

The mundane can be the enemy of our spiritual lives

HERE have been times in my life that I've wanted God to be a little more dramatic! I've prayed for some kind of sign, some kind of way of knowing that what I was doing was what God wanted of me, or some sense of security that God was active in my life, supporting me in what felt difficult or fragile

As a young man, I enjoyed reading the mystics, and I envied them their vivid spiritual lives. I wanted to be a visionary like them. I suppose I thought that if God had given me visions, I would have been a better Christian, more able to direct my energies to what was important in life.

It's true that the mundane can be the enemy of our spiritual lives. That's because sin is in many ways highly mundane. We make our mistakes, mostly, in the boring details of our lives, in the ways in which we miss small opportunities for love, the petty ways in which we act selfishly, thoughtlessly. And those small mistakes gradually entrench in us the bad habits that make the big mistakes that much easier.

When we examine our consciences, before going to confession, say, it can be easy to play down all of these little slips, because they don't seem to amount to very much. Some impatience with our family, loss of temper with others on the road, slightly uncharitable thoughts about our neighbours. It's all very dull and common. We might shrug and say, 'Well, I'm only human.'

But the mundane, the everyday, can be a wonderful source of an awareness of God too. God didn't make me a mystic, and that's no doubt a very good thing, but perhaps the view of the mystics that I had growing up was also distorted and exaggerated. The spiritual life isn't all about those intense moments when we see visions. Most of the time, it's about what appears ordinary and everyday. Any of the mystics strike me now as down-to-earth, practical people.

Our experience of God doesn't have to be an experience like Moses on Mount Sinai or a voice from the clouds like thunder. God does deal with some people that way, but He deals with all of us, every day, in everything that we do and see.

The very simple, but very profound, experience of God I've had recently is just noticing the tremendous generosity of people in this parish towards us Dominicans. I know very well that we don't always deserve it. We're not always the priests you need and have a right to expect us to be. The kindness you show us anyway is almost overwhelming. Our love for us is a real sign to me of God's love.

I only hope you know that we, in our turn, love you too, though often imperfectly and with many of those silly, mundane mistakes I was talking about a moment ago. And so the apparently ordinary, everyday business of kindness, of treating each other thoughtfully and considerately, can be something very extraordinary, in its own way even more extraordinary than the most intense vision. It shows us God's love in a direct, and concrete way.

This shows us how foolish it is to think of the small, mundane, foolish mistakes we make as being 'only human'. That's really human, what really shows what human beings can be, are those actions, in their own way equally small and mundane, of generosity and warmth and concern. Sometimes, God is very near to me in the stillness of the early morning, in the beauty of a sunrise, in the song of the birds, but mostly, I see His work, in the kindness to me, undeserved on my part, of those around me, and my own, small attempts at that same warmth and generosity.

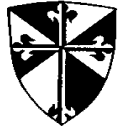
2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year A

16 January 2011

The Newsletter of HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH, LEICESTER

Serving Leicester's Catholics since AD 1247



Entrance Antiphon: O Lord, God of heaven, may all the earth give you worship and praise, and break into song to your name. *Antiphona: Deus, Dominus Altissimus*

At 11am – page nos in Missale: Ordinary, p 567, Proper, p 558
4-ung setting', Issa. Bishop's Actor, p 95;redo III, p 95;
4\$ommunion motet *Oculi omnium* <ood=7, arian "ntiphon 5, p 95>
4. rgan sortie' Sort?ge et @itanie *Dupré*

1st Reading: Isaiah 8:16 A(

Psalm 124: Declare the Lord's marvellous works among all the peoples! <3s 9>=

2nd Reading: 5 \$orinthians 5: 5(6

Alleluia: God has called us through the Gospel, to obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ

Gospel: John 5: 9>(68

Communion Antiphon: *Either* C! he @ord has prepared a feast for me' given wine in plenty for me to drink. *Or* C %e know and believe in God's love for us

WEEKDAY MASS IN LATIN. In addition to the masses listed in the schedule on p 6, Holy Mass will be offered in the older form from **Monday to Saturday at 8am.**

AROUND THE BIBLE IN 80 WEEKS. This is the title of a series, starting next week, on each book of the Bible, written by one of the friars, and to be inserted into the Newsletter. The series will also appear on the Parish website. Watch this space!

