



THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

ISAIAH 49:14-15

The Response to today's Psalm: *Oh that you would listen to his voice! Do not harden your hearts....*

"Is the Lord in our midst or not?" That question was addressed to Moses at the end of the skirmish when the people were camped at Rephidim, later renamed as *Massah* or *Meribah* (*test* or *quarreling*). The people wanted water and complained about having left Egypt to die now in the desert. In an action reminiscent of the Exodus, striking a rock with the staff with which he struck the river, Moses produces water. The quarrel echoes throughout history. Psalm 95 recalls the event and uses it as an incentive to seek repentance. "Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness, when your ancestors tested me, and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work." (Ps 95:8-9). The Psalmist has richly prepared us for this call to conversion, with the argument about "seeing my work." Thus, the psalm opens on the praises of God as creator-king, (vs.1-5) and then follows with a second wave of praise of the Shepherd God (v.6-7).

MATTHEW 6:24-34

In today's Gospel an appeal to conscience is heard in Jesus' words to the Samaritan woman: Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." (v.10) Then Jesus reveals to the woman the state of her conscience which is precisely the point she shares with the villagers. "She said to the people, 'Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done!'" (John 4:28,39) Note John's characteristic irony which comes full circle in the question asked by the woman: "He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" (4:29). He is indeed the Messiah, and she will be a pre-evangelizer. Eventually, the people of Samaria said to the woman: "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Saviour of the world." (4:42) Like a good pre-evangelizer, she knows when to withdraw into the background.

NEXT SUNDAY –

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (YEAR A)

'O Divine Jesus, impress on my heart a disposition like that of a certain man who loved your cross so much that he used to say if after serving you for a hundred years his only recompense were the grace to suffer one hour for love of you, he would believe all his sacrifice too well rewarded.'

St. Bernadette Soubirous

Pope Francis

Evangelii Gaudium

The Joy of the Gospel

"The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God's word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration. In all its activities the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelisers. It is a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a centre of constant missionary outreach."

THE WORD AT WORK: OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

GIVING AND RECEIVING; SERVING AND BEING SERVED



The 5th Station of the Cross means something very special to me at the moment. As I'm recovering from a serious illness I'm still very weak and depend on the help of carers. This could be humiliating. We all want to be able to stand on our own feet; we wrongly think we are self-sufficient. But then I gaze at the 5th Station of the Cross and see the Son of God crushed by the burden of the cross. He who had come to serve, not be served, needed the help of Simon of Cyrene, literally, to help Him back onto His feet. He needed Simon to help Him carry His cross. He needed to complete the journey to Calvary and there save the world from the power of evil. The Suffering Servant of the Lord was not too proud to accept the service of a stranger forced to help Him save the world. He didn't show resentment and insist that He could manage by Himself. Instead, Jesus accepted Simon's help, and according to tradition rewarded him with the salvation, which He was about to win on the cross, which Simon was helping Him to carry. In this there's a meeting between Simon of Cyrene giving Jesus a helping hand and Jesus welcoming that support – a meeting between giving and receiving, serving and being served. There's a picture which says so much to me. In this Simon looks at Jesus with compassion, Jesus looks at Simon with gratitude.

It's reassuring for me to realise that Jesus needed and welcomed help throughout His life -most obviously as a baby and child, but also as an adult. For example, Jesus sought water from the Samaritan woman when He was tired and thirsty. His mission depended on a back-up supply chain of supporters. Jesus welcomed and needed friends - Martha, Mary, Lazarus. In Gethsemane He wanted the moral support and prayers of Peter, James and John. As He died on the cross the support of His Mother, a few women and the Good Thief must have meant so much to Him. Never did Jesus refuse the offer of help. He did not reject the enthusiastic expression of penitent love, expressed by the woman who washed His feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. Never did He feel humiliated when someone helped him. If Jesus has taught me that true greatness lies in lovingly, generously serving others, He's also shown me, through the 5th Station of the Cross, that graciously accepting their care is not degrading. As we follow Jesus on the Way of the Cross we need Him, acting through people like Simon of Cyrene, to help us carry our heavy burdens. They need the sensitivity to allow us to do what we can and not treat us as being utterly helpless.

I have found that if I'm treated with respect I don't lose my dignity in being helped, even in my most basic needs. But when Jesus insisted on washing Peter's feet He taught him and us two things. Firstly, we must humbly serve each other, and secondly, we must allow other people to serve us, without our losing our dignity. If we are to be sensitive in helping others we need first to feel what it's like to be on the receiving end.

In this 5th Station Jesus and Simon of Cyrene have taught me, and I hope you, the dignity of giving and receiving, serving and being served -both with love and respect.

