



Our aim is to offer a variety of articles, essays, and materials that help us develop our Spiritual, Human, Intellectual, and Pastoral life (SHIP).

Our Monthly Newsletter is designed specifically for the St Alban's Community and its friends, featuring curated content that speaks to our daily life under the Catholic faith. We therefore encourage you to publish your thoughts with us, based on facts and reliable sources of information. Our **SHIP** content allows you to print all materials related to the liturgy, retreats, sacraments, etc. (**S**piritual), Catholic social teaching, politics, culture, etc. (**H**uman), science, theology, philosophy, etc. (**I**ntellectual), and everything linked to parish life (**P**astoral). Just remember that our aim is not simply to inform, but to **FORM** consciences in the light of Catholic teaching... and all these in **LOVE** and **RESPECT**.



## Proclaim with joy: Christ is risen - Alleluia!

By Karyn Johnston



These headline words are familiar, even comforting. But Easter is not simply a celebration of something that happened long ago, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ shapes how we understand the world as it is, and how we are called to live within it.

Jesus' Passion exposes how unjust systems work. He is condemned through fear, political expediency, and indifference. His death reveals how easily truth and justice can be sacrificed. Then, just as now.

But Easter is God's response. Injustice does not have the last word, power is not ultimate, truth cannot be buried.

After the Resurrection, Jesus does not appear to the powerful or successful. He appears to frightened disciples, grieving women, and broken communities. He is recognised in the simple and communal act of breaking of bread, not in displays of force.

The risen Christ still bears his wounds, shaping our understanding of solidarity with those in pain.

In a world tempted to turn away from suffering, Easter keeps us close to those who are forgotten.

When the risen Jesus appears to his disciples, his first words are: "*Peace be with you.*" He does not seek revenge on those who wronged him, but reinforces his commandment to love one another.

Peace is not merely the absence of conflict, but the slow work of justice, truth, and reconciliation. And, without the hope brought to us by the Resurrection, we are nothing, we have nothing. In today's world, hope becomes an act of resistance.

Easter tells us that God is at work even where life feels fragile. It assures us that love is stronger than death, and that justice, even if delayed, will not be defeated.

For us, Easter means living as people who believe that new life is possible in our hearts, in our communities, and in our world - because God so loves us.

Christ is risen indeed - Alleluia!



### First Saturday Devotion

**4 Apr 2026 and 2 May 2026**

Join our Holy Rosary at 10:30 am, Consecration Prayer and Reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Confessions at 11am with Holy Mass at 12 noon

### St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP)

Help us to help those in need.

Donate. Volunteer. Pray.

**DO YOU, OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW, NEED OUR HELP?**

**Then contact Jean on 07881 895540**



### All welcome to our friendly book club

Our next book is

'**Leonard and Hungry Paul**' by Ronan Hession.

We meet on the second Wednesday of every month in the Parish Centre.

Summer meeting times: 3pm for 3.15pm start

Next meeting: Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> April, 3.15pm  
Tea/coffee served at 3pm!

Enquiries to Mary [maryfrommacc@msn.com](mailto:maryfrommacc@msn.com)  
Or Tess [tessmcghee@btinternet.com](mailto:tessmcghee@btinternet.com)



### St Alban's Parish ROSARY FOR PEACE

Every Wednesday at 5:30pm in Church

### Pope Leo's intention for April 2026



#### For priests in crisis

Let us pray for priests who struggle with loneliness: or lack of hope, and those who question their vocation. May God let them feel they are not functionaries but His beloved sons, and may He renew in them the certainty of His unconditional love. May He also grant them healthy friendships, rekindle the joy of the Gospel, and teach us as a community to care for them.

### Join our bereavement group

Whether you want to chat, or just drink coffee or tea, eat biscuits or cake, or simply be with people who get what you're going through, St Alban's Bereavement Group hosts a convivial get-together every month in the Parish Centre.

Join us every second Thursday of the month throughout 2026

**2:30pm - 4pm St Alban's Parish Centre**

Thursday, 9 April 2026



# Ladies Lenten retreat day – Wednesday, 11th March

By Louise Hatchman

We were blessed with a beautiful, sunny day for our annual Ladies' Group Retreat Day. It provided a welcome opportunity to step away from the busyness of everyday life and spend time in prayer, reflection, and fellowship in peaceful and tranquil surroundings.

On arrival, we were warmly welcomed with fresh coffee and delicious homemade biscuits, a gesture of hospitality that immediately set a relaxed and friendly tone for the day. Lisa opened the gathering with an introductory talk, thoughtfully outlining the theme and guiding us into a spirit of reflection and prayer.



