



Church Website

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN

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30 November 2025 – FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Contactless Giving

Parish Priest: Fr Michael O'Boy - Assistant Priest: Fr John Casey

Permanent Deacons: Rev. Brendan Day & Rev. Michael Larmer

Parish Administrator: Mrs Angela Gray - Catechetical Coordinator: Mrs Joan Egenes

Safeguarding Lead: Mary Harber / stalbands3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk / 07976 277059

We are a Fairtrade parish

Fr Michael writes... Next week we are due to have the second site meeting with the architects, contractors and quantity surveyor to review progress on the works to the forecourt and church porch. As you will have observed the works to the church forecourt are still in the first stages. In contrast the works on the extended porch are very much in progress with the new kitchen, toilet and storage spaces having been formed and the first fix on the electrics nearing completion. The extended porch really is beginning to take shape and already you can get a sense of its size and potential for gathering, post-mass refreshments and as a meeting space. This last week we have been considering the design of the manifests or transfers to go on the glass doors, ensuring that people will be able to see that there is a glass door in front of them. Also, we are beginning to turn our thoughts to the digital displays / monitors that will be a new feature of the extended porch. These will make the publicity in the fresher, more appealing and better focused – a larger version of what we already have the Parish Centre foyer.

Over the weekend of 20/21 December there will be a practice fire drill to ensure that people are familiar with the revised evacuation procedures. We would like to do this before Christmas because over Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, with larger numbers than usual, it will be important for a crucial mass to know if an evacuation of the building becomes necessary. This coming Christmas, because of the more restricted space in the church, we will stream the busier masses to the hall upstairs and distribute Holy Communion in the hall.

Finally, I would just like to thank you all, from the Sunday congregations, through to the weekday attenders journeying over to St Bartholomew's in the week, for entering into all the changed arrangements with such good spirit.

Revised Mass Schedule As a reminder, our new schedule of Weekday Masses begins from Monday 1 December 2025:

Monday	10am (St Alban & St Stephen)	12 Noon (St Bartholomew's)
Tuesday	10am (at St Bartholomew's during Building Works)	
Wednesday	10am (St Bartholomew's)	7pm (St Alban & St Stephen)
Thursday	10am (at St Bartholomew's during Building Works)	
Friday	No Morning Mass	7pm (St Alban & St Stephen)
Saturday	No Morning Mass	

Exposition, Confessions and Benediction will take place at St Bartholomew's on a Wednesday morning, beginning at 10.30am, and at St Alban & St Stephen on a Saturday morning, beginning at a new earlier time of 10am. The weekend mass schedule remains unchanged.

St Alban & St Stephen Parish Advent Talks 2025 This year's Advent Talks will focus on The Holy Land. Fr John Deehan, Ecumenical Catholic Chaplain at St Albans Cathedral, will speak on 'The Holy Land – Gift or Entitlement?' at 7.45pm on Monday 1 December. The talk will focus on the Biblical Theology of the Holy Land, drawing mainly on the Old Testament scriptures. Fr Paul McDermott, Parish Priest, St Edward the Confessor, Golders Green and Director of the Diocesan Holy Land Pilgrimage will reflect with us on the holy places Jesus visited in 'The Word was Made Flesh Here', at 7.45pm on Monday 8 December. Refreshments available and everyone is welcome to join us in the parish hall. **The talks will follow a Parish Appeal on behalf of Friends of the Holy Land after all masses this weekend - 29/30 November.**

Calling singers and musicians for St Alban & St Stephen Carols by Candlelight Practices as follows:

- Saturdays 29 Nov, 6 Dec, 13 Dec: BAND in Church 1.30- 3.15pm, SINGERS in Hall 3- 4.40pm (in Church on 13 Dec).
- Saturday 20 December 1.30-4.30pm Band AND Singers
- Monday 22 December 7-9.30pm Dress rehearsal
- Tuesday 23 December 5.45pm warm up for 7.30pm service. Please email stalbandsbc@rcdow.org.uk to take part.

