



HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 2ND APRIL 2017

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT, YEAR A

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

FROM THE PRIOR'S DESK

The longer evenings have one key disadvantage – they highlight the dust and cobwebs that have gathered during the darker days. As we prepare to veil our statues and images, they all get their annual dusting down. When they are unveiled again at Easter, we will see their colours and beauty ever more vividly because they have had a spring clean!

Lent has moved very quickly this year. It always seems like a vast expanse of time at the beginning, but before long, the veils are coming out, and we're beginning to make plans for the Easter flowers. How quickly the simplicity of Lent blossoms into the brightness of Easter. As we approach the last weeks of Lent, let's have the courage to look at the areas of our lives where dust has accumulated. Let them be covered with the veil of God's compassion and mercy, and let's look forward to Christ's light shining through.

We're looking forward in the week ahead to welcoming our Dominican brethren to Leicester from all across our province. The Province Day is a great opportunity for us to reflect on how our Dominican Mission in Britain can be strengthened and developed. It's also a chance for our brothers to see what good things we are able to achieve in Leicester. Please pray for the success of our Province Day, for growth in our way of live, and for vocations to our Order.

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.

THIS WEEK AT HOLY CROSS

We welcome Fr Richard Conrad OP who is visiting us over the weekend. On Wednesday of this week, Dominicans from across England and Scotland will gather for the Province Day meeting here in Leicester. Vespers will be celebrated at 3:30pm in the Church. We are pleased to welcome our brothers from the different priories of our Province

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.

NOTICE BOARD

BAPTISM PREPARATION

If you wish to have your child baptised, please attend one of our baptism preparation sessions. The next is Sunday 2 April 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

MARCH FOR LIFE IN BIRMINGHAM – 20TH MAY

A coach will depart **Holy Cross Church**, Wellington Street, Leicester at **8.00 am** on **Saturday 20th May** for Birmingham to celebrate the annual **March for Life**, we will arrive in time for Mass at St Chad's Cathedral at 10 am, followed by LifeFest in the centre of Birmingham, with a host of speakers and stalls, followed by the March. We depart for Leicester at 4.30 pm. Each year this important pro-life rally grows in size due to more and more people realising that great graces can be won by cherishing the lives of our precious unborn infants. Please contact the office at Holy Cross to book your place. Cost: £10 adults, under-14s free.

SOCIAL NEWS

A big thank you to all who supported or attended the Race Night. We had a great afternoon and evening and raised £418.10. for the continued running and development of the church and priory. **Today** we have **Breakfast Club** (with croissants) after the 8am Mass and '**Meet for a Treat**' (cream teas) after the 10.30 Mass. Both events are free and you all are welcome to join us in the hall. **Saturday/Sunday May 6/7 - we are planning events after the vigil Mass and all the Sunday Masses and will be launching this year's Blackfriars' Market Raffle. Details to follow...holy week 2017**

HOLY WEEK 2017

Monday and Tuesday – Masses at 8am; 12:30pm; 7:15pm. Wednesday – Chrism Mass at 11:30am (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.

GIFT AID ENVELOPES

For the coming year, these are available for those on the envelope scheme for regular church giving. More details on finance after Christmas.

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

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:

£ 1026.38

(Gift aided: £ 385.00)

Second Collection –
South Sudan

£197.03

(Gift aided: £ 11.00)

Woodhouse Collection

£ 146.25

(Gift Aided: £113.00)

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT!**



THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

1ST READING: EZEK. 37. 12-14:

This reading is preceded by the prophet's vision of dry scattered bones. These represent Israel exiled in Babylon and spiritually dead. Today's reading gives hope of God's spirit reviving His people. That has two meanings, firstly, freeing His people from death-like exile and restoring them as a nation in the Promised Land. Secondly, God will renew His people spiritually, as being faithful to Him. Note, the initiative comes from God, not man.

Responsorial Psalm 30: *"With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption"*

2ND READING: ROMANS 8. 8-11

When we were baptised we shared in Christ's death to sin and rose with Him to new life in the Spirit. Today's extract from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans tells us something about what that life is like. He contrasts the unspiritual, worldly outlook and behaviour of the ungodly, which we Christians should have rejected, with life in the Spirit, which we have received. That should give us the mind of Christ, so that we follow Him in our behaviour. The Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead, and whom we have received, will also raise us bodily from the dead.