Dominican Preaching on the internet - an 800 year old tradition for the 21st century. Please pick up one of the handy bookmarks from the tables by the doors. These give the website addresses of the main Dominican sites, including 'Etorch' and 'EgodFdogF', the latter, of course, from 'omini(canes <the dogs of the @ord=

What have these saints in common? — St Martin de Torres, St Hugh of St Omer, St Joseph, Our Lady of the Rosary, St Dominic, St Patrick, St Helena, St Rita of Cascia, St Michael the Archangel, St Anne, St George and St Anthony of Padua. **Answer:** we have statues of them here in Holy Cross. Want to know more about them? Here is a set of leaflets (9: p each, please) available in the Wellington-treet transept giving some details of their lives and works. So you can discover who was apprenticed to a man who was both a barber and a surgeon? who, when invited to choose a toy from a boy, said 'I'll have the lot' who sold his precious theology books to buy bread for the hungry? and who lived to a ripe old age, excavating the site of a pagan temple.

And there is also a leaflet about our Shrine of the English Martyrs, and a Visitor's Guide, highly recommended even to long-standing parishioners.

MONEY MATTERS: Last two Weekends' collections – Offertory Collection £945.45 (previous week £1308.65); SVP £20.49; Friends of Holy Cross £15.75; Holy Souls £18.28; Grenada Church Restoration £21.64. There have been further generous donations to the McNabb Appeal totalling £260, bringing the total to £10,114.86.

This week there will be retiring collection for the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children's White Flower Appeal (see below).

Very many thanks for your continuing generosity.

White Flower Appeal – the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children will be holding its annual appeal next Sunday, 5th January in common with the Catholic Church, which defends and upholds the sanctity of human life from conception until natural death. The Society's work covers a wide spectrum of issues. It seeks to protect unborn children from abortion and defends the disabled, elderly and incapacitated from euthanasia and assisted suicide. It also provides trained speakers for schools and offers professional support for teachers, parents and medical professionals. Please give generously to this very worthy cause.



The Aquinas Institute at Blackfriars, Oxford. There will be a series of seminars on Thomas Aquinas and contemporary culture on Thursdays from 9th January to 6th March. See noticeboards.

Today's Gospel: John said, "Look, there is the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world."

Vocation Discernment Weekend. Young women who ever wondered about being a priest! The Franciscan Sisters are holding a taster weekend 9th-10th February 9:55 am to 5:15 pm. This is a weekend for women discerning whether the Lord may be calling them to Religious Life. It's a taste of life as a Franciscan Sister, so you will participate in our life of prayer as well as getting to know the Sisters. We will have time for prayer, discussion, questions, input on Religious Life and the opportunity for one-to-one with a Sister. Places are limited so let us know if you are coming as soon as you can, or get in touch with any queries. God bless! Contact vocations@franciscansm.org or tel: 01582 75095. See poster for details. Closing date for applications is 9th January.

We welcome Fr Jonathan Fleetwood, OP, newly assigned to Holy Cross. In being asked for a note for the Dewsletter he writes: 'I have a problem about a long life but a short biography that is all to the good. Here goes: born in Birmingham in 1947 went to St Philip's Grammar School. Knew Fr Isidore in the scouts. Was apprentice and draughtsman at the GES for eight years. After joining the Order taught in boarding school for two years then went to Africa one year. Parish priest in African location for eight years. Taught morals in the seminary for black students. Had frequent contact with Leicester when for eight years Provincial and thirteen years Provincial Superior, also while at home each year visited during sisters' retreats. He doesn't mention that he also speaks Nulu, so if yours is getting rusty, now's your chance to brush it up!

