



THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

A REFLECTION FROM FR ISIDORE ON READINGS FOR THE 2ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1ST READING: ISAIAH 49:3,5-6; SECOND READING: 1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-3

In the 1st Reading we are told about God choosing and preparing a very, very special servant for Himself. He would be a light to the nations and would bring the Lord's salvation to the ends of the earth. That prophecy was fulfilled in Christ. At His baptism the Father recognised Jesus as His beloved Son or Servant, and in the power of the Spirit He began to preach the Kingdom of God. The words, **'Here I am Lord. I come to do your will'** sum up Christ's life-long openness and obedience to his Father's will. This would take Him to Gethsemane and the cross.

'Here I am Lord. I come to do your will' sums up what should be our response to our Christian vocation. At our baptism God calls each one of us to serve Him and our neighbour. There are many ways in which we can do that. For most of us it will be as married or single lay people. Here also there are many possibilities. God will call others to serve Him in the priesthood or religious life. Each of us will have a particular and limited role in cooperating with God's plan for the salvation to the world.

GOSPEL: JOHN 1:29-34

Today's Gospel is about John the Baptist's mission - to prepare the way of the Lord, firstly by urging the people to repent, then by pointing out Jesus as the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world. Finally, John would prepare Jesus Himself for His mission by baptizing Him. John realized that his personal mission was limited. Having done what God asked of him he was prepared to slip into the background so that Jesus could take centre stage.

But sometimes it is very difficult for us to know what God is asking of us. With the young Samuel we may say, **'Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.'** Rarely do people hear a voice from heaven telling them what God wants them to do. Instead, God helps us make up our minds through prayerful thought and inquiry. Wise advice, or someone simply acting as a sounding board, can be of great assistance.

NEXT SUNDAY –

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR A)

*Do you wish to rise? Begin by descending. You plan a tower that will pierce the clouds?
Lay first the foundation of humility.*

St Augustine of Hippo

Pope Francis:

Amoris Laetitia:

Apostolic Exhortation on the Family

“The lack of historical memory is a serious shortcoming in our society. A mentality that can only say, “Then was then, now is now”, is ultimately immature. Knowing and judging past events is the only way to build a meaningful future. Memory is necessary for growth.”.

THE WORD AT WORK: OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

THE GOSPEL THIS WEEK – POINTING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

As we return to Ordinary Time, Fr Robert asks us to consider whether our lives are effective signs.

Some years ago, a friend of mine alerted me to an amusing mistake. In Wales, all the road signs have to be written in both Welsh and English, and the local council in Swansea wished to place a new sign at the roadside. So they sent off the following text to a translator: 'No entry for heavy goods vehicles. Residential site only'. The sign company received a very prompt reply from the translator, and duly completed the sign. The result was a sign where the English had been translated as: 'I am not in the office at the moment. Send any work to be translated.'

I don't think it's stretching it too far to suggest that our lives can look a little bit like that defective sign at times. We can live in a way which is chaotic and fragmented, and the way we live can send a mixed set of unrelated messages to those around us, especially to those who do not have faith.

The way we live our lives, whether we like it or not, acts as a sign that conveys a particular message to those we encounter. If our lives are carefully and consistently worded, they will communicate to others something of the love of God, and of the huge difference that our faith makes to the way we see the world and live in it. And if our lives are well worded, and point in the right way, they will lead others to the Church, where they can become part of Christ's mystical body, built up by receiving him in word and sacrament.

On the other hand, the sign that we make of our lives might say something to others about Christ, but make hard for them to see why they should bother having faith. If we don't live out what we profess, we might even drive others away from Christ and his Church, and make a life of faith something that seems ridiculous or even damaging. Just like that Welsh translation, they might even lead others to conclude that there's no-one in the office: that belief in God is incredible, a kind of fairy story.

When we look at today's Gospel, perhaps we might find some assistance in shaping our lives as a sign that points to the saving power of Christ, and the fundamental importance it has in living life well and living it fully. John the Baptist was a man whose life sent a powerful, unambiguous message to those who came across him. Now, he was a man who had a very strange way of life in the wilderness, and a strange way of dressing. If one of us were to stand in the wilderness dressed in animal skins, we might wonder what kind of message we might send. Yet we can see that the way that John lived his life was perfectly suited for being a herald of Jesus Christ. Any attention that John drew was immediately deflected away from himself to the one that he had come to point out. He was an effective signpost to Jesus because he pointed towards him with his whole life, which illuminated the truth that he spoke when he said 'Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the World'.

The faith that we have, handed down to us from the Apostles, is the most important thing that we have to offer to our world; I'm sure we'd all agree on that. But if we're not careful, the beliefs that we hold can seem to others as simply a set of words with little or no relevance. What brings our faith alive, and makes it attractive to others, is when those words are lived out in every aspect of our lives. It's then that people can see the great richness that life with Christ holds for all those who seek him.

Fr Robert Gay OP

The Jubilee Prayer

God, Father of mercy, who called your servant St Dominic 800 years ago, to found the Order of Preachers in the service of your Gospel, renew within the Church as we celebrate this Jubilee the Spirit of the Risen Christ, that we might faithfully and joyfully walk with St. Dominic as pilgrims and preachers of grace. Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 15TH JANUARY 2017

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A

· A ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH · THE DOMINICAN PRESENCE IN LEICESTER SINCE 1247 ·

FROM THE PRIOR'S DESK

The first weeks of 2017 have been quite beautiful, with many bright days. It is a great blessing to have this early hope of springtime in the January skies. Even though it remains cold and wintry, already we have a glimpse of the joys of spring, just ahead of us and round the next corner.

