

THANK YOU

As well as thanking those who helped in any way with our Christmas celebrations, a big 'thank you too, from Canon Dwyer, for your generous offerings on Christmas Day. And, as well, sincere thanks from Canon Dwyer and Bishop Crowley for the other gifts, cards and good wishes that we received. Your kindness is very much appreciated.

ALTAR SERVERS

It was good on St Stephen's Day to be able to celebrate the patron saint of altar servers. During Mass ten servers, who have been serving for a year or more, were enrolled in the Guild of St Stephen; while three, who have been serving for over three years received 'blue' medals, and two who have been have serving for over five years received 'gold' medals. Our thanks to all our servers for their contribution to the liturgy throughout the year.

BANISH THE WINTER BLUES' SUPPER

This very popular annual event will be held on Saturday February 3rd at the Lourdes Hall. There will be a three-course supper, followed by coffee or tea and will cost £15 (bring your own drinks). Please contact marva@cpoauk.com (H.712364) if you would like to make up a table or if you would like to join our parish table. Everyone is welcome. Tickets will be on sale after the Masses next weekend and proceeds will go to the Developing World Group.

CRIB OFFERINGS

As is customary, offerings made at the crib will be sent to the Catholic Children's Society. The Society provides mental health services for children struggling with issues such as abuse, neglect and family

breakdown. Situated as it in North Kensington, since the summer the Society has been supporting children traumatised by the fire at Grenfell Tower. Contributions can be placed in the 'Crib Offering' box close to the crib.

CHRISTIAN UNITY

Between 18th and 25th January each year we keep the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. In Hertfordshire we have a quite outstanding and powerful witness to our Church's commitment towards Unity. Every week at 12.00noon Catholic Mass is celebrated in St. Albans Abbey in St. Albans. There is no other Anglican cathedral in the country where such a thing happens every week. The Mass is very well attended by Catholics from various parishes and is an uplifting experience. Why not come along? You will be very welcome and it will mark the Week of Prayer in a significant way.

BOOK THE DATE BARN DANCE 20TH JANUARY 2018

We invite you to join us for an evening of fun, exercise, an excellent caller and the best fish & chips in town (Godfrey's)! Tickets will be £12.50 and it will be a, 'Bring your own drinks and nibbles event.' It's early notice but we know what a busy lot you are! Tickets are selling fast. Please could we have all bookings and money by 15th January. Enquiries to Julia 07891083251

HARPENDEN SPOTLIGHT ON AFRICA QUIZ

Raise much needed funds for essential school books by using your brains at our fun Quiz night on Saturday 27th January in Lourdes Hall, Southdown Rd, 7 for 7.30 prompt start. Tables of 8. Tickets £12.50 each to include a Godfrey's Fish and Chip

Supper. Raffle and cash Bar. This is a popular event so contact quiz@hsoa.org.uk to avoid disappointment.

PARISH DIARIES

Parish diaries, for the coming year, are now available. A voluntary contribution is welcome, and this can be placed in the Newspapers & Catholic Magazines box.

'MY DAY BY DAY'

The January edition of this booklet is now available. It contains daily scripture readings, and is a useful resource, and inspiration for our prayer and daily living.

VINNIE PACKS

The SVP are distributing 12,000 "Vinnie Packs" containing cold weather essentials for the homeless and those spending the principal part of their day on the streets. Each pack contains thermal gloves, two pairs of socks, gloves, toothbrush, toothpaste, information card and pen. Those who can, are asked to consider sponsoring packs at a suggested donation of £3.50 per pack. Donations can be sent to "Vinnie Packs", PO Box 72264, London, SW1P 9EZ, with cheques made out to the SVP. Thank you so much for your support.

DEVELOPING WORLD GROUP

On 1 December we sent £680 to pay for an oven (to cook food and provide heat), a table and chairs for a youth centre in a township in the Dundee diocese in Natal. Most of the beneficiaries are orphans from across the township, who meet and learn practical skills at the centre (which does not receive government grants, relying instead entirely on donations.) We are now working with the Columban Fathers to fund the purchase of a large hand pump for a village (of mainly low caste Hindus) in the Thar Parkar desert in south-east Pakistan. We will provide

more information when the project gets under way. Between 13th November and 11th December, parishioners donated £61.86 in cash, together with £438.00 in standing orders. Thank you for your generosity.

CATENIAN EVENTS

14th January 5-0pm at the Gordan Craig theatre Stevenage, our annual visit to the panto to see the incredibly entertaining and hilariously funny Jack and the Beanstalk. We have been going to the panto for over thirty years so this year we would like to offer out the last few remaining group tickets at £16.50 each (deadline 30th Nov) . Age range of our group is from a few weeks old to 80+ which includes you, and you'll love it. For more details about both events, contact denniscooper238@btinternet.com

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Do you support Catholic schools and the right of Catholics to send their children to them? Then we need you to make your voice heard. The Government is making a critical decision on whether to overturn the admissions cap which prevents Catholic schools from allowing all Catholic pupils to attend. They have acknowledged that this policy discriminates against Catholics and promised to abandon it; now we need you to tell them not to u-turn on their promise to Catholics.

Visit <http://catholicnews.org.uk/> or search for 'Catholic Education' in your search engine to write to the Government and urge them to drop their policy which bans new Catholic schools

A MUSLIM VIEW OF MARY: 20th JANUARY

A talk by Mrs Farrukh Sheikh, organised by the Newman Association. 10:30am on Saturday 20th January at St Alban and St Stephen Church, 14-16 Beaconsfield Road, St Albans AL1 3RB. All welcome.

