

## The Divine Office

If you come early to the Saturday Vigil Mass, or the Sunday 9:30am Mass, or on Sunday evening for the Rosary at 6pm, or Benediction at 6:40pm, it is very likely you will find the friars and some lay people singing psalms and praying. This is called the 'Divine Office' – it is a strange use of the word 'office', but think of it as 'service' or 'prayer'. Most people find the Divine Office a mystery. Even by its other name – the *Liturgy of Hours* – we are no closer to understanding what it is, and why it exists.

Many Catholics have an idea that monks and possibly nuns chant psalms, and that priests have big fat prayer books. What many don't realise is that these chants and fat prayer books do not belong to priests and consecrated religious. They are the patrimony of the whole Church.

Every Catholic knows what the *Mass* is. As ancient as the Mass, and intimately related to it is the 'Divine Office'. These are the two official prayers that the Church offers daily. The Divine Office extends and prolongs the worship offered at Mass to cover the whole 24-hour period of a day. If you think of the Mass as a jewel of the supreme form of worship, the Divine Office surrounds the Mass like a beautiful golden setting.

What is it? It consists of psalms, hymns, readings and other prayers which are sung or recited at set times in the day and night. The Divine Office contains seven day offices and one night office, corresponding to the words of the psalms, *Seven times a day I have given praise to thee, and I rose at midnight to give praise to thee*. The offices are Matins (night office), Lauds (at dawn), Prime (6am), Terce (9am), Sext (12noon), None (3pm), Vespers (at dusk) and Compline (before retiring to bed).

Vatican II called Lauds and Vespers the 'hinges' of our prayer, and it asked that all parishes (parishes, not just friars!) should celebrate Vespers, at least on Sundays. At Holy Cross we sing Lauds and Vespers daily. Lauds (from Latin *laus*, praise), or Morning Prayer, praises God at the start of the new day and asks for His help in the coming day. Vespers (from Latin *vesper*, evening), or Evening Prayer, gives Him thanks as the daylight fades. These two offices are sung in English. On Sundays we sing an early Compline (from Latin *completorium*, completion) in Latin, in the traditional Dominican form. See the noticeboards outside for times.

Everyone is warmly invited to attend these prayers, and to draw inspiration from the voice of the Church praising God. If you come a little earlier, books can be provided so that you may follow the offices more closely. It's a little tricky, but with time you will get the hang of it. Remember to sing quietly. Even if you don't wish to come into the sanctuary, you can share in the prayer from wherever you are sitting, and stand when the friars stand (because Christians always stand for the Gospel!).

In Holy Week there is a special form the Office takes during the last three days. We call this *Tenebrae* (Latin: darkness), which is a dramatic and beautiful preparation for Easter. Come and join us, if not as Lenten prayer – at least as Lenten penance! It depends what you think of our singing...

Fr Leon Pereira OP

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent

Year C

7 March 2010

## The Newsletter of HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH, LEICESTER

Serving Leicester's Catholics since AD 1247



Sunday Masses	This week	Mass Intentions	Next week
6:00pm Vigil	Fr Isidore	Terry McGowan, RIP	Fr Isidore
8:00am	Fr Isidore	<i>Pro populo</i>	Fr Isidore
9:30am Family	Fr Fabian	Amândio Dos Santos, RIP	Fr Duncan
11:00am Solemn	Fr Thomas	Kathryn Ann Taylor, RIP	Fr Leon
12:30pm Old rite	Fr Leon	Margaret & Martin Brett, RIP	Fr Leon
5:00pm Students	Fr Peter	<b>Mass for students in the Lady Chapel</b>	Fr Duncan
7:00pm	Fr Duncan	Margery Bourke, RIP	Fr Thomas

OTHER SUNDAY SERVICES	6:00pm Rosary	6 March	Confessions	13 March
9:00am Lauds	6:20pm Compline	Fr Leon	10:30 - 11:30am	Fr Fabian
5:45pm Vespers	6:40pm Benediction	Fr Isidore	5:00 - 6:00pm	Fr Duncan

**DURING LENT: Confessions also on Sundays from 6:40 to 7:00pm (Fr Thomas this week)**

**SHORT LENTEN TALKS – Through Death to Life.** The usual season of Lenten Talks is now under way. Talks are given by one of the friars after the 10am and 12:30pm Masses each Friday in Lent. **This week Fr Fabian will speak on "The Carrying of the Cross"**. We hope you can make these part of your Lenten celebrations.

