



# HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017

HOLY CROSS DAY

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

## A WORD FROM THE PRIOR ...

*Our Patronal Feast is always a great day to be together as a community, and we are grateful to our Provincial, Fr Martin, for joining with us on this important day. We celebrate all the different ways in which we can serve one another in the spirit of the Gospel.*

*The last year has been a very challenging one for our community. We are all only too well aware of this. There have been many things we've wanted to do, but we have had to wait for times when there are more people around. Many, many things need our attention. We are better placed to look at these things now. It's great to have new people in position.*

*Despite our difficulties since Holy Cross Day last year, there is much about which we should rejoice. Our social group which meets on Tuesdays from this week is a fruit of our Holy Cross Assembly last year, and we have the many developments in our catechetical programme to rejoice about. We are refreshing our approach to students. Things are beginning to happen again.*

*One thing that has changed is the church lighting. It seems that our old system, which has served us for sixty years, has had its day. A temporary arrangement has been installed to tie us over, and during the coming week, we have a company attending to plan a new system. We are grateful to the benefactors for their help.*

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

*Fr David*

## HOLY CROSS DAY

It is great to have our Provincial with us today to mark Holy Cross Day. The past year has been challenging for us, and we have seen many changes. Thankfully, we now have a full team at Holy Cross and we look forward to building on that to work towards our future. Thank you for your support during this period of transition, and we hope you will share our excitement and expectations for the future.

## TOWARDS OUR JUBILEES

In 1817, a Dominican Priest fleeing the French Revolution, Fr Benedict Caestryck OP, took up residence in a house at the top of Dover Street. That same year a site of marshland was acquired between Wellington Street and New Walk, by Richard Raby Esq, a local wool spinner. He began to drain the land, and Fr Benedict began to build Holy Cross Priory. The first Mass would be celebrated on Sunday 14 September 1819. Many years later, on 15 May 1958, the present Priory Church was dedicated. As we mark two centuries since Fr Benedict and Richard Raby began to erect Holy Cross Priory, and as we prepare for the Diamond Jubilee year of 2018 and the Bicentenary year of 2019, let's begin by praying for the courage and vision shown by our founders all those years ago, and work together now for our future.

## NATIONAL NOVENA TO OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM

Friday 15 September – Saturday 23 September. The Inaugural Novena to our Lady of Walsingham. Leaflets available soon.

## NOTICE BOARD

### BAPTISM PREPARATION

If you wish to have your child baptised, please attend one of our baptism preparation sessions. The next is Sunday 3 September 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

## MASS AND PRAYER FOR HEALING IN HONOUR OF ST PADRE PIO

Saturday 23 September at 12:30pm, a special Mass on the feast of St Pio of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio), with procession and prayers for healing. Please do bring along any person you might know who is in need of healing.

## AN AFTERNOON OF PRAYER WITH BLESSED PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI

Saturday 30 September, beginning with the 12:30pm Mass, Br Joseph Bailham OP will lead our reflections on this lay Dominican. After Mass, a light lunch in St Clement's Hall, followed by two reflections and a period of adoration. Come along to find out more.

## SOCIAL NEWS

**NEW! Holy Cross Social Group** – This social group will gather in St. Clement's Hall on Tuesday evenings (6.30-8.00pm). The aim is to provide a chance for people to meet up, enjoy activities and have a chat and a bite to eat. This will be provided **free of charge** (although donations to cover our costs are welcome). The activities involved will depend on what people want to do; we are planning to include: **an informal singing group; board games and cards; a crafts-corner; book exchange, fun bingo.** First session: Tuesday September 19.

## CAN YOU HELP OUT?

This social group will provide social support for the people of Holy Cross. Its success will rely on what people might like to bring to the group, depending on their interests and skills. Would you be able to help by:

- being a member of the group (ie be a friendly face at the group, chat, play games);
- providing an activity (help with food or provide a craft);
- making a donation to help cover costs (please hand in, in a sealed envelope marked Holy Cross Social Group).

For more detail on all of the above please contact Jeff on [hcross.social@gmail.com](mailto:hcross.social@gmail.com)

## OUR UNIVERSITY OUTREACH – LEICESTER CATHOLIC STUDENTS

We have set up a new body called "Leicester Catholic Students", which is designed to reach out to students at the University of Leicester and at DMU. Fr Matthew is taking the lead on this. Please see our facebook presence, and look out for more details in the coming weeks.

## THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Our Holy Hour, each Sunday at 6pm
- Organ recitals, first Friday of each month at 1:15pm
- Padre Pio Mass for Healing – 23 September at 12:30pm
- An afternoon of prayer with Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati

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### THE DOMINICAN COMMUNITY

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

Office Administrator: *Mrs Rachael Powell* – [leicester.admin@english.op.org](mailto:leicester.admin@english.op.org)

Lay University Chaplain: *Mr George Ralph* – [george.ralph@english.op.org](mailto:george.ralph@english.op.org)

Director of Music: *Mr Thomas Keogh* – [thomas@thomaskeogh.co.uk](mailto: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](http://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:

**£ 1353.35**

(Gift aided: £99)

### Woodhouse Collection

**£ 96.18**

(Gift aided: £77)

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
CONTINUED SUPPORT!*

# THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

## XXIV IN ORDINARY TIMES

### 1<sup>ST</sup> READING: NUMBERS 21. 4-9

On their journey through the wilderness the people of Israel murmured and complained and regretted that they had ever left Egypt. To punish them God sent a plague of deadly, fiery serpents; the people repented and cried for mercy. God instructed Moses to make an image of a serpent and to hold it up in the midst of the camp; those who looked upon the serpent were healed. That story much impressed the Israelites. But the Jews themselves were always a little puzzled by this incident in view of the fact that they were absolutely forbidden to make graven images. The rabbis explained it this way: "It was not the serpent that gave life. So long as Moses lifted up the serpent, they believed in Him who had commanded Moses to act thus. It was God who healed them." The healing power lay not in the brazen serpent; it was only a symbol to turn their thoughts to God; and when they did that, they were healed.

