

THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

XII SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1ST READING: JEREMIAH 20:10-13

This reading has clearly been chosen to match the Gospel, which speaks of the persecution that the apostles will encounter on their mission. Jeremiah was pre-eminently the prophet who suffered persecution because of his prophetic activity.

His fate influenced the development of the later Jewish view that rejection, persecution, and martyrdom were inseparable from the prophetic vocation, a view echoed in a number of Jesus' saying. To be a bearer of the word of God means to suffer, because that word inevitably encounters hostility and rejection.

Responsorial Psalm: 69:8-10, 14, 17, 33-35: "In your great love, answer me, o God."

Here Paul presents Jesus as the 2nd Adam, undoing the damage caused by the 1st. While the First's rebellion brought the spiritual death of our being estranged from God, the obedience of the second Adam repaired that damage, so that we could share God's own life as His children. What Jesus gained for us was far greater than what Adam lost.

2ND READING: ROMANS 5:12-15:

St. Paul is probably quoting a traditional eucharistic formula. This is indicated by the use of the Jewish expression "the cup of blessing." Sharing in the "Body and blood" refers to our being united to Christ giving Himself in His redemptive death. Holy Communion expresses and strengthens the bond between us and our crucified saviour. Verse 17 involves a remarkable shift of sense. The word "body," used to refer to Christ, sacramentally present in the Eucharist, is now taken up to refer to the Body of Christ, the Church. We, the Church, are a Eucharistic community, united by being nourished by the one Body of Christ, offered in the Mass and received in Holy Communion.

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 10:26-33:

This continues Matthew's missionary charge to the Twelve. This is a challenge to fearless proclamation of the Gospel in the face of persecution. Jesus realises that since His followers will be risking their lives they are likely to be afraid. So, as He urges them not to be afraid He assures them of God's care for His witnesses and of their ultimate vindication. This is meant to stiffen their resistance to the opposition which will certainly come, as it did for Jesus.

"You are worth more than many sparrows" assures us how much God values His messengers. Their self-sacrifice in His name will not go unnoticed and unrewarded. But He will disown those who disown Him. We bring judgement upon ourselves.

NEXT SUNDAY –

XII SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIMES (YEAR A) - THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

"I have no taste for corruptible food nor for the pleasures of this life. I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, who was of the seed of David; and for drink I desire his blood, which is love incorruptible"

-St. Ignatius of Antioch

A word from Pope Francis

"Although the life of a person is in a land full of thorns and weeds, there is always a space in which the good seed can grow. You have to trust God."

THE WORD AT WORK: OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

XII SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Thrice in today's Gospel, (Matt. 10. 26-33). Jesus urges us not to be afraid. He knew that we, His followers, would be persecuted -just as He was. Sometimes violently, at other times, by those opposing Christ's way of life, His sense of values. All of us have experienced that. Sometimes people ridicule us, or shun us for following Christ. That isolation can make us feel very lonely. And we've all come under attack from violent temptations. In all this we are like Jesus, whom we have been called to follow.

If we are afraid, that's not surprising. So was Jesus, as in Gethsemane, He faced the horror of the cross. If we are tempted to give up, so was Jesus, when He prayed, "**Father if it is your will let this cup (of suffering) pass from me.**" Only through prayer did Jesus find the strength to do His Father's will; the same is true for us.

So how does Jesus reassure us? Surprisingly, not by saying God will remove the opposition. Very often He doesn't. Nor does He always answer our prayers by removing our pain. Instead, Jesus reassures us by talking about the hairs on our head and about sparrows!

God knows each and every hair on our head. There must be thousands on just one head, millions on the heads of any Church. The number of hairs on all the heads throughout the world must be astronomical. And, shifting the imagery, God knows every sparrow that falls, or as some commentators prefer, 'hops on the ground.' Yet God is not overwhelmed by their number.

If God could know each hair on our head and every sparrow, He certainly knows each one of us, and every detail of our lives. That should reassure us, after all, Jesus tells us we are worth many sparrows. Each one of us is special to God and is loved precisely for being our unique selves! In John's Gospel Jesus makes the same point when He speak of us, His flock. He knows each one of us by name.

That Knowledge means much more than simply being able to identify us. God's knowledge of us is full of love, care and compassion. If he sees every detail of our lives, that isn't to catch us out and punish us. God's ever-watchful eye is not like a security camera, used to catch shop-lifters. But it is like a mother who keeps a loving eye on her baby to ensure it comes to no harm.

Christ realises there'd be times when life would be rough, and we would meet opposition for following Him. It is then that we may fear that God has forgotten us, that He doesn't notice or care what happens to us. Then we might become like the baby who panics at not seeing its mother and feeling her closeness. Even though she is still keeping an eye on her child. Through the prophet Isaiah, ch. 41. 10 God reassures us, "**Do not be afraid, I am with you; I am holding you by the hand. Do not be afraid.**" We're not alone when contending with overwhelming forces of evil. With Almighty God on our side we can draw on His infinite strength and overcome whatever is thrown at us.

