

# Church of the Immaculate Conception - Farm Street



## Third Sunday in Ordinary Time 24<sup>th</sup> January 2021 (Year B)

### **PARISH CLERGY**

Fr Dominic Robinson SJ, Parish Priest  
Fr Chris Pedley SJ; Fr Michael Holman SJ

### **REGULARLY ASSISTING CLERGY**

Fr Damian Howard SJ; Fr Paul Nicholson SJ  
Fr Adrian Porter SJ; Fr Laco Sulik SJ

### **PARISH STAFF**

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### **PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL CHAIRMAN**

Steven Fachada, [farmstreetppcchair@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:farmstreetppcchair@rcdow.org.uk)

### **SAFEGUARDING OFFICER**

Debbie Martin, [farmstreetsg2@safeguardrcdow.org.uk](mailto:farmstreetsg2@safeguardrcdow.org.uk)

### **Parish Office**

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### **MASS SCHEDULE**

**Monday to Friday:** 10am & 6pm

**Saturday:** 10am & 6pm

**Sunday:** 11am (Latin) & 6pm

*Due to the critical situation in London, all Masses will be celebrated behind locked doors until further notice. Mass can be viewed on our livestreaming page. <https://www.farmstreet.org.uk/livestream>*

### **EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT**

**Monday to Saturday:** 11am to 4pm

**Sunday:** 12.30pm to 4pm

### **CONFESSIONS**

*By appointment.*

### **BAPTISM AND WEDDINGS**

*By appointment. Dates are subject to lockdown developments.*

### **CHURCH OPENING HOURS**

**Monday to Saturday:** 11am to 5.30pm

**Sunday:** 12.30pm to 5.30pm

### **LONDON JESUIT CENTRE**

*All events are suspended until further notice. For more information, contact Anne Paolino at [apaolino@jesuit.org.uk](mailto:apaolino@jesuit.org.uk)*

**Sunday Homilies & Articles** Weekly newsletter articles are uploaded to our website on a weekly basis. They can be viewed at <https://www.farmstreet.org.uk/weekly-articles>. Our website also contains an archive of previous Sunday homilies.

### **Social Media**

Farm Street Church has a strong presence on social media and we regularly update our Twitter account and Facebook page with information relating to the parish and the wider Catholic community.

## **FOLLOW ME AND I WILL MAKE YOU FISHERS OF PEOPLE**

The Gospel reading for this Sunday tells us about what is for me one of the most attractive episodes in Jesus' public ministry. Jesus was walking along by the Sea of Galilee when he sees two fishermen at work. Their names are Simon and Andrew and he says to them, "Follow me". There's no prospectus, no clothing list, no attempt at an explanation, only these words are added, "and I will make you fishers of people".

What amazes me, every time I think about or pray over Mark's account of the call of the first disciples, is the fact that they leave everything behind, their nets, their means of livelihood, and they follow him, immediately, at once. And then exactly the same happens when Jesus moves on and calls James and John: they too leave everything and follow him.

What was it about Jesus that meant these men left everything and followed him, at once? There is no record in this Gospel of their having witnessed any miracle: the healing of the leper and the paralytic and many others all follow. Neither had they yet heard him teaching. Yet their response was immediate and complete. How unlike the prophet Jonah whom we encounter in the first reading of Sunday's mass. The first time he was called by the Lord he fled his presence and boarded a ship to Tarshish!

And how unlike some of those would-be followers we encounter later in Jesus' ministry in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke: there was one who said he'd first need to bury his father; there was the other who would only follow after he had said farewell to his family. Jesus came before everything: he expected this kind of immediate, wholehearted following and Simon and Andrew, James and John understood that. But what was it about Jesus that made them want to follow him like this?

That's a question which Mark nowhere answers, at least not directly: he wants us to answer it for ourselves. He's a skilful writer. He wants us all to ask this question and then to read on so that we can be with Jesus as he heals, be with him as he teaches and be with him as he confronts his opponents and even be with him as he is put on trial and then dies on the cross and in the process answer this question for ourselves. In other words, reading Mark's Gospel we can share in the experience of the first disciples and encounter Jesus and know for ourselves what it is about him that makes us want to follow him.

For myself, it's Jesus' compassion that I find so attractive. Again and again, I see a man whose heart is broken by those he meets who are suffering: he wants to reach out and make them whole. And in doing so he reveals that this is what our God is like: he is the compassionate one and this takes my breath away. The more I read about Jesus in the Gospel of Mark, the more I feel I have met him, the more I feel I know him and he knows me and the more I want to follow him.

All of which illustrates some well-known words in the Letter to the Hebrews where the author says, "The word of God is something alive and active: it cuts more incisively than any two-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12).

I give thanks for the power which the word of God, the Gospels and all the scriptures, have in my life and in the lives of countless others. Pope Francis has written that it is the Holy Spirit who makes the scriptures "the living word of God, experienced and handed down in the faith of His holy people": they are the channel through which the Holy Spirit continues to work his wonders in us today.

