

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
We will be celebrating our Patronal Feast on **Friday 8th December**. Mass will be celebrated at 8am, 1.05pm, and 6pm. The 6pm Mass will be a solemn Mass followed by refreshments. All most welcome to this very special occasion.

Farm Street Church Carol Service
Farm Street Church will be having its own parish service of nine lessons and carols on **Tuesday 12th December** at 7pm. Music will be provided by the renowned Farm Street Choir. Refreshments will be provided afterwards in the Arrupe Hall. All are most welcome. Do come along for what is sure to be an enjoyable and festive evening.

Icon Exhibition – On Earth as it is in Heaven
An exhibition of icons and contemporary art by Irina Bradley will be displayed in the Ground Floor Gallery at 114 Mount Street from 2nd December to the 15th January 2024. 10am-7pm, Monday to Friday; 9am – 3pm Saturday; By appointment on Sunday. www.irinabradley.com

Vatican II Documents – Faith Sharing Group
Tuesday Evenings 7.00-8.30pm in the Bellarmine Room at 114 Mount Street
21st November – Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium)
28th November – Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (Dei Verbum)
5th December – Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes)
You are welcome to drop in for one session or come to them all. Facilitated by Colette Joyce, 07593 434905. Contact Fr Dominic at dominicrobinson@rcdow.org.uk for more info.

Monthly Memorial Prayer Vigil for refugees and asylum-seekers
On the 3rd Monday of every month outside the Home Office SW1P 4DF from 12.30pm – 1.30pm. Praying for:
*Those who died trying to reach the UK
*Victims of current wars
*Those in detention & who are homeless
*The UK to be a more welcoming nation
Sign up to receive email news & alerts of changes or cancellations at: homeofficevigil@gmail.com

Radio Maria Concert
Usher in the festive season with a charity Christmas concert in support of Radio Maria England. Join us for ‘Wanderings’ on **December 5th at 7:30pm** in the beautiful and intimate setting of St. Wilfrid’s Hall at the Brompton Oratory for a magical evening of solo piano and song. From Schubert lieder to Beethoven sonatas, with award-winning pianist Rachael Shipard and baritone Christian Jenkins. The concert will be fundraising for Radio Maria England, the country’s only Catholic radio station broadcasting over the airwaves, a Christian voice by your side. Refreshments will be provided. Book tickets at RadioMariaEngland.uk/events/

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES
The Mass times for the Christmas period will be as follows:
*Christmas Eve – 8am, 9.30am, 11am, & 12.30pm Mass
(Sun 24th Dec.) as normal
– 4pm, First Vigil Mass of Christmas
– 6pm, Children’s Mass
– 11:30pm, Carols
– Midnight Mass
*Christmas Day – 8am, Mass
(Mon 25th Dec) – 9.30am, Family Mass
– 11am, Solemn Mass
– 12.30pm, Mass
– 5.30pm, Mass
* Boxing Day to
Friday 29th – 1.05pm Mass only
* Saturday 30th
& Sunday 31st – Normal Mass schedule
* Monday 1st January – 12 Noon Mass with music
Tuesday 2nd January – Normal schedule resumes
Please note that there will be no 7pm Young Adult Mass on the 24th or 31st December.

Catholic Listeners
Catholic Listeners is a confidential telephone helpline service. A Diocese of Westminster initiative, it has been set up for those who are returning to the faith. The helpline is all about listening to others, listening to those who might have become isolated due to the pandemic. This service is based on the Landings ethos of compassionate listening. Although not a counselling service, the helpline is staffed by a professional team of volunteers who are trained to signpost callers to other services and agencies. Sometimes just communicating with someone who listens and understands can help clarify a way forward. Simply talking about a problem can ease a burden. We aim to help those in need of a safe space to talk.
Operating three days a week from 4pm-7pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays calls are free on **0800 448 0704** For further information please email us at Catholiclisteners@gmail.com or visit our website at www.CatholicListeners.com.
Catholic Listeners are here to listen.

