

THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

XVI SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1ST READING: WISDOM 12. 13, 16-19

One of the purposes of the Book of Wisdom was to commend the Jewish religion to those in Alexandria who had influenced by Greek philosophers. So he stressed attributes of the God of Israel and His followers which appeal to the pagans: such as justice, mildness, forbearance and hope of forgiveness.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 86 **"LORD, YOU ARE GOOD AND FORGIVING"**

The psalmist, speaking on his own behalf or that of the nation confidently appeals to God's mercy, in which he shows His true greatness, and for which the nations will praise Him.

2ND READING : ROMANS 8. 26-27

This short reading is aa great help when we have difficulty in praying. Don't worry because the Spirit inspires even the most inarticulate groan, and knows what it means.

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 13. 24-43

In today's Gospel Jesus uses three growth parables to tell us about the Kingdom of Heaven. In the first He uses the problem facing every farmer and gardener. What do you do about the weeds, especially when at the early stages they are almost indistinguishable from the good plants. Jesus urges patience and caution lest the good may be rooted out with the bad. The same must be true in not ruthlessly striving for a perfect Church and excluding any who fall short. Instead, we must leave the sorting out to God.

The next two parables are about growth from small beginnings, and are meant to give us encouragement. The first appeals to gardeners and shows that a large bush grows from a small mustard seed. The second appeals to woman who knows that in backing bread a small piece of yeast can produce a large loaf.

NEXT SUNDAY –

XVII SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR A) - SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

"Prayer is the best weapon we have; it is the key to God's heart. You must speak to Jesus not only with your lips, but with your heart. In fact on certain occasions you should only speak to Him with your heart."

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St. Padre Pio

Some thoughts from Pope Francis ...

"Even God is stronger than all else. This conviction gives to the believer serenity, courage and the strength to persevere in good amid the greatest hardships. Even when the powers of Hell are unleashed, Christians must rise to the summons, their heads held high, and be ready to brave blows in this battle over which God will have the last word.

And that word will be love!"

THE WORD AT WORK: OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

THE PROBLEM OF WEEDS

Fr Isidore reflects on our Sunday Gospels for this time of year ...

During the World War II my brothers and I used to grow our own vegetables. 'Digging for Victory' was our small contribution to the war effort. As the tiny shoots lettuces and cabbages, broke the surface, weeds would sprout up among them. At first there appeared to be no difference. What should we do about the weeds? That's a question every farmer or gardener asks himself.

That's the theme of today's Gospel, which develops last Sunday's parable of the sower. That told us that the seed was the Word of God, who guaranteed a bumper harvest. The parable of the sower introduced us to some of the threats, which hinder the Word of God from taking root and bearing fruit.

Today's Gospel focuses on one of those threats: weeds. The seed itself is certainly good –it's the Word of God But the weeds are harmful; they choke the growth of the good seed. Darnel was a special problem. Since it tangled its roots around the wheat, it could not be pulled out without removing the good seed. Worse still, its grain was poisonous and looked very much like the good seed. It had to be separated from the good seed, but that could only be done after the harvest.

What are these weeds, almost indistinguishable from the good grain? They are people who threaten the life and growth of the Good News in Christ's followers. They are not only outside the Church, but also within it. Let's face, each one of us is a mixture of good and evil. At times, we all set a bad example and lead people astray. Zealots who would welcome only the perfect would exclude everybody. If they were honest, that would include themselves! The Church would be empty.

Jesus recognises that even His Church would contain sinners. Instead of instantly destroying them, He is patient; He does all that He can to seek the lost sheep, to bring the sinner to repentance. Only at the last judgment will the Lord of the Harvest sort out and punish those who refuse His mercy.

But what should be done with the enemies, the people who sow the poisonous seed, the darnel of secular, materialistic values of modern society. They attack the growth of the Word of God.

Today we rightly place great store on freedom of speech. That's a matter of justice. Silencing those with whom we disagree can lead to totalitarian dictatorships, which don't allow open criticism and correction. That could be a greater evil than allowing people the freedom to spread false ideas.

But freedom of speech carries serious responsibilities -to seek the truth and share it with others. We do live amidst a mixture of truth and error, and need great discernment to distinguish the one from the other. Those who are very vulnerable need to be protected from harmful ideas and images. In extreme cases, certain material may be so offensive that for the good of the community it should be suppressed and its disseminators punished. But following the argument of the parable, drastically weeding out error is not always the best approach.

Meanwhile God is patient with those who spread false ideas, which undermine the Good News and can cause so much harm. Eventually he will sort out and punish such people; the Good News of the Kingdom will be triumphant.

Above all, God recognises that nobody is completely evil. There's some good in all of us. God's grace and mercy can encourage us and lead even the worst sinner to conversion. The weeds can become desirable fruitful plants! But that's not part of this parable.

Isidore O.P.



HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 23 JULY 2017

XVI SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

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

A WORD FROM THE PRIOR ...

