

SAINT ALBAN'S PARISH

Saint Alban's Church and Presbytery
Conway Road, Pontypool, NP4 6HL

Chapel of Ease: Sacred Heart and St Felix
Ellick Street, Blaenavon

PARISH PRIEST Canon Paul Millar

Telephone: 01495 762280

Website: www.pontypoolparish.co.uk

E-Mail: pontypool@rcadc.org

Follow us on twitter: @pontypoolparish

No 9

This week's Masses and intentions:

Saturday	4.30 p.m.	St Felix	Holy Souls	31st Sunday of Ordinary Time
	6 p.m.	St Alban's	Dorothy Hoare, R.I.P.	
Sunday	9.30 a.m.	St Alban's	People of the Parish	
Monday	9.30 a.m.	St Alban's	Holy Souls	
Tuesday	9.30 a.m.	St Alban's	Francesca Macan (wellbeing)	
Wednesday	9.30 a.m.	St Alban's	No Mass today	
Thursday	9.30 a.m.	St Felix	Holy Souls	Dedication of the Latern Basilica
Friday	12 noon	St Alban's	Requiem Mass for Arthur Waite	

Next Sunday's Masses and intentions:

Saturday	11 a.m.	St Alban's	Mass of Remembrance	
	4.30 p.m.	St Felix	Holy Souls	32nd Sunday of Ordinary Time
	6 p.m.	St Alban's	People of the Parish.	
Sunday	9.30 a.m.	St Alban's	Holy Souls	

Collection last Sunday:

St Alban's:	Plate: £130.70	Gift Aid: £105.00
St. Felix:	Plate £44.00	Gift Aid: £92.90
MISSIO	£10.00	

Counters:

This week: L. Griffin & T. Hitchings

Next week: L. Peters & T. Hitchings

Meeting this week:

U.C.M. Tuesday after 9.30 a.m. Mass in the Hall

Confessions.

St Felix on Saturday at 4.00pm

St Alban's on Sunday at 9.00am.

Canon Paul will also hear Confession after any of the weekday Masses on request.

100 Club:

The winner for October is no. 20 – An Jenkins – Congratulations!

Arthur Waite, who worked hard for our Parish over many years, died recently. His body will be brought to the church on Thursday afternoon at 4.30 p.m. and his requiem Mass will be on Friday at 12 noon. There will be light refreshments in the hall afterwards. Please remember him in your prayers. May he rest in peace.

Bereavement Befriending Group. Our Annual Mass of Remembrance will take place next Saturday at 11 a.m. There will be light refreshments in the Hall afterwards. All welcome to come along

Preparation for the Sacrament of Holy Communion 2024

I you wish to enrol your child for the course of preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion and they are in year 3 or above, please complete the form at the back of the Church and return it to Canon Paul by 11th November.

Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation 2024: If you are in Year 8 of Secondary School or above and wish to take part in the course of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, please complete the form available at the back of the Church and return it to Canon Paul by the 11th of November.

Second Collection for Sick & Retired Clergy Fund: This Weekend This weekend there will be a second collection for the Archdiocese's Sick & Retired Clergy Fund. The fund makes a vital contribution to the cost of providing our priests with a secure and dignified retirement. Last year this was some £165,000. Donating is one way in which we can simply say 'thank you' for their years of service. If you would like to Gift Aid your donation, please pick up an envelope or leaflet at the back of the church. You can also donate online by visiting the Archdiocese's website www.rcadc.org/donations

November Dead List: November is the month when we especially pray for our deceased. Most of our Masses during November will be offered for the Holy Souls. Please pick up an envelope at the back of the Church for the names of your dead loved ones and return it with a donation as soon as possible.

The Pope's Intention for November: We pray for the Holy Father; as he fulfils his mission: may he continue to accompany the flock entrusted to him, with the help of the Holy Spirit

The Catholic Post: copies of this month's papers (October) are available at the back of the Church. A donation of £1 is suggested and can be placed in the Church donations slot in the wall box in the porch of St. Albans or in the basket provided at St. Felix.