Throughout the day, Fr Michael encouraged us to take time in quiet prayer before the tabernacle, inviting us to speak to Jesus openly about our joys, worries, hopes, and fears. His words reminded us of the importance of bringing every part of our lives to God. He also led us in two deeply thought-provoking meditations that helped us reflect more deeply on the meaning of the Lenten season.



Together we prayed the Rosary, focusing especially on the themes of Lent and the approaching Easter Triduum. These moments of shared prayer created a strong sense of unity and spiritual renewal among us.

Lunch was a particularly enjoyable part of the day, giving us time for convivial conversation and the chance to spend unhurried time with fellow parishioners. It was a joy to share stories, laughter, and companionship. There were also plenty of opportunities throughout the day for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and we were grateful to celebrate Mass together at lunchtime.

The day offered both spiritual nourishment and gentle relaxation. After lunch, some of us took a peaceful walk to the Shrine of the Holy Family, enjoying the calm surroundings and the sunshine. The day concluded with a welcome afternoon tea before we made our way home. It was truly a restorative and uplifting day, leaving us refreshed in spirit and grateful for the time spent together in prayer, reflection, and friendship.

## Macclesfield Catenians Celebrate

By Mike Guerin



Macclesfield and District Catenians celebrated again at their March meeting with two members being presented with scrolls for 40 years of membership by Provincial Director Stuart McNeil.

Steve McKevitt reached the milestone in January and has

spent the full forty years as a member of Macclesfield and District Circle. A deacon in his parish of St Mary's Congleton, Steve is one of a number of Congleton members who have played a significant role in the history of the Circle, filling several offices becoming President in 1995/96.

Peter Slater, a St Alban's parishioner, began his Catenian career in Brentwood Circle and remained a member throughout a period when he was posted to Detroit, USA. Having moved to Macclesfield he transferred to Macclesfield Circle, almost immediately taking up the post of Secretary, which he filled for three years. Two members of Brentwood



Circle came to Macclesfield to join in the celebratory dinner at Tytherington Club.

Presenting them with Forty Year Scrolls Provincial Director Stuart McNeill congratulated both on their long service

Macclesfield and District Circle was founded in April 1944 and celebrates its 82nd anniversary in April this year. Founded in Manchester in 1908 the Association aims to offer

Faith, Friendship and Fun to Catholic men and their families. The Circles membership officer is Steve Joseph, a St Alban's parishioner, who is happy to encourage interested men to consider joining the Circle.

### ST ALBAN'S LADIES GROUP WINTER PROGRAMME

We meet informally in the Parish Centre on 1st / 3rd Wednesday 2.00-4.00p.m. for discussion and talks of mutual interest. Tea & Biscuits (inc. chocolate ones) are provided.

Interests are both spiritual and social and include Days of Recollection and social outings.



#### APRIL

*1st Open meeting*

Cleaning of the Brasses for Easter

*15th Deafness support network*

Celebrate 50 years of serving the community

Learn more about the organization and understand Deaf Awareness from the CEO and Community Liaison Officer

For further information contact Anne 7305267325

## What is the Parish Council – by its current Chair, Maurice Wilbraham

We are a small group who meet with Fr. Tomasz and Deacon Gyorgy once each month. Our photographs are on display in the Church porch to help you to put names to faces. We are all parishioners who have volunteered to help. This carries on a fairly long tradition of St. Albans having a Parish Council.

Currently we arrange our efforts in four main areas referred to as 'PILLARS'.

### The Spiritual Pillar

This includes training of Ministers of the Eucharist, Readers and Sacristans. Arrangements for Liturgical events arise and need clarification and discussion. A recent topic was how people prefer to access the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession). This Spiritual area involves much input from Deacon Gyorgy in support of Fr. Tomasz.

An example of how the Pillars overlap and interact was the discussions about the Easter Vigil. We discussed the best way to return into Church after gathering around the Paschal Fire. This discussion drew in aspects of Liturgical Celebration and ubiquitous, but essential, Health and Safety considerations.

### The Fabric Pillar

This covers the upkeep of our special church and other parish buildings. As you can imagine, at present we are very much concerned with the renewal of the heating system. Any planned work in this area is impacted by the Listed status of St. Albans Church. It is often in these discussions that finance comes into and perhaps dominates our thoughts. Architects, engineers and other consultants must be met to assess proposals. This cannot be avoided because of the historic nature and architectural

importance of our Pugin church. BUT it all takes time.

