

Ash Wednesday revisited

Now beginning the third week of Lent we can perhaps pause and consider how it has gone so far. Have we managed to consider and deepen our way of living as Christians, disciples of Jesus? Have we perhaps tried and faltered, falling back into our usual habits? Have we even begun? Well, there is still time – we have another four weeks to go in this season of grace.

The Ash Wednesday I want to revisit though isn't the calendar date of 3½ weeks ago, but rather the poem of the same title published in 1930 by the Anglican poet and mystic, T. S. Eliot. The work of poets serves to crystallise or distil and concentrate human experience, and this particular work is very evocative of the process of conversion, of turning back towards God, which of course applies to all of us, poets or not. It is shot through with allusions to the Incarnation, to the Blessed Virgin, and to the Wisdom of God delighting in His creation.

Eliot begins by stressing our need to realise we need to accept God's help in this:

Because I do not hope to turn again / Because I do not hope / Because I do not hope to turn.

The hope of the new life of the Resurrection held out by the risen Lord is what, through His Spirit, can energise us to reorientate our way of life, to turn back towards God.

Another set of lines Eliot thinks important enough to repeat and to bring in to the conclusion of the poem is a perfect summation of what our Lenten experience should be about:

Teach us to care and not to care / Teach us to sit still / Even among these rocks, / Our peace in His will.

Teach us to care and not to care – teach us to care for others, to respond to their needs with compassion and generosity, as we do in our practice of almsgiving, giving to others of our resources, our time, even our friendship; teach us not to care for the demands of our fragile ego and its insecurities and selfishness and fear, as we do in our fasting, whether from food or from unhealthy and unhelpful ways of living that turn us away from the gentle demands of Jesus.

Teach us to sit still – perhaps the most difficult in our frenetic world, as we come to realise that prayer is for us, largely a waste of time; a waste of time because it is not, in the end, some thing we do ourselves (though of course praying words, or the Scriptures, or contemplating a religious statue, painting or icon can help us attain a state in which we are receptive to prayer) because prayer is largely what God does in us, helping us to discern or tune in to the promptings of His Holy Spirit within our hearts, within the centre of ourselves. Prayer is our sense – however fleeting – of coming into communion with the living God, of turning away from our illusions and disordered desires and finding our peace in His will, even amidst the rocks and barren places and difficulties of our lives.

Another poet who captures something of Lent:

There's so much good in the worst of us / and there's so much ill in the best of us / that it ill behoves any of us / to talk about the rest of us.

We need to be confident and trust in God's mercy. We are by no means (usually) as bad as we think we may be in our more self-pitying or melodramatically despairing moments – another false illusion we need to get rid of; on the other hand, we all know that we could do better. Lent is a time for realism, not masochism. Mediocre disciples we may be, but yet disciples, able to turn to the Lord and seek His pardon and peace, freely given to us if only we can learn to accept it. Let's pray that we can do so in this time and go on with gladness to the great feast of the Resurrection.

Greg OP

Third Sunday of Lent

Year B

8 March 2015

The Newsletter of **HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH, LEICESTER**

www.holycrossleicester.org



Entrance Antiphon:	<i>Either:</i> My eyes are always on the Lord, for he rescues my feet from the snare. Turn to me and have mercy on me, for I am alone and poor. <i>Or:</i> When I prove my holiness among you, I will gather you from all the foreign lands; and I will pour clean water upon you and cleanse you from all your impurities, and I will give you a new spirit, says the Lord.
1st Reading:	Exodus 17:3-7
Psalm ℟:	O that today you would listen to his voice! Harden not your hearts. (Ps 95)
2nd Reading:	Romans 5:1-2.5-8
Gospel ℟:	Glory and praise to you, O Christ. ∞ Lord, you are truly the Saviour of the world; give me living water that I may not thirst.
Gospel:	John 4:5-42
Communion Antiphon:	For anyone who drinks it, says the Lord, the water I shall give will become in him a spring welling up to eternal life.

Baptism Preparation: the next session is on **12 April**; please come to the sacristy at the end of the 10.30am Mass. If you wish to have your child baptised at Holy Cross, you need to attend one of these sessions, usually held on the first Sunday of each month.

