



# HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2016

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR A

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

## FROM THE PRIOR'S DESK

*Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice! The familiar command on Gaudete Sunday, this Third Sunday of Advent, is that joyful command to rejoice. We are encouraged to make our preparations with joy, and to seek the face of Christ with hopeful longing, knowing and experiencing the fruits of our salvation.*

*There's no getting away from the fact that the time around Christmas is not so joyful for many of our families. Perhaps money will be spent that people do not have; there are problems with addiction and depression; relationships can become complicated. Sometimes, loneliness and the absence of loved ones is more keenly felt at this dark time of the year.*

*Our role as a parish community is to inspire hope in others. We can do this by heeding the command to rejoice and repent, and help to lighten each other's burdens. Our Advent Retreat is a good moment for this, so please do take time to attend it. It will be nice to welcome Fr Oliver on his first visit to Leicester. Our Carol Service, next Sunday at 3:30pm, will be a wonderful time for us to sing our favourite Christmas Carols together, and a great opportunity to welcome friends to Holy Cross who might not otherwise come. It would also be nice to see those who will be away for Christmas. I hope to see you there.*

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

Fr David

## THE ADVENT RETREAT – NEXT WEEK WITH FR OLIVER

Next weekend, we have our Advent Retreat, with Fr Oliver Keenan OP, one of our newly ordained priests from Oxford. **The main session will take place on Saturday afternoon, 17 November**, beginning with **Mass at 12:30pm** and continuing through the afternoon, concluding with **Evening Prayer at 5:45pm**. **Please make a special effort to attend this retreat**, and also to celebrate the **Sacrament of Confession** during this sacred time of preparation.

## THE ADVENT MARKET – THANKS AGAIN

Just in case you missed the good news, the final total for the Market was **£6,497.47**, and with gift aid, that will rise to **£7,249.97**, a wonderful achievement. Many thanks again to all who made it a success, and to everyone who has worked so hard during the year to help us improve our finances. When our accounts are ready in the new year, we look forward to presenting them to you.



**IUBILÆUM 800 1216-2016**  
ORDO PRÆDICATORUM

## 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 December, after the 10:30am Mass in St Clement's Hall.

### FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CONFIRMATION

Forms for children and young people who wish to receive these sacraments in the new academic year (2016-17) are now in the Church. Please fill in and return.

### 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

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S PASTORAL COUNCIL – NATIVITY PLAY

*This is a new initiative, aimed at encouraging some of our young people to demonstrate their leadership skills within our community, They write: We have now cast most of the parts in our Nativity Play, and we are busy with rehearsals for the Nativity Play on Christmas Eve. There is still some time for other young people to get involved, so please come after the 10:30am Mass and find out how you can help. If you want to get in touch with us, please speak to Fr David. We would like to thank all the parents and other adults who are helping us to produce our play.*

## FR GREGORY MURPHY – NEW HOME

Fr Greg has safely arrived in his new home. He called to say he had a good journey and has been busy setting himself up for his new ministry. This week's second collection will be for Fr Greg's leaving present. There is still time to sign his card if you have not done so

## LEICESTER WINTER NIGHT SHELTER

***One Roof Leicester*** opens this year's ***Winter Night Shelter*** on ***12 December 2016*** and until ***27th February 2017*** the shelter will offer a warm and welcoming environment for our guests. ***In particular, we would like volunteers from Holy Cross to work with our neighbours at Bishop Street Methodist Church on their part in the project.*** Please get in touch with Fr David or Rachael if you're interested.

## THINGS TO REMEMBER

- This Thursday at 7pm – Catholicism 101 with Fr Robert. Video presentation followed by discussion.
- Our Sunday Holy Hour, 6-7pm – Rosary, Compline, Benediction.
- **Advent to Christmas Social-Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December, doors open 1830hrs. A time to get together to drink, sing, eat and be merry. (Entrance Fee)**
- A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, followed by mulled wine and mince pies – next Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December, 3.30pm. This will be a traditional carol service with all your favourites. A wonderful opportunity to bring your friends to Holy Cross.

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## THE DOMINICAN COMMUNITY

Fr David Rocks OP PP *Prior*; Fr Isidore Clarke OP; Fr Fabian Radcliffe OP;  
Fr Neil Ferguson OP; Fr Robert Gay OP CC *Subprior, Bursar*.

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:

**£ 1,354.61**

(Gift aided: £ 430.50)

### Woodhouse Collection

**£ 131.84**

(Gift aided: £ 81.30)

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
CONTINUED SUPPORT!**



# THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

## READINGS FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### 1<sup>ST</sup> READING: ISAIAH 35:1-6,10

Courage, mentioned here by Isiah, is one of the four cardinal virtues we need to live lives of integrity (the other three bring prudence, justice and temperateness). It helps us overcome the difficulties of this life, but the reward is great, as it is God himself.

