



HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 24TH JUNE

THE NATIVITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

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

A WORD FROM THE PRIOR ...

This week, we bring you news of "comings and goings" at the Priory, and how you can be involved! There's plenty of excitement around, with football and what not.

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

Fr David

COMINGS AND GOINGS AT HOLY CROSS

We are very grateful to Fr Robert, who has remained with us for almost two months following his election as prior in our Oxford Community. He will take up permanent residence there from Wednesday 4 July. Next Sunday he will celebrate Mass at 10:30am after which there will be a reception. There is also a farewell evening to which you are invited.

Through Fr Robert, our Oxford Community have also arranged a series of visiting priests to come here during the summer to tie things over. We are very grateful to Fr Robert for facilitating this amongst his many other duties.

Fr Gregory Pearson has arrived at Holy Cross, returning from Rome for the summer months. He will be a very welcome addition to our team over the next few months, before returning to Rome in the autumn to resume his studies

Fr Provincial has indicated that he intends to assign a priest to replace Fr Robert in the very near future. When the details are finalised, we will let you all know, and look forward to welcoming him amongst us and supporting his ministry.

Thanks for all your support!

CELEBRATION FOR FATHER ROBERT – FRIDAY FROM 7:15PM

This Friday night, from 7:15pm, there will be a social celebration to say a warm "thank you" to Fr Robert for all he has done amongst us this past number of years. It will be an evening of fun, punctuated with food, drink, and Irish music from the local Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann group, so we might even have a song! Please do come along and wish Fr Robert all the best. At present, Fr Robert is busy with concluding his responsibilities in Leicester, writing his MA, and preparing to move. Please do understand that he is no longer available for other appointments.

BREAKFAST CLUB AND CAKE SALE

Next Sunday – Bacon Rolls etc after 8am Mass, and a cake sale in aid of Precious Life after 10:30am Mass.

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

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 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 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

THE WORD AT WORK: OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

BIRTHDAY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

In preaching there are many pitfalls, the most obvious being to prepare the wrong sermon. That's what I nearly did for this weekend, when I took it for granted that I'd have to preach about the readings for the 12th Sunday of Ordinary Time. But I happened to look in the liturgical calendar, where I discovered that this weekend we're celebrating the birth of John the Baptist. My Guardian Angel must have been looking after me!

The Church must consider this feast very important for it to supplant the Sunday liturgy. According to the Vatican Council that's only supposed to happen on very special occasions. And there's something else that's extraordinary about today's feast. Every other saint's feast day celebrates his or her death -when the saint entered heaven. The Church only celebrates the birthdays of Jesus, Mary and John the Baptist. He's certainly in the most distinguished and illustrious company!

So what's so special about John the Baptist's birth? Sometimes in the OT, when God had a special task for someone, there was something unusual about his birth –a problem which God alone could solve. This was usually a question of the parents being unable to have children. We have the examples of Abraham and Sarah, through whose descendents God would fulfil His covenant. Then there are the mothers of Samuel and Samson; then there are the elderly parents of John the Baptist, and finally the virgin Mary, the mother of our saviour. In each of these examples God specially intervened in the conception of those He had chosen for a very special task.

So what was John the Baptist's special God-given task? Quite simply God chose him to go ahead to '**Prepare the way of the Lord.**' His task was to prepare people for God's coming in judgement, and to call them to repentance. Only then would they be ready to receive the forgiveness which Christ alone could give. While John preached a baptism of repentance Jesus would preach a baptism of forgiveness.

And when Jesus did come John had two tasks to perform. Firstly, and surprisingly he baptised Jesus Himself, as the Lord identified with sinful humanity and took upon Himself the burden of all our guilt –a burden which He would carry and remove by His death on the cross. Next, while all the other prophets had foretold the coming of the Messiah, John the Baptist proclaimed, '**There he is. Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.**' Luke's Gospel tells us that John leapt for joy in his mother's womb, at the presence of our unborn saviour. Even then John witnessed to Christ. John witnessed to Christ not only by his preaching, but also, and especially by his martyrdom, which foreshadowed Christ's crucifixion. Such was John's popularity that he could have tried to compete with Jesus, or he might have resented being supplanted. But John was prepared to slip into the background after he'd completed his God-given mission. His guiding principle was, '**He –Jesus –must increase. I must decrease.**'

John marked the transition between the old and new testament. Like John the Baptist, The Church and each of us, must prepare for the way of the Lord to come into days world. As our words and deeds witness to him, he must increase, and we must decrease. Like John, were called to promote Jesus not ourselves.

Isidore O.P.

Collections last week:

Main Collection: £1,439.48

Day for Life: £488.27

Woodhouse: £186.50

Thanks for your generosity!