

HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH



SUNDAY 26TH MARCH 2017

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT, YEAR A

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

FROM THE PRIOR'S DESK

Our Lenten observance is sustained this week when the Church commands us to rejoice. That explains the different coloured vestments. I wonder how much rejoicing there will be when we have to rise an hour earlier than expected this Sunday! Some pleasures are bittersweet. It is these things that help us to focus on the eternal joy for which we hope. Lent leads us to the Lord's Cross. Beyond that is the resurrection.

During these weeks we have been busy trying to keep everything going, with a smaller number of friars than usual. But it is wonderful to see so many people lending a hand in different ways. We are all most grateful. Together we build our community of faith and serve one another. This will create a wonderful and welcoming environment when new friars arrive in Leicester

In the meantime we remain focused on prayer so that our service of one another may be sustained. As Holy Week approaches, we look forward to celebrating that with you all. Please note the arrangements noted in the Newsletter, and indeed the Mass arrangements for the week ahead.

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

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

CATHOLICISM 101

Catholicism 101 has now concluded for this term. 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.

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

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.

LEICESTERSHIRE CHORALE – SATURDAY 8TH APRIL 8.00PM

Please join us for this special concert that will mark the beginning of Holy Week.

MASSES THIS WEEK

Please note revised Mass times this week, owing to availability of priests: Monday only one Mass at 12:30pm; Tuesday – Thursday Mass at 12:30pm and 6:10pm only. Normal times will return on Friday.

HOLY WEEK 2017

Monday and Tuesday – Masses at 8am; 12:30pm; 7:15pm. Wednesday – Christ Mass at 11am (Nottingham Cathedral), no Mass at Holy Cross. Stations of the Cross at 12:30pm, Holy Hour 7:15pm. Maundy Thursday – Mass of the Lord's Supper 7:30pm. Good Friday, Tenebrae 9am, Passion Service 3pm, Stations at 7pm; Holy Saturday Tenebrae 9am, Easter Vigil at 8pm.

MARCH FOR LIFE IN BIRMINGHAM – 20 MAY

A coach will depart **Holy Cross Church**, Wellington Street, Leicester at **8.00 am** on **Saturday 20th May** and depart Leicester at 4.30pm. More details to follow.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Our Sunday Holy Hour, 6-7pm – Rosary, Compline, Benediction.
- Organ recitals, first Friday of each month at 1:15pm
- Are you able to help young pilgrims on their way to Walsingham on the Student Cross pilgrimage, during Holy Week please? They need lifts from Holy Cross to Keyham at 8.15am on Saturday April 8. Please contact Jeff on hcross.social@gmail.com
- Sunday April 2 - Breakfast Club - tea, coffee, fruit juice and croissants (bacon and egg return in May)- after the 8am Mass. Meet for a treat - English cream teas - after the 10.30 Mass. Please join us if you can.
- Blackfriars' Market – is being planned for June this year. Please contact Jeff on hcross.social@gmail.com if you can help in any way.

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:

£ 2024.89

(Gift aided: £ 1103.50)

Second Collection –
South Sudan

£396.32

(Gift aided: £ 15.00)

Woodhouse Collection

£ 87.80

(Gift Aided: £52.00)

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT!**



THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

1ST READING: 1 SAMUEL 16. 1, 6-7, 10-13

This Reading tell us about God's choice of David and his being anointed as king of Israel. Jesus would be descended from the royal line of David and would be King of Heaven and Earth. Immediately after we've been baptised we are anointed to share Christ's priesthood, His sovereignty and His prophet work.

Responsorial Psalm 23: "The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want"

2ND READING: EPHESIANS 5. 8-14

This Reading serves as an introduction to the Gospel theme of the gift of the light of faith. In the early Church baptism used to be called, 'Illumination.' Paul urges his recent converts, who used to be children of darkness, to be 'light in the Lord, be like children of light and to have nothing to do with the futile works of darkness.'

GOSPEL: JOHN 9. 1-41

Today's Gospel is NOT about Jesus curing a blind man. What Jesus did was much more radical -He gave sight to a man who was born blind, who had never been able to see. That gift opened a whole new world of colour and light for him. That was a sign of the gift of faith, which we receive at baptism. This reveals a new world, God's world. We become a part of it, as His children, sharing His happiness. The theme of creation and new recreation is reinforced by Jesus anointing the blind man's eyes with dust and spittle, harking back to the first creation in which man was made from the slime of the earth.

Through this miracle, God is glorified not only in the blind man receiving physical sight, but also in his faith in Jesus whom he could now see. More than that, he gave glory to God by defying the Pharisees and courageously professing his faith in Jesus. He who had received the Light of Christ became a light, a missionary, to the world. Baptism should have that effect on us.

NEXT SUNDAY –

FIFTH 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

4th SUNDAY OF LENT

It must be hard enough being born blind! But it's much worse when religious people tell you it's your own fault; they think God is punishing you for being a sinner. That would add a sense of guilt and rejection by God, when you most needed the Lord's support. But that's the way the Pharisees thought. They believed enjoying health and prosperity were a sign of God blessing a virtuous life, and that the afflicted must be sinners, cursed by God.

But experience tells us that can't be true. The wicked do prosper, while innocent people, including babes, do suffer. However, we attempt to understand suffering it simply won't do to blame God. After all, if Jesus can tell us to love our enemies and do good to those who harm us, we have a right to expect a supremely loving and good God to behave better than us sinners. Jesus confirms our refusal to write off sufferers as sinners. He rejects the traditional way the Pharisees understood evil, and goes even further. He sees the weak as being especially dear to God, and in a unique way they can give Him glory. We can only begin to understand that in the light of the cross and their sharing in the saving work of the crucified Christ.

In today's Gospel glory was first given to God when Jesus gave sight to the blind man. This was much more than a sign of compassion; it was a sign of the Father's blessing on His Son's mission. He was fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah that God's servant would give sight to the blind and would preach the good news to the poor. This was a sign that God's kingdom had dawned with the coming of Christ.

But God's glory was revealed not only in the cure of the man's physical blindness. Once he could see he showed great courage and defiance in witnessing to Jesus as a prophet. He would not allow the Pharisees to brow-beat him into silence, even though he realised they had threatened to expel anyone from the temple, who acknowledged Jesus to be the Christ. That would have meant being cut off from the worshipping community and its relationship with God. Nevertheless, when the Pharisees questioned the man about Jesus, he cheekily asked them whether they believed in Him.

The climax to this episode comes when the man believed in Jesus. In telling us about this miracle John stressed that the man did not simply have his sight restored after losing it. No, he who was born blind was given sight, which he had never possessed before. That was something completely new for him. It opened up for him a completely new world of sights and colours. That's what happened to him and to us when we receive the gift of faith. The light of Christ dispels the darkness of error and ignorance and opens up a new world - God's world. This is a new creation, and wonder of wonders, we become part of it!

The gift of the insight faith, sharply contrasts with the Pharisees' obstinate blindness of heart, in refusing to believe in Jesus. This man's faith moved him to give glory to God in the witness he gave to Jesus. He's a powerful inspiration to all of us believers!

Certainly, this episode leaves many unanswerable questions about the problem of suffering. But Jesus refutes any idea that it's a punishment for sin. And he shows that in different ways God can draw good from evil, as he did with His Son's crucifixion. We may not understand the working of God's wisdom and love, but must learn to trust his love and care for us. That demands the insight of deep faith.

Isidore O.P.