

LIVING IN THE PAST?

WE accuse people sometimes, don't we?, of living in the past. When change threatens to overwhelm us, there's a temptation to pretend that things are as they have always been, to hold onto a world that is long gone. That's what we mean by living in the past.

It might seem that Christians do, in a very strong sense, live in the past. Our secular critics want to say we hold onto a religion which has had its day, and of course I don't think they're right in that. But just a few days ago, we were talking in the kitchen about the nativity scene at the Town Hall, which of course already has its Christ-child in it. Fr Fabian said, "And that" (he meant the birth of Jesus) "hasn't happened yet!"

Well, the pedant in me wanted to point out to him that the birth of Jesus happened a very long time ago, and if I'd done that, I'd have been right in a rather trivial way and wrong in a deeper way. We Christians live our year by entering the Christian story, so for us, at this point in the story, it makes perfect sense to say of the birth of Christ that it hasn't happened yet. But doesn't that mean we Christians are living in the past?

It seems to me that the very opposite is the case. Christians are people who are trying to live their lives with Christ. We are trying to conform ourselves to Christ, so that we can say with St Paul, "It is not I that live, but Christ who lives in me." And we know that Christ was not just a man of history – he was that, of course – but the one who gives meaning to all history, and makes sense of all our human stories and histories.

The Jews, even before Jesus' birth, were being prepared by God for the coming of His son. Their law, their nation, their religion, their priests and their prophets all made sense in terms of the coming of the Christ. Their lives pointed forwards to the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Does that mean that if their lives pointed forwards, ours point backwards, to the life of Christ already lived out on earth? Yes and no. For us, the life of Christ on earth is central to our faith. The great events of our faith are historical – they actually happened, a long time ago. Part of our celebration of Christmas is a calling to mind and entering into these great events of the past, the coming of God into His Creation as a human being.

But Christ is not only of the past. There is an odd phrase in the book of Revelations, where John records the angels praising God saying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come." Christ is for us a man of history, but he is also the Eternal God, who was, and is, and is to come. In trying to live with the life of Christ, our lives point backwards to the events in the life of Christ. They also point forward to the coming of Christ at the end of time, when God's love will finally triumph.

And they're also rooted in the here-and-now. We look back to God's love in sending His son, we look forward to the final victory of love at the end of time, and we live that life of love in the present, making Christ present to those around us, bringing God's kingdom near.

Fr Peter OP

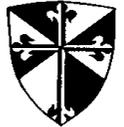
4th Sunday of Advent

Year A

19 December 2010

The Newsletter of HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH, LEICESTER

Serving Leicester's Catholics since AD 1247



Entrance Antiphon:	Let the clouds rain down the Just One, and the earth bring forth a Saviour.
At 11am – page nos in Missale:	•The Ordinary of the Mass, p 13 •Sung setting: Mass XVII, p 214; Credo I, p 215 •The Proper of the Mass, p 48; Alma Redemptoris, p219
1st Reading:	Isaiah 7: 10-14
Psalm 118:	Let the Lord enter; he is the King of glory. (Ps 24)
2nd Reading:	Romans 1: 1-7
Alleluia:	Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name shall be called Emmanuel: God is with us.
Gospel:	Matthew 1: 18-25
Communion Antiphon:	The Virgin is with child, and shall bear a son, and she will call him Emmanuel.
WEEKDAY MASS IN LATIN. In addition to the Masses listed in the schedule on p 3, Holy Mass will be offered in the older form from Monday to Saturday at 8am.	

CHRISTMAS SERVICES. Please take as many of the cards with service times as you need, and please do not ring the Priory to ask for this information. Thank you! Cards are by the doors.

