



# THE SCRIPTURES THIS WEEK

## READINGS FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### 1<sup>ST</sup> READING: ISAIAH 11:1-10

The prophet has a vision of peace built upon justice. No human agency can bring this about, no political hero, religious leader, nor ideology, only God through the Messiah, the Root of Jesse, who is Jesus himself.

### 2<sup>ND</sup> READING: ROMANS 15:4-9

Here in a very important passage Paul reaffirms the validity of the Old Testament, states that Christ was explicitly promised to the patriarchs (Abraham, Joseph and his sons etc.) and that the gentiles were always part of this saving plan.

### GOSPEL READING: MATTHEW 3:1-12

It is probable that John came from a priestly, messianic monastic community, and his years of fasting and praying in the monastic desert were a preparation of this great moment, as the quote from Isaiah suggests; when he identifies Jesus as the divine Messiah.

## DOMINICAN RITE MASS:

EPISTLE: (SEE ABOVE)

### GOSPEL: MATTHEW 11:2-10

Part of the priestly element in John the Baptist's own life was to identify the external High Priest, Jesus Christ. John probably never sacrificed under the Old Law in the Temple in Jerusalem, but his whole life was a living sacrifice of praise and witness. This culminated in the giving of his own life to bear witness to "The Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world."

## NEXT SUNDAY –

### THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR A)

*"The only true riches are those that make us rich in virtue. Therefore, if you want to be rich, beloved, love true riches. If you aspire to the heights of real honor, strive to reach the kingdom of Heaven. If you value rank and renown, hasten to be enrolled in the heavenly court of the Angels."*

Pope St Gregory the Great

*Give to the poor in handfuls!*

Blessed Edmund Rice

Pope Francis:

***Amoris Laetitia***

*Apostolic Exhortation on the Family*

"I sincerely believe that Jesus wants a Church attentive to the goodness which the Holy Spirit sows in the midst of human weakness, a Mother who, while clearly expressing her objective teaching, 'always does what good she can, even if in the process, her shoes get soiled by the mud of the street.'" [308].

# THE WORD AT WORK: OUR WEEKLY REFLECTION

## 2<sup>ND</sup> WEEK OF ADVENT

*As we enter the Season of Advent, Fr Fabian will reflect with us on the meaning of this special time, and the readings we hear at Mass each week.*

The fine but frosty days we had during the past week may have reminded us of the pause at the year's turning that I mentioned last week. They offered us the stillness we need to reflect on the end of the old and the start of the new. This is not just to do with dates and weather, but with our own lives. We need to take some time out, to reflect on what really matters, on where we are going, and on what our lives are about. This is what the season of Advent gives us, as we see from today's Gospel reading.

John the Baptist's message for the people who came to him was: 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand'. And notice that he is making this call 'in the wilderness of Judea', not in the towns and villages of Palestine. This 'wilderness' is on the edge of the great stretch of desert which lies between fertile Palestine and the rich country of Babylonia between the great rivers of the Tigris and the Euphrates. It is an empty quarter between two rich areas of civilization. Hardly anyone lives there, even now, when motor roads cross it.

So it is remarkable that people 'from Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan' went out to hear him. They were ready to leave the comforts of their homes and go out into the desert to hear the message of John the Baptist. But they came not merely to hear it, but to respond, by being baptised as a sign that they were determined to live in expectation of God's salvation coming to them through His Messiah.

The gospel writer quotes the prophet Isaiah: 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord'. Isaiah wrote this when the Israelites were returning, unexpectedly, from their exile in Babylon. That was one particular historical moment, when God rescued his people from the Babylonian captivity, just as he had much earlier rescued them from slavery in Egypt. But now we are not simply remembering something that happened in the past. The gospel writer sees these happenings as events which foreshadowed God's final, definitive salvation which Jesus has given us through his life, death and resurrection, and which John the Baptist was preaching.

So, during Advent we are like those people who went out to listen to John. We need to listen: to the prayers and the Scripture readings at the Mass, and to the homily. Each year we have the opportunity to hear again the promise of God that he would come to save us. But we are not like those who listened to John. For us, the Kingdom of heaven is not just 'at hand'. It became truly present in Jesus, in his life, death and resurrection. We share in it now, truly but still in a semi-hidden way, by faith, prayer and the sacraments, and in our lives of love and service to others. And we look forward in hope to the fulfilment of it all, in God's good time.

*Fr Fabian Radcliffe OP*

### ***The Jubilee Prayer***

God, Father of mercy, who called your servant St Dominic 800 years ago to found the Order of Preachers in the service of your Gospel, renew within the Church as we celebrate this Jubilee the Spirit of the Risen Christ, that we might faithfully and joyfully walk with St. Dominic as pilgrims and preachers of grace. Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION IS ON 8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER.  
PRAY THE MEMORARE IN PREPARATION FOR THIS FEAST**

*Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To you do I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in your mercy, hear and answer me. Amen.*



# HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH

SUNDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2016

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR A

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

## FROM THE PRIOR'S DESK

*Advent is certainly going well here at the Priory, with lots of things happening as we prepare for Christmas. Over the course of the Autumn Term, there's been a great deal of activity, and that is something for which we give thanks. It is wonderful to see so many initiatives coming together and bearing fruit.*

