

Fiducia Supplicans (imploing confidence)

Fiducia Supplicans (FS) is the title of the Church’s recently issued guidance about the blessing of people in what the Church generally calls ‘irregular’ relationships - in this case most particularly gay couples or ‘straight’ people married outside the Church.

To some people this guidance has seemed like an abandonment of Catholic doctrine and moral teaching; to others it has been received as almost an insult, so little ‘new’ does it offer to them. When there are such different responses, it is all the more important for everyone who is interested in the truth to inform ourselves of the facts.

FS itself is easy to access, and perhaps not difficult to read. Just type in the title into the search box at the Vatican website (www.vatican.va) where all such documents can be found.

When the Church talks about matters internal to our life in common - and FS is most of all a document about Catholic life - it is important that we recognise that she speaks of the life of the baptised - and our promises to live as disciples of Christ. The baptised are called to faithfulness and in baptism we vow such faithfulness. (Well, at least those baptised as adults do. Parents and godparents effectively enter into this commitment on behalf of their children. None of us should treat these - freely entered into - commitments lightly! They have consequences.)

FS does not change the Church’s understanding that the sacrament of matrimony can be received only by a man and a woman who freely commit to their intended spouse to have and to hold them “from this day forward or better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish till death do us part.”

Neither does it change the Church’s understanding

- that love can flourish between all peoples of every sort and that in every situation,
- and that sexual relationships have their proper place within the sacramental relationship established by matrimony. Outside of that relationship sex loses its full potential to unite the couple in their commit-

ted union, and may not be open to receiving the gift of children. Outside of matrimony sex is not necessarily sinful (though it is ‘disordered’), but inevitably lacks the full virtue that is has within matrimony. And this is of consequence not only for the couple themselves but for the wider community.

The Church takes particular care over people’s readiness to commit to matrimony - not least because of her desire to promote healthy family life for the good of partners, children and society at large. She also offers all sorts of help for people who have already made that commitment, regardless of the situations they find themselves in..

Sometimes the Church has (at least been seen to) act harshly to those who have made the commitment to matrimony but whose marriage has ‘failed’; or people (straight or gay) who establish families without benefit of the sacrament of matrimony. FS makes it abundantly clear that **whatever their situation** Catholics have a right to the pastoral care and prayer of the Church and all her members to support then in their life as disciples. We are each of us called to love and care as Jesus loves and cares.

Pope Francis regularly takes care to emphasis that clergy and faithful share in the responsibility to show Christ’s love to all others. “Who are we to judge” how and why people are in whatever situation they are in? But we do have an obligation to offer help and encouragement for them to now seek and find the inner freedom to live faithful Catholic lives. FS confirms applies also with regard to those in ‘irregular’ relationships.

The Church does not see ‘living together’ or secular marriage as equivalent of the sacrament of matrimony, and cannot bless such *relationships* and run the risk of ‘muddying the waters’. But when those *individuals* who are in such relationships ask for prayer and care for themselves, to help them live as faithfully as they find they presently can, the Church and all her members can and should offer the comfort of prayer and care. It should always have been so - but sometimes we fall short in living as Christ loves.

FS offers gentle encouragement to all the baptised to seek to do the very best that each one of us can in supporting each other - whoever, however, wherever.

Pilgrimage to Walsingham by the *Birmingham & Wolverhampton Walsingham Association*: Sat 6th to Mon 8th of April. The cost is £299pp en-suite & £261pp for budget accom (inc coach from pick-up points across Birmingham and Wolverhampton. More from Charles Keily on 07710 189036 before Friday 19th Jan.

School for Synodality – Synodality 101 Workshop Series

How do we listen well? How are we attentive to where the Spirit is moving? How can we make better decisions about how we organise ourselves as Christian communities?

