

WE come to Mass to know Jesus, listen to Him, learn to talk to Him in prayer, and receive Him into our lives, completely, in Holy Communion.

Many think they don't need this They've 'got the idea', 'know Jesus', find Mass boring.

It isn't. The gospels aren't boring. If we really listen to them, they become mysterious.

Today's gospel – miracles? They don't happen now. If they did, the newspapers would be full of them. Oh, yes, they happened around Jesus? They don't happen around us.

Unless we see miracles of a different kind now – in all the 'tender and loving care' given by thousands of nurses, doctors, chaplains, and others, to the sick and weak, often in His name, always by His example.

We could see such miracles happening now in ourselves. 'The blind seeing' as our Conversion, 'the lame walking' as Repentance, 'lepers cleansing' as Confession, 'the deaf hearing'. Inspirations that come to us, and 'the dead rising' as Vocations to live by.

'The poor having the gospel preached to them' is a miracle – the whole world covered now by parishes and churches.

Jesus next says that no-one had been greater than John the Baptist.

Then He says that the least in 'the kingdom of God' would be greater than John.

Did He mean – us, in Heaven, happy and glorious, shining like stars?

Or, more likely, us – in the Church, now, 'the kingdom of God'?

Think of the many things you are given.

You are baptised – freed from universal sin. You are confirmed – given God, in the Holy Spirit. You receive Jesus Himself, into your life, at Mass. You have been taught the Creed, God's truth; and the Our Father, God's prayer. You are encouraged by holy Writings, and the Lives of Saints. You have firm teaching about right and wrong.

You are surrounded everywhere by beautiful churches, music, works of art. You have great examples from the Saints and saintly people you might know.

Even the kindly supervision you may feel, and perhaps might resent, from others in the church – does help!

All these are greater than even John the Baptist could have imagined.

'Count your blessings', as they say. Indeed.

Fr Duncan OP

Gaudete Sunday

Year A

12 December 2010

The Newsletter of
HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH, LEICESTER

Serving Leicester's Catholics since AD 1247



Entrance Antiphon:	Gaudete in Domino semper! Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice! The Lord is near.
At 11am – page nos in Missale:	•The Ordinary of the Mass, p 13 •Sung setting: Mass XVII, p 214; Credo I, p 215 •The Proper of the Mass, p 46; Alma Redemptoris, p219
1st Reading:	Isaiah 35: 1-6.10
Psalm R:	Come, Lord, and save us. (Ps 146)
2nd Reading:	James 5: 7-10
Alleluia:	The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has sent me to preach good news to the poor.
Gospel:	Matthew 11: 2-11
Communion Antiphon:	Say to the anxious: be strong and fear not, our God will come and save us.
WEEKDAY MASS IN LATIN. In addition to the Masses listed in the schedule on p 3, Holy Mass will be offered in the older form from Monday to Saturday at 8am.	

CHRISTMAS SERVICES. Please take as many of the cards with service times as you need, and please do not ring the Priory to ask for this information. Thank you! Cards are by the doors.

TO HELP YOUR SPIRITUAL PREPARATION FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD we have:

- **Short Illustrated Advent Talks – The Nativity in Art.** This is a series of talks given on Fridays after the 10am and 12.30pm Masses. This Friday Fr Peter will speak on "Light into Darkness – Caravaggio's Nativity".
- **Look to the Future Now – From Christmas to Advent: A Festival of Choirs.** This **Wednesday** 15 December – 7.30pm in the Parish Centre (downstairs): We have a fantastic line-up of choirs performing at this event. Please do come along and bring family and friends. Entry is free and refreshments (finger-food and drinks) are provided **but please do bring something sweet or savoury to share.**
- **Christmas Novena Masses.** As our immediate spiritual preparation prior to the Solemnity of the Birth of our Lord, we shall have 9 specially themed 6pm daily Holy Masses from 16 December (except on Sunday the 19th, 7pm as normal). The theme for the novena of Masses is: 'Come, Lord Jesus, dwell among us!' All are invited to attend.

PLEASE SUPPORT THE SVP IN THE SUDAN. In 1988 we opened a feeding centre which fed 230 babies every other day; and the programme peaked at 10,000 babies a day for 5 days a week. The centres are near camps for displaced people not far from Khartoum. Vast numbers of the population have been displaced because of unrest in the Sudan and Darfur. The SVP is running this programme and keeping babies alive and giving them hope for the future. It costs £40 a year for each baby to provide nourishing food. Would you like to help? £40 for a year's food, or £20 for six months or £100 for vocational training for 2 adults or £60 for medical treatment for 20 patients. If you would like to help please contact Bernard Hawcroft on b-hawcroft1@ntlworld.com or 0116 210 9077 or 0777 252 5327. He would love to hear from you!

MONEY MATTERS: Last Weekend's collections (previous week in brackets) – Offertory Collection £979.37 (£1225.02); SVP £47.34 (£6.30); Friends of Holy Cross £12.90 (£14.62); Holy Souls £11.36 (£9.54); Grenada Church Restoration £6.06 (£7.22). The retiring collection for new and poor parishes came to £268.63.

This week there is a retiring collection for flowers to decorate the church over Christmas.

200 Club. Last month's winners were: 14, A Devereux-Lacey £150; 148, P Glover £100; and 30, M Vivian £50. Congratulations!

Very many thanks for your continuing generosity.

The Martyrs' shrine in the New Walk transept was consecrated with due ceremony on Wednesday. Many thanks to all who assisted in any way with the occasion. A great number of photographs were taken and these will be available as a permanent record of the ceremony; they will appear on the newly-launched Parish website before long. There is a leaflet by the doors which describes the Shrine in detail and explains the relevance to us of the Martyrs.

Child Protection. The NSPCC has a 24-hour helpline for use by anyone who is concerned about a child. See noticeboard, and there are small cards available by the doors with the number – 0808 800 5000, or use help@nspcc.org.uk.

Today's Gospel: "I tell you solemnly, of all the children born of women, a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen."

Forthcoming events for your diary