Welcome
If this is your first time here, we would like to especially welcome you to Farm Street, our vibrant and engaging Catholic parish in the heart of London. We aim to welcome all who come to our church to share in our faith and fellowship. Please do introduce yourself to a member of the clergy. You will always be most welcome here.
Fr. Dominic Robinson, SJ
Parish Priest



Welcome to Farm Street Church, our vibrant and engaging Catholic Parish in the heart of London
www.farmstreet.org.uk



First Sunday of Advent

3rd December 2023

YEAR B
TODAY’S RESPONSES

ENTRY

To you, I lift up my soul, O my God. In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame. Nor let my enemies exult over me; and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

RESPONSE

God of hosts, bring us back; let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.

ACCLAMATION

Let us see, O Lord, your mercy and give us your saving help.

COMMUNION

The Lord will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its increase.

PARISH OFFICE
ADDRESS: 114 Mount Street, London, W1K 3AH
TELEPHONE: 020 7529 4829
E-MAIL: farmstreetoffice@rcdow.org.uk

PARISH CLERGY
Fr Dominic Robinson SJ, Parish Priest
Fr Nicholas King SJ; Fr Michael Holman SJ

REGULARLY ASSISTING CLERGY
Fr Michael Barnes SJ; Fr David Birchall SJ;
Fr Peter Gallagher SJ

SAFEGUARDING OFFICE
Debbie Martin, Email:
farmstreetsg2@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

CHURCH OPENING HOURS
Monday to Saturday: 7.30am - 6.30pm
Sunday: 7.30am – 7.00pm

MASS TIMES
Monday to Friday: 8:00 | 13:05 | 18:00
Saturday: 8:00 | 18:00 (vigil)
Sunday: 8:00 | 09:30 (Family) | 11:00 (Solemn), 12:30 | 17:30 | 19:00 (Young Adult, 18-35)
Join us for a coffee after the 9:30 and 11:00 Mass.

All Masses can be viewed on our livestreaming page
<https://www.farmstreet.org.uk/livestream>

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT
Monday to Friday: 12:00-13:00

CONFESSIONS
Monday to Friday: 12:00 – 12:55
Saturday: 10:00 to 12:00; 17:45 – 17:55
Sunday: Fifteen minutes before every Mass
Also by appointment



THE SEASON OF WAITING

When I went to live in the United States more than thirty years ago to begin my theology studies in preparation for ordination, I was surprised to find that in some churches the liturgical colour for Advent wasn't the familiar purple, but rather a dark blue.

When I asked about this, some pointed out that in the Catholic Church before the Reformation, blue as a liturgical colour had been common. Others explained that a dark blue represents a time of waiting, which may be thought more appropriate for Advent than purple, which represents a time of penance. After all, in Advent we do a good deal of waiting. In the first two weeks or so, we wait for the second coming of the Lord. Then we wait to celebrate his first coming in the stable in Bethlehem. We wait too for his coming to us each day: in the conversations we have and in the people we meet.

I have found myself thinking a good deal about "waiting" over the past few weeks, ever since I made my annual retreat in our community house in Boscombe, near Bournemouth. On one of the bookshelves in the recreation area, I came across a book by the Redemptorist priest Fr Denis McBride called "Waiting on God"*. If you come across it, do read it. I was so taken with what Fr Denis had to say in the first two chapters, I thought I'd share a few of his ideas with you since "waiting" is clearly a significant theme in the Advent season which we begin this Sunday. I only hope I can do his ideas justice.

For many people, Fr Denis says, waiting is a complete waste of time: it's the empty landscape between where we are and where we want to be symbolised by the doctor's "waiting room". Here time is put on hold. It's a place where nothing happens since whatever is happening is happening somewhere else. Waiting reminds us that we are not in charge, and we often don't like that. Indeed, waiting in traffic jams, supermarkets checkout queues, bank cash points, are all hotspots for anger.