Eastern Valley Foodbank: The collection of food will be this weekend in both Saint Alban's and Saint Felix communities, but if you feel that you would rather give a cash donation then this can be placed in an envelope marked for this purpose and placed in the offertory basket.

Prayer for Vocations: God our Father, you call each of us to follow Jesus, your Son, on the path he has marked out for us - the way of charity, service and fulfilment. May the homes and parishes of our Archdiocese be blessed with ever-renewed dedication to the work of building up your kingdom here on earth. May those whom you call to the priesthood and religious life faithfully give themselves to the service of your Church. Prompted and strengthened by your Holy Spirit, may we respond generously to the call to follow you each day and live out our vocation, to give you glory, for the good of those around us and for our own happiness. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen!

LOUDfence Mass at St. David's Cathedral celebrated by Archbishop Mark O'Toole on Saturday 21st October at 12 noon

What is LOUDfence? LOUDfence, a survivor-led initiative, gives a voice to all those who have experienced abuse within a faith-based setting or have been affected by it, although it is open to everyone. LOUDfence provides an opportunity for reflection on the times the Church and wider society has failed victims/survivors of abuse and to say we are truly sorry. It enables us to commit ourselves to doing our utmost to being a place which is safe for all people. LOUDfence is a process which aids gradual culture transformation through celebrating the virtues we hold valuable. LOUDfence raises awareness in the community and in institutions, it challenges the silence and shame which surrounds the issue of abuse. LOUDfence seeks to support the survivor and validate their worth by celebrating the act of speaking out and truth telling.

Preparation for the Sacrament of Baptism: If you are thinking about arranging your child's baptism there will be a meeting on Thursday 26th of October in St. Alban's Church Hall at 7 p.m. with a second meeting on Thursday 2nd of November. Please let Canon Paul know if you are going to attend as it would be helpful to have some idea of the number who are interested.

November Dead List: November is the month when we especially pray for our deceased. Most of our Masses during November will be offered for the Holy Souls. Please pick up an envelope at the back of the Church for the names of your dead loved ones and return it with a donation as soon as possible.

S.P.U.C. Annual Walk: took place last weekend. If you have sponsored Lorraine and have not already given her your sponsorship money, please put it in a clearly marked envelope and leave it in the Sacristy. Thank you to all who have contributed.

Fire Marshals: As a faith community we have a responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of each member especially during unforeseen circumstances such as fire incidents. The training video provides crucial guidance on how to effectively deal with such situations and how to carry out a safe evacuation procedure. In light of this, we ask for volunteers to step forward and embrace the role of fire marshals for our church. The dedication to this task will greatly

contribute to the overall safety and peace of mind of all who gather in our church. Let us remember that as we come together in worship and fellowship, we also come together in unity and protection. By taking part in this training and offering your service as fire marshals, you exemplify the spirit of selflessness and care that defines our faith community. Interested? Please see Rob Abramczyk.

ALPHA COURSE - An Alpha Course is being run by the Abergavenny parish of Our Lady and St. Michael, beginning Friday 15th September, from 5.30pm - 7.15pm, then every Friday till the beginning of December. Alpha is an introduction to the Christian/Catholic faith, based around a meal, a video and then discussion. It is aimed at those curious about learning more of the Christian faith, who may never have practised the faith or stopped in the past. Everyone is welcome whatever their church background or none. It is relaxed, informal and stimulating. The meetings will take place in St. Michaels Centre, behind the Church at 10 Pen Y Pound, NP7 5UD. For more info contact Fr. Matthew at matthew.carney@rcadc.org, / 01873 851051.

The Archdiocese of Cardiff has been asked to hold the National Annual Altar Servers mass in Cardiff's St David's Cathedral 14th October 2023.

