

Reasonable faith?

Last week I was struck by a curious convergence: on the 28th January – while the Church, and especially the Dominicans, were celebrating St Thomas Aquinas, others, especially in the media, were also engaged in an act of remembering – holocaust memorial day, given particular poignancy this year, the 70th from the liberation of the death camps, by the frailty of those few survivors still able to bear witness to the abominable treatment of man by man. Why curious? Well, Aquinas stood for above all, and dedicated his considerable efforts towards, holding together faith and reason. In his view reason, properly used, guides us to God. In contrast, the death camps can be seen as a triumph of unreason, a moral black hole where the norms of human existence had become abolished, a place of literal non-sense. This is what comes out most strongly in the memoirs of those who survived – for example, Primo Levi, Elie Wiesel, Imre Kertesz and Otto Dov Kulka, to name a few of the most prominent – that they were caught up in a satanic black comedy in which nothing made sense any more. Yet, as their survival attests, some were able to retain their humanity even in the most inhumane conditions imaginable. And those who survived did so, it seems, for two reasons: finding within themselves a sense of personal identity or commitment to a belief that refused the destructive absurdity of their environment, while (especially the young) receiving acts of kindness from fellow prisoners whose humanity had not been crushed.

What is the lesson of this history for us? As Catholic Christians we can view this as the consequence of one of the two destructive idolatries which enslaved a generation of Europeans in the middle of the last century, and in which, with some honourable exceptions, many Catholics were to some extent complicit. How much are our own responses to the events of our own times conditioned unreflectingly by the dominant ideas in current debates? Recently there has been a worrying rise in hostility to those who are different: to immigrants, who may not yet be at home in our language and culture, and to those of other beliefs, especially Muslims and Jews. One of the things that seems common to all destructive extremism is that it is driven by fear – fear of those whose differences challenge us and make us feel vulnerable; fear that this society is hostile and has no room for us, threatens our identity. We too can feel threatened by a secularist mindset that can only view religion, any religion, as primitive, threatening and dangerous. One common response in the secular media to the recent atrocities in Paris was to view (any) religious belief as a threat to reason, to modern society itself. We have no room for complacency here – the recent genocide in Rwanda, after all, was perpetrated by Catholics on Catholics.

The impulse to faith and religion is one of the deepest sources of our sense of our selves, of our personal identity. Yet it cannot be unaffected by the insecurities and aggressions that stain us, that condition of alienation, from God and each other, that we call sin. Faith, unexamined or blind, can all too easily collapse into idolatry. It can bring out the worst in us, rather than the best, can corrupt us rather than bringing us to perfection in virtue and grace. Faith, as Pope Benedict reminded us, has to be purified by reason. Forms of religious identity that are in principle opposed to critical enquiry and reasoned exploration become what Pope Francis calls ‘deviant forms of religion’ – bad and dangerous, fearful and uncertain, and disposed to violence instead of life-enhancing. These are hard and difficult questions, yet we must wrestle with them if we are to respond faithfully to the God of mercy who calls us to love. The constant thread running through Holy Scripture is that we must convert our hearts, turn away from the fear that gives rise to violence and intolerance and learn to love. Jesus tells us that perfect love casts out fear, and shows us how we are to learn to do so. As we approach our annual time of reconversion in the holy season of Lent let’s pray that God will guide us in using this time to purify our hearts.

Greg OP

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year B

8 February 2015

The Newsletter of HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH, LEICESTER

www.holycrossleicester.org



Entrance Antiphon: O come, let us worship God and bow low before the God who made us, for he is the Lord our God.

At 11am – page nos in Missale:

- Mass Ordinary, p 13; Mass Proper, p 118
- Sung setting: *Missa Dominicalis Viadana*; Credo III, p 210
- Communion motet: *O nata lux Tallis*

1st Reading: Job 7: 1-4. 6-7

Psalm 147: Praise the Lord who heals the brokenhearted. (Ps 147)

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 9:16-19. 22-23

Alleluia 7: Christ took our infirmities and bore our diseases.

Gospel: Mark 1:29-39

Communion Antiphon: *Either:* Let them thank the Lord for his mercy, his wonders for the children of men for he satisfies the thirsty soul, and the hungry he fills with good things.
Or: Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be consoled. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall have their fill

Baptism Preparation: the next session is on **1 March**; please come to the sacristy at the end of the 9.30am Mass. If you wish to have your child baptised at Holy Cross, you need to attend one of these sessions, usually held on the first Sunday of each month.

