



HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 31ST MARCH 2019

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

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

A WORD FROM THE PRIOR ...

Spring forward and fall back! A good way to remember which way to turn the dial on the clocks this weekend. Hopefully the earlier rising time will be rewarded by good weather and the exciting onset of spring and summer. That expectation of new life inspires enthusiasm within us, and that's the spirit of our Lenten observance, the longing for the joys that are to come, and the enjoyment of that longing.

Lent is a time of preparation for new life. There's lots of signs of that in our community at the moment. We're grateful to everybody who's helping us to realise this, and we hope you'll continue that enthusiasm as we progress things!

As we continue our preparations to mark the 200th Anniversary, and as we prepare for a time of renewal, I'm conscious of the contribution of past generations. Especially at this time, my thoughts are close to Fr Fabian and Fr Isidore in these days of illness.

Please do look through our events, and get involved with the range of things that are happening.

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

Fr David

DEVELOPING THE FRASSATI CENTRE

Over the last few months, we have indicated the plans we are developing for a new pastoral centre here at Holy Cross – **The Frassati Centre for Preaching and Evangelisation**. This would seek to breathe new life into the original church buildings that we knew as the 'Holy Cross Centre'. We've assembled £180k so far to develop these buildings, and we are seeking to embark on a major fundraising project as we look towards our bicentenary. This week we have been pleased to meet with designers, thinking through the various scenarios, and have begun to prepare works to go out to tender. Please do pray for the success of the project

LENT AT HOLY CROSS

During the season of Lent, we will have Stations of the Cross on Wednesdays and Fridays at 1pm, and Stations of the Cross with Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati on Fridays at 7pm. There will also be an extra opportunity for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on Thursdays at 5pm. Scripture study sessions continue on Thursdays at 7pm in St Clement's Hall.

QUINQUENNIAL SURVEY AND WORKS TO THE CHURCH AND PRIORY

Our last quinquennial survey of the church and priory in 2017 pointed out significant remedial works and repairs that are required to ensure that our buildings are maintained adequately for the future. Significant renovation to areas of the roof of the buildings and the stone and brickwork are required, in order to prevent further damage. We have been pleased to hold meetings with various advisers and contractors to address these issues, and will develop our plans in due course. We are grateful to those with expertise in these areas for helping to point us in the right direction.

NOTICE BOARD

BAPTISM PREPARATION

If you wish to have your child baptised, please attend one of our baptism preparation sessions. The next will be on Sunday 7 April 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 again in the Autumn.

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

RCIA GROUP PREPARES FOR EASTER SACRAMENTS

Please pray for the members of the RCIA programme this year, as they continue the journey towards Easter, celebrating the Second Scrutiny this weekend. We hope that this will be a season of grace for them, and we are grateful for their witness in the midst of our parish community.

WHO IS BLESSED PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI?

He's the inspiration for our new initiative with developing our buildings and our apostolate, but who is he? He's a lay Dominican, whose life was marked by living the Dominican Charism in his everyday life. He was deeply devoted to prayer and study, and he inspired great fellowship with his contemporaries, and devoted himself to the service of others, especially the most vulnerable members of the community. We look forward to getting to know him more closely as we develop our apostolate.

GIFT AID BOXES

Your new Gift Aid Boxes are available for collection. They are on the table by the Wellington Street Entrance. Thanks for your continued generosity.

NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Please do begin to come forward for communion when the server rings the bell at the priest's communion. We remind you that it is perfectly acceptable to receive communion on the tongue or in the hand, standing and/or kneeling. Self-intinction is forbidden by our Bishop. The worthy reception of Holy Communion is something that should always be before our minds and hearts.

ENCOUNTERING THE WORD: SCRIPTURE STUDY OF JOHN'S GOSPEL

Our scripture study sessions with Fr Matthew each Thursday evening at 7pm, continuing on 4 April. Please share the flyers.

STAYING ON TIME!

We hope that you're not too late today for Mass, or too tired after missing an hour's sleep! The clocks have had their annual 'spring forward', so should be adjusted by one hour forward. Looking forward to the lighter evenings!

FR FABIAN AND FR ISIDORE

Thanks for your continued concern for the elderly and infirm members of our community. We are grateful for your generosity, and ask that you keep them in your prayers at this difficult time.

APF "RED BOX" MISSION APPEAL

Fr Vincent, who visited us for the appeal earlier in the year, and his team wish to thank us all for the generous response to the appeal. Several additional people took the traditional "red box" away, while others set up direct debits. Please look out for future notices informing about the collecting of the red boxes for return.

THE DOMINICAN COMMUNITY

Fr David Rocks OP PP *Prior* Fr Tony Rattigan OP *Bursar*;
Fr Nicholas Crowe OP *Subprior*; Fr Matthew Jarvis OP *CC*

Office Administrator: *Mrs Rachael Powell* – leicester.admin@english.op.org

Lay University Chaplain: *vacant*

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:

£ 1259.72

(Gift aided: £432.81)

Woodhouse Collection

£ 167.50

(Gift aided: £116.00)