The week just past has seen our parish life begin to wake up once again for the new term. In our schools, much work has gone into consolidating the great start we made last term. Our University students are already busy with examinations, and some old faces are returning for graduations. It is wonderful to see our achievements flourish and bear fruit for us all.

In the Priory this last week, we've all been praying for Fr Isidore, who has been in hospital. We are grateful for the many good wishes sent his way these last few days. He is growing in strength and regaining his health, thanks to all our prayers. Hopefully he will be back with us all very soon.

In welcoming our mission preacher, Fr Joseph from the White Fathers, we give thanks for the missionary work of the Church, and we seek the inspiration of the Lord who sends his word to all the earth to prosper and grow our own missionary endeavour in Leicester.

Be intent on prayer, and all that may happen will turn to our good.

Fr David

800TH JUBILEE – A CELEBRATION OF THANKSGIVING

The final day of our Jubilee Year is next Saturday, 21 January, when the Holy Father will celebrate Mass at the Lateran Basilica in Rome. We are delighted that **+Patrick our Bishop** will join us for a **Mass of Thanksgiving for Dominican Life in our Diocese** on **Saturday 28 January 2017 at 12:30pm**. This will be an opportunity to give thanks for everything we have celebrated during this special year.

THE DOMINICAN COMMUNITY

Our beloved Fr Isidore has been hospitalised this week with illness. Please keep him in your prayers. For various reasons, this leaves our community much reduced this week, with only Fr David and Fr Fabian in residence until Wednesday, when Fr Robert returns. Please bear with us as we endeavour to live our way of life and conduct our apostolate at this challenging time for us.

NOTICE BOARD

BAPTISM PREPARATION

If you wish to have your child baptised, please attend one of our baptism preparation sessions. The next is Sunday 5 February, after the 10:30am Mass in St Clement's Hall.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CONFIRMATION

Forms for children and young people who wish to receive these sacraments in the new academic year (2016-17) are now in the Church. Please fill in and return.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Couples who are preparing for the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony should make an appointment with the Parish Priest in the first instance.

BECOMING CATHOLIC

Any adult who wishes to become a Catholic or receive Confirmation should join our RCIA programme, which begins in the Autumn Term.

VISITING THE SICK

The Faithful who are sick and housebound can arrange a visit from a priest or special minister by calling 0116 252 1501.

FAMILY VISITS

Families who would like a house blessing or a pastoral visit at home, can make arrangements by calling 0116 252 1501



MISSION APPEAL – MISSIONARIES OF AFRICA, THIS WEEKEND

*The Missionaries of Africa (the White Fathers), will make the annual Mission Appeal in our Parish this weekend. We welcome Fr Joseph Cummins M.Afr. to deliver the appeal. Each year, every diocese is allocated a missionary society which will make the Annual Appeal in each parish. **The Dominican Fathers are one such missionary organisation, and we are welcomed into many parishes in England and Wales to promote and develop our missionary work abroad.** Please give generously to the Appeal, and we look forward to learning about the work of the White Fathers in Africa today.*

OUR SINCERE SYMPATHY AND PRAYERS

We offer our sincere sympathy and prayers to the families of:

- Helen Ethel Pope, who died on Christmas Day aged 92. Her funeral will be celebrated on Monday 14 January at 11:30am here at Holy Cross.
- Michael Johnson KSG, who died last week, a former Lord Mayor of Leicester. Michael's funeral will be celebrated on Friday 20 January at 11am at Holy Cross.
- Please pray also for Nick King, Fr Robert's Uncle, whose untimely death occurred over Christmas. Fr Robert will be absent until Wednesday to attend the funeral.

We commend the souls of the Faithful Departed to the mercy of God.

BECOMING A CATHOLIC

An information evening for any adult who is interested in becoming a Catholic, or any adult Catholics who require the Sacrament of Confirmation, will be held on 26 January at 7pm in the Hall. Please spread the word!

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Our Sunday Holy Hour, 6-7pm – Rosary, Compline, Benediction.
- In the New Year – there will be a new Thursday evening course starting in late January for six weeks. More details coming soon.
- Shared Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity – 7pm at Leicester Cathedral, 25 January 2017. Organised by Churches Together.

THE DOMINICAN COMMUNITY

Fr David Rocks OP PP *Prior*; Fr Isidore Clarke OP; Fr Fabian Radcliffe OP;
Fr Neil Ferguson OP; Fr Robert Gay OP CC *Subprior, Bursar*.

Office Administrator: *Mrs Rachael Powell* – leicester.admin@english.op.org
Lay University Chaplain: *Mr George Ralph* – george.ralph@english.op.org
Director of Music: *Mr Thomas Keogh* – thomas@thomaskeogh.co.uk

For the Office Administrator, please call **0116 252 1501**

Holy Cross Priory, 45 Wellington Street, LE1 6HW. Tel: 0116 252 1501

For more details, visit: www.holycrossleicester.org

MASS TIMES

Sundays:

8am; 10:30am (sung);
12:30pm (old rite);
7pm

Weekdays:

8am (old rite);
12:30pm; 6:10pm

Saturdays:

8am (old rite);
10am; 12.30pm;
6:10pm Vigil Mass for Sunday

CONFESSION

Saturdays:

10:30-11:30am
5:00-6:00pm

MONEY MATTERS

Last week's collections:

£ 1065.24

(Gift aided: £ 380.50)

Woodhouse Collection

£ 92.80

(Gift aided: £ 48.00)

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT!*