



HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 28TH JANUARY 2018

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

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

A WORD FROM THE PRIOR ...

The days are getting longer, and the lights are getting brighter! Not just the sunlight, but the lights in our church. It's always a pity for the peace of our church to be disturbed by building work, but it has been very exciting to watch the new lighting system beginning to take shape. Just like the longer days, it is a very welcome development indeed.

Welcome is a particular theme before us this weekend, as we celebrate Racial Justice Sunday, for which the theme is: Belonging – All Are Welcome. As a Parish, and as a Dominican Community, we go to great lengths to extend a welcome to people of many different kinds and from many different places. This Sunday is an opportunity to reflect on our commitment to this, and how we can extend our welcome further.

At 10:30 Mass this week, there is an opportunity to learn more about the work of City of Sanctuary. This organization, which works with refugees and asylum seekers, has made its home here at Holy Cross for the past three years. It would be great if we could develop our links with this group, and help to extent the impact of their important work with vulnerable people.

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

Fr David

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION FOR THE EASTER SEASON

RCIA – This is the sacramental programme which prepares adults to receive the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist). It is also the means by which we prepare baptised adults for Confirmation and Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church. An information meeting and initial gathering will take place next Saturday 3 February, at 1:15pm, meeting in the church. Please contact us on leicester@english.op.org or call the office if you are interested.

CHURCH LIGHTING PROJECT MAKING PROGRESS

We are beginning to see the changes with lighting in the church, with lighting now installed in the north aisle and in the nave. We are grateful to our contractors for ensuring that the church was returned to full use for the weekend. Please note that, in order to facilitate the works, all Masses from Monday – Friday will be celebrated in the Lady Chapel until further notice. As always, we deeply appreciate your ongoing generosity, which has enabled the project to take place.

ST BLAISE – 3 FEBRUARY – BLESSING OF THROATS

Next Saturday, 3 February, is the memorial of St Blaise. The traditional blessing of throats will take place at all Masses on Saturday and Sunday.

RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY – 28 JANUARY

The theme is "Belonging, All are welcome". City of Sanctuary will join us for 10:30am Mass to talk about their work with refugees, and how we can help.

NOTICE BOARD

BAPTISM PREPARATION

If you wish to have your child baptised, please attend one of our baptism preparation sessions. The next is Sunday 4 February 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 will begin in the next few weeks.

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

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION IN 2018

This year we will celebrate First Holy Communions on Sunday 27 May at 10:30am Mass. Parents of children aged 7 years and above who would like to put their children forward for this year are invited to fill in a form and return it to the sacristy. The programmes to prepare our families for this special day will begin shortly. Likewise, parents of children who are of secondary school age and would like to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation should pass their details to the office.

HOLY CROSS SOCIAL GROUP

On Sunday February 4 you will be very welcome to join us in St. Clement's Hall for:

- Breakfast Club - after the 8am Mass; bacon/egg baps, tea/coffee/juice/croissants.
- Meet for a Treat - after the 10.30 Mass; cake, tea/coffee/juice.

Free of charge! See you there!

Holy Cross Social Group continues every Tuesday in St. Clement's Hall - doors open from 6.00-8.00pm. A great opportunity to meet for a chat and a bite to eat.

LEICESTER CATHOLIC STUDENTS

Our Catholic Wednesdays return this week (31st January) with a special guest: Brenden Thompson, Coordinator at Catholic Voices, will teach us how to debate the Faith with our friends without losing them. Open to all University Students; Brenden's workshop will focus on the Catholic Voices method of reframing, giving you the tools to engage intelligently and compassionately with criticism of the Church. Starting with food at 7pm, in St Clement's Hall.

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

We will mark the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, and World Day of Prayer for the Sick, with a special Mass for Healing on Saturday 10 February at 12:30pm. We would hope to bless the hands of all those who are part of the caring profession. Please let us know in the sacristy if you would like to have your hands blessed. There will be a Lourdes procession following the 10:30am Mass on Sunday 11 February.

CATHOLICISM 101

The popular series will resume for a further six sessions on the Thursday nights in Lent. More details will emerge soon.

PARISH SHOP

Our Parish Shop is open all weekend, and every day after the 12.30pm Mass, come along and have a look at what wonderful items we have available.

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:

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:

£ 1,286.43

(Gift aided: £474.01)

Woodhouse Collection

£118.81

(Gift aided: £86.61)

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT!*

THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FIRST READING -

How will we know the will of God and his plans? The only valid means is indicated in today's reading: *the recourse to the prophet*. Moses describes the features and functions of this character that has nothing in common with the magicians and soothsayers. He is an ordinary man, a brother. Unlike the king is chosen by the people, he is directly inspired by God. The Lord communicates his thoughts and plans to him. God entrusts him the duty to reveal him to the brothers, without adding or subtracting anything (vv. 15, 18). Moses is an example of a "prophet." He has acted as God's spokesman (v. 16). Faced with the terrible majesty of the Lord, the people was scared and asked that the word of God be not communicated directly, but transmitted through a mediator. Moses went up the mountain, met the Lord and heard his voice. He then went down and told the people what he had heard. Here is the prophet: He is one who "climbs the mountain", assists, in a sense, to the "divine council" (Am 2:7). He lives in constant dialogue with God, assimilates his thoughts and feelings. Then he has the ability and the courage to pass them on to people, even if they are contrary to human common sense.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Response: O that today you would listen to his voice, harden not your hearts.