### The Community Pillar

This has always been a very active parish with many different groups. The parish hall is a great asset and, as with other parts of the parish, it requires regular maintenance and brings with it running costs. Recent uses of the hall include an afternoon of Family Games, a Quiz Night and a Passover Meal. In co-ordination with the Justice and Peace Group the tradition of lunchtime soups in Lent has continued. Activities for the Season of Creation are also planned by the Justice and Peace Group as they have been over recent years.

### The Communications Pillar

Recently the parish was being revised and updated, and it should be up and running soon. We have also discussed the form and editorial policy for this monthly magazine to ensure its continued publication and progress. Our meetings are minuted and we aim to be as open as possible but occasionally matters arise which cannot be shared publicly.

We are willing to discuss aspects of parish life with parishioners. I myself am frequently in the parish hall after 9.15 am Sunday Mass. I can be found drinking coffee and sometimes serving teas and coffees.

It is some time now since we reviewed how our Parish Council functions and so we will be setting out to review our constitution in the coming months. These discussions take time and, as stated at the outset, we are all volunteers who are trying to help. Please be patient.

## Lent Lunches: CAFOD & R.O.A.R.

By Jerome Johnston

We'd only just caught our breath after Christmas, when early in the new year the appeal for volunteer cooks and helpers was made for the Lent Soup Lunches. As is always the case at St Alban's, we were not disappointed. Offers of a great range of soups enabled us to serve a different selection of five soups each Friday. In addition to volunteer cooks, there were many who assisted with serving, washing up, and generally clearing away.

During the cold weather, Fr Tomasz has been saying Mass in the Parish Centre and so we were all delighted once again to move from "Missa to messa" as Fr Paschal used to say. Each Friday, we have had to find additional chairs for the larger congregation and it's always good to feel the intimacy and prayerfulness of so many worshipping together. Mind you, we are sometimes concerned that a miraculous intervention might be needed if everyone stays for soup! So far, we have always had more than enough; we aim to cater for between 30 and 40 covers each Friday.



CAFOD and ROAR are the two charities we have supported this year. Kathryn Keenan visited and spoke about CAFOD's work and the importance of our role in support. At the same lunch we had three visitors from ROAR (Reach Out and Recover) who gave us an insight into their work. Each of the three had successfully gone through the programme which helps people with addiction issues, homelessness and other traumatic life events. Will told us about his journey

from homelessness, through university to having his own home all thanks to support from ROAR. All three now give back to the programme by giving their support to others entering ROAR. You can find out more at [reachoutandrecover.org](http://reachoutandrecover.org)

At the moment it is impossible to say exactly how much has been raised. There is £510 in cash but as we now accept cards via the Dona terminal, we will have to see what comes through.

Finally, my thanks to the stalwart support of all who make this endeavour possible and such an enjoyable sociable event. A special mention to Ann Brattoli who worked tirelessly clearing tables every week and to Anne Grundy who took sole responsibility for the raffle and the display of the weekly prizes.

Lastly, from an email just received from Will Meek: "It was a real pleasure meeting you all at St Alban's Parish Centre, and I'm really grateful for the opportunity to share more about Reach Out and Recover. The support from yourselves and the community truly means a lot to us and the people we work with."



# Tanzania: Pallotine Sisters' legacy, empowering women through education

By Sr. Ernestina Patrick Lasway SAC – Vatican City. Originally published in [Vatican News](#)

What began as a small rural mission in Singida is now a lifelong source of hope for generations of Tanzanian girls. For decades, the Pallotine Sisters have championed education as a tool for empowering girls and women and transforming communities.

The Pallottine Sisters arrived in the Diocese of Singida in 1990 from England, responding to an invitation from Pallottine missionary priests who had already been working in Tanzania since the 1940s. Welcomed into Makiungu Parish, the Sisters immersed themselves in parish life, learning Kiswahili and serving the local community through catechesis and education.



Guided by the late Bishop Bernard Mabula, the Sisters soon recognised a pressing need: education for girls was not a priority in the largely pastoralist communities of Singida. In response, they moved to the nearby village of Siuyu in 1994 and later established Pallotti Girls' School, with a clear mission to uplift rural women through education.

## Education for underprivileged children

For years, the school has prioritised girls from disadvantaged backgrounds, offering free education to those eager to learn. This option, in turn, opened doors for many girls to continue their secondary school education in a safe, supportive environment close to home. Today, Pallotti Girls School alumnae include doctors, educators, business owners, and leaders who drive positive change within Tanzania and internationally.

