

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

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No 29

Holy Week Services:

Saturday	6 p.m.	St Alban's	People of the Parish	Palm Sunday
Sunday	9 a.m.	St Felix	John & Dorothy Madden, R.I.P.	
	11 a.m.	St Alban's		
Monday	9.30 a.m.	St Alban's	Holy Souls	
Tuesday	the Priests of the Archdiocese gather with the bishop to celebrate the Mass of Chrism which takes place in St David's Cathedral at 11.30am. During the Mass the holy oils used in the celebration of the sacraments are blessed by the bishop and the priests renew their priestly promises.			
Holy Thursday	7 p.m.	St Alban's	Mass of the Lord's Supper. The church will remain open until 10 p.m for private prayer, followed by Night Prayer	
Good Friday	3 p.m.	St Alban's	The Lord's Passion	
	7p.m.	St. Felix	Stations of the Cross	
Holy Saturday	9.30 a.m.	St. Alban's	Morning Prayer	
	7.30 p.m.	St. Alban's	Easter Vigil	People of the Parish
Easter Sunday				
Sunday	9 a.m.	St Felix	Colin Bath, R.I.P..	
	11 a.m.	St Alban's		

Collections last Sunday: St Alban's: Plate: £312.39 Gift Aid: £180.00
St. Felix: Plate £54.30 Gift Aid: £80.00

Counters: This week: L. Griffin & T' Hitchings

Holy Week

This week we celebrate the most important festival in the Church's year, the suffering, death and Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Our celebration begins with the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, reaches its climax in the Easter Vigil and closes with Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday.

It is the time when we celebrate the great events by which humankind was released from sin and reunited with God. In participating in the liturgy, we are not simply onlookers at a pageant, but are uniting ourselves with Christ in his suffering and death, that we might become one with him in his triumphant resurrection.

Good Friday

Good Friday is a day of Fasting and Abstinence.

Every year on Good Friday, a retiring collection is taken up in Catholic Churches to support the work of the Franciscans working in the Holy Land. The Franciscans have the unique responsibility of caring for the Holy Places as well as caring for the Christians living in the Holy Land. Christians there rely heavily on the help that comes to them during this special day in the Church and our life of faith

Communion under both kinds

On Maundy Thursday we will re-introduce the practice of receiving Communion under both kinds for those who wish to receive communion from the chalice. I am conscious that some parishioners may still feel uneasy about receiving communion from the chalice, there is no obligation to do so, it is a matter of personal choice.

The Church teaches that the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ is present in both the Sacred Host and Precious Blood, and so there is no obligation to receive Holy Communion from the Chalice. Those who receive under only one species are not deprived of any grace that is necessary for salvation'.

However Holy Communion 'has a fuller sign when it takes place under both kinds, for in this form the sign of the Eucharistic banquet is more clearly evident and clearer expression is given to the divine will by which the new and eternal Covenant is ratified in the Blood of the Lord'

Good Friday Walk of Witness

On Good Friday there is an ecumenical walk of witness through Usk which has become a strong feature in our Christian calendar and is a wonderful way to share worship and faith together. It starts in the car park by the co-op at 10.30am and finishes at noon.

Easter Sunday

Fr Peter McLaren will celebrate the 9.00a.m Mass Blaenavon

Today's Collection is the Easter offering for Clergy. Please pick up an envelope at the back of the Church.

Church Cleaning for Easter will take place on Tuesday starting at 10 a.m. Please come along if you can spare an hour. It would make a big difference. Everybody welcome.

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

Flowers for our Churches for Easter: Donations to ensure our churches are beautiful would be very welcome and can be given to Priscilla or Margaret Vidler or put in the collection in a clearly marked envelope.

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Easter Sunday

Fr Peter McClarran will celebrate the 9.00am Mass Blaenavon

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Youth Council Summer Event



Are you in years 9-13?

Do you want to spend some time getting to know other young Catholics?

The Cardiff and Menevia Youth Council is offering you the opportunity for a few days away in beautiful St. David's, Pembrokeshire, to relax, pray, talk, walk, eat and have fun together.

