



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

14 Beaconsfield Road, St Albans, AL1 3RB

Office Hours Monday-Friday 9am-1pm Tel: 01727 853 585

E-mail: stalbans@rcdow.org.uk Website: www.albanstephen.org

YouTube: <https://youtube.com/c/SsAlbanandStephenCatholicChurch>

9 March 2025 - FIRST 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

Safeguarding Lead: Mary Harber / stalbanssg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk / 07976 277059

We are a Fairtrade parish

Fr Michael writes ... Today's Gospel recounts Jesus' experience in the wilderness. We're told how he refused to turn stones into bread to feed his hunger, how he remained steadfast in his devotion to God, and how he refused to put God to the test. The Gospels as a whole testify to Jesus' tremendous powers. He could change water into wine, he could heal the sick, raise the dead and see into people's souls. Nonetheless he refuses to use these powers for his own ends. In short, Jesus identifies himself with us - he chooses to be subject to the Father - just as we God's creatures, God's creation, are subject. Opening himself to the work of God's Spirit, the Spirit we have received in baptism, Jesus chooses to face temptation using only the powers and determination available to each of us. Indeed, he chooses the way of sacrifice and gives himself over to suffering, the same suffering that we might experience. The powerful one experiences powerlessness. He gives up everything in order to walk with us. Lent is our opportunity to walk with him. 'You shall worship the Lord your God', he says, 'and him only shall you serve'.

Blessing for new Mothers 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.

Cardinal's Lenten Appeal 2025 This Holy Year invites us to be 'Pilgrims of Hope'. We invite you to consider supporting work being done in the Diocese of Westminster to bring hope into many lives. Your contributions will help fund vital projects across our Diocese, including Youth & Evangelisation, Social Action, Marriage & Family Life, and Catholic Education Initiatives. The Cardinal extends his heartfelt thanks to all who give what they can to this meaningful cause. Donation envelopes are available today, and you can also contribute [online](#) or by using the QR code on the posters in the porch. Thank you for your kindness and support.

CAFOD Lent Appeal - Family Fast Day collection 14 March Please donate to our Family Fast Day parish collection and be a pilgrim of hope with CAFOD this Jubilee Year. You'll be supporting communities suffering the impacts of war, poverty and climate change to find solutions and hope. CAFOD envelope are available in the church porch and you can also donate online at www.cafod.org.uk/envelope or call us on 0303 303 3030. You can also text CAFODLENT to 70085 to donate £10.

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. Every £1 you raise will support communities like Lokho's in Kenya, experiencing the worst impact of the climate crisis, to rebuild their lives in hope. Sign up here: <https://walk.cafod.org.uk/>

Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) Survey CSAN is conducting a survey to understand the impact of the two-child benefit cap and the current economic climate on Catholic families in England and Wales. Please share your experience by completing the survey, which can be accessed at www.csan.org.uk/news/familysurvey, where you'll also find further information about the survey. The survey will close on 25 March.

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. On the 15 March the Stations will be led by Parish Friends based on Pope Francis' Urbi et Orbi. 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 will commemorate 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 their names into the office clearly marked 'Easter Garden' either by emailing the parish office at stalbins@rcdow.org.uk or by posting the details through the presbytery door.

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:) 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 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.

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 (first Sunday of the month).

Thank you from Centre 33 Many thanks to everyone who has donated items of warm clothing to Centre 33. We now have enough jackets, jumpers, gloves and hats to keep us going for some time so we will pause our collection for the time being. Thank you again for your generosity. Melanie, on behalf of Centre 33's trustees.

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 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](mailto:) 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 an hour and a half, including refreshments and discussion. If you would like to join, please contact the parish office.

Fair trade Stall Open 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 proceeds are donated to CAFOD.

AFF Group - Lenten talks 7.30pm to 9pm as follows:
Friday 21 March 2025 - A Just War?
Friday 28 March 2025 - 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.

The Parish Friends Knit & Natter Group We will be meeting in the Parish Centre on 11 March 1.30-3.30pm. All are welcome. Contact Helen Bassill 07860 830340.

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.

BINGO - Friday 14 March at 8pm in the Parish Hall, to raise funds for the Knights of St. Columba. Admission is 50p and includes refreshments. Everyone Welcome.