In our society, Fr Denis points out, there's a direct correlation between status and waiting, since the more important you are, the less time you must wait. The people who always have to wait are the poor, be it, we might add, in the job centre, at the food bank or in line at the post office waiting for benefits.

He quotes the French philosopher and critic Roland Barthes who claims, interestingly, that "waiting" and "love" are very close. "Am I in love?" Yes, since I am waiting. You will always wait for the one you love. We know how important it is in both a family and religious community, to spend time together, to wait together.

This line struck me as well: "I wait because I have not given up the habit of hoping". Which brings us to the patriarch Abraham, our father in faith, and his wife Sarah. They waited and longed for a child for decades. Abraham was 75 and Sarah ten years younger when Abraham was called and promised a son. Ten years later, there was still no sign of one and he was getting

older. He decided to help God out and he married Hagar, his wife's servant. But when she got pregnant, God let him know that wasn't what he promised. Sarah would give him a son, and for that Abraham had to wait another 15 years.

Abraham and Sarah waited. They held on to the dream God had for them. They teach us that waiting in hope, believing in God's dream for us, is no squandering of time but "hallowing time". In that time of waiting, we are being formed. Waiting is our formation and what God does in us while we are waiting is as important as what we wait for. Waiting is not just passing the time, until we get what we want, waiting is the process of becoming that which God wants us to be. We need to be like Sarah and Abraham to trust in God that good will emerge from this in time.

Here are some words of the Swiss theologian Paul Tillich which Fr Denis quotes: "Although waiting is not having, it is also having. The fact that we wait for something shows that in some way we already possess it. Waiting anticipates that which is not yet real. If we wait in hope and patience, the power of that for which we wait is already effective within us. He who waits in absolute seriousness is already grasped by that for which he waits. He who waits in patience has already the power of that for which he waits."

With thoughts such as these in mind, we can begin the season of Waiting. Still better, why not make Fr Denis' book your Advent reading?

*"Waiting on God": *Becoming what God wants us to be* by Fr Denis McBride. Liguori Publications, ISBN-10: 0764812157

Fr Michael Holman SJ

Sunday Refreshments

Refreshments are normally served in the Arrupe Hall after the 9.30am, 11am and 5.30pm Sunday Masses (second & fourth Sunday only for 5.30pm).

Blessing on the Ground Floor Corridor -TODAY

On Sunday 3rd December we welcome Canon Paul Wright, Sub-Dean of the Queen's Chapel at St James's Palace, to participate in an ecumenical blessing of the new icon of St Claude la Colombière to be hung in the newly named Claude la Colombière Room. The icon has been written and donated to Farm Street by Dr Irina Bradley, Chief Icon Writer at the Prince's Foundation. This blessing will take place at 12.30pm, after the 11am Mass.

Christmas Cards

The Farm Street Christmas card is available for sale in Reception during the week and in the Arrupe Hall after the 9.30 and 11.00 Masses. Cards are priced at £2.50 individually and at £12.00 for a box of six.

Liturgical Calendar

Sun: **First Sunday of Advent**
Isaiah 63:16-64:8; I Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:33-37
Mon: **St John Damascene, Priest & Doctor**
Isaiah 2:1-5; Matthew 8:5-11
Tue: **Advent feria**
Isaiah 11:1-10; Luke 10:21-24
Wed: **Advent feria; St Nicholas, Bishop**
Isaiah 6:1-8; Luke 10:1-9
Thu: **St Ambrose, Bishop & Doctor**
Ephesians 3:8-12; John 10:11-16
Fri: **The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (No Friday abstinence)**
Genesis 3:9-20; Ephesians 1:3-12; Luke 1:26-38;
Sat: **Advent feria; St Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin**
Isaiah 30:19-26; Matthew 9:35-10:8
Sun: **Second Sunday of Advent**
Isaiah 40:1-11; II Peter 3:8-14; Mark 1:1-8

Cana Lunch Café

On Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, a café lunchtime café operates in the Cana Lounge at 114 Mount Street. Freshly made sandwiches and soup are available for a very reasonable suggested donation. The café operates between 12 noon and 2pm. **The café will be closed from the 8th December and will re-open on the 9th January.** We look forward to seeing you in the new year!