The new 10.30 Mass will start on Shrove Sunday, NEXT SUNDAY, 15 February

On 15 February we will begin our new Sunday Mass schedule, with the new combined morning Mass at 10.30am. This is the coming together of two long-standing Eucharistic Communities in charity and friendship. Next Sunday we want to have a “bring and share” lunch after this Mass, and we hope that pancakes will be served! We are involved in a process of organising and developing the various ministries around this new Eucharistic Community.

The demolition of New Walk Centre is scheduled for Sunday 22 February. We are outside the exclusion zone, so it will be business as usual at Holy Cross. Billy Young, the Demolition Project Manager, has met with Fr David and is working on a strategy to manage car parking. He will visit next Sunday morning, 15 February, to answer questions. We will also have a number of police and sentries allied to us and our concerns on the day. Fr David would be grateful if some parishioners would volunteer to help manage things at Holy Cross on the day. **Please do come to Mass on this Sunday at Holy Cross!**

SAFEGUARDING. The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is a top priority at Holy Cross, and it is the responsibility of all of us to ensure that we are a safe and nurturing community. Please do not allow children to visit the toilet unaccompanied by an adult relative. The building is vulnerable to hide-and-seek or keen explorers, so please – straight there and straight back with an adult relative. **Thank you all for your co-operation on this most important matter.**

MONEY MATTERS: Last Weekend's collections – Offertory Collection £1196.94 (of which £327.50 was Gift Aided and £869.44 was not) and in addition the parish receives approximately £240 per week in donations made by standing order, nearly all of which are Gift Aided; SVP £4.23; Friends of Holy Cross £13.93; Holy Souls £47.34; Grenada Church Restoration £ - .

Very many thanks for your continuing generosity.

The sacrifice of the Mass. There will be a St Thomas Aquinas Study Weekend at St Dominic's Convent, Stone, Staffordshire ST15 8EN, with Fr Richard Ounsworth OP and Sr Valery Walker OP from 20 to 22 February. Contact Sr Valery Walker on valerywalker@yahoo.co.uk or 01785 812091. Suggested donation £150 residential (students and unwaged £50); daily £5 per talk, lunch £5.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of **Martin McKeown**, youngest child of Danny and Mary McKeown. He died on 22 January and his funeral will be at Gilroes on 10 February at 1.30pm.

The Leicester Theological Society's next talk will be given on **Friday 13 February** by Richard Gill, President of the Society, and entitled "Parables". Meetings are held here at Holy Cross, in St Clement's Hall at 7:30pm. Visitors are welcome (£5; students no charge).

On-Street Car Parking. Charges did not apply last Sunday, and will not apply until the notices on the machines and roadside signs are altered. So, check the signs if parking in Wellington Street.

King Richard III. The refurbishment work to the walls and floor has begun. Areas of the church are being closed off, but normal service times are retained.

The Ballot process has begun for the Requiem Mass on Monday 23 March, to be celebrated here by Cardinal Vincent Nichols at 5pm. We will have a number of official guests present and people from around the country are asking to attend this historic event. Although our church is a good size, we cannot accommodate everyone wishing to come. Parishioners of Holy Cross will have a protected percentage of the places available. The only fair way to allocate these tickets is by a ballot of the applicants. A maximum of two tickets per application will be issued to the successful applicants. If you wish to attend this event please write your name, address, parish and diocese on a piece of paper and send with a stamped addressed envelope to: Richard III Event, Holy Cross Priory, 45 Wellington Street, Leicester LE1 6HW. It is also possible to apply by email to kriii@holycrossleicester.org giving all the information already stated when applying. The cut-off date is 25 February.

The Dominican Fathers will sing the Office of Vespers in Leicester Cathedral on Tuesday 24 March. All are welcome to attend this service at 5.30pm.

Rosmini Centre (LE7 4SJ). Saturday 14 February: "Unique features of the Consecrated Life", 11am to 2pm; presented by Sr Eileen Keane, Vicar for Religious of Nottingham Diocese; shared lunch; Mass at 10am. Please telephone 01509 813078 or email rosminicentreinfo@gmail.com. Donations appreciated to cover costs and stipends.

News from the Parish Shop. We celebrate St Patrick's Day in just over five weeks. We now stock cards, rosettes, lapel pins, rosary bracelets, key rings, etc for the occasion. Hurry while stocks last!



Today's Gospel: "Be quiet! Come out of him!" And the unclean spirit threw the man into convulsions and with a loud cry went out of him.

