

NEWS BULLETIN - ST ALBAN & ST STEPHEN



Church Website

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25 January 2026 - THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



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 / stalbanssg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk / 07976 277059

We are a Fairtrade parish

Fr Michael writes...

Every parish is required by Canon Law to have finance committee to support and advise the parish priest in the administration of the parish finances and resources. At both St Alban & Stephen and St Bartholomew's we are blessed to have finance committees in place and I greatly value their input on how we use the resources gifted to the parishes by parishioners. In St Alban & St Stephen the finance Committee have been key to the realisation and development of the building works that are now in progress, while at St Bartholomew's they have been key advisers in terms of the presbytery refurbishment and its ongoing use.

Going forward I would like to increase the membership of both finance committees. If you have a background in finance and would be interested in finding out more and joining the finance committee please let me know. However we don't only need financial expertise. On one or both committees we would be grateful for some expertise in the area of data protection and property/health & safety issues. Again, if you have experience in this field please be in touch with me.

Finally, there is another area, also to do with parish finances, where we are looking for volunteers. Every other week in both parishes what we collect in the weekly offertory and in second or special collections needs to be counted. Being a counter would be a regular fortnightly or monthly commitment of approximately 2 hours each time. Again, if you would be interested in volunteering as a counter please let me know. For all of the volunteer roles mentioned I can be contacted at michaeloboy@rcdow.org.uk

Exposition & Confessions St Bartholomew's Wednesday 10.30am / St Alban & St Stephen Saturday 10am

Benediction St Bartholomew's Wednesday 11.15am / St Alban & St Stephen Saturday 10.45am

Retiring Collection for Mary's Meals Last weekend's retiring collection raised £3,866.31. Mary's Meals would like to thank everyone in the parish for their wonderful generosity when we visited last weekend. These donations will enable Mary's Meals to feed over 200 children one good meal every school day for a whole year. Thank you so much for your support, please continue to pray for the work of Mary's Meals. God bless you all.

IGNITE Open to 14-18 years old who want to grow in faith is being held at St Michael's Church, Garston. Starting on 31 January with 6pm vigil Mass and followed by activities 7-8.30pm in the hall. Come and meet fellow young enthusiastic Catholics from St Albans, Watford and Hemel and have fun. Please let parish office know if you can come, for safeguarding purposes.

The Creed A film series exploring the Nicene Creed to reveal the intellectual and spiritual depths of Christian faith will be shown in lent. Please come and understand our core Catholic doctrine, beyond just facts, to a personal, transformative belief. All are welcome. When: 12 and 26 Feb; 5, 12, 19 and 26 March at 7.30- 9pm in the hall.

FIRE MARSHALS We are looking for parishioners to volunteer as Fire Marshals in the rare event of our needing to evacuate the building. Full training will be given. If you are willing to volunteer please email the parish office with your name, email address and contact number.

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 7 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 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 for everyone after mass.

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.

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.

Youth Mass dates 2025/26 Our Parish Youth Masses take place at 6pm on Sunday evening on the following dates: 25 January, 8 February, 22 March, 10 May, 14 June and 5 July.

Mass for the Sick at the Cathedral 2pm Saturday 7 February The Diocese will be holding its annual Mass for the Sick celebrated by the H.E. Cardinal Vincent Nichols, during which Anointing of the Sick will be offered. To help with planning for the Mass and the anointing, tickets need to be booked in advance. If you would like to attend the mass, please contact the parish office.

OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

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 St John Fisher Mass centre, on the first Sunday of each month. The principal demand remains for long life items (milk and fruit juice), tinned items (fruit, veg, meat, fish and puddings), cooking sauces, coffee, teabags, cereals and jam. 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.

PARISH GROUPS & EVENTS

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

Faith and Family Group We meet in the parish hall on the first Tuesday of the 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. 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)

St Albans URC Memory Café Sociable afternoon for those with dementia 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.

The Parish Friends Knit & Natter Group We will be meeting in the Parish Centre on 27 January 2.15-3.45pm. Please note change of time, All are welcome. Contact Helen Bassill 07860 830340.

Migrants' Meals Thursday 29 January. Many thanks to all the parishioners who have helped us to arrange cooking days for local migrants who do not have access to a kitchen or to home cooking. If you can volunteer to be present (not to cook) for a couple of hours between about midday and 6pm that would be a great help. Please call Mary on 07976 277 059.