Isidore O.P.



HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 19TH MARCH 2017

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT, YEAR A

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

FROM THE PRIOR'S DESK

It's very quiet as I sit down to complete this week's newsletter, a calm period after a storm the previous evening. When Leicester City are playing away, there isn't so much of the bustle around the city. There's only the sound of the different birds who are thinking of making their homes in the priory garden.

As a Dominican Community, we often remark how blessed we are to have a garden in our priory garth. Few of our priories have this privilege, as do few of our neighbours in the city centre. It allows us to be close to nature, to watch the seasons unfold, and provides a space for contemplation. Lent is a space for contemplation. It helps us to grab an opportunity to witness the unfolding of God's grace in our lives.

Fr Isidore has gifted us with a beautiful Lenten reflection this week, which you'll find on the back page. The picture he has chosen is just as important as the words. Do read it and use it as an opportunity to share his contemplation. Lent continues, and please note the Mass times which are edited this week, owing to various commitments.

We are very grateful for your kind support at this time. Be intent on prayer, and all that may happen will turn to our good.

Fr David

THIS WEEK AT HOLY CROSS

Fr Robert is away, and Fr Fabian is undergoing minor surgery to his eyes. Monday is the Solemnity of St Joseph. Mass at 12:30pm and 7:15pm (old rite) only. On Wednesday, our Station Mass at 7:30pm here at Holy Cross, so no Mass at 6:10pm. Thursday is the funeral of Mark Jacques at 11am, so no Mass at 8am. Otherwise, everything as normal. Many thanks for your help at this time

DOMINICAN ROSARY PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY IN JUNE

From **Wednesday 14-21 June 2016**, a pilgrimage to sites associated with Our Lady and the Holy Rosary, including Loreto, the site of the Holy House, the great Franciscan Shrines at Assisi, St Padre Pio's Shrine in San Giovanni Rotondo, and Pompei, the Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary. Inclusive price: £1,165. Please see the flyers, and make contact with Fr David if interested.

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Students from both our Universities are reorganising their Catholic Societies, so if you're a student, and you're interested in getting more involved with other Catholics at University, contact George who will point you in the right direction. george.ralph@english.op.org

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 March, after the 10:30am Mass in St Clement's Hall.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CONFIRMATION

Please get in touch with the Priory Office if members of your family wish to celebrate these sacraments.

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

CATHOLICISM 101 – THIS THURSDAY AT 7PM

Catholicism 101 concludes for this term on Thursday at 7pm, beginning with food, and the topic is "vice and virtue. We hope to develop further themes next term, and details of the times and dates will be available in due course. Please come along and bring your friends.

PILGRIM VIRGIN STATUE VISIT TO HOLY CROSS – JUNE 1ST

The **National Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima** will visit Holy Cross on **Thursday 1 June 2017**. The statue is making a pilgrimage round the country to mark 100 years since the apparitions at Fatima, and we are very privileged that it will come to Holy Cross. More information will be available soon.

HOLY CROSS RACE NIGHT – SATURDAY 25 MARCH

At next Saturday's Race Night, the runners and riders for the first race include 'Rocks' Rocket', 'Flighty Friar' 'Fabian's Firebrand' and 'Robert's Racer'. Make sure you're there to join the fun. There are two sessions, 3pm to 5:30pm and 7pm to 9:30pm, and food will be provided. The cost is £5 (£2 concessions) and children are welcome. Tickets are available from the church shop. We still need more horses to be sponsored - use an envelope from the tables by the doors.

MARCH FOR LIFE IN BIRMINGHAM – 20 MAY

A bus will leave from Holy Cross to arrive in Birmingham in time for 10am Mass at the Cathedral. More details soon

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Our Sunday Holy Hour, 6-7pm – Rosary, Compline, Benediction.
- Organ recitals, first Friday of each month at 1:15pm. A very nice way to spend a lunchtime.
- Race Night - Saturday March 25th at Holy Cross. Tickets available now in the shop. Please see the additional attachment for more details.
- Blackfriars' Market – is being planned for June this year. Please contact Jeff on hcross.social@gmail.com if you can help in any way. Please see the additional attachment for more details.

THE DOMINICAN COMMUNITY

Fr David Rocks OP PP *Prior*; Fr Isidore Clarke OP;
Fr Fabian Radcliffe 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:

£ 1256.87
(Gift aided: £ 275.17)

Second Collection –
Comboni Fathers

£240.61
(Gift aided: £ 30.00)

Woodhouse Collection

£ 156.00
(Gift Aided: £98.00)

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT!**