This Sunday is the "Sunday of the Word of God". The best way to keep it, I would suggest, is to begin reading this Gospel for ourselves and to set out on the adventure of discovery which Mark invites us to join. In the process you too will meet Jesus and he'll meet you and you too will hear him call to you, "Follow me and I shall make you fishers of people".

**Fr Michael Holman SJ**

### **Suspension of Public Worship**

Following a consultation led by the Parish Pastoral Council we have decided that, in the interests of public safety and following the directive of both the Mayor of London and the Prime Minister that people stay at home and use public transport only for essential travel, public Masses will be suspended as of Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January until the critical situation in London regarding the possibility of COVID and its new variants' infection improves.

The church will now be open from 11am – 5:30pm (on Sunday from 12:30pm) with adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 4pm. There will be two livestreamed Masses Monday to Saturday at 10am and 6pm (on Saturday the Vigil Mass of Sunday) and on Sunday 11am Solemn Latin and 6pm in English with music.

Many thanks for your understanding.

### Liturgical Calendar

**Sun:** Third Sunday in Ordinary Time  
**Mon:** The Conversion of St Paul the Apostle  
**Tue:** SS Timothy and Titus, Bishops  
**Wed:** Feria; St Angela Merici, Virgin  
**Thu:** St Thomas Aquinas, Priest & Doctor  
**Fri:** Feria  
**Sat:** Feria; The Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday  
**Sun:** Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

### Daily Bible Readings

**Sun:** Jonah 3:1-5.10; I Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20  
**Mon:** Acts 22:3-16; Mark 16:15-18  
**Tue:** Titus 1:1-5; Mark 3:31-35  
**Wed:** Hebrews 10:11-18; Mark 4:1-20  
**Thu:** Hebrews 10:19-25; Mark 4:21-25  
**Fri:** Hebrews 10:32-39; Mark 4:26-34  
**Sat:** Hebrews 11:1-2,8-19; Mark 4:35-41  
**Sun:** Deuteronomy 18:15-20; I Corinthians 7:32-35; Mark 1:21-28

### Face Covering Update

'Face coverings will be mandatory in Places of Worship from Saturday 8th August 2020. All those who are attending churches must wear a face covering unless they are exempt from doing so. This is for the good of all who gather in the Church for Mass [or for private prayer] as it is an enclosed public space where there are people from differing households who they do not normally meet.' (*Statement issued by the Bishops' Conference*). Further information can be found on following link to the relevant section of the Government website

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

### Mass intention

If you would like a Mass to be celebrated for a specific intention, please contact the Parish Secretary at [farmstreetoffice@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:farmstreetoffice@rcdow.org.uk)

### Racial Justice Sunday

Racial Justice Sunday 2021 is on 31<sup>st</sup> January. Events of 2020 make this year's RJS particularly important. To mark the day, the Bishops' Conference of has prepared some reflective and prayerful material, which can be viewed at the following link <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/racial-justice-sunday-2021/>

### The Crib at Farm Street Church



The above photograph is of the crib at Farm Street Church, located in the Sacred Heart Chapel. As is traditional, the crib will remain in the church until the celebration of the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February. All are most welcome to come into the church during these troubling times to reflect and pray before the crib.

### White Flower Appeal

The Society for the Protection of Unborn children (SPUC) would have been holding its White Flower Appeal at Farm Street Church this Sunday. Due to the suspension of public worship, this cannot happen. Nevertheless, we would like to draw your attention to it.

SPUC is currently campaigning to stop home abortion, which gives women abortion pills to take at home without medical supervision. This is one of the most dangerous threats to unborn children and their mothers in decades. More information about this campaign can be found in the appendix at the end of this newsletter.

Please be as generous as you can to help the SPUC defeat this latest attack on unborn babies and help protect mothers from increased risk of coercion and serious health risks. Donations can also be made online at [www.spuc.org.uk/donate](http://www.spuc.org.uk/donate).

### Copenhagen Street Foodbank

Farm Street Church is collecting supplies for the Copenhagen Street Foodbank. This foodbank is an independent community set up with the support of Caritas Westminster, and operates on Thursday, 1pm to 3.30pm, in the Blessed Sacrament Church Hall in Copenhagen Street, N1 0SR. They are appealing for donations of non-perishable foods (such as pasta, rice, tinned food, biscuits etc), toiletries, household items (such as laundry liquid and detergent), feminine products, and baby supplies. If you would like to donate supplies, please them in bags inside the Farm Street entrance to the church.

## **Christian Unity Week**

We are currently celebrating Christian Unity Week. To mark the occasion, the Reverend Richard Fermer from the Grosvenor Chapel preached at the 11am Mass at Farm Street Church on the 17<sup>th</sup> January, and Fr Dominic will preach at the Grosvenor Chapel on the 24<sup>th</sup> January.

Farm Street Church and the Grosvenor Chapel are hosting three online ecumenical prayer vigils. Two have already taken place on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January. The third will take place at 8pm on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> January. These vigils consist of prayers, readings, a short homily, and a twenty-minute discussion. This Sunday's vigil has a focus on the unity of all peoples with all creation.

