



HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 4TH MARCH 2018

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

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

A WORD FROM THE PRIOR ...

Snow is not a very frequent visitor to Leicester, and we might well have thought we had our fair share around Christmastime. The early days of March were welcomed with more than just a flurry of snow. The birds in the garden were grateful for the food left out for them, and are eagerly awaiting the thaw.

There's a particular beauty about snow in the springtime. The lighter days have made the white snow glisten, and the gradual thaw seems to highlight the colours that are emerging from underneath. That's a bit like Lent. Our practices of penance are spread like a blanket over our lives, and gradually they help us to see God's call to repentance, which brings out the beauty of our salvation.

St Patrick's Day is coming up, and we begin to make preparations for Easter and beyond. It's good to see the lighting project nearing completion, and to look beyond that to the challenges we face in the years ahead. It is truly remarkable to recognise the achievements we can attain when we work together. Hopefully this will continue for many years into the future.

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

Fr David

SPECIAL EVENTS DURING THE SEASON OF LENT

On Saturday 10 March, we will have our Lenten Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary at our Priory in London. The bus will depart from the Priory at 9:30am, returning at 7pm in the evening. We will have Mass at the Rosary Shrine, and an opportunity to learn more about the work of the Shrine and its history, in addition to Adoration and time for reflection, with the opportunity for Confession. A donation of £15 is requested. Please pass your name to Michael in the shop if you wish to attend.

LENT AT HOLY CROSS

In addition to the Catholicism 101 course that will see us through Lent, we will have Stations of the Cross each Wednesday and Friday after 12:30pm Mass, and veneration of the Relic of the True Cross on Fridays. We will renew our commitments to Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament after the lighting is completed.

CHURCH LIGHTING PROJECT NEARING COMPLETION

The finishing touches are being added now, and the project nears completion. Following the conclusion of the works, the church will be cleaned.

APPEAL FOR PRAYERS FROM FR THOMAS IN INDIA

Over the last number of years, we have maintained contact with Fr Thomas in India, who runs St Joseph's Hospices for the destitute poor. We have kept contact through Light for the Blind, a UK based charity that is constituted by his former parishioners in the Diocese of Leeds.

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 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 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

ST PATRICK'S DAY, SATURDAY 17 MARCH 2018

The principal celebration of Mass for St Patrick's Day will be celebrated by +Patrick our Bishop at St Patrick's, Beaumont Leys at 11am. Shamrock will be blessed here at 12:30pm Mass and the annual Parade will take place, starting outside the church at 1pm.

HOLY WEEK 2018

Looking ahead to Holy Week, we are glad that Fr Christopher Thomas will preach our Holy Week Retreat this year. Fr Chris is a priest of this Diocese and has been a very good friend of our Community for many years.

BLACKFRIARS MARKET – 20 MAY 2018

We have begun to think about Blackfriars Market, the most important fundraising event in our calendar. Over the last number of years, this event has helped us raise £60,000 for the fabric and maintenance of the church and priory. This money has assisted us to address many issues with fabric within the priory itself. Over the next few years, we will need to turn our attention to facilities in the various halls and meeting rooms, as well as heating in the church. A successful Market in May will be a significant step towards addressing these needs.

HOLY CROSS SOCIAL GROUP

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 main student night, Catholic Wednesdays, continues on 7 March with a discussion on 'Church vs Justice? Clerical Sex Abuse'. Come along and find out how to appreciate the common objections, and how to respond sensitively. Meet in St Clement's Hall after the 6.10pm Mass: there's food at 6.45pm, followed by talk and discussion. Our weekly student email is the best way to keep in touch, as well as the Facebook page. So, if you're a student and you're not yet on the mailing list, you can give us your address using the blue form from the student table in the church, or by emailing Fr Matthew (matthew.jarvis@english.op.org) or George (george.ralph@english.op.org).

CATHOLICISM 101 – LENTEN SERIES

We meet this Thursday (8 March) to consider the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in our salvation. We start with food at 7pm followed by a 40-minute video and discussion, in St Clement's Hall. Free entry. All welcome!

PARISH SHOP

Our Parish Shop is open each weekend, and every day after the 12.30pm Mass, come along and have a look at what wonderful items we have available. This is an excellent way of helping the church and priory. We have a small amount of St Pauls Missals available to purchase and St Benedict Crosses. New stock has just arrived and there is now a First Communion and Confirmation Section and St Patrick's Day goods.

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:

£ 1,358.41

(Gift aided: £482.06)

Woodhouse Collection

£ 119.00

(Gift aided: £83.00)

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT!*

THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

FIRST READING

How In the codes of the ancient Middle East the precepts were stated with a generic, impersonal formula, "If anyone will do such a thing... he will suffer the following sentence..." Not so with the ten words. These are addressed by the Lord directly to everyone, "You do or you do not do this or the other." The pious Israelite is always asked directly by his God and never reduces his loyalty to the strict observance of rules, but lives it as a personal response to the Lord. The decalogue has had a considerable significance in the religious life of Israel. It was the synthesis of the entire Torah. It was solemnly read during the Feast of Tabernacles and was used in the daily liturgy of the temple. Even today, every Jew repeats it, twice a day, in the morning and evening prayers. On the feast of the *bar mitsvah*, he who, having reached the age of 13, becomes an adult, proclaims it before the assembly congregated in the synagogue, to declare his decision to remain faithful to all the law of his people. The interest in the Decalogue has always been so high that the priests of the temple had restricted its use to some particularly solemn moments. Some rabbis, to prevent the spread of the belief that only the ten commandments were given by God, sustained that, on the two tablets, from one letter to the other of the decalogue, God has written all the 613 precepts.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Response: You, Lord, have the message of eternal life.