KING RICHARD III

- ◆ If you have been allocated a seat for the Mass on Monday 23 March, **please collect your ticket(s)** from Dorothy Yates after the 8am or 10.30am Sunday Masses. If you cannot do so, please send a stamped addressed envelope to Dorothy Yates at the Priory (address at bottom of column on p3).
- ◆ The renovation work on the church is proceeding apace, and work is now largely finished. **Please come and help to clean the church** next Saturday, 14 March, after the 12.30pm Mass. Furniture has to be moved, and much cleaning and polishing is needed to ensure that the church is spick and span.
- ◆ On Tuesday 24 March there will be a **special Parish Mass for Richard III** at 4pm, welcoming visitors to our city. Following that, the Dominican brethren will process to the Cathedral to sing Vespers for Richard III at 5.30pm, and you are invited to join the procession and attend Vespers.
- ◆ **Concert for a King - Music from the Time of Richard III.** There will be a concert of music and readings from the time of Richard III here in the church on Tuesday 24 March at 8.30pm. See overleaf.

The Leicester Theological Society's next talk will be given on **Friday 13 March** by The Rt Rev and Rt Hon Dr Rowan Williams, the Lord Williams of Oystermouth, former Archbishop of Canterbury, and entitled "Theresa of Avila and Thomas Merton: two anniversaries". Meetings are held **here at Holy Cross, in St Clement's Hall** at 7:30pm. Visitors are welcome (£5; students no charge).

MONEY MATTERS: Last Weekend's collections – Offertory Collection £1487.57 (of which £472.00 was Gift Aided and £1015.57 was not) and in addition the parish receives approximately £240 per week in donations made by standing order, nearly all of which are Gift Aided; SVP £19.36; Friends of Holy Cross £5.08; Holy Souls £28.69; Grenada Church Restoration £ - .

The collection for **Light for the Blind** came to **£596.26**. Light for the Blind, is a Catholic organisation supporting St Joseph's Hospices for the destitute and poor in India. The situation of the people who are helped is truly appalling. For further information, and to give help, see www.lightfortheblind.org.uk, and contact charles.stone@sky.com or ring 01924 820239.

Very many thanks for your continuing generosity.

A **Holy Week Retreat** will be given by Fr Simon Gainé OP. More news soon.

Stations of the Cross during Lent: Wednesdays and Fridays after the 12.30pm Mass.

St Patrick's Dance on Saturday March 14th at 8pm at St Patrick's Parish Centre, Beaumont Leys Lane. Dancing to Mel, Paul and Mary. Tickets £7; pay on the door.

Holy Cross Gospel Choir will be performing at the CAFOD fundraiser from 7.15pm on Saturday March 14 at Sacred Heart church hall, Mere Road. To order your ticket for the event (£3), please contact Jeff Henry on 243 1289 or pay at the door.



Today's Gospel: "Anyone who drinks the water that I shall give will never be thirsty again."

Concert for a King - Music from the Time of Richard III. The Ricardian Music Guild will present a concert by Aitone of early music which will be held here in the church on Tuesday 24 March at 8.30pm. The concert will pay homage to the life of King Richard III through the music of his time. The programme will include music that he might have heard when he lived, and will present this music in honour of his memory. The musical pieces will be interspersed with readings from contemporary accounts of King Richard III.

The occasion will be a bringing together of two important elements in the character of King Richard III: his deep and sincere religious devotion and his love of music. There will be no charge for the concert but donations will be accepted, the proceeds of which will be directed to the Leicester Cathedral King Richard III Appeal. **Reservations absolutely must be made** so that there will be a fair and equitable distribution of available seats on a first-come basis. Go to www.Aitone.org.uk, follow the link to the concert, and from there follow the link to the Eventbrite website.

To donate to the appeal please visit <http://don8.to/leic003>. Further information is available at: www.Aitone.org.uk or by contacting: Sonia Tower at stower@ovationtv.com or Rob Durk at rob@aitone.org.uk. See noticeboard. If you do not have access to the internet, please see Fr David.

The General Election 2015. Please pick up a copy of a letter on this subject addressed to Catholics in England and Wales by our Bishops.

VACANCY: The Governors of The Good Shepherd Primary Catholic Voluntary Academy, Nottingham, are seeking to appoint a Deputy Headteacher. Please contact the school office (tel: 0115 926 2983) or email office@goodshepherd.notts.sch.uk for further details and to receive an application pack. Closing date 20th March.

