



HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER 2017

XXV SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIMES

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

A WORD FROM THE PRIOR ...

As the blooms in the Priory Garth begin to look autumnal, it's wonderful to see some new life and energy at the centre of our community life. After the long days of the summer holidays, our energies are beginning to focus on the year ahead, and everything we can achieve together.

Following on from all the busy events surrounding Holy Cross Day, it certainly was a busy week at the Priory. Preparations to welcome the students who are arriving in the universities were made in haste, and we're looking forward to the first gathering, this Wednesday at 7pm. Do pass on the word to any students who might benefit. Over the years, Holy Cross has been a kind of home-from-home for so many.

The first of our new social events on Tuesdays was very pleasant, and these will continue on Tuesdays through term. We look forward to enjoying the videos from Bishop Barron in a few weeks, when Catholicism 101 returns. This is an excellent way to learn about our faith together.

It's been great to have some of our student brothers on placement, and we look forward to the reflections that Br Joseph will offer next Saturday on Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, one of the more recently elevated members of our Order!

As always, we are grateful to our staff and volunteers, and our many collaborators. It's amazing what we can do when we work together.

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

Fr David

LAUNCHING LEICESTER CATHOLIC STUDENTS

Leicester Catholic Students – bringing together Catholic students from Leicester and De Montfort Universities

Leicester Catholic Students is a hub for students to find out more about Catholicism, make new friends and put faith and prayer into action. Whether you are a lifelong Catholic or just looking to find out more, come along to our Freshers 2017 Welcome Event at Holy Cross church (entrance on New Walk, LE1 6HW) on Wednesday 27 September at 7pm. Also look out for our '**Catholic Wednesdays**' events later in term. Find out more and get updates on our Facebook page: [Facebook.com/LeicesterCatholicStudents](https://www.facebook.com/LeicesterCatholicStudents)

WELCOME EVENT FOR STUDENTS THIS WEDNESDAY!

Please do spread the word to any students, new and old, who would like to attend the welcome event, 7pm this coming Wednesday. Also look out for more student events as the term progresses.

NEXT SUNDAY – ROSARY SUNDAY

Roses will be blessed at all Masses next Sunday to mark Rosary Sunday, the beginning of October, the Month of the Holy Rosary, together with the Rosary Procession at the 10:30am Mass.

NOTICE BOARD

BAPTISM PREPARATION

If you wish to have your child baptised, please attend one of our baptism preparation sessions. The next is Sunday 1 October 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

AN AFTERNOON OF PRAYER WITH BLESSED PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI

Saturday 30 September, beginning with the 12:30pm Mass, Br Joseph Bailham OP will lead our reflections on this lay Dominican. After Mass, a light lunch in St Clement's Hall, followed by two reflections and a period of adoration. Come along to find out more.

PARISH SOCIAL EVENTS

The first of our Tuesday evening social events was very enjoyable, and this will continue on Tuesday evenings during the term, in St Clement's Hall from 6:30pm. On Saturday 7 October we will have the Holy Cross Music Variety Event, with two sessions at 3:00pm-5:30pm and 7:00-9:30pm. Please see the flyers for all the details.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

The school was established in Leicester in 1819, and moved to the present site in Stonesby Avenue in 1967. Bishop Patrick will join us to celebrate the Jubilee Mass this Tuesday at 2:00pm. Please make contact with the school office if you would like to attend.

CATHOLICISM 101 RETURNS

This was very popular last year, and we are glad to be marking its return on Thursday 5 October at 7pm in St Clement's. This term there will be six sessions, taking a break on 26 October, and we will be watching Bishop Barron's DVDs on *Key Players*, which examines the lives of some saints and other contributors. All are welcome.

NEW DOMINICANS

We send our best wishes to Brs Isaac, Thomas, Vincent, and Cuthbert, who made their First Vows this weekend in Cambridge. We are also pleased to welcome six new novices to take their place. Please do remember to pray for new vocations, and that the Lord will sustain them in their calling.

A WORD OF THANKS ...

To all who made a special effort to enhance our patronal celebrations last weekend. Fr Martin, our Provincial, was very impressed.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Our Holy Hour, each Sunday at 6pm
- Organ recitals, first Friday of each month at 1:15pm
- An afternoon of prayer with Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati – next Saturday, following on from 12:30pm Mass.

SAVE THE DATE

- Parish Requiem Mass – Wednesday 27 November at 7:15pm
- Advent Market – 3 December. You can start buying puddings already!
- Advent Retreat Weekend – 9 – 10 December, led by Br Luke Doherty OP

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:

£ 1103.82

(Gift aided: £451.60)

Woodhouse Collection

£ 141.00

(Gift aided: £109.00)

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT!*

THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

XXV IN ORDINARY TIME

1ST READING: ISAIAH 55:6-9

This Reading has been chosen as providing the key to understanding today's Gospel. Through the prophet Isaiah God tells us, "***For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.***" That becomes very clear when it comes to paying the labourers in the vineyard!