<b>Entrance Antiphon:</b>	<i>Either</i> – My eyes are ever fixed on the Lord, for he releases my feet from the snare. O look at me and be merciful, for I am wretched and alone. <i>Or</i> – I will prove my holiness through you. I will gather you from the ends of the earth; I will pour clean water on you and wash away all your sins. I will give you a new spirit within you, says the Lord.
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Reading:</b>	Exodus 3:1-8.13-15
<b>Psalm Response:</b>	<b>The Lord is merciful and gracious.</b> (Ps 103)
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:</b>	1 Corinthians 10:1-6.10-12
<b>Tract (at 11:00) or Verse before Gospel:</b>	<u>At 11:00</u> – I have lifted up my eyes to you, who dwells in the heavens. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us. <u>Otherwise</u> – Glory and praise to you, O Christ. ☩ Repent, says the Lord, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.
<b>Gospel:</b>	Luke 13: 1-9
<b>Offertory (at 11:00):</b>	The precepts of the Lord are right, they gladden the heart, and sweeter are they than honey, than honey from the comb. So in them your servant finds instruction.
<b>Communion Antiphon:</b>	The sparrow even finds a home, the swallow finds a nest wherein to place her young, near to your altars, Lord of hosts, my King, my God! How happy they who dwell in your house! For ever they are praising you.

**MONEY MATTERS:** Last Weekend's collections – Offertory Collection £1637.66; SVP £32.40; Friends of Holy Cross £17.35; Holy Souls £16.73; Grenada Church Restoration £4.80. The McNabb Appeal fund stands at £6650.38. The Lenten Fast Day collection for Aid to the Church in Need came to £417.52.

Next week there will be a retiring collection for the McNabb Appeal for parish funds.

200 Club. Last month's winners were: 49, S Morton £150; 3, K Redmond £100; and 130, I Pye £50. Congratulations!

Very many thanks for your continuing generosity.

**OUR DEANERY LENTEN PROGRAMME:** Lenten Station Masses have been arranged as follows:

- ◆ Wednesday 10 March HERE at Holy Cross with Bishop Malcolm at 7pm.
- ◆ Wednesday 17 March at St. Patrick's at 11am.
- ◆ Wednesday 31 March, Mass of the Holy Oils at the Cathedral at 11.30am.

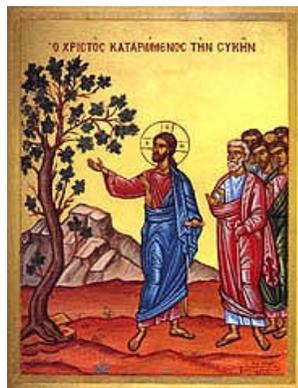
**Work in the church.** (a) A durable carpet will be installed in the narthex soon at the request of the children's liturgy group. As it is a thick carpet, all the doors (and there are many) will need to be shaved. Please have patience while the work is under way. (b) This coming week, access to the sacristy may be difficult because the floor will be sanded and polished. If you need the toilets on weekdays, please use those in Blackfriars Hall, which has ramped access now. A handrail will be installed in due course.

**Our bishop, Malcolm McMahon OP, has recently withdrawn his permission** 'for public celebration of Mass explicitly for homosexual people at Holy Cross Priory'. This is partly because a group that was holding bi-annual Masses here did not adhere to an agreement they made with him regarding their website, that all content and links contrary to the Catholic faith would be removed. This request from the bishop was made a few years ago, and despite requests and reminders to comply, no relevant changes were made. The Church mandates that, 'No authentic pastoral programme will include organizations in which homosexual persons associate with each other without clearly stating that homosexual activity is immoral' (*Homosexualitatis problema*, 15). The bishop asks us friars here to 'continue to reach out to all marginalized people to offer them the light of the Gospel.' Naturally, any homosexual person can attend any Mass at Holy Cross or any other Catholic church. The same rules apply to all Catholics: we are urged to offer ourselves at Mass, and if we wish to receive Communion, to be in a state of grace, availing ourselves of the sacrament of Confession. We must extend the charity of Christ to all our brothers and sisters.

There is a **VACANCY FOR A HEADTEACHER** at St Patrick's Primary & Nursery School, Mansfield. Details from [ken.daly@nottingham-des.org.uk](mailto:ken.daly@nottingham-des.org.uk) or (01623) 478090. Closing date is 15 March.

An important one-day conference on Medical and Moral Issues around the end of life is taking place at London Metropolitan University on Monday 29 March. For more information, see the University website or contact Fr Thomas.

Thanks from SPUC for our White Flower collection in January: "Fantastic; best ever!"



Today's Gospel: "Leave the fig tree one more year...it may bear fruit next year."

