



HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 17TH FEBRUARY 2019

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

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

A WORD FROM THE PRIOR ...

Valentine's Day has been and gone. No flowers for me in the post this year again. But the spring flowers are coming through. They need to be attended to (esp. the Spanish strain of bluebells). I'll be out in the Priory Garth again soon, hopefully more able than I was last summer, and getting ready to welcome my summer roses!

We're planning lots of things at the moment. Like the garden, it's all a bit of a mystery to so many. Please do come along to our Irish evening on 2 March to find out more. We're trying to launch something very exciting. You need to be there to see it!

As always, there is so much happening around us. Our RCIA group are preparing their next stage of the journey as we look forward to Lent and the Rite of Election. The whole process of Easter is before us, and we have many things to look forward to in the events that are scheduled each week.

Please do look through our events, and get involved with the range of things that are happening.

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

Fr David

VANDALISM IN THE CHURCH AND PRIORY

Recently there has been much controversy in the press regarding our erection of security grilles on the lower level windows of the church and priory. We had no choice but to take these measures, as expenditure on window replacement as a result of repeated and consistent vandalism runs over £10k at present. Following meetings with Leicester City Council, we have agreed a suitable way forward, which means that the security provided by the grilles remains in place until alternative arrangements can be made. While we are disappointed that some of our neighbours on New Walk, and some of the businesses that operate in the vicinity, have been hostile and confrontational, we hope that our openness to addressing the issues will be fruitful in the longer term.

RCIA GROUP PREPARES FOR LENT

As we move into the weeks before the beginning of Lent, we pray for all those in our RCIA group who are preparing to complete the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil. Lent begins on Wednesday 6 March this year.

THE FRASSATI CENTRE – A NEW DEVELOPMENT

As we approach 200 years of our ministry on this site, we have been developing plans for redeveloping our buildings and extending our outreach. Part of that is the establishment of the Frassati Centre. We want to creatively reimagine the space in the original church and school buildings to make a pastoral resource for the 21st Century. There will be much more news about this in the weeks to come, so do please watch this space, and lend your support! Already, plans and schedules are in an advanced stage of preparation. **The launch date, with all the plans and news of how things will develop from here, is set for the weekend of 2/3 March. We hope to see you there.**

NOTICE BOARD

BAPTISM PREPARATION

If you wish to have your child baptised, please attend one of our baptism preparation sessions. The next will be in 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 on 16 January.

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

SATURDAY 2 MARCH 2018 – LAUNCH OF THE FRASSATI CENTRE

We invite you to join us for a social evening on Saturday 2 March, to learn more about our plans for the Frassati Centre and how we will mark our 200th Anniversary. Irish stew will be served, and music provided by the Leicester branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, so please bring an instrument or join in the ceili dancing. Tickets will be £5 per person. Please help us to share the news in the coming weeks.

BREAKFAST CLUB AND MEET FOR A TREAT – SUNDAY 3RD MARCH

Breakfast Club meets in St Clement's Hall, after the 8.00 Mass. Come and be part of our friendly community and enjoy bacon and egg baps.

Meet for a Treat takes place in the Parish Hall after the 10.30 Mass - bring and share amazing muffins!!

Both events are free of charge, with tea, coffee and juice provided

For more information, contact hcross.social@gmail.com

CALLING ALL CATHOLIC STUDENTS!

There will be a social gathering for students following the Mass at 7pm today. There will be pizza and a quiz! We hope to see you there!

USE OF THE PRIORY ORGANS

We are currently inundated with requests for organists who wish to use our organs for practice. While we want to support this, we also need to safeguard the church as a place for prayer and reflection. We are now requesting that organ practice does not take place on Sundays, so that the church may be reserved for prayer. Those who wish to practice the organ on other days may do so by arrangement with the Prior and Chapter, in collaboration with the Director of Music, Mr Keogh. This request must be accompanied by a reference from an accredited music teacher. Thank you for your co-operation.

FR ISIDORE AND FR FABIAN

As a Dominican Community, we are very grateful for the presence of these two very dear brothers in our lives and for their immense contribution to Holy Cross over quite a number of years. However, we are now forced to face the reality that both gentlemen are seriously ill. Thankfully, as a parish community, we were able to mark Fr Isidore's Diamond Jubilee in 2017, and Fr Fabian's retirement celebration back in February was a very memorable occasion. We also have happy memories of a private celebration of Fr Fabian's 90th Birthday in May. Both gentlemen are grateful for your prayers and good wishes. Respectfully, we now ask that parishioners refrain from asking to visit with them. This is to allow both men the opportunity to reflect on their situations and to embrace their challenges with the support of their brethren, families, and close friends. Many thanks for your continued prayers.

ENCOUNTERING THE WORD: SCRIPTURE STUDY OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Our scripture study sessions with Fr Matthew commence again in February on Thursday evenings at 7pm, continuing on 21 February. Please share the flyers.

THE DOMINICAN COMMUNITY

Fr David Rocks OP PP *Prior* Fr Tony Rattigan OP *Bursar*;
Fr Nicholas Crowe OP *Subprior*; Fr Matthew Jarvis OP *CC*

Office Administrator: *Mrs Rachael Powell* – leicester.admin@english.op.org

Lay University Chaplain: *vacant*

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:

£ 1109.08

(Gift aided: £444.00)

Woodhouse Collection

£ 139.00

(Gift aided: £68.00)