### 2<sup>ND</sup> READING: JAMES 5:7-10

St James stresses both God's patience and how we should reflect it in our own lives. The fact that the day of judgement has not come yet does not mean it won't come. St Peter elsewhere stresses the positive aspect of the time we have left: "And remember, our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved."

### GOSPEL READING: MATTHEW 11:2-11

Part of the priestly element in John the Baptist's own life was to identify the external High Priest, Jesus Christ. John probably never sacrificed under the Old Law in the Temple in Jerusalem, but his whole life was a living sacrifice of praise and witness. This culminated in the giving of his own life to bear witness to "The Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world." The expected Christ was also known as "The One who is to come."

## DOMINICAN RITE MASS:

### EPISTLE: PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7

Today is *Gaudete* Sunday, and the Epistle continues this theme of joy. True joy is born out of the theological virtue of hope. Despite the trials and tribulations of this world, our true joy is the eternity that awaits us.

### GOSPEL: JOHN 1:19-28

St John the Baptist makes it clear that he is merely the forerunner of the divine Messiah. John's baptism was a symbol of repentance only, for only Christ could institute a Baptism which cleanses from sin and conforms us to Himself.

## NEXT SUNDAY –

### FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR A)

*"To convert somebody go and take them by the hand and guide them."*

St Thomas Aquinas

Pope Francis:

***Amoris Laetitia:***

*Apostolic Exhortation on the Family*

"I think, for example, of the speed with which people move from one affective relationship to another. They believe, along the lines of social networks, that love can be connected or disconnected at a whim of the consumer, and the relationship quickly 'blocked'... We treat affective relationships the way we treat material objects and the environment: everything is disposable; everyone uses and throws away, takes and breaks, exploits and squeezes to the last drop. Then, goodbye." [39]

## THE WORD AT WORK: OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

3<sup>RD</sup> WEEK OF ADVENT – THE COMING OF OUR GOD

*During the Season of Advent, Fr Fabian reflects on the meaning of this special time, and the readings we hear at Mass.*

We are now half way through Advent, and we are looking forward more actively to Christmas. The word 'Advent' means 'coming', and during Advent we think particularly about Jesus's birth in Bethlehem. But this is only part of what we mean by the 'coming of Christ'. We say in the Creed: *'He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His Kingdom will have no end'*. That is his 'Second Coming', the final winding up of the present creation and the appearing of 'the new heavens and new earth', which we have been promised. But what about the time in between? That too is part of the time of his 'coming', but in the sense of his being continuously present with us through faith and grace, in prayer and the sacraments, in our love and service of one another, as well as in our suffering and humiliation. It is the time of his continuing presence, but also the time of his continuing judgement, because his presence searches us. So, the coming of Christ includes not only his birth and his Second Coming, but also his continuing presence with us throughout all the time in between. *'Behold, I am with you always, until the end of time'* (Matthew 28. 20).

But there is more to it even than this. At his trial, Jesus said: *'You will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven'*. In Scripture, 'cloud' is a sign of God's presence. The Israelites in the desert had the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, as a sign of God's presence with them. And when Jesus was transfigured on the mountain, the terrified apostles were overshadowed by a cloud, and they feared when they entered it, the fear of awe in God's presence. So, to speak of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven, is to speak of Jesus sharing fully in the Godhead.

These words about the Son of Man on the clouds are quotations from the Old Testament. The Prophet Daniel sees a vision of the Ancient of Days, God himself, seated on his throne. Then Daniel sees *'one like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, so that all peoples, nations and languages should serve him'* (Daniel 7: 13-14).

So, this 'coming of the Son of Man' is not a coming to earth, to us. It is a coming to the Ancient of Days, to God the Father, an ascent rather than a descent. A man, Jesus, is raised to the throne of God himself, sharing his glory. And if one man, then all men; for, as Daniel's prophecy goes on to say, the Son of Man is linked with the 'saints of the Most High'. So not only the Son of Man, but also the Saints of the Most High, will share the glory and dominion and majesty of God.

This is the vision which is offered us, a vision by which we live, which gives us hope and strength and direction in the present, whatever confusion and agony we may suffer. The prayer of the first generation of Christians is ours as well: 'Maranatha', 'Come Lord Jesus'.

*Fr Fabian Radcliffe OP*

### ***The Jubilee Prayer***

God, Father of mercy, who called your servant St Dominic 800 years ago to found the Order of Preachers in the service of your Gospel, renew within the Church as we celebrate this Jubilee the Spirit of the Risen Christ, that we might faithfully and joyfully walk with St. Dominic as pilgrims and preachers of grace. Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.