Men's Breakfast Our first Men's Breakfast for 2026 is on Saturday 31 January, from 8.15am to 10am in the Parish Centre. We will start with conversation over coffee and pastries, followed by a 20 minute video on the Christian living by Dr Edward Siri of the Augustinian Institute. We will conclude with a discussion and finish by 10am. No pre-booking required and for more details please message Richard on 07976 252309S.

Fair-trade. The monthly parish fair-trade stall will be open after all Masses here at Church over the weekend of 31 Jan/1 Feb and after Mass at Marshalswick Mass Centre on 8 February. Fair-trade is designed to allow producers to obtain a fair price for their products and gives them a little extra to help towards community projects such as schooling, developing local amenities and healthcare - all of which we so easily take for granted here. The fair-trade stalls are run by volunteers: if you could spare an hour once a month to help keep this vital support for those in the Developing World going, please speak to any of the volunteers or email grabecki@hotmail.com.

'Ending Trade with the Settlements' 1 February A talk organised by St Albans Friends of Palestine and given by Martin Butcher of Oxfam at 7.30 - 9.30, Fleetville Community Centre, Royal Road, St Albans AL4 4LQ.

Thinking Lunch Talk Thursday 5 February Paul Kelly-Moore Finding Peace in Poetry and Prisons. Marlborough Road Methodist Church 12.30-1.30pm. Please bring your own lunch and drinks. Half an hour talk and then discussion. Donations will be gratefully received to cover expenses, any profits will be given to the speaker for a charity of their choice.

C.W.L. Meeting 2pm Thursday 5 Feb A talk by Jeremy "Tales from Back Stage at the Opera" All are welcome members, friends & guests, cost £3 to include refreshments.

St Columba's College Prep School Open Morning Friday 6 February 9-11am This is a wonderful opportunity to have a tour of the Prep School by our current students and to hear from the Prep Leadership Team. Please register using the following link: [Visit Us - St Columba's College](#). If you have any questions, please contact [Mary Masters](#).

Retrouvaille Retrouvaille helps marriages. It can bring hope and healing to relationships. Next date 12 February. www.retrouvaille.org.uk Tel: 07887 296983

BINGO A big thank you for the support and donations for our recent Bingo, that raised £215.00 for the Catholic Children's Society. Our next Bingo evening will be on Friday 13 February.

Care homes, creativity and celebrating St Francis - would you like to be involved? Anna Chaplaincy with both St Alban & St Stephen and St Barts, are creating a group to work on an exciting project this year. Working alongside care homes and local Catholic schools we will be celebrating the life of St Francis through an inter-generational project connecting the schools with local care homes. We are looking for a group of people to be involved with helping to create some large-scale artwork and help organise some informal creative worship sessions in care homes. Would you like to be involved? If you'd like to know more please email Maggie, St Albans Anna Chaplaincy Lead mrsmaggiedodd@gmail.com or contact Sara Nash (SSAS) stalbans@rcdow.org.uk or Christine Lambert (St Barts) cmljdl@aol.com Please respond by 15 February if you are interested in taking part.

CAFOD soup and film event Saturday 21 February Everyone is invited to the Hall to have a simple lunch [from noon] and watch The Penguin Lessons [12] from 1pm - a comedy based on the story of a disillusioned Englishman going to work in Argentina in 1976. Donations in support of the Lent CAFOD family fast day.

Westminster Diocese Justice & Peace Lecture The second annual Justice and Peace Lecture which will be given by Charles Wookey, formerly CEO of Blueprint for Business, and for the last three decades advisor on social and ethical issues to archbishops of Westminster and BCE&W. He will speak on the topic ' Living out Catholic Social Teaching in Today's Britain'. A response will be given by

the young scholar, Dr Charlotte Bray of the University of Manchester. The lecture will take place at Farm Street Church of the Immaculate Conception, 114 Mount Street, London W1K 3AH, on 25 March at 7pm. Access to the church is from Farm Street or Mount Street. After the lecture in the church all are invited to a buffet reception in the Arrupe Hall. All are welcome. To attend, please email justiceandpeace@rcdow.org.uk by 1 March.

Alzheimer's Society We run local activity groups in your area for people living with dementia and their carers and we are currently looking for group support volunteers. Our groups are fun and a chance for people to meet others in their local community in a similar circumstance. We do activities like adapted sports, arts and crafts, welcome singers, guest speakers and more. Any commitment of volunteering is welcomed. Our groups are typically 2 hours long and run on a weekly basis, all of the group's information and areas can be found [here](#).