Year II	The week ahead...	Psalter Week 3
<b>DURING LENT</b> there will be <b>STATIONS OF THE CROSS</b> each Wednesday (at 1pm) and Friday (at 6pm), and <b>CONFESSIONS</b> on Sundays from 6:40 to 7:00pm (Fr Thomas this week).		
Monday to Saturday:	Lenten feria	
<b>WEEKDAY MASS IN LATIN.</b> Holy Mass will be offered in the older form from Monday to Friday at 8:30am, and on Saturday at 8:15am.		
<b>Next Sunday – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent, Laetare Sunday. Prayers are recommended for candidates for the sacraments. Readings:</b>		
Joshua 5: 9-12	2 Corinthians 5: 17-21	Luke 15:1-3.11-32

**Message of thanks received from the Red Cross:** "We would like to express our deep thanks and gratitude for the timely response to our recent emergency request for baby items. The Red Cross' Refugee & Asylum support project was responding to the specific need of a family experiencing hardship. One parent had no recourse to public funds and, after a tough decision, we assisted the other parent to apply for support with the baby. This will allow there to be support for him and his baby under the National Asylum Seeker Support scheme. We understand the benefits of breastfeeding for both the mother and baby but, in this specific situation, breast feeding was not an option. Both parents wish to express their sincere thanks to all those who responded to this crisis."

**The Secular Society has organised a petition** asking that no part of the cost of the Pope's visit be met by the taxpayer. You can counter this by signing an alternative petition expressing support for the Pope's visit (details at [www.proecclesia.com/page\\_newsflash.htm](http://www.proecclesia.com/page_newsflash.htm)).

**Congratulations** to Gail Neil, one of our long term, loyal parishioners, the head teacher of Bishop Ellis School, who has been appointed as the new Director of the Diocesan Education Service! She will be responsible for the Catholic ethos of all our schools.

**The pro-life group based at Holy Cross** is holding its second annual candlelit Prayer Procession at 7pm on Friday 19 March (St Joseph's feast day) to pray for an end to abortion. If you would like to take part please contact Sica on 0775 88 44 918.

Forthcoming events for your diary	
Wed 10 Mar	Station Mass with Bishop Malcolm, 7pm
Sat 13 Mar	Evening of Music and Reflection for Lent, 7pm
Sat 27 Mar	Leicestershire Chorale - Devotional Music, church at 8pm
Sat 24 Apr	Karaoke evening, 7pm
Fri 7 May	2010 <i>Spes Unica</i> Lecture. Professor Luke Gormally, Senior Research Fellow at the Linacre Centre & Member of the Pontifical Academy for Life on 'Sex and the City: Chastity as a Social Virtue', 7:30pm, Blackfriars' Hall
Sat 8 May	<b>BLACKFRIARS MARKET – NOTE THE DATE NOW!</b>
Sat 15 May	'Day for the Year of the Priesthood', with the artist and writer Elizabeth Wang, and Fr Richard Duffield, Provost of the Birmingham Oratory. Details soon.
Sat 15 May	Absolute beginners' Cha-cha, 7pm

REGULAR SERVICE TIMES
<b>MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS</b>
8.00 Lauds
10.00 Mass
12.30 Mass
17.45 Vespers
Old Rite Masses as announced.
Church is open from 8.00 - 18.00
<b>WEDNESDAYS</b>
10.30 Exposition until 12.30
11.45 Divine Mercy Chaplet, Rosary & Benediction
<b>SATURDAYS</b>
9.00 Lauds
10.00 Mass
10.30 Novena to Our Lady
10.30 Confessions until 11.30
12.30 Mass
17.00 Confessions until 18.00
17.45 Vespers
18.00 Vigil Mass for Sunday
Old Rite Masses as announced.
<b>HOLIDAYS</b>
18.00 (previous day) Vigil Mass
8.00 Lauds
10.00 Mass
12.30 Mass
17.45 Vespers
19.00 Mass
<b>BANK HOLIDAYS (&amp; MON TO FRI AROUND XTMAS &amp; NEW YEAR)</b>
8.00 Lauds
12.30 Mass, after which the church is closed
<b>SUNDAYS</b>
8.00 Mass
9.00 Lauds
9.30 Mass (Family)
11.00 Mass (Solemn: Latin on 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> Sundays)
12.30 Mass (Old rite in Latin)
17.00 Mass (for Students, term time only)
17.45 Vespers
18.00 Rosary
18.20 Sung Latin Compline
18.40 Benediction
19.00 Mass
<b>Leicester Royal Infirmary Catholic Chaplaincy:</b> For urgent visits, ask ward staff to bleep the Roman Catholic Chaplain. For non-urgent visits leave message at the Priory or the LRI Chaplains' Office. Messages may not be picked up until the end of the day.
<b>Website for past Newsletters:</b> <a href="http://holycrosschoirleicester.co.uk">holycrosschoirleicester.co.uk</a>
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