Year I	This week's calendar & Mass Intentions	Psalter Week 1
Sunday	Fifth Sunday per annum. Today is the Day for Victims of Trafficking. Vigil 18.10 <i>Pro populo</i> 8.00 † Mr Don Mannigan Sung 9.30 <i>Pro populo</i> Solemn 11.00 Antonio & Maureen Fernandes OP Rite 12.30 Brendan Kavanagh's intentions 19.00	
Monday	Feria OP Rite 8.00 12.30 Thanks to Our Lady of Fatima 18.10 † Dorothy Martinez	
Tuesday	St Scholastica, Virgin OP Rite 8.00 † Dead of the Order of Preachers 12.30 † Maria Lubek 18.10	
Wednesday	Our Lady of Lourdes. Today is World Day for people who are Sick OP Rite 8.00 † Jimmy Tunney (anniversary) 12.30 † Una Leonard 18.10 † Elizabeth Murphy	
Thursday	Bl Reginald of Orléans OP Rite 8.00 12.30 † Gonzaga Thacio Gonzales 18.10	
Friday	Bl Jordan of Saxony, Priest OP Rite 8.00 12.30 † Michael Fernandes 18.10	
Saturday	STS CYRIL, MONK, AND METHIDIUS, BISHOP, PATRONS OF EUROPE OP Rite 8.00 10.00 Karolina (intentions) 12.30 † Joe Broderick	
Next Sunday – Sixth Sunday per annum. Today is the Day for unemployed people. Readings:		
Leviticus 13:1-2.44-46	1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1	Mark 1:40-45

Donations of Food for Refugees and Asylum Seekers. We are really grateful for the parish's magnificent response to the appeal, but do please note that the only acceptable gifts of food are non perishables. Do please check the list which is published in the Newsletter from time to time, and which also appears on noticeboards. Last year someone gave a fresh beetroot – that had to be given away to someone else. This year someone gave three baked potatoes wrapped in tin foil. They were decomposing by the time we inspected them and I am sure a health hazard. Please don't give fresh fruit, vegetables, meat, fish and bread &c and please don't give cooked or frozen foods. The amounts you give are very satisfactory and most welcome, and we hope you can keep it up in this hard winter.

REGULAR SERVICE TIMES
SUNDAYS 8.00 Mass 9.00 Lauds 9.30 Mass - UNTIL 8 FEBRUARY 10.30 Mass - FROM 15 FEBRUARY 11.00 Mass - UNTIL 8 FEBRUARY 12.30 Mass (Dominican Rite) 18.00 Exposition, Rosary, Compline & Benediction 19.00 Mass
MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS 7.30 Lauds 8.00 Mass (Dominican Rite) 11.00*Devotions & Exposition 12.15*Benediction 12.30 Mass (Rosary at 12.00) 18.10 Mass followed by Vespers *WEDNESDAYS ONLY
SATURDAYS 8.00 Mass (Dominican Rite) 9.00 Lauds 10.00 Mass 10.30 Devotions & Exposition 10.30 Confessions until 11.30 12.30 Mass (Rosary at 12.00) 17.00 Confessions until 18.00 17.45 Vespers 18.10 Vigil Mass for Sunday
HOLYDAYS OF OBLIGATION 18.10 (previous day) Vigil Mass followed by Vespers 7.30 Lauds 8.00 Mass (Dominican Rite) 12.30 Mass 18.10 Mass followed by Vespers
BANK HOLIDAYS 7.30 Lauds 8.00 Mass (Dominican Rite) 12.30 Mass, after which the church is closed
Royal Infirmary Chaplaincy: For urgent visits, ask ward staff to bleep the Roman Catholic Chaplain. For non-urgent visits, leave a message at the Priory or at the LRI Chaplains' Office. Messages may not be picked up until the end of the day. Universities' Chaplain: Fr David Rocks: 0116 252 1512
Baptism Preparation: 1st Sunday of month after the 9.30 Mass. Baptisms: Saturday afternoons. Parish Website: www.holycrossleicester.org Website & Newsletter Editors: web@holycrossleicester.org holycrossnewsletter@gmail.com
CONTACT DETAILS Holy Cross Priory 45 Wellington Street, LE1 6HW Priory phone: 0116 255 3856 For home visits/recorded times of services: 0116 255 3856 Fax: 0116 255 5552 Parish Priest Fr David Rocks 0116 252 1512 leicester@english.op.org