Welcome to all new parishioners! Please see our [website](#) for useful information for those who are new to our parish. Please also 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.

LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS

Sacrament of Baptism The next baptism preparation course is Saturday 6 December 2025 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.

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.

Youth Mass dates 2025/26 Sunday 6pm Mass on 7 Dec, 25 Jan, 8 Feb, 22 Mar, 10 May, 14 June and 5 July.

OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

Monday Office Volunteers We currently have a group of five volunteers who come into the presbytery on Monday mornings between 9am and 1pm on a rota basis to answer the door and phone, and to undertake some light office duties. If you would be interested in joining this group, or for more information, please speak with Fr Michael.

Parish Christmas card market stall Every year we distribute Parish Christmas cards at the market as a reminder about the meaning of Christmas and an invitation to join us in our celebrations. This year, could we please have a volunteer to head it up? Please contact Mary at 07976 277 059 for more information about this and the Easter stall.

Migrants' toiletries and clothing collections We currently need donations of sanitary towels (not tampons), shower gel, toothpaste, shampoo, baby wipes, adult toothbrushes, deodorant, bars of soap, baby shower gel and shampoo. Donations of men's clothing are also needed for local migrants. Please only donate items which you would be happy to give to a family member or friend. While the building works are taking place, there will be a collecting point for these items on the third Sunday of each month.

St Albans Food Bank We currently have a food collection point at all masses, including the Marshalswick Mass centre on the first Sunday of each month. The principal demand remains for long life milk, long life juice and tinned fruit. More details of the St Albans Food bank can be found [here](#).

Coffee and Tea After Mass Refreshments are available in the Parish Centre 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 so please do come along.

OUR PARISH GROUPS AND EVENTS

Parish Groups and Events Please see our ['Parish News'](#) webpage for more details of parish groups and events.

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.

Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation group We meet on the third Thursday of each month in the Parish Centre, starting at 7.30pm. All welcome. See [here](#) for future events

St Bart's Baby and Toddler Group The St Barts baby and toddler group meets every Thursday morning in St Barts hall 11am-12.30pm. Lizzie Lizzio (efkelly88@gmail.com)

Phillips Grief Café Phillips the undertakers are running a **Grief Café** 10am-Noon on the first Thursday of the month in the parish centre foyer. A place for people to come together to share and discuss their experiences of grief and loss, and connect with others who understand.

St Albans URC Memory Café Sociable afternoon for those with dementia [however mild/severe] and accompanied by their live-in carers - Chiswell Green URC Hall, Watford Road, Chiswell Green on the first Thursday of the month - 1.30-3.30pm. Email [here](#) for information.

South St Albans Churches Ecumenical Advent Talks 2025 Wednesday evenings 7.30-9pm, 26 November 3, 10 and 17 December, at St Bartholomew's. A series of four ecumenical Advent Talks with the theme of "Hope, Peace, Joy and Love in our Time." Our speakers are the Very Rev'd Dean Jo Kelly-Moore and Rev'd Kevin Walton, from St Albans Cathedral, Fr Richard Parsons, RC Priest and Rev'd Graham Clarke, Baptist Minister. A bible may be useful for some of the talks but is not essential. Please contact cmljdl@aol.com.

Advent Carol Service Sunday 30 November St Saviour's Church Sandpit Lane 4pm. Beginning the journey towards Christmas with Churches Together in Marshalswick.

Jesuit Refugee Service Advent Service And Reception 7pm Monday 1 December Farm Street Church, W1K 3AH As we begin our preparations for Advent and reflect on the Holy Family's flight into exile, join the Jesuit Refugee Service for an evening of carols and a special performance by their refugee music group.

The Parish Friends Knit & Natter Group We will be meeting in the Parish Centre on 2 December 2-3.30pm. All are welcome. Contact Helen Bassill 07860 830340.

C.W.L Christmas meeting on Thursday 4 December at 2pm for Sherry, mince pies a quiz and some music. Cost £3 visitors and guests are welcome.