GOSPEL: JOHN 11.1-45

Since I've written a long meditation on the raising of Lazarus, which is published on the back page, I will here restrict myself to outlining the context in which that miracle occurred. Opposition to Jesus was growing; His life was in danger, especially if He went up to Jerusalem. So He made a tactical withdrawal, not out of cowardice, but to assert His control of events, which would only happen when He was ready. He knew His friend, Lazarus, was dying and yet did not come and cure Him. Not only Mary and Martha were puzzled, so are we, when God seems to ignore our prayers and fails to come to our aid. But Jesus realised that waiting until Lazarus had died would give Him a greater opportunity to strengthen His followers' faith, than if He'd simply cured Lazarus' sickness. Restoring the dead Lazarus' life would be a sign -a pointer -to a much greater wonder -Jesus' resurrection to glory after His death on the cross. If we believe in Him and follow Him we will share in the glory of the risen Lord. Jesus also knew that raising Lazarus from the dead would increase hostility to Him and would set His Passion in motion. But, He knew what He was doing, even when those closest to Him didn't; He was always in control when everything would seem to descend into utter chaos. They and we must trust His wisdom and love.

NEXT SUNDAY –

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD (YEAR A)

*"Our Lord needs from us neither great deeds nor profound thoughts.
Neither intelligence nor talents. He cherishes simplicity.*

Saint Therese of Lisieux

Pope Francis
Evangelii Gaudium
The Joy of the Gospel

"Let me say this once more: God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy."

THE WORD AT WORK: OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

5TH SUNDAY OF LENT -THE RAISING OF LAZARUS

Most of us have mourned the death of our loved ones. I certainly have –members of my family, friends, Dominican brothers and sisters. Since they have been part of our lives, when they die part of us dies. We miss them. All kinds of unanswerable questions about death torment us. We are confused, in shock, perhaps angry. We feel empty.

In today's Gospel, about the raising of Lazarus from the dead, Jesus responds to our grief. We see Jesus both in His human vulnerability as He grieved for His friend, Lazarus, as He mourned with His friends Martha and Mary. We also see Jesus' divine power to raise Lazarus from the dead. Jesus mourned the death of His friend. He shared the pain of grief of His dear friends Mary and Martha. He, who knew what it was like to grieve, identifies with us and comforts us in our sorrow. So, it's nonsense to say that grief shows a lack of faith, as someone did to me when my mother was dying. Jesus Himself has shown us that grief is a deep expression of love, not a lack of faith or trust.

In this narrative Jesus, Martha and Mary express their grief in different ways. Jesus, with great distress and a deep sigh coming from His heart. He mourned not only for His deceased friend, Lazarus, but had a deep love and compassion for Mary and Martha in their grief. That led both sisters to reproach Jesus, arguing that He could have cured their brother if He'd been present when he was dying. While Mary wept, Martha expressed a deep faith in Jesus -that it was not too late for God to answer whatever He asked of Him. Clearly, there's no one right or wrong way to grieve.

So, how does Jesus respond to our grief? He is with us, comforting us, as He did Martha and Mary. He helps us, as He did her, to grow in our belief that death is not the end for any of us. He assures us that He has power over life and death. When Martha reproached Jesus for not being present to cure the dying Lazarus that provided Him with the opportunity to deepen her faith. After she's expressed her belief in the general resurrection at the end of time Jesus tells her that He Himself is the **"Resurrection and the Life."** And when asked, Martha says that she does believe that claim. That's a remarkable expression of faith, for which Martha is not given sufficient credit. We must cling onto the conviction that Jesus offers us life after death, when we are tempted only to think of death as the end of life. Jesus gives us hope that death does not have the last word in our life-story. The best is to come -afterwards!

To convince us that He does in fact have power over death, Jesus raises Lazarus from the grave. For Lazarus this meant returning to his former kind of life. He would have to die again. But the raising of Lazarus was much more than an act of compassion for His grieving sisters. This miracle foreshadows Jesus' resurrection. He would rise from the grave –not like Lazarus, who continued His former way of life and then had to die again, but to enjoy a far more wonderful, glorious life. And that will be true for us. If we follow the crucified and risen Christ we will share in the glory of His resurrection. We need that reassurance when we are faced with death –either of our loved ones, or our own death.

Reactions to the raising of Lazarus were mixed. Not surprisingly, many people believed in Jesus. But that made His enemies realise that His popularity would antagonise the Roman occupying force. If the nation wasn't to be destroyed Jesus must die. The raising of Lazarus resulted in the death of the one who had just proved that He had power over life and death! What irony!

But Jesus would demonstrate that power when He rose from the grave on Easter Sunday. Death could not defeat Him. Nor will it defeat us -if we have Martha's faith and follow Him. Today's Gospel gives us that reassurance as we approach Holy Week's celebration of Jesus' triumph of life over death, goodness over evil.