



HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 6TH MAY

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

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

A WORD FROM THE PRIOR ...

A sunny and warm start to the Bank Holiday weekend can be only but welcome – the hope that summer is finally on its way. It's great to see so much of our hard work coming to fruition as the summer approaches. Our University students are entering the last weeks of their term time before exams, and our schools are celebrating all the great learning of the last few months. Plenty of things are coming in for Blackfriars Market, and we're ready for that when we're back from Walsingham next week.

We had a good session all about Alfie Evans on Friday night with Fr Robert, and we hope to continue to build up events of this kind at Holy Cross. It's good to think through issues together and develop discussions. It is so important for us to explore the teachings of the Church, and learn to understand them.

Remember that Thursday is a Holy Day of Obligation, so we all need to get to Mass that day.

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

Fr David

BLACKFRIARS MARKET – SUNDAY 20 MAY

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.

VOLUNTEERS FOR THE MARKET

Of course, the Market doesn't run itself, and we need lots of able and willing volunteers to keep things moving. There will be stalls to run, setting up to do, clearing away, keeping things going on the day and much more besides. Please give your name to Anne Chafer, who is co-ordinating this kind of thing. As ever, if each of us does something small the Market will be a huge success.

GOING INTO HOSPITAL

One of the very important ministries we are engaged with here at Holy Cross is the chaplaincy to LRI. Josephine is the chaplain there, and works very hard to visit all the patients and provide for their needs. If you, or a relative, is due for a spell in hospital, do let us know. This makes it easier to have names added to the list, and ensure that we are able to provide for your needs until you feel better.

BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY AND MASSES

There will be no 8am Mass on Monday or Tuesday this week, and no 6:10pm Mass on Monday evening. Many thanks for your kind attention.

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

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION – SUNDAY 27 MAY

This special day will be celebrated on Sunday 27 May at 10:30am Mass. There will be a meeting for children and their parents this Sunday, 28 April, following the 10:30am Mass. We will meet in St Clement's Hall.

STUDENTS – CATHOLIC WEDNESDAYS ARE BACK

Looking forward to seeing you all this Wednesday at 6:45 for some food and sharing, followed by a time of Eucharistic adoration. Some time with our Lord before the stress of exams. We're looking forward to the exciting events of the summer term, not least our Diocesan day with Catholic Voices, Saturday 9 June. Look out for more details.

ALFIE EVANS CASE – MANY THANKS

Thanks to all who attended the session on Alfie Evans on Friday night. It was good to have a comprehensive look at the various issues involved and also to pray together about the issues surrounding life and death in general, according to the teachings of the Church. These are obviously ongoing issues, and we hope to develop more opportunities to come together and think about these things as a parish community. Particular thanks go to Fr Robert for taking time out to prepare the session and for his carefully constructed answers to the different issues that were raised.

THE MONTH OF MAY

We encourage you to erect May altars in your homes in honour of Our Lady for the month of May. Our May Procession will take place on Sunday 27 May at 11:45am. Please bring flowers to honour Our Lady.

DOMINICAN PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM – 13 MAY

Departing from the Priory at 8am, please put your name down on the list in the shop. The cost will be £15. It is always a good day, so please do join us!

ASCENSION OF THE LORD – THURSDAY 11 MAY

The Bishops have restored the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord to Thursday of the sixth week of Eastertide, and therefore it is a day of obligation. Masses at 8am, 12:30pm, 6:10pm, and 7:15pm (sung in the Dominican Rite).

PARISH SHOP

Copies of the Dominican Rite Mass are now available to purchase in the Shop.

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION FOR CHILDREN

Children of secondary school age who have been baptised will begin to think about celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation. We hope to have a date for this in the next academic year. Children over the age of 12 who have not made First Holy Communion will need to follow this programme when it begins. Likewise, children over the age of 7 years who are unbaptised can be baptised as part of the First Holy Communion programme.

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:

£ 1008.43

(Gift aided: £375.40)

Woodhouse Collection

£ 95.00

(Gift aided: £75.00)

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT!*

THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

1ST READING:

The fact happened at Caesarea, the splendid capital founded by Herod the Great. The Roman procurator lived in this city and a strong military garrison was stationed there. One of the commanders of the garrison was called Cornelius, a centurion, who, like his colleague at Capernaum (Lk 7:1-10), cultivated a deep respect for the religion of Israel. He prayed, handed out alms, loved the people of Israel, but this was still not enough to be associated to the heirs of the promises made to Abraham. He was not circumcised and therefore remained impure, unapproachable by pious Israelites and Peter was one of them. Peter was a traditionalist, proud of his election (Deut 7:6; 26:19). He had always avoided contact with foreigners, not to be led into idolatry. He defended his religious identity, bearing in mind that a clear line of demarcation separated him from the pagans. He had scrupulously observed the prohibitions and requirements that the rabbis had taught him, but, a few years after Pentecost, events began to chip away at his confidence. An increasingly insistent doubt tormented him: discriminations, impositions in the name of God, were they really willed by God?

Responsorial Psalm: The Lord has shown his salvation to the nations

2ND READING:

Only Jesus could claim to be the only Son of God. The works of his Father are manifested in full only in him (Jn 9:3). However those on whose faces the appearance of the heavenly Father is revealed, they are called and really are children of God: "those who work for peace" (Mt 5:9), those who love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them (Mt 5:44), those who act as parents to orphans and widows (Sir 4:10). It is a likeness, from which even the greatest saint will remain infinitely distant, but to which we must continually strive for. In fact, Paul says: "As most beloved children of God, strive to imitate him" (Eph 5:1) In the first part of today's passage (vv. 7-8), the apostle John takes this image of sonship to indicate what is the foundation, the source of the commandment of love. It does not come from an external provision given by God, but it is the necessary manifestation of a new reality, intimately present in man, the divine seed that God has placed in him. Who is God? We do not even know who we are, how can we define God? John does not give a definition, but explains how He manifests himself: not as a legislator and judge, as the rabbis believed, but as love. "Let us love one another—he says—for love comes from God. Everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Those who do not love have not known God, for God is love."

