

THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

XXI IN ORDINARY TIMES

1ST READING: ISAIAH 22:19-23

In this passage Isaiah denounces one Shebna, who is ("who is master of the household," [Is 15](#)), and predicts his replacement by Eliakim, who would be given keys to the house of David. He had the right to give or receive access to the king. In the Gospel Jesus would confer the same right on Simon Peter and would give him the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Responsorial Psalm: 138:1-2, 2-3, 6, 8: *"Your love, O, Lord, is eternal, discard not the work of your hands"*

The psalmist thanks God for being faithful to His eternal love, shown in answering his prayer. This is a salutary reminder that we should always trust God's loving commitment to us and thank Him for answering our prayers.

2ND READING: ROMANS 11:33-36

Having discussed Israel's place in salvation history Paul is now filled with a sense of wonder, awe and praise at the depth and riches of God's wisdom. These are far too deep, even for Paul, the greatest of theologians, to penetrate. The deeper we go, the more unfathomable the mystery. If ever anyone claims fully to understand God he is worshipping an idol, reduced to the size of what his limited creaturely comprehension can cope with!

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 16:13-20

What do people make of Jesus? What does He mean to them and us? These are central questions, running throughout the Gospels. Now Jesus asks His disciples what people make of Him. Their replies have one thing in common: they look to the past and think Jesus is John the Baptist or a prophet returned from the dead. But Jesus asks Peter what he thinks of Him. Remarkably, he doesn't see Jesus as a revival of someone from the past, but as the fulfilment of God's promises and Israel's longings for a Messiah or Christ. With Jesus, a new age had dawned, not someone from the past returned.

This faith-insight was special gift from God, and not the result of human speculation. [Mt 16:17-19](#), enshrines very early material going back to the Aramaic-speaking Church; and that the Rock on which the church is to be built is Peter himself, not his faith, as some patristic and most Reformation exegesis had supposed.

But there is division among exegetes along confessional lines over the question of the continuation of Peter's function in the church. For us Catholics the Pope is Peter's successor, as the rock on which Jesus has built His Church.

NEXT SUNDAY –

XXII SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIMES (YEAR A) - ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

"We let ourselves be molded and transformed by Christ and continually pass from the side of one who destroys to that of the one who saves."

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Pope Benedict XVI

"The storms that are raging around you will turn out to be for God's glory, your own merit, and the good of many souls"

St Pius of Pietralcina

THE WORD AT WORK: OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

21ST SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

What's in a name? Well, we use a name to distinguish one person from another. Our names give us a personal identity. Titles, such as 'Prime Minister' or 'Prior' denote someone's role in the community.

In today's Gospel, we first see Simon identifying Jesus' role and status as the '*Christ, the Son of the living God.*' Jesus remarked that the Father Himself, not human reason - had led Simon to recognise Jesus as the Christ – the promised Messiah.

Following upon Simon correctly identifying Jesus' role as the Messiah, He then changed the disciple's name to 'Peter.' A change in someone's name or title is important. Taking her husband's surname denotes that a woman has married a certain man, and has assumed the status of being his wife. And it used to be the custom for us Dominicans to be given a new name when we received the habit of the Order. That denoted that we had embarked on a new dimension of our Christian vocation.

So, when Jesus changed Simon's name to 'Peter' he was indicating that the disciple was being given a new and special role. The Greek for Simon's new name, 'Peter,' means 'rock.' Peter was to provide the solid foundation on which Jesus would build His community of followers – the Church. The Spirit of Truth, would guide Peter in protecting us from the shifting sands of uncertainty and error concerning the essentials of Christ's teaching.

The image of a rock was frequently used in the Old Testament. It suggested a solid foundation for a building. The Patriarch, Abraham, was the rock on which God's people were founded, (cf. Is. 51. 1). Above all, God Himself was frequently seen as the foundation-rock of His people, (cf. Psalm 18.2). Always this image suggests the solid, underlying stability, necessary for development. Never does the image of a rock imply a boulder, crushing God's people. That would be an abuse of power!

Next, Jesus switches to the image of Peter as door-keeper. This image should be seen as liberating. The Church is meant to be welcoming and hospitable, as was Jesus. The door keeper should use his keys to let people in, not lock them out.

The Church, led by Peter, exercises this ministry primarily through the sacraments of baptism and reconciliation. Through baptism we are welcomed as members of the Christian family, sharing God's own life. The sacrament of reconciliation renews our Christian commitment, as Jesus forgives us when we confess our sins to a priest. Only unrepentant sinners, who don't want to enter God's kingdom, would be excluded by their own choice.

