am Mary Miskell (RIP)

12 Noon Mass Tom Bambury (RIP)

6pm Mass Mario Di Filippo (Ann)

Reading 1, Joshua 5:9-12, Psalm 33(34), Reading 2,

2 Corinthians 5:17-21, Gospel, Luke 15:1-3,11-32

## PLEASE PRAY

United with Churches together in St Albans we pray for all members of Ashley 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 Jacqueline Bushby, Eileen Davey, Noel Joseph Grogan, Casey Hennessey, Angelika Hughes, Bridie Lally, Sally McNeil, Joyce Moran, Steve O' Donoghue, Canon Bernard Scholes and Peter Wilson.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Marie Noella Amadis, Kathleen Armstrong, Mary Baxter, Mary Bergin, Annie Cawley, Floryse Chan-Fat, Mario Di Filippo, Marie Aline Rangasamy and Milly Yarwood.

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

**St Bartholomew's Parish** Please see the St Bartholomew's website at [St Bartholomew - Roman Catholic Parish of St Albans South](#) for details of mass times and events or to read a copy of the St Bartholomew's weekly newsletter.

**Justice, Peace & the Integrity of Creation Prayer** As we celebrate the anniversary of St Oscar Romero's martyrdom on 24 March 1980 we reflect on his words: This is the hope that inspires us as Christians. We know that every effort to improve society, especially when injustice and sin are so widespread, is an effort that God blesses, that God wants, that God requires of us.

**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 [cantonmassesea@gmail.com](mailto:cantonmassesea@gmail.com).

**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.