Responsorial Psalm: 144: 2-3, 8-9, 17-18: "*The Lord is close to all who call Him.*"

This psalm praises the Lord, who is full of mercy and compassion. That is shown in today's parable, in which He gives labourers what they need, not what they deserve.

2ND READING: PHILIPPIANS 1:20C-24, 27A

Today's extract from St. Paul's letter to the Philippians was written while he was in prison, probably in Ephesus. As he faced the possibility of martyrdom he gives a very moving meditation on the prospects of life and death. He is in a state of tension, pulled both ways. Whether he lives or dies, Paul is convinced that Christ will be honoured in his body, that is, either by Paul's labours and suffering for the Gospel or by actual martyrdom.

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 20:1-16

This is another parable about the Kingdom of Heaven and God's generosity, which does not consider later comers as second-class citizens. The context in which it was originally told must have been Jesus' opponents complaining that he was paying more attention to the outcast than to the respectable members of society. Jesus takes a situation as familiar in daily life then as now—long lines of unemployed waiting for a job. But He depicts the behaviour of the employer in a quite surprising way. Out of pity for the unemployed and their families, the employer generously gives a full day's wages to everyone. That is what God is doing in Jesus' ministry—giving the tax collectors and prostitutes an equal share with the righteous in his kingdom. Obviously, the parable is not a moral lesson about labour relations!

At the level of Matthew writing up oral tradition, the proverbial phrase "the last will be first, and the first will be last" has been added. This looks like a reapplication of the parable to the situation of the post-Easter community. Israel has rejected the Gospel, so Gentiles have been drawn in. As St. Paul tells us in his letter to the Ephesians, they are 'no longer outsiders, but fellow citizens in God's household.'

NEXT SUNDAY –
XXVI SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIMES (YEAR A) - FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

"Expect much of God, and he will do much for you."

-
St Bernard of Clairvaux

"There is no surer means of calling down God's blessing upon the family than the daily recitation of the Rosary."

Pope Pius XII

THE WORD AT WORK: OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

GOD'S GIFT TO US

It's not fair! That was the reaction of the labourers who'd worked all day in the heat. They expected to receive a higher wage than those who'd worked for only an hour in the cool of the evening. I'm sure we would agree with them – but we'd be wrong!

The employer had been faithful to the agreement he'd made with each of the workers. None of them could accuse him of a breach of contract. The only grounds for complaint was that they were all paid a fixed wage, rather than by the hour. The employer was asking for trouble by giving each of his workers the same wage, no matter how long he had worked!

But this is not a parable about industrial relations and a just wage. It's a parable about the Kingdom of Heaven, and God's generosity in welcoming the most unlikely people. The employer is not so much concerned with how much each worker deserves, but how much he needs. Each required sufficient to support himself and his family. That was as true for those who had worked all day, as for those who had been waiting a long time for someone to give him a chance to earn a living. In this parable, the employer was generous and compassionate towards those who'd worked only a short time, without being unjust to those who'd borne the heat of a day's labour.

This is how God treats each of us. God wants, and even needs, all of us to work for Him in bringing about His Kingdom. For our part, we all need His mercy and long for His salvation. This He has promised us if we do His work. Some respond to His call throughout their lives. They are faithful servants who bear the heat of the day, resisting temptations, and even persecution.

But then there are those who only turn to God at the last moment. Only then do they do His will. This parable may well have been inspired by the resentment at Jesus making sinners so welcome. That was true of the 'good thief' whom Jesus promised to welcome into paradise that very day, as they both died on the cross. And there's the Prodigal Son who, after enjoying a dissolute life, repented and was given such a warm welcome home. Our sympathies are with the faithful son, who protested that this was unfair. We think he had good reason to resent his wayward brother being given the reward, which he thought he deserved. And we may well think it unfair that some people, who have lived wicked lives, are, after a late repentance, welcomed into heaven, while the rest of us are expected to serve God for the whole of our lives.

There are two replies to these objections. The first is that devoting our whole lives to serving God brings out the very best in us. While someone may enjoy a dissolute, godless life, he or she brings out the worst in themselves and often harms others. In the end, such a life is empty and meaningless. The second reply follows directly from today's parable. There we see that God, our employer, shows a generosity which transcends what any of us deserves. He offers all of us, His workers, the salvation we need, regardless of when we respond to His call. **WHAT GOD GIVES EACH OF US, HIS LABOURERS, IS NOTHING LESS THAN THE TOTAL GIFT OF HIMSELF! HE IS OUR REWARD!**

Instead of complaining that God is unjust in offering salvation and eternal happiness to late coming sinners, we should rejoice that He is so generous and merciful to all of us. Never should we be so mean-hearted as to begrudge the sinner forgiveness. God's generosity doesn't mean that he's unjust to any of us. With the father in the parable of the Prodigal Son we should rejoice. His son or daughter –our brother or sister –was dead, and is now alive! So, let's rejoice. God bless you.

Isidore O.P.