

MASS INTENTIONS
Third Second Sunday of Advent (B)

Saturday 16 th December – Third Sunday of Advent	6.30pm	Francis Patros (R.I.P)
Sunday 17 th December – Third Sunday of Advent	9.00am	Brian Popkin (R.I.P)
	11.00am	Deceased relatives of the Borg & Abela families
Monday 18 th December – Weekday of Advent	9.00am	Emmanuel Formosa (R.I.P)
Tuesday 19 th December – Weekday of Advent	9.00am	Roy North (R.I.P)
Wednesday 20 th December – Weekday of Advent	9.00am	Maria -Concetta Formosa (R.I.P)
Thursday 21 st December – Weekday of Advent	9:00am	Robin Brown
Friday 22 nd December – Weekday of Advent	9.00am	Margaret Brennan (R.I.P)
Saturday 23 rd December – Weekday of Advent	9.00am	Rose Hunter (R.I.P)

Fourth Sunday of Advent (B)

Saturday 23 rd December – Fourth Sunday of Advent	6.30pm	The Boon Family (Int)
Sunday 24 th December – Fourth Sunday of Advent	9.00am	Mark Finnegan (R.I.P)
	11.00am	Gift Agwuncha (R.I.P)
Christmas Eve	6.30pm Midnight (12am)	Francis Nolan (R.I.P) Dora Corry (R.I.P)

Thought for the week:

Christmas offers the world, of all faiths and none, in all its diversity, the opportunity to stop, to renew family relationships and to exercise the best of our common humanity. It challenges nations and institutions by its message of peace and goodwill for all. Christmas certainly keeps alive these values of kindness, care for the poor, and being in peace with the world, in the hope that we might replicate them throughout the year. But the word was made flesh promises more, being graced with God's DNA – joy – the joy of being alive, the joy of being loved, the joy of knowing that God is the remedy to the struggle of our human journey. – **Fr Brendan Carr CSSp**



ST ALBAN'S PARISH NEWSLETTER
Langdale Gardens RM12 5LA
PARISH PRIEST: Canon Maurice Gordon



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St Alban's Primary School

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Head Teacher: Ms Gail McBride

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Third Sunday of Advent (B)
16th & 17th December 2023

Dear Friends,

Last week, we were introduced to John the Baptist as a part of our Advent journey. We hear his story again today but this time it is from the fourth Gospel. In this Gospel, Light and Darkness is a key theme. The Evangelist goes on to tell us that John the Baptist's mission is that he has been sent by God to speak for the Light. John is a Light bearer, he is not the light, but he points to the light. He is a witness to the light of God in our world. A light that cannot be put out. We celebrate this light today on Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete means rejoice. We light the pink candle, and we celebrate with joy. As our world is in a state of war and confusion, there is much fear and anxiety. People might not feel like celebrating or being joyful, but nature shows us that spring always follows winter. Like John, we are called to be bearers of light to others.

Allowing the light to shine, means we want to come away from the darkness. We want to be among those who have space in our hearts in our homes, for Christ and our neighbours. We are asked to fill our world with his light by our repentance, our prayer, our generosity and our charity because Christ born poor asks us to reach out to his people.

Prayer:

“Lord there is much darkness in society and in our Church. We thank you that someone always comes to the scene, sent by you as a witness to speak for the light – teachers, community leaders, grandparents, children, a friend... they bear witness to the rest of us that somewhere in the dark, a light shines that darkness cannot overcome” - **Michel de Verteuil.**

God Bless and keep safe,
Canon Maurice

Please pray for all who are sick, including:

Nell Addison, Paul & Eva Au, Michael Balfour, Doreen Banister, John Barry, William Bradbury, Vincent Brady, Rose Cahill, Marlene Camay, John Carty, Macmillan Chitoma Bras-Goncalves, Sarah Content, Maureen Daly, John Detheridge, Katherine Day, Gerry Dique, Rose Dique, Charlotte Dudenney, Dylan Dunbar, Nancy Donovan, Ann Dunn, Margaret Dumbrell John Finan, James Francis, Anna Gawlik, Maisie Glennon, Maureen Gorham, Kevin Harty, Bernadette Heddle, Peter Hemsley, Ellen Hurley, Mathew John, Jenny Jones, Julia Joseph, Kathleen Kavanagh, Rev Tom Keighley, Francesca Kelly, Baby Stephen Kelly, Vicky Loik, Mary Lynes, Amaogechi Mbanu, Siobhan McKeon, Norah McLoughlin, Gladys McQuaid, Matthew Milnar, John Morrison, Ann Mount, Jim Nolan, Brian Nash, Ivan Opoku-Agyemang, Baby Teegan Oakley, Vincent Okolo, Dean Partleton, Teresa Pitman, Michelle Pointer, Baby Teddy Rands, Jennie Reddy, Rosetta Reehill, Dorothy Ryan, Fr Francis Coveney, Mary Sayers, Marina Scarff, Elizabeth Smith, Alan Stokes, Teresa Shorey, John Sinclair, Charles Stimpson, Crystal Stimpson, Julia Thomas, Theresa Wiseman, Elizabeth Wyles, Jay Spencer, Irene (Evelyn's sister), Clara Yankey and Nikhil Rao. For those we know and the many we do not know, we pray to the Lord.