| Year 1 | This week's calendar & Mass Intentions | Psalter Week 2 |
|---|---|-------------------|
| Confessions | 5: 6: to 55 6: 2r !omas, and 5K :: to 5M :: 2r 3eter | |
| Sunday | 2nd Sunday per annum. Peace Sunday: Prayers are recommended for peace and justice on earth. | |
| Ignit | 5M :: 3eter +rennan <welfare= | |
| | M :: ✠ , ichael @yons | |
| 2amily | > 6: \$atherine Deill | |
| -olemn | 55 :: ✠ "nne , arie 3ennington | |
| . 3 Rite | 59 6: In thanksgiving | |
| -tudents | 5K :: Mass for students in the Lady Chapel | |
| | 5> :: <i>Pro populo</i> | |
| Monday | St Anthony, abbot | |
| | 5: :: ✠ Berfy Heiniger | |
| | 59 6: ✠ \$atharine @ynch | |
| Tuesday | St Margaret of Hungary, virgin. The Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity begins today. Prayers are encouraged for the unity of Christians in this period that runs until 25 January. | |
| | 5: :: ✠ /ead of the . rder of 3reachers | |
| | 59 6: ✠ -am O \$ollette %alker | |
| Wednesday | Feria | |
| | 5: :: \$hris %ilco& | |
| | 59 6: ✠ Bim @eonard | |
| Thursday | Bl Cyprian Iwene Tansi, priest, religious | |
| | 5: :: ✠ 2rank O , alcolm | |
| | 59 6: /ennis O Pathleen , c\$arthy <int= | |
| Friday | St Agnes, virgin, martyr | |
| | 5: :: ✠ , iriam Bones | |
| | 59 6: ✠ Bohnnie Luigley | |
| Saturday | Feria | |
| | 5: :: ✠ , r O , rs \$ /' -ilva | |
| | 59 6: ✠ \$atharine @ynch | |
| Confessions | 5: 6: to 55 6: 2r 2abian, and 5K :: to 5M :: 2r /uncan | |
| WEEKDAY MASS IN LATIN. Holy , ass will be offered in the older form from Monday to Saturday at 8am | | |
| Next Sunday – 3rd Sunday per annum. Readings: | | |
| Isaiah M'96 Q >6 | 5 \$orinthians 5'5: (56,5K | , atthew 8' 59(96 |

The British Red Cross remains in urgent need of food donations to respond to the emergency needs of destitute asylum seekers in Leicester. To help, please leave your gifts after any , ass. Non-perishable goods such as tinned and dried foods are also mostly wanted. Full list of items may be seen on the noticeboard and in the Dewsletter. December = on the parish website. Please keep giving generously to support these vulnerable people. Thank you.

Please join us in the Parish Hall after the 9:30am and 11:00am Sunday Masses for tea, coffee, fruit-juice etc. There is the opportunity for a chat with members of the Dominican Community and with parishioners. We particularly welcome newly-arrived students and other visitors.

| REGULAR SERVICE TIMES |
|--|
| MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS |
| K 6: @auds |
| 5: :: , ass |
| 59 6: , ass |
| 5K 8A Iespers |
| . Id Rite , asses as announced |
| WEDNESDAYS |
| 5: 6: E&position until 59 6: |
| 55 8A /ivine , ercy \$haplet, |
| Rosary O +enediction |
| SATURDAYS |
| > :: @auds |
| 5: :: , ass |
| 5: 6: Dovenata . ur @ady |
| 5: 6: \$onfessions until 55 6: |
| 59 6: , ass |
| 5K :: \$onfessions until 5M :: |
| 5K 8A Iespers |
| 5M :: I gill , ass for -unday |
| . Id Rite , asses as announced |
| HOLIDAYS |
| 5M :: <previous day= I gill , ass |
| K 6: @auds |
| 5: :: , ass |
| 59 6: , ass |
| 5K 8A Iespers |
| 5> :: , ass |
| BANK HOLIDAYS (& MON TO FRI AROUND XTMAS & NEW YEAR) |
| K 6: @auds |
| 59 6: , ass, after which the church is closed |
| SUNDAYS |
| M :: , ass |
| > :: @auds |
| > 6: , ass <2amily= |
| 55 :: , ass <-olemn' @atin on 9th, 8th and Ath -undays= |
| 59 6: , ass <. Id rite in @atin= |
| 5K :: , ass <-for -tudents, term time only= |
| 5K 8A Iespers |
| 5M :: Rosary |
| 5M 9: -ung @atin \$ompline |
| 5M 8: +enediction |
| 5> :: , ass |
| Leicester Royal Infirmary Catholic Chaplaincy: 2or urgent visits, ask ward staff to bleep the Roman Catholic \$haplain. 2or non-urgent visits leave message at the 3riory or the @RL \$haplains' . ffice , assages may not be picked up until the end of the day. |
| Parish Website: www.holycrossleicester.org |
| Website & Newsletter Editors: holycrosswebsite@gmail.com holycrossnewsletter@gmail.com |
| CONTACT DETAILS |
| Holy \$ross 3riory |
| 8A %ellington -treet, @E5 : H% |
| 3riory phone' <: 55: = 9AA 6MA; |
| 2or home visits \$eorecorded times of services' 9AA 6MA; |
| 2a&' 9AA AAA9 |
| Parish Priest: |
| 2r @eon 3ereira' 9A9 5A: 5 |
| leicester.english.op.org |