Organist required St Leonard's Church Sandridge require and will remunerate an organist for their 10am Sunday service, plus occasional weddings and funerals. Contact Kathy 07808956666/kathleentilney@hotmail.com

St John Fisher Catholic Primary School Consultation on Proposal to Change Admission Arrangements The school is consulting on changes to its admissions policy and the consultation period ends on 30 January. The Governors are keen to hear views from the local community who may be affected by the proposed changes and are consulting interested parties in accordance with the School Admissions Code. For more information on the changes that are being proposed, please contact the school, see the school website or follow [this link](#) to read a letter from the Chair of the Board of Governors.

PARISH ADMINISTRATION

Mass Intentions Mass intentions can be booked by phoning or visiting the parish office from 9am to 1pm any weekday. Outside these times, please email the 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 May 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 24 January - VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY

5pm Mass Peggy Hough (RIP)

Sunday 25 January - THIRD SUNDAY IN ORD.TIME

8am Mass Damien Mearns (RIP)

8.30am Mass Stan Phillips (Ann)

(*St John Fisher School, Marshalswick*)

10am Mass William Murphy (RIP)

12 Noon Mass Rosalia Vetere (Ann)

6pm Mass Pierce Hackett (RIP)

Reading 1, Isaiah 8:23-9:3, Psalm 26(27), Reading 2, 1 Corinthians 1:10-13,17, Gospel, Matthew 4:12-23

Monday 26 January - Saints Timothy and Titus

10am Mass Rosemary Lyon (RIP)

Reading 1, 2 Timothy 1:1-8, Psalm 95(96)

Gospel, Mark 3:22-30

Tuesday 27 January - feria

10am Mass * John Stack (RIP)

Reading 1, 2 Samuel 6:12-15,17-19, Psalm 23(24)

Gospel, Mark 3:31-35

Wednesday 28 January - St Thomas Aquinas

10.30am * Confessions, Exposition and Benediction at St Barts

7pm Mass Anne Smet (RIP)

Reading 1, 2 Samuel 7:4-17, Psalm 88(89)

Gospel, Mark 4:1-20

Thursday 29 January - feria

10am Mass * Funeral Mass for John Doran

Reading 1, 2 Samuel 7:18-19,24-29, Psalm 131(132)

Gospel, Mark 4:21-25

Friday 30 January - feria

7pm Mass James Casey (Ann)

Reading 1, 2 Samuel 11:1-4,5-10,13-17, Psalm 50(51)

Gospel, Mark 4:26-34

On Fridays Mass is celebrated in St Albans Cathedral at Noon

Saturday 31 January - St John Bosco

10am Confessions, Exposition and Benediction, no Mass

Saturday 31 January - VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY

5pm Mass Mary and James Corbett (Ann)

Sunday 1 February - FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORD. TIME

8am Mass Rosemary Lyon (RIP)

8.30am Mass Ray Hill (RIP)

(*St John Fisher School, Marshalswick*)

10am Mass Maria Del Carmen Romero Fernandez (Ann)

12 Noon Mass John O'Neill (RIP)

6pm Mass Breda Hughes (RIP)

Reading 1, Zephaniah 2:3,3:12-13, Psalm 145(146)

Reading 2, 1 Corinthians 1:26-31, Gospel, Matthew 5:1-12

* Mass takes place at St Bartholomew's Church, Vesta Avenue

PLEASE PRAY

United with Churches together in St Albans we celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2026 which offered us the opportunity to reflect on our unity in Christ and to support one another.

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 Mary (Jo) Comer, John Doran, Jack Geldard, Bernadette Kelly and Mary O'Reilly.

For all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including James Casey, Mary and James Corbett, Maria Del Carmen Romero Fernandez, Eileen Kane, Roy McGoohan, Stan Phillips and Rosalia Vetere.

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

The funeral Mass for John Doran will take place 10am on Thursday 29 January at St. Bartholomew's. It will be followed by a short service at 11.30am at the Garston crematorium.

The funeral mass for Mary Jo Comer will take place at 1.30pm on 27 January at Luton Vale Chapel, The Vale, Butterfield Green Road, Luton KLU2 8DD

St Bartholomew's Parish Information Please see the St Bartholomew's website at [St Bartholomew - Roman Catholic Parish of St Albans South](http://www.stbartholomew.org.uk) for details of mass times and events or to read a copy of the St Bartholomew's weekly newsletter.

Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation Prayer Lord, we pray for a world where Justice and Peace prevail, and to that end, we ask you to guide our leaders to seek justice and truth, to choose diplomacy over conflict and to protect all people with compassion, transforming weapons into instruments of peace.

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 cantonmassessea@gmail.com.

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

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.