PARISH FINANCES:

9th & 10th December

Loose

£510.06

Envelopes

£450.50

Mother and Toddlers Group:

The last session for the Mothers and Toddlers group before Christmas will be this Thursday 21st December and will re-open on Wednesday 3rd January. For more information, please visit <https://stalbanscic.my.canva.site/> We thank Maria, Sarah and all of the staff who support our Mother and Toddlers group.

Baptism Course:

The next Baptism course will take place on Saturday 13th January in the Parish Hall at 9am. To attend please register with Mr & Mrs Law on 07454 962277.

Brentwood Catholic Youth Service

Bookings are now open online for the Brentwood Catholic Youth Service pilgrimage to Lourdes in July. The pilgrimage is open to all those in school year 10-13 with all those of school leaver age (18+) invited to join us as young leaders (subject to attending a training weekend) All details and applications can be found on the website www.bcys.net/events/sl24

YOUNG ADULT RETREAT: is taking place on Saturday 6th January, for anyone aged between 18 and 27 (having left school) to develop their faith and community as a young leader in the church.

FLAME 2025 tickets will be on sale soon and you can request yours now! (all details are in a previous email, please do get in touch if you need further information)

VOLUNTEER AT WALSINGHAM HOUSE for the academic year 2024/2025 – applications are now open for anyone currently in year 13 or above.

All information for the above can be found on their website – www.bcys.net

Confirmation Programme

The next session for the Confirmation programme will take place on Saturday 6th January at 4pm.

First Holy Communion Programme 23-2024:

The next meeting for parents and Children will take place on the 11th of January 2024 at 7pm.

Walk with Me

Walk with me is an Advent reflective prayer book. It could be a helpful tool for prayer during this season. On sale for £1 each at the back of the Church.

Brentwood Diocesan Directory 2024

These are now available for sale at the back of the Church. Prices are £2.95 each or £4.15 for the ring bound version.

Journey in Faith Programme (RCIA):

Anyone who wishes to know more about the basics of the Faith or is interested in joining the Church is invited to the weekly sessions which take place each Monday at 7:30pm in the Presbytery. Any Parishioner who wishes to support this group, is also invited to come along.

Tree of Angels

The Tree of Angels has now been placed in the Sanctuary. If you would like to remember some intention during this Christmas period please place an Angel – which are at the back of the Church, write your intention on it and then place it on the tree.

Right to Life:

Let us pray for our politicians and decision-makers, that they would always strive to protect all human life and human dignity from the point of conception till natural death.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Father Joseph and Father Maurice will be available after all the Masses this weekend and next weekend to celebrate with you the Sacrament of Reconciliation. They will also be available during the week after Mass if you wish to go. This is a good way to prepare our hearts and our minds to celebrate the birthday of our Saviour. All are welcome.

St Albans Catholic Primary School

School finishes next Tuesday the 19th December for the Christmas holidays and returns in the new year on Thursday the 4th January. We wish all of our staff, teachers, children and families, all of God's blessings.

Christmas Card

Please take a copy of the Christmas card with all the times of the Masses and over the season. Also, please pass copies on to your family members, friend and neighbours to let them know the times of the Services.

The SVP are looking for volunteers willing to help children put their faith into action.

Could this be you? The St Vincent de Paul Society have primary school groups called Mini Vinnies, and volunteers would support teachers or youth leaders wishing to start a group in their school or parish. They will talk to children about how they can make a difference to those living in poverty and share resources to support the group. The role is flexible but does need people with some availability during school hours (at least 2 mornings or afternoons per month) who are willing to travel within the diocese (all costs are covered). If you are passionate about helping children discover how they can make a difference in their communities, please email Sarah for more information on youngvincentians@svp.org.uk. You do not have to have previous experience of working with children as all training will be given. Our next initial training day is on Tuesday 27th February 2024.