SECOND READING

In In these four verses we have, in short, Paul's preaching: Christ crucified is the sign of God's love. In the face of this love, no one can remain indifferent; all must take a stand. There are two negative responses: that of the Jews, for whom the crucified Jesus is a scandal and that of the Greeks, who consider him insane. The Jews were expecting spectacular demonstrations of God's power, as it happened during the Exodus from Egypt. They were convinced that the new world would be prodigiously born (v. 22). Jesus, however, was challenged to show, by coming down from the cross, that God was on his side. He accepted defeat. The sages of Greece did not believe in miracles. They trusted only as the eighteenth-century Illuminists, on rationality (v. 23). The death of Jesus on the cross did not respond to any human logic and was therefore a genuine madness. The two attitudes are denounced by Paul because they can always infiltrate the community of disciples. There may be those who think like the Jews and consider faith and religion as means to obtain graces and miracles, to be preserved from calamities and misfortunes that affect other people. Don't many Christians perhaps worship the saints more like the authors of wonders than witnesses of the one who gave his life for the brethren?

GOSPEL

By purifying the temple of the merchants, Jesus pronounced his severe, final sentence against mingling religion and money, between worship the Lord and economic interests. God expects only love from man and love is free. It shows and nourishes itself only through generous and disinterested gifts. To avoid dangerous misunderstandings, Jesus ordered his disciples: "You received this as a gift, so give it as a gift. Do not carry any gold silver or copper in your purses. Do not take a traveller's bag, or an extra shirt, or sandals, or a staff: workers deserve their living" (Mt 10:9-10). The most important teaching is, however, in the second sentence: "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up" (v. 19). He was not referring to more trade and unworthy traffic that took place in the sanctuary, but the inauguration of a new temple. He announced the beginning of a new cult. The comment of the evangelist is a clarifier: "He was referring to the temple of his body" (v. 21).

NEXT SUNDAY: FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (YEAR B)

"Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you."

St. Augustine

THE WORD AT WORK: OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

ZEAL FOR GOD'S HOUSE

Fr Richard Ounsworth explains the cosmic significance of Christ's cleansing of the temple..

There is surprisingly little in common between St John's Gospel and the other three. Apart, of course, from the bare facts of Jesus's life, notably his crucifixion, there are very few stories from his biography that all four agree on. But today's tale of the 'cleansing of the temple' is such a one, and all four Gospels see this incident as closely related to Jesus's death. This is not simply because Jesus was just making himself a nuisance and causing a fuss – even a potentially explosive fuss at the biggest event in the Jewish year – but because by his actions Jesus was seen to be making a claim about himself, one that was absolutely unacceptable to the religious authorities of Jerusalem.

This is very obvious in the account that we read today. 'What sign have you to show us for doing this?', he is asked. In other words, 'Who do you think you are, and why should we believe you?' Now Jesus gives an answer, but a cryptic one, which is naturally enough misunderstood, at least until the resurrection, when the sign is fulfilled. But in fact what he has done is itself the sign that justifies his action, if we recognise the point of his saying about making the temple a 'house of trade'.

Naturally we take this to mean that Jesus is against selling things and changing money in the temple. We may ask ourselves whether he would express equal displeasure at copies of Catholic newspapers and fairtrade instant coffee being sold at the back of church. But this would be quite to miss the point. Without the sellers of animals for sacrifice, animals that were guaranteed to be acceptable according to the Law of Moses, there could be no sacrifices. Without the money changers, taking the unacceptable Roman coins and turning them into Tyrian shekels, no-one could offer money to the treasury or pay the temple tax that every Jew took pride in paying. In other words, Jesus is not just trying to get rid of a few corrupt practices that have crept in to mar something he basically approves of; no, he is trying to put a stop to the whole thing.

And this is because Jesus brings, in his own person, the fulfilment of the prophecy of Zechariah – in fact the very last verse of his prophesying, which says that 'there shall no longer be a trader in the house of the Lord on that day'. On what day? On the day of the Lord, when the Lord shows himself to be King over all the earth, when all the nations of the earth will be gathered into one, and when 'living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem'. On the day of the Lord, the temple is no longer needed, because the whole world is sanctified by the presence of the Lord.

Jesus told the woman of Samaria: 'The hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father... The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth.'

Jesus claims to be the one who brings in this day of the Lord. Indeed, when he is nailed to the cross, Pilate will truly – though he does not mean to be truthful – proclaim that here is the Lord enthroned as King. From that Crucified King living waters will indeed flow out from Jerusalem to bring life to the whole world, on the day when zeal for God's house does indeed consume him. What is this zeal? On the one hand, it is the misplaced zeal for the *status quo*, the present arrangements which, for the priestly powers, are working out very nicely thank you, and they will not stand for anyone who threatens their tottering authority. Or perhaps they are not so cynical: after all, the temple was a great institution, it was the place where God had chosen to make his dwelling among humanity and invite his chosen people to celebrate his mercy by participating in the sacrifices established by Moses. All of that, important though it was, was but a sign pointing towards its fulfilment, the astonishing fulfilment that came in the person of Christ. Perhaps we are all guilty, from time to time, of loving the outward signs more than the inward reality.

But more importantly, the 'zeal for your house' that consumed Jesus is also Christ's love for God's true house, which is the whole world, and which is every human heart that welcomes his Spirit of truth and love.

On the Cross Jesus died for love of us, as zeal for our hearts consumed him. Today, will we decide again to accept that life-giving love, and die to sin for love of him?