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT!*

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

A THOUGHT FOR THIS SUNDAY

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is in Latin called *Laetare* Sunday, that is, "Rejoice", from the first word of the entrance antiphon in the liturgy of Mass. The liturgy today invites us to rejoice because Easter, the day of Christ's victory over sin and death, is approaching. But where is the source of Christian joy to be found if not in the Eucharist, which Christ left us as spiritual Food while we are pilgrims on this earth? The Eucharist nurtures in believers of every epoch that deep joy which makes us one with love and peace and originates from communion with God and with our brothers and sisters. Yes, in the Eucharist Christ wanted to give us *his* love, which impelled him to offer his life for us on the Cross. At the Last Supper, in washing the disciples' feet, Jesus left us the commandment of love: "even as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (Jn 13: 34). However, since this is only possible by remaining united to him like branches to the vine (cf. Jn 15: 1-8), he chose to remain with us himself in the Eucharist so that we could *remain in him*. When, therefore, we nourish ourselves with faith on his Body and Blood, his love passes into us and makes us capable in turn of laying down our lives for our brethren (cf. I Jn 3: 16) and not to grasp it for ourselves. From this flows Christian joy, the joy of love and the joy to be loved. Mary is the "Woman of the Eucharist" par excellence, a masterpiece of divine grace: the love of God has made her immaculate, "holy and blameless before him" (cf. Eph 1: 4).

– **Pope Benedict XVI**

Responsorial Psalm: Taste and see that the Lord is good

THE WISDOM OF THE SAINTS OF THE CHURCH

Those who have been freed and raised up follow the light. The light they follow speaks to them: *I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness*. The Lord gives light to the blind. Brethren, that light shines on us now, for we have had our eyes anointed with the eye-salve of faith. His saliva was mixed with earth to anoint the man born blind. We are of Adam's stock, blind from our birth; we need him to give us light. He mixed saliva with earth, and so it was prophesied: *Truth has sprung up from the earth*. He himself has said: *I am the way, the truth and the life*. We shall be in possession of the truth when we see face to face. This is his promise to us. Who would dare to hope for something that God in his goodness did not choose to promise or bestow? We shall see face to face. The Apostle says: *Now I know in part, now obscurely through a mirror, but then face to face*. John the Apostle says in one of his letters: *Dearly beloved, we are now children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be. We know that when he is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is*. This is a great promise.

– **From a commentary on the Gospel of St John by St Augustine**

CONTEMPORARY WITNESS

The English Province was blessed to have had a brother called Vincent Cooke who was born blind. He never saw a human face, though when he was young he could tell whether the lights were on or not. Yet he was able to teach us to see each other, to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the brethren, the latent gifts. When we can see another's fragile humanity and hidden goodness, we can help them to find a voice and become strong and free and let others liberate us too. The clay that we put on each other's eyes are words that open each other eyes to the goodness of creation, and that release us from seeing others with contempt. St Paul writes to the Ephesians: 'Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear.' (4.29) Faced with each other's incompleteness, do we, like the Pharisees in this story, speak words that ridicule and undermine, or words that give life and strength?

– **Fr Timothy Radcliffe OP**

NEXT SUNDAY: FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT (YEAR C)

“The higher we go, the better we shall hear the voice of Christ.”

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati OP

WHERE DO WE STAND?

TWO WAYS OF LOOKING AT THE PRODIGAL

Today's gospel, which we hear well into the season of Lent, is extremely familiar. To describe someone as a 'prodigal' or behaving just like the prodigal son has become almost proverbial, a way of speaking which does not depend on being a Christian. The familiar can of course lose its power, its capacity to startle us into repentance.

Because the parable is so well-known, in listening to it we probably knew what was coming next and could even race ahead while it was being read out. So let's take step back, and then perhaps the parable will speak to us in a fresh way.

When we read the Bible, with its histories and its stories, do we basically think we are spectators looking out of a window at something that this happening out there to others? Or do we think of reading the Bible as more like looking into a mirror, when we too are very much in the picture?

If we look at the Bible as we do when we look out of the window, then we are at some distance from what is going on, we need not get involved if we do not want to, we can remain at a safe distance. The people 'out there' do not include us, and what they say and do is not aimed at us. But if we look at the Bible as we look into a mirror, then we are in the middle of what is going on, we are part of the picture. In the mirror we see ourselves as well as others; we are caught up and involved in the story.

In reading or hearing the parable of the prodigal son, as the story is usually even if not too accurately called, we should not remain spectators looking at the drama of someone else's family. If we are directly involved then we will not just ask questions about what is going on, but are ourselves called into question. In fact, we are made to question ourselves.

We are meant to be 'at home' in God's house, without rivalry or estrangements. There are to be no alienating distances between the children and their Father or between the children. Looking into today's gospel as into a mirror, what should we look for? Clear-sighted honesty about how each of us stands, to begin with. We can distance ourselves in all kinds of ways. The prodigal son's distancing of himself is brought out geographically in that he travels to a distant land, but also in his life-style and how he has to 'return to himself' as well as to his father. At one level the older brother is near to his father, but more deeply he is not close to him and he cuts himself off from being related to his younger brother: 'this son of yours', as he describes his brother. Especially in Lent, we should look and see if there are features of the prodigal in us as well as features of the older brother.

The gospel, however, is Good News as well as a way of gaining self-knowledge. If it contained only judgment then this might well increase our sense of alienation from God, from ourselves and from others. In the mirror of today's parable, the generous and lavish welcome of the Father is the feature to concentrate on. Putting the focus on God will allow us to discover the truth about ourselves and at the same time not to think that is the whole picture, the end of the story. God makes change possible, more than we sometimes dare to hope for.

At this point, in a way the mirror scene turns out to be part of a film, a film in which each of us is one of the cast, and there is development and change. We have seen how the story unfolded so far, and in a dramatic manner the story finishes with the end of one estrangement and the risk of another. How will the older brother finally react? Will he accept and imitate the generosity of his father?

Where does each one of us stand in all this?