*The Assembly, which seems like a while ago now, has enabled lots of things to get started, and the work we've done to increase our collaboration is making a huge difference here at Holy Cross. The wonderful success of the Advent Market is the most recent sign of this, and we are hugely grateful to you all for the effort that achieved this. Other things, like Catholicism 101, and the new work we're doing with university students at Leicester and DMU, are things we are rightly proud of, and can build on for the future.*

*This weekend, we say a fond farewell to Fr Greg, who will take up a new ministry in Dundee. He has been with us for five years in Leicester, and in that time he has been Subprior, Chaplain to the LRI, Chaplain to the Prison, and an Associate Chaplain at the two Universities. I know you all join with me in wishing him well as he goes, and we will all continue to pray for him. Thank you, Fr Greg, for your time among us and your kindness to so many people over the years.*

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

*Fr David*

## THE ADVENT MARKET – A HUGE THANKS AND WELL DONE!

Lots of work went into making the Market a success last week, and it paid off. The final total for the Market was **£6,497.47**, and with gift aid, that will rise to **£7,249.97**, a wonderful achievement. The money raised at Blackfriars Market has been used in recent years to address fabric and structural issues in the Church and Priory. We have been able to renew office space, create reception rooms, and begin to restore the church and priory to their former glory. Obviously, there is still much to be done. But the huge effort that raised this fantastic total means we're well on our way. **Grateful thanks to all for the super work that make this possible**, and let's continue to work for the future.

## ADVENT RETREAT – SATURDAY 17 DECEMBER

**Beginning with 12:30pm Mass and Lunch**, until 6pm, with Fr Oliver Keenan OP. Please put your name down in the shop or contact Rachael if you wish to attend.



**IUBILÆUM 800 1216-2016**  
ORDO PRÆDICATORUM

## 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 December, after the 10:30am Mass in St Clement's Hall.

### FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CONFIRMATION

Forms for children and young people who wish to receive these sacraments in the new academic year (2016-17) are now in the Church. Please fill in and return.

### 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 begins in the Autumn Term.

### 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

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S PASTORAL COUNCIL – NATIVITY PLAY

*This is a new initiative, aimed at encouraging some of our young people to demonstrate their leadership skills within our community, and to organise events and initiatives for others. Their first event is to organise the Nativity Play which is such an important part of our Christmas Vigil Mass on Christmas Eve at 6:10pm. The Council is jointly chaired by Raymond and Monica Ogunbowale. They write:*

**The Young People's Pastoral Council are organising a Nativity Play for Christmas Eve Mass and would like to involve children from the congregation in this special event. Parents may be able to help get the costumes and making the props for the play. The planning is today, Sunday 4 December after 10:30am Mass. Please come if you would like your child to be part of this play.**

## LEICESTER WINTER NIGHT SHELTER

**One Roof Leicester** is coordinating this year's **Winter Night Shelter** which will rotate around 7 venues across the City. Opening from **12 December 2016** to **27th February 2017** the shelter will offer a warm and welcoming environment for our guests. ***In particular, we would like volunteers from Holy Cross to work with our neighbours at Bishop Street Methodist Church on their part in the project.*** Please get in touch with Fr David or Rachael if you're interested.

## THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **THIS WEDNESDAY at 7pm** – Catholicism 101 with Fr Robert. Please bring food. Video presentation followed by discussion.
- Our Sunday Holy Hour, 6-7pm – Rosary, Compline, Benediction.
- Organ Recital – **Weds 7<sup>th</sup> Dec 1930hrs** – Chris Ouvry-Johns. Drinks reception in hall afterwards.
- ADVENT RETREAT
- Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December -Breakfast Club after 8am Mass. 'Meet for a Treat' event after 10.30am Mass.
- **Our Advent Service is this Sunday at 1600hrs in the Church followed with mince pies and mulled wine afterwards in St Clements Hall.**
- Advent to Christmas Social-Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December, doors open 1830hrs. A time to get together to drink, sing, eat and be merry. (Entrance Fee)
- If you would like any more information, please email Rachael at [leicester.admin@english.op.org](mailto:leicester.admin@english.op.org) or call her on 0116 2521501.

## THE DOMINICAN COMMUNITY

Fr David Rocks OP PP *Prior*; Fr Isidore Clarke OP; Fr Fabian Radcliffe OP;  
Fr Neil Ferguson OP; Fr Greg Murphy OP; Fr Robert Gay OP CC *Subprior, Bursar*.

Office Administrator: *Mrs Rachael Powell* – [leicester.admin@english.op.org](mailto:leicester.admin@english.op.org)

Lay University Chaplain: *Mr George Ralph* – [george.ralph@english.op.org](mailto:george.ralph@english.op.org)

Director of Music: *Mr Thomas Keogh* – [thomas@thomaskeogh.co.uk](mailto: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](http://www.holycrossleicester.org)

## MASS TIMES

### Sundays:

8am; 10:30am (sung);  
12:30pm (old rite);  
7pm

### Weekdays:

8am (old rite);  
12:30pm; 6:10pm

### Saturdays:

8am (old rite);  
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:

**£ 1,067.92**

(Gift aided: £ 345.60)

Advent Market –

**£6,497.47**

**Woodhouse Collection**

**£ 154.75**

(Gift aided: £ 91.00)

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
CONTINUED SUPPORT!**