



# HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2017

SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A

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

## FROM THE PRIOR'S DESK

*Do you remember the measuring tape that Mary Poppins took from her carpet bag. "Practically perfect in every single way" was how it measured her. The other measurements weren't quite so flattering. We can find ourselves constantly being measured against a standard of practical perfection, and falling short. It's not easy!*

*The Lord invites us to be perfect in the Gospel this week. That's the challenge of the Christian vocation. It is a calling that will not be complete in us during our earthly pilgrimage, so this reminds us not to limit or contain ourselves by earthly standards if we want to attain a heavenly glory. That's one which will last. Fr Fabian's words on the back of the newsletter will help us to reflect more deeply on this week's message.*

*It's been a quieter week at the Priory after recent events. Fr Isidore remains stable, and sends his thanks to all those who have sent prayers and good wishes. We're also grateful to everyone who has been so kind and generous following the distress of the recent break in. Your kindness to us, in so many different ways, is greatly appreciated.*

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

*Fr David*

## LOOKING INTO LENT

The Holy Season of Lent will begin in a few weeks, with Ash Wednesday falling on 1<sup>st</sup> March. Next week, we will let you know what we have planned to mark this special season of grace. Now is the time for our families and communities to reflect on the spiritual and penitential practices that will nourish our souls during Lent this year.

## DOMINICAN ROSARY PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY IN JUNE

From **Wednesday 14-21 June 2016**, a pilgrimage to sites associated with Our Lady and the Holy Rosary, including Loreto, the site of the Holy House, the great Franciscan Shrines at Assisi, St Padre Pio's Shrine in San Giovanni Rotondo, and Pompei, the Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary. Inclusive price: £1,165. Please see the flyers, and make contact with Fr David if interested.

## UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Students from both our Universities are reorganising their Catholic Societies, so if you're a student, and you're interested in getting more involved with other Catholics at University, contact George who will point you in the right direction. [george.ralph@english.op.org](mailto:george.ralph@english.op.org)

## NOTICE BOARD

### BAPTISM PREPARATION

If you wish to have your child baptised, please attend one of our baptism preparation sessions. The next is Sunday 5 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 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

## CATHOLICISM 101 – THIS THURSDAY AT 7PM

**Catholicism 101** this term will focus on the Church's moral teaching, and is entitled: *Living Life to the Full – becoming a joyful and faithful Catholic*. This week's session will explore the themes of law and conscience as we continue our reflections on the morality of the human act. The sessions start at 7pm and there will be food. Please come along and bring your friends.

## PILGRIM VIRGIN STATUE VISIT TO HOLY CROSS – JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup>

The **National Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima** will visit Holy Cross on **Thursday 1 June 2017**. The statue is making a pilgrimage round the country to mark 100 years since the apparitions at Fatima, and we are very privileged that it will come to Holy Cross. We will begin our preparations by keeping the First Saturday devotions, with the first occasion being Saturday 4 March at 12:30pm Mass.

## MARCH FOR LIFE

In 50 years, nearly nine million babies have been killed by abortion. But with new technology proving the humanity of the unborn child, the tide is starting to turn. 'Pro-choice' is increasingly seen as the choice to end the life of an infant human being and few women are given any real choices by the abortion industry. You can help lift our voices to God by taking part in this year's **March for Life**, a peaceful, prayerful, pro-life rally which takes place in Birmingham on **Saturday 20th May**. It's also a great opportunity to make a pilgrimage to the replica image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. For more information please contact Sica on 07943 711549 or email [francisca@sicamartinez.plus.com](mailto:francisca@sicamartinez.plus.com)

## THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Our Sunday Holy Hour, 6-7pm – Rosary, Compline, Benediction.
- Organ recitals, first Friday of each month at 1:15pm. A very nice way to spend a lunchtime.
- 8.00 Mass Breakfast Club and 10.30am Meet for a Treat continues on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March.
- Date for your diaries – **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March**, 3.00-5.30 and 7.00-9.30 pm, we are looking at holding a Social Event, so watch this space for more detail

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## THE DOMINICAN COMMUNITY

Fr David Rocks OP PP *Prior*; Fr Isidore Clarke OP;

Fr Fabian Radcliffe 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:

**£ 1522.97**

(Gift aided: £ 518.50)

Second Collection  
towards Security

**£984.31**

(Gift aided: £ 35.00)

### Woodhouse Collection

**£ 192.50**

(Gift Aided: £121.00)

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
CONTINUED SUPPORT!*



# THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

## SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LEV 19:1-2,17-18 | 1 COR 3:16-23 | MATTHEW 5:38-48

Feuds, vendettas and – grudges are nurtured in parishes, in streets and even in families.