Year 1	This week's calendar & Mass Intentions	Psalter Week 2
Sunday	THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT. Prayers are asked for candidates for the sacraments.	
	Vigil 18.10 ✠ Kathryn Ann Taylor 8.00 <i>Pro populo</i>	
	Sung 10.30 Neglected intentions	
	OP Rite 12.30 ✠ Luisa Antonia Gonsalves 19.00 ✠ Susan McNally	
Monday	Feria	
	OP Rite 8.00 Intentions of Pope Francis & all Catholics 12.30 Thomas Bartlett 18.10 Edmund Olaf & Anita's intentions	
Tuesday	Feria	
	OP Rite 8.00 ✠ Dead of the Order of Preachers 12.30 ✠ Mr Gonzaga Ignacia Gonçalvez 18.10 For peace in the world	
Wednesday	Feria	
	OP Rite 8.00 ✠ Holy Souls 12.30 Special friends - good health 18.10 ✠ Pekha Theresa & Joseph Ochyra	
Thursday	Feria	
	OP Rite 8.00 ✠ Holy Souls 12.30 Mrs Samantha Rodriguez 18.10 Catenian Mass for Vocations	
Friday	Feria	
	OP Rite 8.00 ✠ Holy Souls 12.30 In thanksgiving 18.10 Paddy & Aggie Murphy	
Saturday	Feria	
	OP Rite 8.00 ✠ Holy Souls 10.00 Olivella Wilson - sick in hospital 12.30 ✠ Eddie Oliver	
Next Sunday – FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT, 'Laetare Sunday'. Prayers are asked for candidates for the sacraments. Readings:		
1 Samuel 16:1b.6-7.10-13a	Ephesians 5:8-14	John 9:1-41

News from the Parish Shop:

- ◆ We celebrate St Patrick's Day in just over one week. We now stock cards, rosettes, lapel pins, rosary bracelets, key rings, etc for the occasion. Hurry while stocks last!
- ◆ We have cards for Mothers' Day; and Easter cards from 20p.
- ◆ We have a stock of "A Short History of the Dominicans in Leicester: Commemorating the 750th Anniversary of the Foundation of St Clement's Priory in 1247", written by Fr Isidore. Available at its 1996 price of £2.

The shop is open after the 12.30pm Masses during the week, on Saturdays from 11am until after the 12.30pm Mass, and after every Sunday Mass. The shop is in the room beyond the sacristy.

Parish Pilgrimage to Lourdes: Please note that the dates have changed to 8-12 June. From Stansted, staying at the Agena Hotel. £425 per person sharing. Please contact Fr David.

REGULAR SERVICE TIMES
SUNDAYS 8.00 Mass 9.00 Lauds 10.30 Sung Mass 12.30 Mass (Dominican Rite) 18.00 Exposition, Rosary, Compline & Benediction 19.00 Mass
MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS 7.30 Lauds 8.00 Mass (Dominican Rite) 11.00*Devotions & Exposition 12.15*Benediction 12.30 Mass (Rosary at 12.00) 18.10 Mass followed by Vespers *WEDNESDAYS ONLY
SATURDAYS 8.00 Mass (Dominican Rite) 9.00 Lauds 10.00 Mass 10.30 Devotions & Exposition 10.30 Confessions until 11.30 12.30 Mass (Rosary at 12.00) 17.00 Confessions until 18.00 17.45 Vespers 18.10 Vigil Mass for Sunday
HOLIDAYS OF OBLIGATION 18.10 (previous day) Vigil Mass followed by Vespers 7.30 Lauds 8.00 Mass (Dominican Rite) 12.30 Mass 18.10 Mass followed by Vespers
BANK HOLIDAYS 7.30 Lauds 8.00 Mass (Dominican Rite) 12.30 Mass, after which the church is closed
Royal Infirmary Chaplaincy: For urgent visits, ask ward staff to bleep the Roman Catholic Chaplain. For non-urgent visits, leave a message at the Priory or at the LRI Chaplains' Office. Messages may not be picked up until the end of the day.
Universities' Chaplain: Fr David Rocks: 0116 252 1512
Baptism Preparation: 1st Sunday of month after the 10.30 Mass. Baptisms: Saturday afternoons.
Parish Website: www.holycrossleicester.org Website & Newsletter Editors: web@holycrossleicester.org holycrossnewsletter@gmail.com
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Parish Priest Fr David Rocks 0116 252 1512 leicester@english.op.org