School for Synodality is running a series of free online evening workshops in the new year, introducing the principles of prayerful truthful, and safe conversations – valuing gracious listening and courageous speaking. Avril Baigent, co-founder of the *School for Synodality* has said that “after the success of our *Practicing Synodality* Webinars we wanted to offer a series of workshops to help people to bring the richness of conversations in the spirit into their own communities.” The first session of the three workshops is being held on Wednesday 24th January, and will continue the following two Wednesdays. For more information, a breakdown of the workshops, and to register, please use the following link: www.eventbrite.com/e/synodality-101-tickets-774303501617



St Nicholas Catholic Church, Boldmere

Address: 243 Jockey Rd., Boldmere, Sutton Coldfield, B73 5US

Website: www.stnicholasboldmere.co.uk

E-mail: stnicholas.boldmere@rcaob.org.uk Telephone: 0121 354 1763

Parish Blog: www.stnicholasboldmere.wordpress.com

Parish Priest: Fr Allen Morris Deacon: Rev John Garvey

Our Parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham: Registered Charity No. 234216

JANUARY 2024: PARISH MASSES

Sa	13	6pm	2nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	Jenifer Cummings RIP (Foster)
Su	14	9am		Decsd of Drozd and McGee families
		11am		For the parish
M	15	10am		Sarah Broom RIP (Ord)
T	16	10am		Decsd of Byrne family
W	17	10am	St Antony	Mike Moran RIP (Byrne)
Th	18			
F	19	7pm	St Wulstan	Andy Kean RIP (Kean)
Sa	20	6pm	3rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	Luke Gill RIP (Gill)
		9am		Michael & Anne Lynam RIP (McGrath)
		11am		For the parish

Anointing of the Sick: Next celebration is 26th January at 11am

Sacrament of Confession: Friday 18.30-18.55; 19.30 (after Mass), until 20.00; and Sat 5.30-5.45 — and by appointment

RESOURCES FOR PRAYER.

1. Parish prayer on Zoom (links on parish website homepage)
Morning Prayer: Mon to Sat at 8.30am; **Rosary** Mon at 7pm.
2. Readings of the day and much more at Universalis.com
3. Resources for the Year of Prayer: <https://bit.ly/47kMBYS>

Please pray for those who are sick including Theresa Monteiro; Craig Brooks, Paul Craig, Fr Michael Ho, Brenda Davies; Stephen Burke; Lesley Devlin & Jean Lawlor. **Please pray** for Marian Long, Peter Murray, Mary Vargus, Doris Johnson, Terry Devenney, Kathleen Cecil, Lea Burke and all others whose anniversary at this time.

WEEKDAY SOCIAL. Tuesdays after 10am Mass. All are welcome.

PARISH CAR PARK Free parking for 1 hour is available for anyone at anytime in our carpark. Automatic free parking permits are issued to cover all parking on **Sat** from 5.30pm to 7.30pm; on **Sunday** from 8am to 2pm; on **Mon, Tues, Weds** from 9.30am to 11.30am and **Fri** from 6.30pm to 8.30pm. *At other times, if on site for parish meetings and the like - to park for more than 1 hour, please scan the QR poster in the church or Benedict Room to extend your ‘free’ parking time.*

The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory **Safeguarding** Guidance and the National and Archdiocesan policies & procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representative is Mary Rose. She can be contacted at: sg.stnicholas.boldmere@rcaob.org.uk Alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240 or safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk

The ‘Year of Prayer’

2023-24 has been designated the Year of Prayer by Pope Francis, with a particular emphasis on the *Our Father*. It will help us prepare for the Jubilee Year “Pilgrims of Hope”. It presents our Church with a significant opportunity to revisit the basics of prayer, and for us to become even more a people of prayer.

Each week during this year a teaching about prayer related to the readings of that Sunday is posted on our parish blog (address above) This resource has been prepared by Fr Rob Taylerson, Spiritual Director at Oscott College.

Peace Sunday

This Sunday is designated Peace Sunday by the Bishops of England and Wales.

Pope Francis has spoken out so often about the folly of war and our vocation as Catholics to be peacemakers and peace — putting our faith into action.