Some are even passed down from one generation to the next. A colossal amount of energy and ingenuity is expended on settling old scores and exacting vengeance. The *lex talionis* – “an eye for eye and tooth for tooth” – is alive and well and thriving in every human environment, but nowhere more so than in the industrial world. Management singles out troublemakers for redundancy. Blacklists are kept. Workers know where and when to call a lightning strike and who in management is to be sacrificed. Even in the corridors of power, in the velvet setting of plush boardrooms, the knives are long and sharp and are slipped between pin-striped shoulder-blades almost with a smile.

Honour is always at stake when the God of vengeance is invoked. “Getting one’s own back” is raised to the level of a virtue in our world. The injured party could never hold its head up again if the injury is not repaid. Loved ones too are invoked. We owe it to our wives and children. “Getting even” becomes an obsession. “I’ll fix him if it is the last thing I do.” Shades of the prostrate crook and his smoking six-shooter! The world has nothing but contempt for the one who “turns the other cheek.” He is a weakling. “He took it lying down.” It goads us on to vengeance. “Don’t let them get away with it.”

The Bible tells us otherwise. The Lord said to Moses: “You must not take revenge, nor bear a grudge against the children of your people.” What is refreshing about today’s gospel is that it recognises us as we are, full of pettiness, exacting hurt for hurt, trading blow for blow. We all have enemies who persecute us. Letting them get away with it is not easy. Loving them is a call to perfection, to be perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect.

### NEXT SUNDAY –

### EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR A)

*Our Lord does not come down from Heaven every day to lie in a golden ciborium.  
He comes to find another heaven which is infinitely dearer to him -  
the heaven of our souls, created in His Image, the living temples of the Adorable Trinity.*

Saint Therese of Lisieux

*Pope Francis*  
**Evangelii Gaudium**  
*The Joy of the Gospel*

“It is not 'progressive' to try to resolve problems by eliminating a human life.”

# THE WORD AT WORK: OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

## GOD'S WAY TO BE MAN

Many years ago a friend recited to me a comical little rhyme, which has stuck in my memory ever since.

*The rain it raineth every day, / Upon the just and unjust fella;  
But more upon the just, because / The unjust hath the just's umbrella.*

This is obviously based on Jesus's words in the Sermon on the Mount, read at today's Mass. Jesus says that the Father loves us all, because he sends his rain equally on the righteous and on the unrighteous. The rhyme may be witty and light-hearted. But Jesus's Sermon is a serious and profound call that we should treat ourselves, our enemies and our friends as God does. Jesus proposes the kind of justice that is creative and healing. It is based on the way our Father treats us, the way Jesus himself lived.

The old Jewish law said: 'Eye for eye and tooth for tooth'. This was enacted to limit revenge, rather than encourage it. If someone takes out one of your eyes, you are not entitled to take out both of his. That would only escalate the violence. So the old law aimed to limit human wickedness, but could not eradicate it. In contrast, Jesus says: 'Turn the other cheek'. To be slapped with the back of the hand on the right cheek was a gross insult; it implied that the person hit is inferior. Our natural instinct is to hit back. Jesus says it is far better to find a creative way forward, reflecting the patient love of God himself. By offering the other cheek, you are effectively saying: 'Hit me again if you wish; but this time, treat me as an equal, not as an inferior'.

Again, you may be obliged to carry some equipment for a Roman soldier. The military had the right to make civilians do this, but only for one mile, not more. Very well then, says Jesus: surprise him by offering to go two miles. That is far more constructive than making an official complaint, or plotting revenge by joining a resistance movement. You would be showing the Romans that there is a different way to be human, a way which reveals God's victory over all oppression, injustice and inequality.

These little scenes give glimpses of God's way for us to live a truly human life. They are not easy; and perhaps they were not intended always to be taken literally. But they should certainly urge us to think about our own behaviour, and realise that we are often oppressive or domineering. They should encourage us to share Jesus's truly creative and loving way of being human.

Some people reject the Sermon on the Mount, thinking that it offers us totally unreal objectives; or that it presents a subtle way to control other people by non-violence; or even that God is teasing us by pointing towards something that is in fact impossible to do. But no. It's not like that at all. Jesus is giving us good news, not good advice. He is not asking us to do anything that he did not do himself. When they challenged his teaching, he told Parables, quizzical and often humorous stories, which forced them, and us, to think differently. When they mocked him, he did not respond. When they struck him and scourged him, he accepted the pain, uncomplainingly. When they made him carry the burden of the cross, the ultimate symbol of Roman domination, he carried it as far as he was able, and then had the humiliation of someone helping him with it. Together they brought it to the place of execution; and as the soldiers hammered in the nails he prayed for them.

Try reading this passage differently. Try seeing it as a description of Jesus himself, and the way he himself lived. He is poor in spirit, he is meek, he is merciful. He does not resist the one who is evil, but turns the other cheek. He loves both neighbour and enemy. In short, he shows us God's way to be man. And if he shows us the way, he will certainly also lead us the truth and the life.

*Fabian Radcliffe O.P.*