GOSPEL

Today's gospel is a continuation of last Sunday's. After introducing the allegory of the vine and the branches, Jesus explains what happens in those who remain united to him. There are fleeting infatuations for Christ, dictated by temporary emotion and enthusiasm. There is a lasting attachment that no opposing force is able to break. This strong and decisive adhesion is expressed by John with the verb to remain (μενειν in Greek). It occurs seven times in the parable of the vine and mentioned thrice at the beginning of our passage (vv. 9-10). Jesus remains in the Father's love because he is always united to him. He is faithful to the Father and "always does what pleases him" (Jn 8:29). The disciples can become in the world a reflection of this union only if they remain in His love and keep his commandments: "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him; and we will come to him and make a room in his home" (Jn 14:23).

NEXT SUNDAY:

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (YEAR B)

'To enjoy interior peace, we must always reserve in our hearts amidst all affairs, as it were, a secret closet, where we are to keep retired within ourselves, and where no business of the world can ever enter.'

St. Antonino Pierozzi

THE WORD AT WORK: OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

WHAT DOES THE *TANTUM ERGO* MEAN?

Fr Matthew offers the second of three reflections on the Eucharist ahead of Adoremus – the National Eucharist Congress

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|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Tantum ergo Sacramentum</i> | Therefore, the great Sacrament |
| <i>Veneremur cernui:</i> | Let us reverence, prostrate: |
| <i>Et antiquum documentum</i> | And let the old covenant |
| <i>Novo cedat ritui:</i> | Give way to a new rite. |
| <i>Præstet fides supplementum</i> | Let faith complete and surpass |
| <i>Sensuum defectui.</i> | What is lacking in the senses. |
| | |
| <i>Genitori, Genitoque</i> | To Begetter and Begotten |
| <i>Laus et iubilatio,</i> | Be praise and jubilation, |
| <i>Salus, honor, virtus quoque</i> | Health, honour, strength also |
| <i>Sit et benedictio:</i> | And blessing. |
| <i>Procedenti ab utroque</i> | To the One who proceeds from Both |
| <i>Compar sit laudatio. Amen.</i> | Be praise as well. Amen. |

This much-loved hymn is sung by Catholics at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. It was composed as the last two verses of a longer hymn by St Thomas Aquinas, great poet and theologian, for the universal feast of Corpus Christi instituted in 1264. But what does the *Tantum Ergo* mean, and how can it help us adore our Lord in the Sacrament?

'So great a Sacrament' (*tantum sacramentum*) – that's the first thing to notice. St Thomas teaches that the Eucharist is not just another sacrament: it is the *greatest* sacrament. Whereas other sacraments give us grace, and Baptism is the most important as the 'gateway' to all the sacraments, only in the Eucharist does God give us *his very self*. In receiving the whole Christ in Holy Communion – his Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity – we are received into God himself, made 'partakers of the divine nature' (2 Pet 1:4).

That's why the minister and people bow down at the second line (*veneremur cernui*) before offering the incense. Our bodies matter, and we use them to offer fitting worship to God. At Mass and Adoration, we use our body language to say to God: 'I love you, I adore you.' St Paul urges us: 'present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship' (Rom 12:1). The philosopher Elizabeth Anscombe once came back to her pew after receiving Holy Communion, and her three-year-old daughter asked her, 'Is he inside you?' When her mother said yes, the little girl immediately fell prostrate on the floor to adore Jesus in her mother!

The Eucharist is the 'new covenant' (*novo ritui*) in the Blood of Jesus. The sacrifices of the Old Testament were incapable of taking away sins (Heb 10:4), but they pointed forward to the sacrifice of Christ, the true Lamb of God, whose death brings us complete forgiveness and conquers death itself (2 Tim 1:10). Fr Herbert McCabe OP explained that what was *figurative* in the Old Testament became *real* in the New Testament and is made *sacramentally real* in the Church. Our joy is to be alive after Christ's victory, to know Christ explicitly, and by our faith worship him sacramentally present among us.

Faith is critical, because the senses let us down. Can you see God? Can anyone see God? Yet Christ has made him known to us (Jn 1:18). Jesus is the face of the Father: 'anyone who has seen me has seen the Father' (Jn 14:9). We are privileged to see Jesus – to see God – in the Blessed Sacrament. Physical sight (or taste) only suggests bread and wine, but these are important and God-given signs of the presence of God, whose Body is broken like bread, whose Blood is poured out like wine, to nourish us and give us life. Never say, Jesus is 'hidden' by the appearances of bread and wine: they don't hide but *reveal* him. The senses don't deceive us; they only fall short (*sensuum defectui*). So, faith does not contradict reason, but surpasses it, drawn through the created appearances to the divine reality.

I have focused on the first stanza because it contains such rich Eucharistic theology. The second is the doxology expressing praise of the Holy Trinity. In the end, that's what Adoration is all about: worshipping the Holy Trinity, revealed to us by Jesus and in Jesus. As a parishioner said to the Curé d'Arns: 'I gaze at him, and he gazes at me.'