This is an honour for our Cathedral and more importantly our Archbishop and the altar services of the Cardiff diocese. I personally will be very grateful if as many parishes in the diocese can attend.

To allow for planning I will be very grateful if individual parishes can confirm to me attendance and number by Sunday 6th August 2023.

I will then reply asking a second time during the first week September 4 - 9.

Maryvale Institute, Birmingham- Study part-time, by distance learning for a Bachelor of Divinity (BDiv) or a Licence in Divinity. The Maryvale Higher Institute of Religious Sciences (HIRS) is the only ecclesial institute of this kind in the English-speaking world. The Ecclesiastical BDiv is a five-year part-time, collaborative-learning degree programme in Catholic theology providing a comprehensive exposition and analysis of Christian doctrine based on the study of the sacred Scriptures, the works of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, and the documents of the Magisterium. The Licence in Divinity: Pathway in Catechetical Sciences is another qualification of the Holy See, distinct from an STL, it is a three-year, part-time, programme aimed at those in leadership positions in catechetics and in other positions of responsibility. Contact: Admissions tutor, Deacon Dr Harry Schnitker at: researchcentre@maryvale.ac.uk

Repository: It is now the season for first Communions. There is a large selection of Cards, rosaries and other small gifts available together with a large selection of Cards for every occasion on sale at the back of the Church. Why not have a look?

Your weekly collection envelopes: Gift Aid Scheme envelopes (with your names on them) are available (if you have not already collected it) in the Sacristy if you are in the scheme: If you are not already part of this scheme to further support our parish, please consider joining. All that is required is that you pay income tax of the amount equivalent to your weekly offering, sign a declaration and use a given box of envelopes for your collection.

Planned Giving Scheme: Many people appreciate having a set of envelopes as it helps them to keep track of their regular contributions to our parish. If you wish to have a set of envelopes but cannot join the Gift Aid Scheme please use a box of yellow envelopes at the back of the Church.

Church Cleaning: Thank you to those ladies who turned up on Tuesday to clean. The church looks beautiful!

Donations for flowers for Easter: Donations can be given to M. Vidler. The Ladies will be coming to do the flowers on Easter Saturday.

Easter Offering Envelopes: are at the back of the Church. The Easter Collection is your offering to the Priest and forms an essential part of his income.

Hospital Chaplaincy: Please note the following information when anyone from our community is admitted to hospital: If you are aware of routine procedures which will require your stay in hospital, and would like to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion or the Sick please contact Fr. Lawrence so that appropriate arrangements can be made before your admission to hospital. At the present time it may not be possible to offer this ministry in hospital for planned procedures. In the case of emergency admissions, **the onus is entirely on the patient and/or family member** to note the following directives:

- In the case of Neville Hall, please ask staff to contact Father Carney, or you may do so directly on 01873 851051.

- In the case of the Royal Gwent, please ask staff to contact the on-call Catholic Chaplain.
- In the case of Panteg Hospital or The Grange, please ask staff to contact Fr. Lawrence or you may contact me directly.

Holy Communion at home: If you would like to receive Holy Communion at home, please contact Father Lawrence so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

A.P.F.: Margaret Vidler asks for the Red Boxes to be brought to Church for emptying in the near future.

Sacrament of Reconciliation: St Alban's on Wednesday from 6.30 – 6.55 p.m. and by arrangement with Canon David.

As this has been highlighted as an important part of our community's outreach, we would welcome more people to go on a rota to help deliver the collection to the foodbank. Please let Canon David know when you are willing to help.

Holy Communion at home: If at the present time, you feel unable to re-join the parish community for Sunday Mass (or weekday Mass when there are fewer people present), and would like to receive Holy Communion at home, please contact Canon David so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Housekeeper for the Presbytery, mainly for cleaning and ironing – 3 hours per week. Please see Fr. David for more details.