## Successes and testimonies

“As an alumna, I can testify that, had it not been for the presence of the Pallottine Sisters and going through secondary education at Pallotti Girls, I could not be who I am today, and work as a professional midwife and nurse

at the best hospital in Tanzania. Through the sisters, we not only benefitted from the academics, but Christian formation and embracing moral values which help us to work and relate with everyone in the society as children of God,” said Magdalena Vitali, a former student. She added that the boarding school in Singida helped the children, especially girls, avoid early marriage.

Magdalena attests that the education she received from the Pallottine Sisters has been the catalyst for a life-changing transformation, improving not only her personal opportunities but also the wellbeing of her family and community.

Mary Joan Msonza, also a former student, serves as managing director of renowned Tanzanian company through which she has been able to create employment for over 1,300 people. “The foundation I received at Pallotti Girls School continues to influence the leadership, structure, and growth of the organisation I lead,” she said. She added, “The Pallotine way of formation grounded my discipline, integrity, and value-driven leadership style.”

## Call to invest in women's education

Founded in 1838 by St Vincent Pallotti, the Pallottine Sisters continue to live out their charism of reviving faith and awakening love through action. In Tanzania, their mission unfolds through education, healthcare provision, social services, and pastoral work, ensuring education remains a lasting source of hope, dignity, and success for generations to come.

Despite ongoing challenges, especially for girls in marginalised communities, equal access to education is essential for building a skilled, productive nation. The work of the Pallottine Sisters in Tanzania remains significant in this context.

Sr. Juliana Quaras, headmistress of Pallotti Girls School for the past few years, takes pride in the students' and staff's efforts to make their students' dreams a reality. She urges people of goodwill to empower girls from less privileged backgrounds by sponsoring them.

By 2026, Pallotti Girls School had about 500 boarding students and over 5,000 graduates.

Sr. Juliana emphasised that educating girls from poor families must continue, since “educating a girl child is educating the entire society.”

# +live simply

## at St Alban's

By Bernadette Bailey

Livesimply challenges us to respond to God's call to live simply, sustainably and in solidarity with the poor.

During Lent we, as parishioners of St. Alban's, have been reminded of our commitment to Livesimply by the banners over the rood screen and on the pulpit. We renewed our parish commitment at all Masses on the 21st and 22nd February, and Livesimply Lent Calendars with daily reflections, actions and prayers were given to all those who attended Masses on 14th and 15th February. Both the [text of the renewal](#) and the [Lent Calendar](#) are available on the Parish website.

So how have these helped you Livesimply during Lent?

A number of people have shared their views and experiences and here are some of them:

*"The calendar is part of my daily routine in Lent. I keep it in the kitchen and look at it each morning."*

*"I made an apple crumble to share with friends which I made entirely with ingredients from Scoop and Scales ([scoopandscales.co.uk](http://scoopandscales.co.uk)) and The Corner Plot ([You can find them on Facebook](#)) and the apples were from a friends tree in Macclesfield."*

*"When looking for new Fairtrade things to buy, as suggested on 18th March, I came across Vanilla Ice Cream in the Co-Op that is made from Fairtrade sugar."*



*"I have not used the calendar in a daily, methodical or consistent way but I had a good look at it when I first picked it up so got a general sense of it."*

*"My situation means I have to live simply. I think more about using water and heating, and pray for friends who are struggling and for peace."*

*"I did try to drink just water as suggested on 11th March and succeeded in getting to 4.00pm."*

*"I have walked more after the chain fell off my bike. From this I discovered a new joy and a calmer rhythm from allowing more time for journeys. On a longer walk along the canal to visit friends I had the immense feeling of gratitude for health and strength to enjoy the walk, the sense of Spring beginning to emerge and the awareness that we have the ability to use all our faculties for good if we choose to and share those gifts with others."*

*"I am sorry to say the calendar is buried under other things on my desk."*

*"I took my step mum to the Repair Café ([maccrepaircafe.com](http://maccrepaircafe.com)) on Mothering Sunday weekend, she is a big fan of the Repair Shop on TV, and was desperate to visit the Repair Café and it was a resounding success. There was a wonderful friendly and community vibe, with delicious homemade cakes served with tea and coffee and no pressure to pay but donations welcome. Volunteers were giving freely of their time and there was so much overall good will. To repair my step mums' skirt, she was paired with a delightful woman who not only mended the skirt there and then on her sewing machine but also took an unfinished jumper, that could not be finished due to struggles with dexterity and concentration, home to complete. Here are some photos of the visit."*



*"I kept the Lent Calendar on my kitchen table and looked at it each morning along with the daily readings and my prayers."*

What about you?