St Patrick's Day Tea Party - Sunday 16 March 3-5pm Once again Peter and Damian Fahy will be entertaining us so we are guaranteed a great afternoon's entertainment. Everyone is welcome. Offers of homemade cakes and drivers to give lifts will be appreciated. Please note that the lift to the hall is not currently working. We will be asking for donations for CAFOD instead of having our usual raffle this time.

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 March in the Parish Centre. All welcome.

St Columba's College Prep School Open Morning Friday 21 March 9.30-11.30am A wonderful opportunity to observe lessons, meet our dedicated team, and experience the special atmosphere and distinctive quality of our Columban community. Please visit <https://stcolumbascollege.org/> to register for the event.

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.

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 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 and phone number.

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. If you would like 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.

St Barts Baby and Toddler Group A group is being set up at St Barts at 11am-12.30pm on Thursdays for children aged 0-4yrs. This will allow parents/carers with young children up to school age to socialise and share activities in a safe setting, e.g. singing, story time and play. 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.

Have you considered joining the Catenians? The Catenian Association is an international Catholic organisation established over 100 years fostering the values of faith, family and friendship and it is hoped that men from our parish will consider joining the Catenians and encourage each other in our shared faith and charitable works and activities. The local group meets every month at Harpenden Golf Club at 7pm for an informal meeting and supper. Please consider joining them and you will be assured of a warm welcome. More information available on our [website](#) or simon-davies9@sky.com or George.jarzab@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 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.

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 8 March - VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY

5pm Mass Pat Roache (Ann)

Sunday 9 March - FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

8am Mass Carys Newton (First Anniversary)

8.30am Mass People of the parish

(John Fisher School, Marshalswick)

10.00am Mass Andrew Fernandes (Ann)

12 Noon Mass Mary Walsh (Ann)

6pm Mass Evelio Azcona (RIP)

Reading 1, Deuteronomy 26:4-10, Psalm 90(91)

Reading 2, Romans 10:8-13, Gospel, Luke 4:1-13

Monday 10 March - Lent feria

10am Mass Holy Souls

7pm Mass Norah Owen (RIP)

Reading 1, Leviticus 19:1-2,11-18, Psalm 18(19)

Gospel, Matthew 25:31-46

Tuesday 11 March - Lent feria

10am Mass Peter McHugh (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 55:10-11, Psalm 33(34)

Gospel, Matthew 6:7-15

Wednesday 12 March - Lent feria

10am No Morning Mass

7pm Mass Mattie Feeney (RIP)

Reading 1, Jonah 3:1-10, Psalm 50(51)

Gospel, Luke 11:29-32

Thursday 13 March - Lent feria

10am Mass Francesco Ciaccio (Ann)

Reading 1, Esther 4:17, Psalm 137(138)

Gospel, Matthew 7:7-12

Friday 14 March - Lent feria

10am No Morning Mass

7pm Mass Annie Crudden (RIP)

Reading 1, Ezekiel 18:21-28, Psalm 129(130)

Gospel, Matthew 5:20-26

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

Saturday 15 March - Lent feria

9.30am Stations of the Cross

10am Mass Audrey Collins (RIP)

10.30am Confessions and Exposition

Reading 1, Deuteronomy 26:16-19, Psalm 118(119)

Gospel, Matthew 5:43-48

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 weekly newsletter.

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. 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 15 March - VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY

5pm Mass Mary Curran (Ann)

Sunday 16 March - SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

8am Mass People of the parish

8.30am Mass Bridie Gildea (Ints)

(John Fisher School, Marshalswick)

10.00am Mass Edward Sumner (Ann)

12 Noon Mass Deceased members of the Cassin family

6pm Mass Harry Thompson (RIP)

Reading 1, Genesis 15:5-12,17-18, Psalm 26(27)

Reading 2, Philippians 3:17-4:1, Gospel, Luke 9:28-36

PLEASE PRAY

United with Churches together in St Albans we pray for all members of Hatfield Road Methodist 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, Angelica Hughes and Salvatore Realmuto.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Francesco Ciaccio, Mary Curran, Andrew Fernandes, Fr Sandy Murray MSC, Carys Newton, Pat Roache, Edward Sumner, Mary Walsh and Milly Yarwood.

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 Dear Lord, as it is International Women's Day this Saturday, 8th March can you assist us to appreciate women all year round? Amen.

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.