Today's Gospel concludes with a warning and a reassurance. What we say and the way we behave show whether or not we are true followers of Christ. If we reject Him and His way of life He won't force Himself upon us. But if we stand by Him through the trials, the tests to our loyalty, Jesus will stand by us and plead our cause before His Heavenly Father. That gives us certain hope of eternal happiness in God's Kingdom. That, surely, makes all the suffering worthwhile!

Isidore O.P.



HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 25TH JUNE 2017

XII SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

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

A WORD FROM THE PRIOR ...

The day of Blackfriars Market has finally come round! It is always a great occasion, but this year above all it comes at a climax, following this period of short staffing at Holy Cross within the Dominican Community, and during a time of significant transition. As we look forward to celebrating our achievements this weekend and having a great time at the Market, it is important to recognise the super effort that has gone into keeping the show on the road these last months.

First Holy Communion is a very beautiful occasion, and we pray that this will be an extra special day for the families who are celebrating this today. My own memories of first holy communion are cherished, and moments for feeling uplifted when things are tough. We all hope and pray that this day will be memorable for our children and their families

Each week as I write, I am reminded of the things that happen and are shared each day with me and my confreres in silence, and of course those that are not. Before ever we act on our judgement of other people, we should pray that God might give us an insight into what those others are carrying. Mercy is a way of life, and not a mere slogan. We can always do well to pray for those whose burdens are a load to bear.

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

Fr David

BLACKFRIARS MARKET – TODAY!!

The day has arrived! Thanks to all who are working so hard to make it all possible. **We are coming close to the £5,000 mark** for our cash totals for Blackfriars Market to date, and today is the chance for each of us to do that little something to ensure it will be another consummate success. We still have a way to go before we reach the magic target of £10,000, so do keep up the super effort. Please spend at least a few minutes today, visiting the market and buying a few things. The support this provides for us is so important. Cash donations can be handed in at any time during the week and on Sunday morning - please hand them in to any member of the community.

BLACKFRIARS MARKET – WHAT IT HAS DONE ALREADY

Since May 2014, Blackfriars Market has raised more than £40,000 for Holy Cross Priory. This has helped us to carry out much of the remedial repair works around the premises which had fallen into severe neglect. With your help, we have been able to make a real difference. A successful Blackfriars Market will help us to continue this important work and build for the future.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS 2017

Congratulations to our children and their families who are celebrating first holy communions this weekend, and to all those who have marked this special moment this year.

NOTICE BOARD

BAPTISM PREPARATION

If you wish to have your child baptised, please attend one of our baptism preparation sessions. The next is Sunday 2 July 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

SAFEGUARDING – KEEPING OUR CHILDREN SAFE

We remind you once again that Holy Cross is only safe for our children and vulnerable adults if we make it so. We ask each family to ensure their children are supervised at all times, and are accompanied by a trusted and responsible adult known to the child. Please also support us in discouraging children in running and climbing on the premises.

FEAST OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL – HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION

Thursday of this week, 29 June, is the Solemnity of St Peter and St Paul, which is a Holy Day of Obligation, meaning that every Catholic must attend Mass. Our Catholic schools have organised Masses at different times in school. Masses at Holy Cross – 8am; 12:30pm; 6:10pm, with a Vigil Mass at 6:10pm on Wednesday evening. Please be aware that the Dominican Fathers are busy on this day offering Mass in our schools and in the prison.

HOLIDAY SEASON

As June draws to a close, we begin to enter the holiday season. Remember if you are travelling for holidays and get to Mass, bring back a Newsletter from the church to give to Fr David. He now has quite a collection. Travel safely and have a good time. Over the next number of weeks, the Dominican Fathers will also take turns for holiday and also to take part in ministerial commitments elsewhere.

MASSES THIS WEEK AT HOLY CROSS

Mass will be celebrated at the normal times this week. The 8am Mass will be in the Dominican Old Rite (Extraordinary Form) on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday this week.

NEW ARRIVALS

We expect Fr Matthew Jarvis OP to join our community on 11 July, and Fr Tony Rattigan to arrive a week later. We are also expecting a third priest to be assigned to our community in the autumn who will be with us on an occasional basis over the next few years. We are glad to be welcoming our brothers to join us in Leicester.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Thursday 29 June – Holy Day of Obligation for St Peter and St Paul
- Second collection today is for Blackfriars Market
- Our Holy Hour, each Sunday at 6pm
- Organ recitals, first Friday of each month at 1:15pm

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

Lay University Chaplain: *Mr George Ralph* – george.ralph@english.op.org

Director of Music: *Mr Thomas Keogh* – 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

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:

£ 946.17

(Gift aided: £ 252.00)

Woodhouse Collection

£ 135.00

(Gift aided: £116.00)

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT!*