Has the parish focus on Livesimply and the calendar helped you take any action or pray for others. If so the **Justice and Peace Group** would like to hear from you. Please contact: Bernadette Bailey at [justiceandpeacemacc@gmail.com](mailto:justiceandpeacemacc@gmail.com)

# A Note From Your New Editor

By Magda Zarzycka



Over the past couple of months, I have stepped into the role of editor for our parish newsletter, and I thought it was about time I properly introduced myself so that you can put a face to the name. It's been a busy start, but a fruitful one, and I'm grateful for the warm welcome I've already received. I also want to express my sincere thanks to Karyn Johnston, whose dedication and hard work have shaped this newsletter into something truly valued by our community, and who continues to contribute articles we all enjoy, as well as support me while I'm learning the ropes.

Opening this new chapter was a perfect opportunity to look at the newsletter from a fresh perspective and to check with our community whether in its current form the newsletter keeps up with our needs and expectations. This led to a very fruitful discussion with the Parish Council, the contributors, and as many parishioners as possible, in which we considered various perspectives, weighed the pros and cons, and asked questions about the direction we want to take.

You can find the most tangible result of these conversations on the first page of this issue of our newsletter, in the form of our Mission Statement, which is also included below:

sincere thanks to Karyn Johnston, whose dedication and hard work have shaped this newsletter into something truly valued by our community, and who continues to

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I am full of plans and hopes as to how to play my part in fulfilling this mission, and how to draw on the spiritual and cultural richness of our parish to continue the newsletter's important role.

As hopeful and excited as I am, I can also guarantee that I will at times get things wrong. I hope that when I do, you will not only forgive me but crucially, that you will let me know. I would like to strengthen this newsletter's role as a forum for exchanging views, offering differing

perspectives and entering respectful discussion with one another. Let's discuss things that are important to us; let's enjoy sharing similar views, but let's also disagree sometimes. Let's draw on our diverse experiences to discover new perspectives; at times, let's also learn to accept that we might not find mutual understanding, but we can love one another nevertheless. Together, let us grow in love, faith and understanding. I count on you on this journey!



**Christ is risen!  
Happy Easter!**

Fragment of 'The Resurrection' by Ugolino di Nerio, 14<sup>th</sup> century. Courtesy of the National Gallery

## What were you doing on 28th March?

On this day a number of parishioners joined up with others from Macclesfield and went to London to join the Together Alliance March to celebrate Love, Hope and Unity in the face of increasing hate and division in our country. It was a day of unity with approx half a million others all marching together to stand up against the far right and those creating and emphasising the differences between those of different cultures and religions.

There were many civil society organisations, churches and charities from across the UK represented and we joined the Christian Climate Action group. Others from Macclesfield went to March with Global Justice Now and Extinction Rebellion.



We were pleased the weather was sunny and dry as we stood for nearly two and a half hours before we even started to march as there were so many people and the roads were blocked. During the wait we got to chat to people of all ages, cultures, churches, diverse local groups, and areas of England including Shropshire, St. Alban's, Bognor Regis, to name a few. We also enjoyed reading all the wonderful creative banners.



Once we set off we had a stop start walk of two and a half miles through the centre of London to the beat of chanting, singing and music of all types. The march concluded in Whitehall where there was a range of

speakers through the day, these included Sir Lenny Henry, Billy Bragg and Paloma Faith. However as we were so far back in the march we only heard the last 10 minutes and the last couple of speakers before the finish just after 5.00pm.

We had a brisk walk back to Euston and were all very tired as we sat down on the train but hopeful for the future and pleased to have participated in such a monumental event where we stood up for our Christian values and to try and stem the tide of hatred and division that we so often see reported in the press.

God bless,

Bernadette Bailey



## Joys, Hopes and Mr Trump

You may well remember, oh gentle reader, an article in last month's News with a title including the words joys and hopes.

It included the announcement of a programme of Zoom talks organised by St Alban's Justice & Peace Group. They were to start in April.

Unfortunately there has to be a further delay, this time bigger. Spring is almost here, time to be out in the garden, taking walks but not sitting glued to your laptop. So the talks will start in September.

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**Starlight Walk  
2026**

**Thursday 16th April at Capesthorne Hall**

[www.echospice.org.uk/starlight-walk](http://www.echospice.org.uk/starlight-walk)



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[contact.parihcouncil@stalbanmacc.org.uk](mailto:contact.parihcouncil@stalbanmacc.org.uk)

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Contributions welcome from all groups and individuals in the Parish

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Tel: 01625 501172 for more details