



HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 4TH FEBRUARY 2018

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

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

A WORD FROM THE PRIOR ...

In Ireland we always say that Brigid brings the Spring, and having celebrated her feast day and Candlemas during the week, it's starting to feel like springtime! I had several celebrations of Candlemas in the last week, as we conducted Year 8 Form Masses at English Martyrs School; we also had a wonderful celebration of St Thomas Aquinas with the 6th Form.

Lent is rapidly approaching, with Ash Wednesday falling on 14 February this year. A certain irony has been alluded to, in that Ash Wednesday is on Valentines Day and Easter Sunday on April Fools! So it's the time of year to start thinking about our observance of Lent and our journey towards Easter.

Next week, we will celebrate Our Lady of Lourdes with a special Mass to mark World Day of the Sick. Please take note of the details of Fr Fabian's retirement celebrations as we prepare to offer him a huge "thank you" for everything he's done for us over the years. Please continue to keep our senior brethren in your prayers, and thanks for all you do to support us.

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

Fr David

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION FOR THE EASTER SEASON

RCIA – This is the sacramental programme which prepares adults to receive the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist). It is also the means by which we prepare baptised adults for Confirmation and Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church Please contact us on leicester@english.op.org or call the office if you are interested.

CHURCH LIGHTING PROJECT MAKING PROGRESS

Work on the church lighting is now at an advanced stage, and so disruption to our regular programme of Masses etc is now changing on a daily basis. The Blessed Sacrament will be removed from the Church on Sunday evening, as work is now underway in the sanctuary area. Again, we are grateful for your patience.

ST BLAISE – 3 FEBRUARY – BLESSING OF THROATS

Saturday, 3 February, is the memorial of St Blaise. The traditional blessing of throats will take place at all Masses this weekend.

CITY OF SANCTUARY

We are very grateful to Catriona from City of Sanctuary who spoke to us last weekend about the important work they do here at Holy Cross with refugees and asylum seekers.

FRASSATI SOCIETY

Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati is a Dominican and a patron for young people. There is some interest in forming a group that would work with young Catholics (between 20 and 40 years). An initial meeting – Friday 2 March at 7pm in the Hall.

NOTICE BOARD

BAPTISM PREPARATION

If you wish to have your child baptised, please attend one of our baptism preparation sessions. The next is Sunday 4 February 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 will begin in the next few weeks.

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

FR FABIAN RADCLIFFE - RETIREMENT

In his 90th year, and following 58 years of faithful service as a priest, Fr Fabian will retire from active ministry at the beginning of Lent this year. He will still remain part of our community, and we look forward to having him around, but he will no longer celebrate Mass in public, hear confessions, or look after groups, etc. We wish him well for the years ahead, and we are grateful for the 30 years of service that he has given here at Holy Cross. There is a card into which you can write good wishes. There will be a special Mass of Thanksgiving in the Church on Saturday 17 February to mark the end of his ministry, followed by a reception in the Hall. Please do come along.

HOLY CROSS SOCIAL GROUP

This Sunday February 4 you are very welcome to join us in St. Clement's Hall for:

- Breakfast Club - after the 8am Mass; bacon/egg baps, tea/coffee/juice/croissants.
- Meet for a Treat - after the 10.30 Mass; cake, tea/coffee/juice.

Free of charge! See you there!

Holy Cross Social Group continues every Tuesday in St. Clement's Hall - doors open from 6.00-8.00pm. A great opportunity to meet for a chat and a bite to eat.

LEICESTER CATHOLIC STUDENTS

Thanks to all those who helped organise the sessions with Brenden Thompson. There will be a further session this week starting with food at 7pm, in St Clement's Hall.

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

We will mark the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, and World Day of Prayer for the Sick, with a special Mass for Healing on Saturday 10 February at 12:30pm. We would hope to bless the hands of all those who are part of the caring profession. Please let us know in the sacristy if you would like to have your hands blessed. There will be a Lourdes procession following the 10:30am Mass on Sunday 11 February.

CATHOLICISM 101

The popular series will resume next Thursday for a further six sessions.

PARISH SHOP

Our Parish Shop is open each weekend, and every day after the 12.30pm Mass, come along and have a look at what wonderful items we have available. This is an excellent way of helping the church and priory.

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

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:

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:

£ 1,607.21

(Gift aided: £666.72)

Woodhouse Collection

£145.00

(Gift aided: £111.00)

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT!*

THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FIRST READING -

How Job is a fascinating character and, like Ecclesiastes, he is loved more and more. Today's reading contains his famous reflection on the condition of people on earth. Life is nothing but pain. Man is a slave subjected to enormous sacrifices from which he derives no benefit. He is a laborer who toils from dawn to dusk in a field not his own, bears the scorching heat of the sun in the distressing wait for the evening to arrive (vv. 2-3). Job considers himself even more unfortunate than a slave, unhappier than the laborer. These seem to be privileged: during the night they rest from their labors, while he not even finds relief in sleep. Distraught by pain he tosses and turns in bed until dawn (v. 4). The hope of a change in his condition is a vain illusion. The years pass quickly, like a puff and he has no choice but to conclude sadly: *"My eyes will never see happiness again!"* (vv. 6-8). Why has God put him in such a desperate situation? Why did he let him be born if he was only going to have pain and misfortunes? Job is not resigned; he does not suffer in silence. He gives vent to his grief before the Lord and asking him to explain the reason for his afflictions and calamities. His cry almost scares us, it seems a rebellion, blasphemy. Instead, it is prayer.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Response: Praise the Lord who heals the broken hearted.