TO HELP YOUR SPIRITUAL PREPARATION FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD we have:

- **Short Illustrated Advent Talks – The Nativity in Art.** This is a series of talks given on Fridays after the 10am and 12.30pm Masses. **This Friday Fr Fabian will speak on “The Nativity in Different Cultures”.**
- **Christmas Novena Masses.** As our immediate spiritual preparation prior to the Solemnity of the Birth of our Lord, we have specially themed 6pm daily Holy Masses this week (except today, 7pm as normal). The theme for the novena of Masses is: ‘Come, Lord Jesus, dwell among us!’ All are invited to attend.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the work of the parish social committee this year, either by helping to run or by attending the events. Please look out for our programme for 2011 – you will soon be able to find us on the web-site.

PLEASE SUPPORT THE SVP IN THE SUDAN. In 1988 we opened a feeding centre which fed 230 babies every other day; and the programme peaked at 10,000 babies a day for 5 days a week. The centres are near camps for displaced people not far from Khartoum. Vast numbers of the population have been displaced because of unrest in the Sudan and Darfur. The SVP is running this programme and keeping babies alive and giving them hope for the future. It costs £40 a year for each baby to provide nourishing food. Would you like to help? £40 for a year's food, or £20 for six months or £100 for vocational training for 2 adults or £60 for medical treatment for 20 patients. If you would like to help please contact Bernard Hawcroft on b-hawcroft1@ntlworld.com or 0116 210 9077 or 0777 252 5327. He would love to hear from you!

MONEY MATTERS: Last Weekend's collections – Offertory Collection £1041.62; SVP £11.41; Friends of Holy Cross £14.87; Holy Souls £13.80; Grenada Church Restoration £13.55. The retiring collection for flowers to decorate the church over Christmas came to £283.44.

The Advent Mini-Food Fest raised £615.25. A very big thank-you to the organisers and all those parishioners who made it such a success. Usually we would have a retiring collection for those who were unable to attend, but we will refrain as we are now so near Christmas.

Very many thanks for your continuing generosity.

The Aquinas Institute at Blackfriars, Oxford. There will be a series of seminars on Thomas Aquinas and Contemporary Culture on Thursdays from 27 January to 3 March 2011. See noticeboards.

Child Protection. The NSPCC has a 24-hour helpline for use by anyone who is concerned about a child. See noticeboard, and there are small cards available by the doors with the number – 0800 800 5000, or use help@nspcc.org.uk.

A Group of singers and musicians from the parishes of St Mary's, South Wigston and St John Bosco, Eyres Monsell, will be carol singing to raise money for CAFOD at Asda, Fosse Park, tomorrow, Monday 20 December between 7pm and 8.30pm. Please go and support them!

Red Cross Appeal for Refugees & Asylum Seekers. The full list of items needed to support these destitute and vulnerable people is:

- ◆ **Tinned goods:** tomatoes/ kidney beans/ chick peas/ tuna/ mackerel/ corned beef/ tinned fruit/ tinned vegetables/ baked beans/ soup;
- ◆ **Dried foods:** rice/ maize meal/ lentils/ cous cous/ dried fruit/ noodles/ sugar/ porridge/ flour/ pasta;
- ◆ **Long life goods:** cooking oil/ cereal bars/ nuts/ cereal/ crisps/ indian savoury mix/ chocolate/ biscuits;
- ◆ **Drinks:** fruit juice/ tea/ coffee/ drinking chocolate/ dried milk/ long-life milk/ squash/ water
- ◆ **Toiletries:** toothpaste/ toothbrushes/ soap/ toilet paper/ shampoo/ sanitary towels/ face and body creams/ shaving equipment;
- ◆ **Baby items:** nappies/ baby wipes/ oil/ baby milk/ baby food jars/ baby bath liquid;
- ◆ **Also:** tin openers/ cutlery/ crockery/ pans/ towels/ sleeping bags/ t-shirts/ supermarket and other shopping vouchers/ mobile telephone top-up vouchers/ writing paper/ envelopes/ stamps.

Please leave these items after any Mass. Thank you.