SECOND READING

Writing to the Corinthians, Paul *praises the celibate* life and does so in fervent terms as to give the impression that he devalues the institution of marriage. He begins with an observation: it is true—he recognizes—that marriage is good and holy. However, there is a risk that married people let themselves be absorbed by the cares of this world, to such an extent as to overshadow or even undermine the union with the Lord. He is not saying that the celibate is better than one who marries, nor, even less, that conjugal love and the exercise of sexuality estrange one from God. He simply says that the state of virgins is not only admirable as that of the married ones, but puts those who live it, in a mature way, in a favourable condition to remain united to the Lord. Those who do not have their own family has a free heart to devote themselves entirely to God and to all the brethren. What's more, the condition of the celibates is also a witness to married people of the community. It reminds everyone that marriage belongs to the realities of this world. It is not the ultimate condition but is transient, destined to go. In the future world all will be like the angels of God. They will neither marry nor be married.

GOSPEL

After the call of the first four disciples (Mk 1:16-20) Jesus fixes his residence in Capernaum, which becomes "his city" (Mt 9:1). He is a guest of the Peter's family who owns a house along the lake, a few steps from the synagogue. He begins to teach and to perform healings. The first that is told in the Gospel of Mark is not chosen at random. In Mark's intention it constitutes the synthesis of the whole work of Jesus in favour of people. It's Saturday and people go to the synagogue to pray and to hear the reading and explanation of the word of God. There is a rabbi who organizes the meeting. Every adult Jew may attend or be invited to read and comment on the scriptures. To give a homily is quite simple: it is enough to recall the explanations given by the great rabbis to that particular biblical text. To venture one's own interpretation is risky because one can be seen as presumptuous. Jesus, as is customary, joins his people and is willing to do the readings. The first is taken from the book of the law, that is, the first five books of the Bible, the other is a song of the prophets. Who reads the second, if he likes, can also do the homily. Jesus, taking advantage of the climate of meditation and prayer that is created, introduces his message, with a highly appreciated speech: unlike the scribes, he speaks with authority (Mk 1:21-22).

NEXT SUNDAY: FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR B)

"Frequently people lose time in longing for time to suit themselves, for they do not employ what they have otherwise than in suffering and gloominess."

St. Catherine of Siena

THE WORD AT WORK – OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY – BELONGING: ALL ARE WELCOME

Below are some reflections on the Church's duty to welcome all peoples.

Racial Justice Sunday is on the Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time. On this day Catholics are called to pray for those who experience unjust discrimination or are marginalised because of their race and ethnicity. We think in particular of those who feel they do not belong within our society or our communities because of this discrimination.

As Catholics we are asked to treat all humans with dignity, regardless of their background or circumstance. There are many stories of alienation throughout the Bible, with clear calls to "Love the stranger". That the Church is a place where all belong is clearly seen in the recent Feast of the Epiphany, when Christ is revealed not only to the Israelites, but to all of God's people.

The Catholic Church proclaims that all human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society across the world. Pope Francis has consistently reiterated that every man, woman, girl and boy is made in the image of God and is a free person - so must be accorded the same freedom and the same dignity. Everyone is included and no one is left behind.

Human worth and dignity in the Scriptures

A thread that runs through both the Old and New Testaments argues for the dignity and worth of humanity. This thread begins in the story of creation where the Scriptures tell us that human beings, male and female, were made in God's image and God declares all that he has made to be good as in Genesis 1:26a "Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness...'" Taking this one stage further in Deuteronomy 10:17b-18 we are presented with a God who does not discriminate one person's dignity from another's: "... the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, 18 who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing."

So we are imprinted with God's image. Our dignity comes from the persons we are and not from our race, gender or age. In Galatians 3:28 Paul tells us that in Christ, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female." We are morally and spiritually equal before God, we all equally need salvation, and we all share in the same means of salvation. This strand draws us to recognise that discrimination and abuse of any kind, are a gross violation of God's loving purpose in creation.

Throughout the Bible there are many stories of alienation and discrimination – whether from individual injustices and disputes to collective persecution from following God's call to the Promised Land and in the missionary travels of the early church disciples and apostles. At the heart of the Biblical imperative, God through his Law and prophets is consistently on the side of the victim. Whether it's in Deuteronomy 10:19 that you should "Love the stranger then, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." Or from Jeremiah 22:3 where you must "practice honesty and integrity; rescue the man who has been wronged from the hands of the oppressors; do not exploit the stranger, the orphan, the widow; do no violence; shed no innocent blood in this place," the message is very clear about right human behaviour.

The New Testament takes this one stage further as personified in Jesus who summarises the Commandments in Mark 12:30-31 as "to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' 31 The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." However, very often our debates about inclusion and exclusion (both political and spiritual) revolve around numbers and targets rather than people and values. Yet people are not numbers or targets. So how then, do we justify our treatment of people when we discriminate against them? What kind of a society are we if we do not welcome those whom we meet or help make it possible for people to belong in our neighbourhoods, churches and communities?