### **Responsorial Psalm: 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9: "O that today you would listen to His voice! Harden not your hearts."**

Throughout history we people have rebelled against God, He has always remained faithful in His loving mercy. Of course, we should not abuse His loyalty by continuing to offend Him.

### 2<sup>ND</sup> READING: PHILIPPIANS 2. 6-11

Scholars believe that this was an early Christianity hymn, sung during worship. In this the Son of God reverses Adam's pride and disobedience in striving to become equal to God. Instead of growing in status he let himself down. Through sin Adam entered a downward spiral of self-destruction. This hymn states that though Son is equal to His Heavenly Father He 'emptied' Himself of His divine glory and took the form of a slave, totally obedient to His Heavenly Father and totally serving our need for salvation. He adopted our human condition and He even went lower than this, by submitting to one of the most terribly degrading and painful forms of death, by crucifixion. Because of this self-giving and self-emptying, the Father has raised Him up, has "exalted" Him so that the name of Jesus is now honoured above every other name, and before which every knee should bend in deep adoration and confess Jesus as Lord.

### GOSPEL: JOHN 3. 13-17

In today's Gospel Jesus compares being 'lifted up' on the Cross to the incident of the Brazen Serpent as described in the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading. This foreshadowed God's healing mercy, achieved through Christ's death on the cross. In a much more radical way, Jesus, too, is lifted up **"so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life"**. We can receive this life only because Jesus' has sacrificed His own life on the Cross. That is a sign of His Father's love and mercy for everyone who puts His faith in His Crucified Son. The word 'Exaltation' in the name of today's feast means both a physical 'lifting up' and also a rise in status, glory. In John's Gospel Jesus says that He, being "lifted up," will draw all peoples to Himself. In this Gospel, above all others, the crucified Christ was triumphant, glorious, exalted. He certainly was not a tragic, defeated failure!

### NEXT SUNDAY –

### XXV SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIMES (YEAR A) - FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

*"Expect much of God, and he will do much for you."*

St Bernard of Clairvaux

"There is no surer means of calling down God's blessing upon the family than the daily recitation of the Rosary."

Pope Pius XII

# THE WORD AT WORK: OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

## EXALTATION OF THE CROSS

What a crazy thing to do –to glorify in the brutal instrument used to execute a criminal! And yet that is what we Christians do. We have crucifixes in our homes and wear them round our necks. But Paul tells us that the folly of the cross defies the wisdom of human reason. Not that the pain of Christ's crucifixion was good in itself. It was brutal and unjust. And he was no masochist, who delighted in suffering. The Romans crucified many people –a thousand at one time on the Appian Way, when they crushed Spartacus' slave revolt. Though they were martyrs for the cause of freedom, their execution did not have the same meaning and effect as Christ's.

Christ used his death on the cross as the means to saving the world from the power of sin and death. Far from being defeated as a tragic, misguided failure Christ was triumphantly enthroned as king of heaven and earth, on the very instrument, which was meant to humiliate and destroy him –the cross. Pilate condemned him as king; the Roman soldiers crowned him with thorns and mocked him. The crowds taunted this crucified king. Even in mockery they were all so right in calling Jesus 'king,' but none of them understood the nature of his sovereignty.

That's the triumph of the goodness of love over the evil of hatred. Not force of arms, but the power of love and mercy -those were His weapons. By dying He has destroyed the power of death, and opened the way for us to share His divine life. As Jesus hung upon the cross it was as though, as man, He stretched out one hand to His Heavenly Father, and as God, He stretched the other hand to us sinners. In His crucified person Jesus drew God and us sinners together in love. Paul speaks of Christ reconciling us to God through the blood of the cross.

In his Gospel John has Jesus expressing the Exaltation of the Cross by using the phrase 'Lifted up.' This harks back to Isaiah's Suffering Servant of the Lord who would be raised up as the triumphant saviour of the world. The phrase 'Lifted up' also harks back to the brazen serpent, which Moses raised up in the desert, as a sign of God's healing mercy for those who looked upon it and repented for their sins. Now Christ, lifted up on the cross, is the source of God's mercy for all who believe in Him. When He is raised on high, triumphantly on the cross, He will draw us up with Him to share in His victory over evil. Then, indeed, we will know that He is the God of infinite love, mercy and power –our saviour. No one but God could show such sublime, crazy love as to become one of us, allow us to crucify Him –simply because He loves us and judged that was the best way to enable us sinners to share His divine life and happiness. To the unbeliever the crucifixion is sheer madness; to the believe the cross is the sign of the wonder of God's love, which defies human logic.

On Good Friday we sing the hymn, 'Vexilla Regis' - 'Abroad the regal banner flies.' That proclaims our loyalty to the crucified, yet triumphant Christ. Under the Sign of the Cross we join Him in His battle against evil and march triumphantly with Him to His Heavenly Kingdom. The cross gives us our identity as followers of Christ. Not that we glory in suffering, nor do we honour the cross as a means of brutal execution. To do so would be sick! But we venerate the cross as the means whereby the Son of God saved the world. That's why we raise the cross on high and humbly thank God.

On the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross let us exclaim with St. Paul, "**may I never boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.**" (Gal. 6. 14).

Happy Feast!