Children's Liturgy: if there are children in St Felix this weekend, there will be Children's Liturgy at Mass. Unfortunately, no one has volunteered to assist with restarting this in St Alban's at the present time.

THE BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP is a small team of parishioners who offer confidential help and support to families or individuals who have suffered the death of a loved one. The team offer support to the bereaved throughout the whole of St. Albans parish. Would you be interested in joining the group?

Baptismal Certificates: These are required prior to the celebration of First Holy Communion, Confirmation or Marriage, so as to confirm membership of the Church. They are sometimes asked for by Schools or the Local Authority too, but always to confirm a spiritual bond with Jesus and his Church. Is this always why parents ask for a copy of a certificate? Or is it just for admission to school or a free bus pass? Remember that at the Celebration of Baptism you undertook a solemn promise before God to bring up your child as a Catholic, and this includes attendance at Sunday Mass and receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion! As family, school and parish we work together for the spiritual development of your children! Don't deprive your child of getting to know the person of Jesus by forgetting your obligations!

Caring for those who cared – The Work of the Clergy Welfare Board: A retiring collection will be held in this Parish **this weekend**. This will be allocated to the Clergy Retirement Fund. Gift Aid envelopes are at the back of the Church so that the offerings of taxpayers may be increased by 25%. Please give as generously as you can.

Qualities necessary? To have been confirmed yourself. To have a desire to live a Catholic life and to be a witness to others. To recognise that you don't have all the answers but to have a willingness to deepen your own faith as you share it with others. To believe that you won't be left to run the programme on your own, but to have a commitment to work with others to support young people grow in their faith. Please pray and reflect on whether the Lord is calling YOU to help in the ministry of **Catechesis!**

Catholic Online Radio: Heaven's Road Catholic Online Radio featuring prayers, interviews and music to appeal to a Catholic audience, can be accessed on www.heavensroadfm.com

Please note that **Children's Liturgy** is for those who are aged between 3 to 9 years of age. Children over 9 years old should be taking part in the celebration of Mass. Why not encourage them to become part of our Altar Serving team?

Christmas offering to your Parish Priest: Thank you to all who contributed to this, and for the other gifts; all much appreciated!

Christmas Offering to your Parish Priest: Many thanks to everyone who has contributed towards this, and for the other gifts I've received over the Christmas festivities. It's most appreciated after a frugal year!

Church cleaning at St Alban's: There is a desperate need for help in cleaning our Churches. CAN YOU COMMIT to being on a rota once in six weeks? There is no minimum age (within reason!!) and neither is there a restriction on it normally being done by female members of the parish! Please sign the list at the back of the Church if you can help so that a rota may be made.

Confession is one of the great Sacraments of love and healing. Through this Sacrament we receive God's deep, loving and absolute mercy when we turn to him and present our shortfalls, our failings, the little and the great things we have done wrong. The Church is often accused of being too rigorist and unrelenting, but what she presents to us is the ideal to strive towards. Not one of us is perfect and we all need the Sacrament of Reconciliation in this life to strengthen and renew us and to hear the words 'you are forgiven, it is forgotten, you are ALIVE'

Could you help to clean our church? The list of cleaners has been decimated by sickness and age. Would you be willing to go on a rota which would mean you would have to help to clean the church about once every 6 to 7 weeks. Please give your name to any member of the UCM.

Crib Offerings: The offering this year will be to support local homeless people. Amazing Grace Spaces is a charity that creates safe sleeping places for the homeless (sleeping pods). They are seeking funding to create as many safe sleeping places for rough sleepers in Newport as possible. As we recall this Christmas how there was "no room" for Jesus, Mary & Joseph, let's look towards providing immediate aid to the growing homeless population in Newport. Each sleeping pod costs £5,500. See the poster at the back of the Church or in front of the Lectionary for more details.