Fair trade The last fair trade stall of the year will be available after all Masses over the weekend of 6/7 December and after Mass at Marshalswick Mass centre on 14 December. We have a wide range of charity Christmas cards, chocolates and goods from Palestine.

Churches Together Food Bank Collection Sunday 7 December 10am-12 noon outside Budgens at The Quadrant. Volunteers most welcome to hand out flyers and accept food donations from shoppers. All donations are distributed via the Vineyard Verso programme. Contact: Christine 07900260190 or Maureen 07788 968654.

Carol Singing at Hixberry Lane Care Home AL4 0TZ. A group of parishioners will sing carols at 2 pm on Tuesday 9 December. We need more volunteers to attend for up to an hour; you do not need to be a good singer! If you can help or need lifts please call Mary on 07976 277 059.

Mothers' Prayers We will meet on Tuesday 9 December at 8pm in the Parish Centre.

BINGO - Friday 12 December, at 8pm in the Parish Hall in aid of "LIFE". Admission is 50p and includes refreshments. Everyone is most welcome.

Bring Joy and Sing in a Short Carol Service in a Care Home Monday 15 December at 10.30 and 11am in Tara's Retreat, Sandridge, AL4 9DQ and Wednesday 17 December at 10.30am in Alban Manor, 2 Chene Drive, Waverley Rd. AL3 5QP. Please contact Maggie Dodd before 20 November on 07462 586773 or email: mrsmaggiedodd@gmail.com.

Alban Arena pantomime tickets for sale £29.50 each for Saturday 13 December 6pm show. All sales help towards SSAS school PTA. Contact ssaspta@gmail.com to order!

St Albans Foodbank Once again the St Albans Foodbank are running their Reverse Advent Calendar. Their main goal is to ensure that no one in the community goes hungry due to lack of access to food. This year alone, they have distributed over 10,000 three-day emergency food parcels to individuals and families in crisis, across the St Albans District via their 9 hubs. The Reverse Advent Calendar is a simple way to give back this season:

- For 25 days, add an item from the [attached](#) list
- Bring your collection to our Foodbank Warehouse in Redbourn, (Unit 3, Redbourn Industrial Park, High Street, Redbourn, AL3 7LG) ready to be distributed to local families in time for the holidays. Please see [here](#) for details of Foodbank opening hours over Christmas.

Winter Beds Project We provide accommodation for people who are rough sleeping and not accommodated in The Open Door Night Shelter. We are looking for people to help run the project this winter. Volunteers are needed every evening and morning to perform a variety of roles, including setting up and greeting guests, cleaning and checking out guests, laundry. Volunteers will receive comprehensive training and support. We offer volunteering opportunities with no minimum time commitment. For more information, please email winterbedsproject@opendoorstalban.org.

Vinnie Packs The SVP are distributing over 10,000 Vinnie Packs containing cold weather essentials to the homeless this winter. 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 SCHOOLS

St Alban & St Stephen Catholic Primary School and Nursery Admissions For nursery and primary admissions please contact the school office to book a place on one of our tours taking place on 3 December, 11 December and 8 January. More information can be found [here](#). The admissions deadline is 15 January 2026.

St Adrian's Catholic Primary School Admissions For nursery and reception admissions please contact the school office to book a place on one of our tours. More information can be found [here](#). The application deadline is 15 January

Nicholas Breakspear Catholic School Senior Citizens' Christmas Party Hosted by NBS students. Friday 5 December 12.15-2.30pm. Join us for an afternoon of festive activities and entertainment. RSVP by 24 November 01727 860079 or admin@nbs.herts.sch.uk. If anyone requires a lift to this event or can offer a lift please contact Helen Bassill 07860 830340.

St Michael's Catholic Grammar School - Consultation on Admissions Arrangements 2027/28 The Governing Body invite your views on the consultation of our Admissions Policy 2027/28. Further information on the proposed changes can be found on our [website](#). The consultation period will finish on 2 December 2025. All views should be submitted to admissions@st-michaels.barnet.sch.uk.