If you would like to participate via Zoom, please contact the Parish Secretary at [farmstreetoffice@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:farmstreetoffice@rcdow.org.uk).

## **St Vincent de Paul Society**

The St Vincent de Paul Society are looking for befrienders. The role of a befriender is to visit someone in their own home about once a week (or every two weeks). In the event of further Covid-related restrictions, phone calls are a possibility. If you would be interested to explore this, please can you contact Sandra McNally: [s.mcnally1@lse.ac.uk](mailto:s.mcnally1@lse.ac.uk); tel. 07779 078933.

## **The Pope's Prayer Network**

The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network is the largest prayer-group in the church, active in 97 countries. They pray and work to meet the challenges of the world identified by the Pope in his monthly intentions, while walking a spiritual path called the "Way of the Heart". It is a Pontifical Service entrusted to the Society of Jesus by the Holy See, and this status has been confirmed by Pope Francis.

Farm Street Church will publish the monthly intentions of the Pope in this newsletter, and we commend these intentions and the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network to you. They have recently launched a new website which we encourage you to visit <https://www.praywiththepope.net/popes-intentions/>

## **The Pope's Monthly Prayer Intention**

In the month of January, Pope Francis encourages us to pray for **evangelization and human fraternity**. May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all.

## **A Prayer if Anxious**

*Do not look forward in fear to the changes in life; rather, look to them with full hope that as they arise, God, whose very own you are, will lead you safely through all things; and when you cannot stand it, God will carry you in His arms. Do not fear what may happen tomorrow; the same understanding Father who cares for you today will take care of you then and every day. He will either shield you from suffering or will give you unfailing strength to bear it. Be at peace, and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations.*  
St Francis De Sales

## **Act of Perfect Contrition**

*My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against You, whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with Your help, to do penance, to sin no more, to avoid whatever leads me to sin, and to confess my sins when possible.*

## **Act of Spiritual Communion**

*Jesus, I believe you are present in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You and draw closer to You. Since I cannot receive Your body and blood sacramentally at this time, come to me spiritually. Help me to embrace You more deeply and unite myself more wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from Your love. Amen*

## **Supporting the Parish**

We are extremely grateful to everyone who has continued to financially support the church during the many months of disruption caused by the pandemic. We are mindful that many people are currently struggling financially and may not be able to donate as they once did. If you are able to donate to the work of the parish, we would ask that you consider doing so in a way that avoids physical cash. This is for the safety of our staff, who need to physically handle and count any money that is donated. Please consider donating via our website, setting up a standing order, or donating via the cashless terminals in the church. We are also implementing a new donating system called Givt, which will allow contactless donations via mobile phones. If you would like to donate via standing order, please contact the parish Finance Officer at [farmstreetfin@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:farmstreetfin@rcdow.org.uk).

Thank you again for your support.

## **White Flower Appeal**

The mission of the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) is to save the lives of unborn babies and to protect women from abortion. Every new life is a wonderful gift from God and every baby is loved and cherished by God from the first moment of his or her existence.

SPUC works to build a society which reflects this unconditional love that God has for every one of us. And we want to create a society which cherishes motherhood and helps parents to do the best for their children.

Tragically, the threats facing unborn children in our country today are very great. Since the Abortion Act was passed in 1967 more than nine million precious babies have lost their lives as a result of abortion. And millions of women, and men too, have been deeply wounded.

In March 2020 the government introduced “home abortion” under cover of emergency coronavirus regulations. Both doses of abortion pills can now be taken at home without medical supervision. This will lead to more innocent babies being killed.

And there are serious dangers for women. These drugs, which can lead to serious medical complications, will be taken without the supervision of health professionals. Moving abortion into the home also makes women much more vulnerable to coercion from abusive partners and family members.

Public consultations are being held in England, Scotland and Wales on making “home abortion” a permanent part of our already brutal abortion regime. SPUC is fighting this by doing what we do best, mobilising pro-life men and women up and down our country to put pressure on politicians to protect our babies.

And – despite the obstacles put in our way by Covid-19 regulations - we are continuing to spread the truth about abortion – and about the wonder of human life – by educating our young people, by holding online conferences, by producing top quality briefings and research, and by organising powerful acts of public witness.

You can help us to stop abortion getting worse by writing to your MP and the Prime Minister. This can be done simply and quickly through our website. <https://www.spuc.org.uk/Get-Involved/Campaigns/Tell-the-Truth-DIY-Abortion>.

I would also ask you to support our work by giving as generously as you can to this appeal. Every donation, of whatever size, will help us to save babies’ lives. Donations can be made via the SPUC website <https://www.spuc.org.uk/Donate>.

There are many babies, children and adults alive today because of your generous support for SPUC in past years. Let’s keep going until every baby is safe.

Finally, I would ask you to pray for SPUC’s work. There is truly nothing more important than prayer. The continued prayer for unborn children that goes up to Heaven across our country makes us confident that the final victory will be ours. Thank you!