Today, Peace Sunday, is an annual opportunity to refresh and renew our own commitment to work for peace and justice in our world. Each year Pope Francis (and other popes before him since 1968) gives us a theme for our prayer and reflection.

This year’s theme is *Artificial Intelligence and Peace*. The theme may seem a little remote or technical for us to grasp: butt it alerts us to the new threats that are facing us on the world *Continued on p3.*

St Nicholas World Development Group AGM is to be held at 70 Station Rd: 29th Jan at 7.30 p.m. All Welcome.

Retrouvaille – Do you need help in your marriage?

Retrouvaille has helped many couples find new hope, nourishment and growth in their marriages. If you want to uncover or reawaken the love, trust and commitment that brought you together and work through difficult times in your marriage contact Retrouvaille confidential for more information about our 2024 programmes. There is no group therapy or group work. Their next programme commences with a Virtual weekend on 8 - 11 February 2024 or there is a Face to Face weekend in Welwyn Garden City on 14-16 June 2024. Call or text 07887 296983 or 07973 380443, email retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com - or visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk

The Introductory Rites
Opening Song
*A new commandment I give unto you
That you love one another as I have loved you,
That you love one another as I have loved you.*

By this shall all men know
that you are my disciples
If you have love one for another.

You are my friends
if you do what I command you.
Without my help you can do nothing.

Gloria



Glo - ry to God in the highest, and on earth peace to peo - ple of good will...

We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.
Glory to God...
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;
You are seated at the right hand,
of the Father, have mercy on us.
Glory to God...
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.
Glory to God... Amen. Amen. Amen.

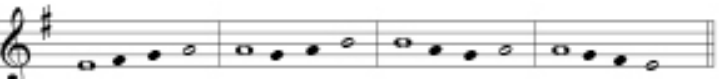
The Collect
The Liturgy of the Word
1 Samuel 3:3-10,19

Samuel was lying in the sanctuary of the Lord, where the ark of God was, when the Lord called, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ He answered, ‘Here I am.’ Then he ran to Eli and said, ‘Here I am, since you called me.’ Eli said, ‘I did not call. Go back and lie down.’ So he went and lay down. Once again the Lord called, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, ‘Here I am, since you called me.’ He replied, ‘I did not call you, my son; go back and lie down.’ Samuel had as yet no knowledge of the Lord and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. Once again the Lord called, the third time. He got up and went to Eli and said, ‘Here I am, since you called me.’ Eli then understood that it was the Lord who was calling the boy, and he said to Samuel, ‘Go and lie down, and if some-one calls say, “Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.”’ So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

The Lord then came and stood by, calling as he had done before, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ Samuel answered, ‘Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.’

Samuel grew up and the Lord was with him and let no word of his fall to the ground.

Psalms 39(40):2,4,7-10



I waited, I waited for the Lord
and he stooped down to me;
he heard my cry.
He put a new song into my mouth, praise of our God.

You do not ask for sacrifice and offerings,
but an open ear.
You do not ask for holocaust and victim.
Instead, here am I.

In the scroll of the book it stands written
that I should do your will.
My God, I delight in your law
in the depth of my heart.

Your justice I have proclaimed
in the great assembly.
My lips I have not sealed;
you know it, O Lord.

1 Corinthians 6:13-15,17-20
The body is not meant for fornication: it is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. God, who raised the Lord from the dead, will by his power raise us up too.

You know, surely, that your bodies are members making up the body of Christ; do you think I can take parts of Christ’s body and join them to the body of a prostitute? Never! But anyone who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him.

Keep away from fornication. All the other sins are committed outside the body; but to fornicate is to sin against your own body. Your body, you know, is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you since you received him from God. You are not your own property; you have been bought and paid for. That is why you should use your body for the glory of God.