Cycle of Prayer:

Eucharistic Adoration: as we remember, this has been an important part of our spiritual lives in our parish for many years, and has been the source of many graces and blessings for those whose intentions have been brought before the Lord in prayer. During these challenging times, to be still in the presence of the Lord is an oasis of peace and prayer, and affords us the opportunity to not just pray for one another, but particularly for all who are affected by the virus in any way; that all may recognise the part which each one of us should fulfil in reducing the impact of the virus in our community. At the current time, we have Adoration for one hour every Monday after Mass; can you spend an hour in prayer before the Lord?

"Instructions for my Funeral Mass": Ever wondered how to let your family know your wishes? This leaflet, produced by the Catholic Church in England and Wales, helps to help make it easier for our family or our friends to arrange our funeral at what will be a sad and difficult time for them. Too often the issue of death is considered a taboo subject in our secular society. But in the light of our Catholic faith it is one which we should all have the confidence to face as the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead on Easter Sunday transforms our understanding of death. Faith tells us, that through our baptism we already share in that risen life of the Lord. This is a bond that nothing - including death - can ever destroy. Please consider asking for a copy from the back of the Church. The cost is only £1 each and will help to ease the burden on our loved ones.

Parish Advisory Council: The community at St. Felix does not have a representative on the Council at the moment. Meetings are held every two months. Not a time-consuming commitment but important for the Blaenavon community to be represented! Interested? Please speak to Fr. David for more information!

I wish, my Lord, to receive You with the purity, humility and devotion with which your Most Holy Mother received You, with the spirit and fervour of the saints. Come Lord Jesus.

Give me, good Lord, a longing to be with You....give me warmth, delight and quickness in thinking upon You. And give me your grace to long for Your Holy Sacraments, and specially to rejoice in the presence of Your very blessed Body, Sweet Jesus Christ, in the Holy Sacrament of the altar. (St Thomas Moore)

Let's not forget that we also have a wide selection of cards for all occasions: on the stand there is a range of cards for birthdays, birth and baptism of children, engagements, weddings and anniversaries. On the shelves there are Mass Bouquet cards for various occasions, sympathy and anniversary of death Mass cards, get well and thanksgiving cards. Why not take a look, and support your parish!

Repository: the Advent 'Day by Day' and 2022 Diaries are now on sale in the Repository, as are a wide selection of Christmas Cards and other Advent and Christmas items. Please do have a look and support our Repository.

Sacristan at St Alban's: Fr David has outlined the need for help in the Sacristy, for example by helping to keep the linens in order, the drawers tidy, and to generally assist with the preparation of liturgies in the Church especially for big celebrations. But not one person has offered to help... It is an essential responsibility of the parish that help is provided in this important area, and a failure to do so implies that you do not care... Can you help?

Sacristy Library: The bookshelves in the Sacristy have now been sorted and are available to those who would like to borrow a book during their adoration hour. There are books on scripture, prayers and devotions, reference and stories of saints. All we would ask is that the books are returned to where they were taken from at the end of your adoration.

Year Books for 2021 are available on request at a cost of £3. An invaluable resource containing lots of useful, information, e.g.

liturgical calendar, contact details of Churches, Priests, Church Organisations across Wales and beyond.

Your financial support for our parish: Thank you to those who have reviewed their contributions recently; it is much appreciated! There are still some **Gift Aid Scheme** envelopes in the Sacristy for collection. If you are not already part of this scheme to further support our parish, please consider joining. Please talk to Canon David if you can support our parish in this way. There are also envelopes available in the Sacristy for the **Planned Giving Scheme**. Many people appreciate having a set of envelopes as it helps them to keep track of their regular contribution to our parish. If you wish to have a set of envelopes but cannot join the Gift Aid Scheme please ask Canon David for a box from the Sacristy. Finally, if you haven't reviewed your financial contributions recently, please do consider doing so, as our community depends on the regular and generous donations of every parishioner.

Please pick up your box from Canon David. Thank you for your regular contributions to support our community.