Parish Prayer List

We pray for those in the parish who are sick: Debra Minty Baker, Marie Carroll Copestake, Felicity Ann Croft, Kyllikki Edelshain, Christian Engelhart, Asoka Fernando, Lady Antonia Fraser, Christopher Halliday, Caroline Harkink, Erin Lillis, Nikhin, Laura Marani, Donald Mathieson, Robert McCormack, Helen Murphy, Millon Nigussie, Otilie, Graziella Pirovano, Mrs Katerina Porter, Sarah Esparza Regalado, Ian Rice, George Tabor, Francis Walsh, Natalie Williams, Anna Wright, & Michael Wymes
The LORD sustains him on his sickbed; in his illness you restore him to full health. Psalm 41:3
We pray for those in the parish who have recently died. Paul Mphothandisizwe Mtimkulu
Requiescant in pace

Prayer intentions

Please consider asking for particular prayer intentions at Mass and the lamp before Our Lady of Farm Street. Contact the Parish Office or speak to the sacristan for information on how to make your requests. Details of Mass intentions are on the notice board outside of the sacristy.

The lamp this week is lit for the intention of Clayton, his wife, Estella, and their baby Caelum

11am Solemn Mass Music List

Prelude Nun komm der Heiden Heiland
Buxtehude
Mass Missa Alma Redemptoris Mater *Victoria*
Motets Dixit Maria ad Angelus *Hassler*
Ave Maria *Victoria*
Postlude Nun komm der Heiden Heiland BWV659
JS Bach

Night Shelter Volunteers

Farm Street Church is intending to participate in a night shelter during the coldest winter months. This will involve having homeless guests sleep in various venues around the city and will be modelled on the winter night shelter that we ran at 114 Mount Street from 2015 to 2019. Volunteers will be needed for this. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Fr Dominic or send an email to centrallondoncatholicchurches@gmail.com

SVP Vinnie Packs

The SVP are distributing over 10,000 Vinnie Packs containing cold weather essentials to the homeless and those spending the principal part of their day on the streets. Each pack contains thermal gloves, thermal hat, two pairs of thermal socks, face flannel, toothbrush, toothpaste, information sheet and pen. Please could you consider sponsoring packs at a suggested donation of £4.20 per pack? Donations can be sent to Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ with cheques made out to SVP or by bank transfer to Nat West sort code 60-60-04, account no. 4608 8237. Thank you so much for your support.

Lessons Learned from Cop28

Friday 15th December, 7pm-8.30pm at the London Jesuit Centre, 114 Mount Street
Our expert panel will provide a plenary on the Cop process, providing us with analysis and predictions for the future. With:

Gareth Rowe: Research Fellow at the Department of Theology and Religion at Durham University
Liam Finn: Campaigns manager for CAFOD UK
Cate Brandmayr: Director of Policy at the Grantham Institute for Climate Change and the Environment at Imperial College London.

For further details, see www.londonjesuitcentre.org.

Study Day on G. K. Chesterton

Led by author: Dr Aidan Cottrell-Boyce
Saturday 16th December 10.30am – 3.30pm at the London Jesuit Centre, 114 Mount Street
GK Chesterton was one of the most celebrated public intellectuals of the Edwardian era. A man of many talents, he was a writer of detective fiction, an art historian, a literary critic, a philosopher, and a Catholic apologist. Our study day will provide a crash course in Chesterton's work: his genius as a prose stylist and the clarity of his philosophical work.

For further details, see www.londonjesuitcentre.org.