As I write this week, I am speeding through the Leicestershire countryside, on my way to the Shrine of Our Lady at Lourdes. In recent years, the last week in July has become my regular time at Lourdes, having been invited to minister as chaplain to the Order of Malta there during the week. In a few hours, we'll be loading up the plane and setting off for our spiritual time together.

I've always experienced Lourdes as a very special place. So many of us travel there in search of something wonderful to happen in our lives, and often we're surprised when that happens in the simplest of ways. As always, I carry the intentions of our community and parishioners to this holy place. Often, our burdens are just that little bit lighter when we can help each other in simple ways.

It was great to welcome Fr Tony to the Community during the past week, and it is good to have him back with us in Leicester. Fr Tony has already contributed a huge amount to Holy Cross, and we are glad to welcome him as a new member of our team. Over the next few weeks, he and Fr Matthew will continue to settle in, and all of us can begin to establish a new routine. It really is a big change for Holy Cross, but we're looking forward to working for the future with your solid support behind us.

Welcome back if you've been away, safe travels if you're off. Perhaps you're reading this online somewhere slightly more exotic. Don't forget to bring back a Newsletter if you manage to get to Mass.

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

Fr David

BABY NASHVEL – THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Recently we made an appeal for prayers and support for Baby Nashvel Gonsalves. Bishop Patrick also took Nashvel's intentions to the attention of the Diocese, and in addition to many prayers we have managed to raise some money to help the family. **Sadly, Nashvel died on Monday.** He was not able to fight his illness any longer. His funeral will take place on Friday of this week. Thanks also to the medical staff and chaplaincy team at Glenfield. **A huge thanks for your generosity** and please keep up the prayers for the family at this very difficult time for them. *Be intent on prayer and whatever may happen will turn to our good.*

WELCOME TO FR TONY RATTIGAN

Fr Tony arrived last Wednesday and has begun to settle in. He is a very familiar figure at Holy Cross, having fulfilled almost every role there is here over the years, and most recently was Prior and Parish Priest until 2009. He has spent the last few years in prison chaplaincy in Northumberland. Those of you who remember Fr Tony have been looking forward to his return, but of course many of you will be meeting him for the first time. Please do extend to him a warm welcome. Hopefully, we can now spend the next few weeks settling into a new rhythm at Holy Cross following the recent months of changes.

NOTICE BOARD

BAPTISM PREPARATION

If you wish to have your child baptised, please attend one of our baptism preparation sessions. The next is Sunday 6 August 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

SAFEGUARDING – KEEPING OUR CHILDREN SAFE

We remind you once again that Holy Cross is only safe for our children and vulnerable adults if we make it so. We ask each family to ensure their children are supervised at all times, and are accompanied by a trusted and responsible adult known to the child. Please also support us in discouraging children in running and climbing on the premises.

SUMMER ARRANGEMENTS AT HOLY CROSS

During the summer months, there will be a reduced presence at Holy Cross, as the Dominican Fathers, our staff, and our volunteers take some time for rest, vacation, and ministry elsewhere. Mrs Powell in the Office will be absent until 3 August. This week, Fr David is in Lourdes, Fr Fabian at the Family Week in Critch, and Fr Matthew preaching a parish mission. **Please note there will be no Mass at 8am Monday – Friday of this week.** Many thanks for your continued co-operation.

EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS – SEPTEMBER 2018

Our Bishops have announced that a **National Eucharistic Congress** will be held in Liverpool during September 2018. After the summer holidays, we will begin to make preparations for this important moment, and we will consider how we can enrich our devotion to the Eucharist. **Next Sunday, 30 July, Fr Chris Thomas will join us and explain a bit more.** Fr Chris is a priest of this Diocese, and General Secretary to the Conference of Bishops in England and Wales. He is also a great friend of our community.

SUMMER HOLIDAYS

Summer months seem to pass so quickly! Over the next weeks, many of us will depart for vacations. There is time to visit family and friends, perhaps go somewhere a little warmer, and take time to recharge the batteries in preparation for the new challenges that arrive with the autumn. Remember to bring back a newsletter from the places you visit and celebrate Mass! Travel safely.

CONGRATULATIONS ON GRADUATIONS

Graduations have now concluded at the University of Leicester and at DMU. **A huge congratulations to all graduates!** Over the years, students at both our universities have **contributed a great deal to the life of Holy Cross**, and for that we thank them, and especially those who will now leave us to start their careers elsewhere. **A huge thanks also**, on their behalf, to the many parishioners who help to make them such a part of our community here.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Our Holy Hour, each Sunday at 6pm
- Organ recitals, first Friday of each month at 1:15pm

THE DOMINICAN COMMUNITY

Fr David Rocks OP PP, *Prior*; Fr Isidore Clarke OP; Fr Fabian Radcliffe OP;
Fr Tony Rattigan OP; Fr Robert Gay OP CC, *Subprior, Bursar*; Fr Matthew Jarvis OP

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

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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:

£ 1,336.70

(Gift aided: £ 529.00)

Woodhouse Collection

£ 185.00

(Gift aided: £ 151.00)

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT!*