In John's Gospel, Ch. 21, the risen Lord appoints Peter as leader, using the image of shepherd. With its emphasis on compassionate caring, this image especially appeals to Pope Francis. This appointment is based on Peter's faith in Jesus, and his love for Him. This he had to renew, after disowning Jesus three times. Then, and only then, did Jesus give Peter the responsibility of feeding Christ's flock with sound doctrine and the sacraments.

The task of being the rock on which Christ would build His Church, the Chief Shepherd of His Flock, has been handed on to Peter's successors, the popes. That's an awesome burden for any man to have to carry. Even though he is supported and guided by the Spirit of Truth, the pope still remains very human. He certainly needs the support of the whole Christian community, our loyalty and our prayers, not our criticisms.

Isidore O.P.



HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 27TH AUGUST 2017

XXI SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIMES

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

A WORD FROM THE SUBPRIOR ...

Sir Mo Farah completed his track career in Zurich this past week with a rather dramatic close win. It marks the end of what became a stellar career in track athletics, with him winning multiple international titles at 10,000 and 5,000 meters. Mo had moments of difficulty and struggle along the way- more even than the 100+ miles of running training a week - but those moments turned out to be important stepping stones towards success. Without the graft and the perseverance he would not have succeeded.

The Christian life has often been compared to the life of an athlete. In the Letter to the Hebrews, Philippians, Galatians and 2 Timothy, there is a sense of the Christian life as a race run for a prize. If you have a Bible, see if you can find the references to the verses that speak of the Christian life in this way. This athletic image was taken up in the monastic tradition, especially by the Desert Fathers, who saw their penitential life as a way of training desires and appetites so that they would be better able to have friendship and union with God, which was their goal. Their training partners were solitude, prayer, and fasting. They used these disciplines to help shape their appetites and desires, so that they were more able to receive what God wanted to give them.

The importance of a goal and of training are well worth keeping in mind as we lead our daily lives. The goal of getting closer to God, to share life and friendship with him isn't an elite one which only applies to desert monks and such people: it is a necessary goal for all of us. We should all want that goal, and by God's grace and mercy, keep it in mind each day. Keeping our eyes on it – just as an athlete keeps on the goal of an Olympic gold medal- helps us to persevere in our efforts when times get a bit tough, and we are tempted to give up. Great prizes can motivate people to make great sacrifices and efforts in order to obtain that prize. There is no greater prize than to have friendship and union with God. And if we want it, God in his great goodness will help us to get it!

As we approach the week ahead, let us pray that we will keep our eyes on the prize!

God bless,

Fr Robert

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, so as to prevent accidents or other incidents.

NOTICE BOARD

BAPTISM PREPARATION

If you wish to have your child baptised, please attend one of our baptism preparation sessions. The next is Sunday 3 September 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

SECURITY UPDATE

As you will know, Holy Cross church is open from Lauds in the morning (7.30) until just after vespers in the evening. We are committed to making sure that Holy Cross is a place of prayer available all day. However, we do ask that you are especially mindful of the fact that some people see this place as an opportunity to steal. In particular, we ask that you do not leave bags and other valuable items unattended, especially during Holy Communion. It only takes a few seconds for an experienced thief to take something. Please keep bags and valuables on your person at all times. The same applies in the Parish Halls. Please also report any suspicious activity to one of the Dominicans or lay staff and volunteers.

THE OFFICE AT HOLY CROSS

Mrs Powell is our office administrator, and is very much at the centre of everything that happens at Holy Cross. The list of things she does is enormous, as Holy Cross is a very busy place! In addition to ensuring our accounting information is passed to our main office in Oxford, she manages hall hire, contractors, emails, phone messages, and sacramental registers. Do get in touch with her if she can help in any way!

DOMINICAN RITE MASS

We regret that 8am weekday Mass will not be celebrated again for another couple of weeks. However, Fr Matthew will celebrate the 12.30 Mass for the next two Sundays, and Fr Robert is continuing to train to say the Dominican Rite, and hopes to be celebrating it in public soon. We thank you for your patience, and look forward to resuming the 8am as soon possible.

HOLY CROSS DAY – 17 SEPTEMBER 2017

This year we will mark Holy Cross Day on Sunday 17 September. The Mass at 10:30am will be preceded by a procession of the Relic. Mass will be celebrated by our Provincial, Fr Martin. We will start to make preparations for this very soon.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Our Holy Hour, each Sunday at 6pm
- Organ recitals, first Friday of each month at 1:15pm
- Holy Cross Day – Sunday 17 September

THE DOMINICAN COMMUNITY

Fr David Rocks OP PP *Prior*; Fr Isidore Clarke OP; Fr Fabian Radcliffe OP;
Fr Tony Rattigan OP *Bursar*; Fr Robert Gay OP CC *Subprior*; Fr Matthew Jarvis OP

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:

£ 1167.39

(Gift aided: £268.50)

Woodhouse Collection

£ 137.00

(Gift aided: £85.00)

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT!*