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT!*

THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

BLESSED ARE YOU WHO ARE POOR

A THOUGHT FOR THIS SUNDAY

Today's Gospel calls us to be a people of radical Christian hope. The Evangelist paints an image of Jesus looking at up at those who have gathered to hear him and sharing with them a prophetic message, one that pricks my conscience every time I hear it. To become a people of Christian hope, we are called to walk alongside those who are economically poor, that, together, we might realize what theologian Ada María Isasi-Díaz described as the Kingdom of God. For Isasi-Díaz, the Kingdom of God frees us from oppressive practices in favour of enfleshing what it truly is to be an egalitarian and interdependent spiritual family. To become a people of Christian hope, we are called to feed the hungry, to comfort the afflicted, even to afflict the comfortable. To become a people of Christian hope, we are called to stand with the economically poor and those who are afflicted—not as voices for the voiceless, but as those who make space for the voices of the afflicted to emerge, to speak their truth, to be heard and heeded. We are called to stand with the economically poor and the afflicted, even if it causes some among us to denounce us and to hate us, as the Evangelist tells us in today's Gospel. It is increasingly tempting for those of us who are economically comfortable to stop paying attention right here, to concern ourselves with other matters. However, Jesus has choice words for us, as well. These words echo the radical reversal we heard first in the Magnificat, that prophetic song of praise Mary shares after she consents to giving birth to the infant Jesus.

– Jennifer Owens Jofre @catholicwomenspeak.com

Responsorial Psalm: Happy the man who has placed his trust in the Lord!

THE WISDOM OF THE SAINTS OF THE CHURCH

The word of God is a tree of life that offers us blessed fruit from each of its branches. It is like that rock which was struck open in the wilderness, from which all were offered spiritual drink. As the Apostle says: *They ate spiritual food and they drank spiritual drink.*

And so whenever anyone discovers some part of the treasure, he should not think that he has exhausted God's word. Instead he should feel that this is all that he was able to find of the wealth contained in it. Nor should he say that the word is weak and sterile or look down on it simply because this portion was all that he happened to find. But precisely because he could not capture it all he should give thanks for its riches.

– *From a commentary on the Diatessaron by Saint Ephraem, deacon*

CONTEMPORARY WITNESS

To become a Christian is to be inserted into a new history; to be a Christian is to live that history out in the midst of a history that we are leaving behind. In the midst of competing values and tyrannies, the Christian life is a life lived in accordance with the values of the coming Kingdom of Heaven. That is why a Christian life is always already a life of witness: we stand out because our way of life is from the future, and is therefore both timely and timeless at the same time. Yet this is no gamble on our part. We do not have to negotiate the absence of leadership, nor are we wagering our lives on a future that is uncertain. Christ is already sovereign, he presides over our lives and has definitively inaugurated the future Kingdom that we are living from. But we are still not quite in full possession of ourselves, we continually have to receive our present identities afresh from our future, who is Christ. We are, here and now, already living a life that is not yet fully manifested, and our lives are spent constantly catching up with our futures.

– Fr Oliver Keenan OP

NEXT SUNDAY:
SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR C)

“The higher we go, the better we shall hear the voice of Christ.”

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati OP

AS BLESSED AS THE POOR

WHEN WE ARE POOR, THEN WE ARE RICH!

Our late brother Fr Piers reflects on the challenge presented to all of us by the presence of the poor amongst us, whoever they are

First we have set aside the more familiar 'beatitudes' found in Matthew's gospel. 'Blessed are the poor in spirit'. Matthew gives us a spiritualised, set of attitudes. To discover the more material, gritty slant of Luke we need to work out what sort of congregation he has in mind.

By the time the Gospels were written, the new congregations that had sprung up were city dwellers. Luke was clearly an educated man. This implies that his family were of some standing because education was expensive. Whereabouts did Luke write? In a city outside the Holy Land certainly. Antioch is one suggestion - possible but not provable. What were his church members like?

The lives of peasants in Galilee where Jesus centred much of his ministry were precarious. They were peasants dependent on what bare subsistence they could wring from a plot of land, not of the best - the local rich controlled the best arable land. The average peasant was crushed by the rent he had to pay on his plot and by excessive taxes of various kinds. He was at the mercy of locusts, famine and every misfortune possible. He died young - forty if he was lucky. His wife was exposed to the hazards of childbirth. Widows and orphans were common.

But urban life was no soft option - there was a vast gap in wealth between a very small minority and the average city dweller whose existence was fully as precarious as a peasant's. Writing to the Corinthians, Paul says 'Consider, brothers, how you were called; not many of you are wise by human standards, not many influential, not many from noble families' (1 Cor 1.26). The implication is that a few disciples were well off and distinguished.

Suppose that Luke's city congregation had a few well-placed members (including Luke!) but were mainly poor. Most of Luke's congregation were dependent on finding such work as was available on a day to day basis - their situation was akin to the labourers in the vineyard. If unlucky on a particular day, there might be no food on the table. Those too crippled, worn out or handicapped even to seek such work would be forced to beg. These would be not just poor but destitute. There were many who were homeless. Their health no better than a peasant's, their lifespan equally short.

What of the few members of the congregation who were better-off? Their support of the life of the congregation would be very necessary - and also difficult far beyond any financial aspects. By joining the despised and disreputable Christians they would be stigmatised and shunned by their well-off friends and lose whatever power they had formerly enjoyed. There would be no more exchanges of banquets and the like social events. Luke himself would surely have experience of such deprivations.

Luke's Beatitudes are addressed to two sections of his church. Many were destitute, hungry, mourning and despised by the local population. At the economic level they are certainly not blessed. Yet Luke calls them blessed!

But of the rich (potentially ex-rich?!), Luke's Gospel is very demanding. They could foresee a future of being in very changed circumstances. What they lost by their discipleship would be doubly hard to bear. Being a disciple and living up to Jesus's exacting demands could beggar them. Was this too much for some of them to face? The Gospel directs the four woes at them. Rich, well-fed, laughing you rich may well be now but what would you be if you heeded the call to discipleship? You might take the beatitudes to yourselves then and also be paradoxically be as blessed as the poor!