SECOND READING

Writing to the Corinthians, Paul reminds Christians of their duty to assist the apostles: *"Those announcing the Gospel live from the Gospel"* (1 Cor 9:14), as Jesus taught: *"Workers deserve their living"* (Mt 10:10). In practice, however, it is not always easy to apply this principle because, due to human weakness, abuses creep in. Anyone can use this right to enrich, to acquire privileges, to lead a comfortable life. There is also a danger that the community's leaders behave as "servants of the sacred" and carry out their ministry with passion, generosity and selflessness of those who are really in love with the gospel, but as employees who work in view of salary. When recording such behaviour, even the most eloquent and prepared preachers lose credibility; This is why Jesus recommended, indeed, enjoins his disciples: *"You received this as a gift, so give it as a gift"* (Mt 10:8). To avoid these risks, Paul states that at times the evangelizer must be ready to give up his right to support from the community. This decision must be taken when suspicion may arise that the preaching of the word of God may be motivated by ulterior motives. This is what he and Barnabas have done: they lived by working with their hands. They continued to carry out their profession without being a burden to anyone.

GOSPEL

When addressing the issue of evil, it is essential to distinguish between moral evil and physical evil. Man is the real culprit of the first. He can also commit heinous crimes. Auschwitz cannot be blamed on God, but those who have arrived to such abuses. The problem remains open: Can God intervene or not in human history? If he can, why does he not intervene? Only those who have struck out omnipotence from the attributes of God find answer to this question. The real puzzle is constituted by evil that does not depend on man: natural disasters, genetic diseases, death. How can God allow these misfortunes? The objection often turned to the believer is: "Tell your God that this is impossible. Either he has nothing to do with the bad or he is very bad." In today's Gospel Jesus is confronted with evil. He does not seek and gives no theological explanations. He does not wonder why misfortune, illness and pain exist in the world. Faced with the tragedies of the world it is useless to blame God or people. The only thing to do is to be at the side of those who suffer and struggle with all our strength against evil.

NEXT SUNDAY:

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR B)

"The law of freedom teaches the whole truth. Many read about it in a theoretical way, but few really understand it, and these only in the degree to which they practice the commandments."

St. Mark the Ascetic

THE WORD AT WORK – OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

POOR OLD JOB!

Fr Leo Edgar OP says that Job is a sign of God's confidence in us, and understanding Job is excellent preparation for Lent.

Poor old Job! You can't help feeling sorry for the man. Despite all his protestations and prayers, God seems to be ignoring his requests!

Why, I wonder, does the Church introduce us to Job's suffering so early in this year's Liturgical Calendar, and so close to the beginning of Lent in ten days time? A reading from the prophet Job only appears once in the Sunday scripture readings, so why now? If my memory serves me right, before the Second Vatican Council changes, we never got to hear the story of Job at all.

Poor old Job!

The story told in the Book of Job relates how God allowed him to be tested by Satan. This blameless and upright man is handed over to Satan by God to put him to the test. The whole passage seems to be a battle, a divine battle, between God's certainty of victory over Satan, and Satan's determination not to stop testing Job. No matter how tedious and odious the test can be, we are continually confronted with the power of God's love for Job.

The same is true for us! God is so confident that we can overcome the temptations set us by the devil, that he never gives up on us, even at times when we might be tempted to give up on ourselves! It is important for us to remember this, particularly at those moments in our lives when doubts might creep in, or we might question how much longer we must keep struggling, not only with matters of faith, but even with matters of life itself. A bit like Job, we can be caught between the slowness of the passing night, and the restless, seemingly endless waiting for twilight to fall, as the day begins to come to an end.

But read on! What we notice in the passage about Job's desperate appeal to God, is a seemingly introverted attitude towards his situation. He's feeling sorry for himself, a feeling perhaps shared by many of us from time to time!

Part of the challenge of Ash Wednesday, and the whole of the Lenten season, is to take stock of our lives as followers of Christ, and to examine the depth of our commitment to living our lives as Christ lived – or at least trying to! To what extent are we, like Job, subject to bouts of self-pity; of a feeling of being harshly treated in life, and in need of God's intervention to make things better?

In order to address the question effectively, one needs to discover, I think, to what extent one has been infected by the so-called "Fake News" that seems to permeate so much of today's false teaching in matters regarding one's relationship with the supernatural, influencing not only one's understanding of the ills of the world in which we live, but also of the goodness of the Creator of that world.

In his appraisal of God's goodness, Job is torn between the understanding of a God who punishes the wrongdoer, but rewards the one who lives according to God's laws; an understanding shared by many of his contemporary friends (Eliphaz, Bildah and Zophar) who try to console him and advise him in his plight, but not very successfully. They only partly succeed in this, as Job has to discover for himself God's goodness and mercy in order to "live happily ever after", his health restored, his children and possessions once again replaced by God in the latter part of the story.

Reading Job is a good preparation for us as we approach another Lent.