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 one year in advance and the first masses we now have free for booking are in March 2026. Please also be aware that weekday morning masses (excluding Mondays) will be held at St Barts for the duration of the building works.** 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 normally be included for eight weeks, unless the request to have their name included is renewed.

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Saturday 29 November – VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY
5pm Mass Kitty Sheehan (RIP)

Sunday 30 November – FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
8am Mass Michael Walsh (Ann)
8.30am Mass Jim Dalley (RIP)
(*St John Fisher School, Marshalswick*)
10am Mass People of the parish
12 Noon Mass Antonio Visconti and Guiseppe D'Auria (Ann)
6pm Mass Selwyn Caldeira (Ann)
Reading 1, Isaiah 2:1-5, Psalm 121(122)
Reading 2, Romans 13:11-14, Gospel, Matthew 24:37-44

Monday 1 December – Advent feria
10am Mass Jo Gleeson (Ann)
Reading 1, Isaiah 4:2-6, Psalm 121(122)
Gospel, Matthew 8:5-11

Tuesday 2 December – Advent feria
10am Mass * Rosemary Roscoe (Ints) (*at St Barts*)
Reading 1, Isaiah 11:1-10, Psalm 71(72)
Gospel, Luke 10:21-24

Wednesday 3 December – St Francis Xavier
7pm Mass Edward Tiffin (Ann)
Reading 1, Isaiah 25:6-10, Psalm 22(23)
Gospel, Matthew 15:29-37

Thursday 4 December – Advent feria
10am Mass * Eve Hadlow (RIP) (*at St Bart's*)
Reading 1, Isaiah 26:1-6, Psalm 117(118)
Gospel, Matthew 7:21,24-27

Friday 5 December – Advent feria
7pm Mass Anna Evelyn Cronin (RIP)
Reading 1, Isaiah 29:17-24, Psalm 26(27)
Gospel, Matthew 9:27-31
(*On Fridays Mass is celebrated in St Albans Cathedral at Noon*)

Saturday 6 December – St Nicholas
10am Exposition, Confessions and Benediction

** at St Bartholomew Church, Vesta Avenue, St Albans AL1 2PE*

Mass in Polish Mass in Polish takes place here at 4pm on the second and fourth Sundays of each month.

Cards for Good Causes Christmas Charity Christmas Card and Gift Shop St Peter's Church, St Peter's St. Monday-Saturday 10am-4pm, Sunday 11am-4pm.

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.

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 6 December – VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY
5pm Mass Mickie Clancy (Ann)

Sunday 7 December – SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
8am Mass Martin Brosnan (RIP)
8.30am Mass Sr Catherine McGovern (RIP)
(*St John Fisher School, Marshalswick*)
10am Mass Lydia Centala (Ann)
12 Noon Mass Josephine Egan (RIP)
6pm Mass Peter Celestine Okoro (RIP)
Reading 1, Isaiah 11:1-10, Psalm 71(72)
Reading 2, Romans 15:4-9, Gospel, Matthew 3:1-12

PLEASE PRAY

United with Churches together in St Albans we pray for the members of the Christ 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 Sue Assorto, Ian McEnhill, Erika Notova and David Robinson
For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Selwyn Caldeira, Lydia Centala, Mickie Clancy, Guiseppe D'Auria, Jo Gleeson, Edward Tiffin, Antonio Visconti and Michael Walsh.

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 Group Dear Lord, please look after all those people who cannot afford Christmas.

School Applications & Certificates of Catholic Practice

If you are a parent, guardian or carer who needs a Certificate of Catholic Practice to accompany your child's application for a primary, secondary or nursery school place, please email the parish office on stalbans@rcdow.org.uk with your child's name, date of birth and home address together with a contact telephone phone number for yourself. Please indicate which school(s) you are applying for as not all catholic schools require the Certificate of Catholic Practice. Fr Michael will then arrange an appointment to meet you.

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.