Gospel Acclamation
Alleluia, alleluia! Speak, Lord, your servant is listening:
you have the message of eternal life. *Alleluia!*

John 1:35-42
As John stood with two of his disciples, Jesus passed, and John stared hard at him and said, ‘Look, there is the lamb of God.’ Hearing this, the two disciples followed Jesus. Jesus turned round, saw them following and said, ‘What do you want?’ They answered, ‘Rabbi,’ – which means Teacher – ‘where do you live?’ ‘Come and see’ he replied; so they went and saw where he lived, and stayed with him the rest of that day. It was about the tenth hour.

One of these two who became followers of Jesus after hearing what John had said was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. Early next morning, Andrew met his brother and said to him, ‘We have found the Messi-

ah’ – which means the Christ – and he took Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked hard at him and said, ‘You are Simon son of John; you are to be called Cephas’ – meaning Rock.

Homily
The Apostles’ Creed
I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful
All: Through our lives and by our prayers,
your kingdom come.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist
The Offertory NB Our next collections for the Bethany Food Bank are 21st January and 4th February.

Unless a grain of wheat shall fall
upon the ground and die,
It remains but a single grain with no life.

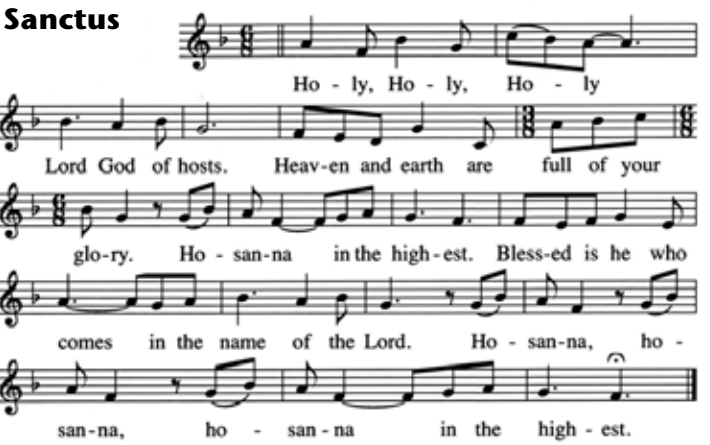
If we have died with Him,
Then we shall live with Him.
If we hold firm, We shall reign with Him.

If any one serves me,
Then they must follow me.
Wherever I am, My servants will be.

Those who love me
Are loved by my Father.
We shall be with them, and dwell in them.

Peace I leave with you,
My peace I give to you,
Peace which the world cannot give is my gift.

Sanctus



Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly
Lord God of hosts. Heav-en and earth are full of your
glo-ry. Ho - san-na in the high-est. Bless-ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san-na, ho -
san-na, ho - san-na in the high-est.

The mystery of faith



When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we pro-
claim your Death, O Lord, un - til you come a -
gain, un - til you come a - gain.

The Communion Rite
Communion thanksgiving
He who would valiant be ’gainst all disaster,
Let him in constancy follow the Master.
There’s no discouragement shall make him once relent
His first avowed intent to be a pilgrim.

Who so beset him round with dismal stories
Do but themselves confound—his strength the more is.
No foes shall stay his might; though he with giants fight,
He will make good his right to be a pilgrim.

Since, Lord, thou dost defend us with Thy Spirit,
We know we at the end, shall life inherit.
Then fancies flee away! I’ll fear not what men say,
I’ll labour night and day to be a pilgrim.

Prayer after Communion

Concluding Rites

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Continued from p1. stage and in our own homes. Peace finds its home alongside truth and love and healthy interpersonal relationships. AI can be exploited to feed untruth, to disrupt trust and communion pose a risk to stable society and personal integrity. We need to learn to best use new technology, and how to prevent it being abused by others to damage us.

There is a retiring collection today to support *Pax Christi* — the International Catholic Movement for peace and nonviolence — to support their continuing work of advocating for peace, building a culture of non-violence and campaigning against war, nuclear weapons and the arms trade.

Do take one of their prayer cards - and if you would like to learn more about *Pax Christi* go to <https://paxchristi.org.uk/>