July 24th – 28th. The cost £250 for four nights at St. David's Bunkhouses, including coach travel and all meals.

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Meetings this week:

U.C.M.

Tuesday after the 9.30 a.m. Mass in the Presbytery

First Communion Class: Thursday at 4p.m. in the Presbytery

Confirmation Preparation: Thursday at 5 p.m. in the Presbytery

Faith Exploration: Thursday at 7 p.m. in the Presbytery

Confessions.

Saturday in St. Alban's between 5 and 5.30 p.m.

Canon Paul will also hear Confession on request after daily Masses

Faith Exploration: Are you thinking about becoming a Catholic? Are you a Catholic who would like to know more about your faith? Come and join us on Thursday at 7 p.m. in the Presbytery. The subject this week is 'The Adventure of Prayer'

Thank you to all who helped in any way for the 'Soup Lunches' over the past few weeks and also to those who supported them. More than £200 was raised for CAFOD. Last Friday was the last one for Lent. We will hopefully be able to have lunches perhaps once a month after Easter. Watch this space!

Holy Communion at home: If you are sick or housebound or know of anybody who would like to receive Holy Communion at home, please contact Canon Paul so that arrangements can be made

Deanery Mass and Meetings with Archbishop Mark: Last month Archbishop Mark issued a Pastoral Letter in which he discussed the proposed union of the Cardiff and the Diocese of Menevia, two Dioceses. As part of this process he said that he would be holding a series of Open Listening Sessions across both Diocese. The purpose of those gatherings will be to come together in the joy of our faith, in the different parts, to see how we might be a local Church which looks outward much more, to share the faith with those who do not believe, and to look at how we put our resources at the service of those most in need.

On Wednesday 10th April there will be an "an open discussion" with the Archbishop at St. Mary, Stow Holl, Newport at 5 p.m. followed by a **deanery Station Mass.**

Talk by Austin Ivereigh: on Thursday, 18th April at 7 p.m. in St. David's Church Pontnewydd, Cwmbran, Austen Ivereigh will share with us his considerable experience of the synod, both at home and in Rome.

An opportunity to explore what the Holy Spirit is doing in South Wales & Herefordshire Pope Francis has invited Spirit-inspired Catholics to come together. You're invited to do so:

Saturday 13th April 10 am - 3.15 pm at All Hallows, Llantrisant (CF72 8PG)

Saturday 20th April 10 am - 3.15 pm at St David's & St Patrick's, Haverfordwest (SA61 1SX)

Both days begin with Mass. For more, see [Facebook.com/CCRSWH](https://www.facebook.com/CCRSWH) or contact Anne Nolan annec_nolan@yahoo.co.uk or [07989 839710](tel:07989839710)

Census Form: In order to enable us to update our records I would be grateful if you would complete the parish census form with as much detail as you wish to disclose and return the signed form to the church or post it through the presbytery door. Please include dependants for family members in your household. The forms are at the back of the Church.

The Catholic Post: copies of this month's papers (March) 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.

100 Club: Would you like to take part in 2024? The cost is £1 per month which can be paid monthly or c £12 for the year. The Prize is £25 per month. If you are interested please put your contribution together with your name in an envelope and give it to Treana or leave it in the Sacristy before the 19th of January

The Popes intention for March: Let us pray that those who risk their lives for the Gospel in various parts of the world might imbue the Church with their courage and missionary drive.

Flowers for our Churches for Christmas. Thank you to those ladies who do the flowers and work so hard throughout the year to make sure that our churches look beautiful. They always make a special effort for Christmas and Easter. Donations for flowers are always welcome but especially at these special times.

Preparation for the Sacrament of Holy Communion 2024 If 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 this weekend.

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 this weekend.

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

Year Books for 2024 are available in the Repository at a cost of £5. An invaluable resource containing lots of useful information, e.g. liturgical calendar, contact details of Churches, Priests, Church Organisations across Wales and beyond.

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.

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 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.

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.

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.

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

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?

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'

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.

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!

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.

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.