Are you keen to know what feasts are celebrated in this church for the coming year? The Dominican Ordo for the liturgical year 2010/2011 may be ordered from this website: <http://www.lulu.com/product/paperback/op-or-do-2011/13999510>. Or you can download an electronic version from http://english.op.org/News_files/Ordo%20OP%202011.pdf.

THE PARISH WEBSITE IS LAUNCHED!

Go to <http://www.holycrossleicester.org> and there it is. Thank you to everyone who has sent information about their parish group; if yours is not there, we need up to 200 words (and pictures are welcome) about your activities in the parish, written exactly as you would like to see them on the website, so that the site can be as comprehensive as possible. Please email your information or any questions to holycrosswebsite@gmail.com as soon as possible.



Today's Gospel: "Joseph, do not fear to take Mary...she shall bear a son and you shall call him Jesus."

Year 1	This week's calendar & Mass Intentions	Psalter Week 4
Confessions	10.30 to 11.30 Fr Duncan, and 17.00 to 18.00 Fr Peter	
Sunday	4th Sunday of Advent	
Vigil	18.00 ✠ Fr Austin Milner, OP 8.00 ✠ Catherine Robinson	
Family	9.30 <i>Pro populo</i>	
Solemn	11.00 Connie Bennett	
OP Rite	12.30 ✠ Mary McBride	
Students	17.00 No Mass now until next term 19.00 ✠ Vincent Boyle	
Monday	Advent feria. Additional 'novena' Mass at 6pm. 10.00 Pietro Matragrano 12.30 ✠ Ngo Kollo Emerentienne	
Tuesday	Advent feria. Additional 'novena' Mass at 6pm. 10.00 ✠ Dead of the Order of Preachers 12.30 Thank you, Jesus	
Wednesday	Advent feria. Anniversary of the Approval of the Order of Preachers in 1216. Additional 'novena' Mass at 6pm. 10.00 ✠ Fr Robert Sharpe, RIP 12.30 ✠ Carlito & Carlota de Silva	
Thursday	Advent feria. Additional 'novena' Mass at 6pm. 10.00 ✠ Reginald Eyre 12.30 Michelle Bernadette, Michael, Rebecca Frances & Esther Marie	
Friday	Advent feria. 10.00 ✠ Jozef Lubek 12.30 Henriqueta Cruz Andrade	
Vigil	18.00 ✠ Ngo Kollo Emerentienne	
Saturday	THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD. There is no evening Mass today. Midnight 23.30 ✠ German Guerrero, Elvia Arango 8.00 <i>Pro populo</i> Family 9.30 ✠ Fr John Orme Mills, OP Solemn 11.00 ✠ Fr Austin Milner, OP OP Rite 12.30 ✠ Fr Edmund Hill, OP	
Confessions	None today	
WEEKDAY MASS IN LATIN. Holy Mass will be offered in the older form from Monday to Saturday at 8am		
Next Sunday – THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH.		
Readings:		
Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6. 12-14	Colossians 3: 12-21	Matthew 2:13-15. 19-23

The Angelus Project. Following the Papal visit, we have all been invited to continue the celebrations with a Year of Catholic Education. The Diocesan Education Service has picked out five main themes on which to base our activities for this year. These are **Sainthood, Service, Vocation, Communication and Prayer**. These themes are drawn together as 'The Angelus Project'. The Angelus links the five themes, and also provides a beautiful way for the Diocese as a whole, parishes, schools and other groups, to continue its follow-up to the Papal visit. Please take a prayer card from one of the tables by the entrances.

If you haven't already, please do consider signing the petition by the Wellington Street doors to oppose TV ads aimed at children, and please take a blue leaflet for more information.

REGULAR SERVICE TIMES
MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS 7.30 Lauds 10.00 Mass 12.30 Mass 17.45 Vespers Old Rite Masses as announced.
WEDNESDAYS 10.30 Exposition until 12.30 11.45 Divine Mercy Chaplet, Rosary & Benediction
SATURDAYS 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.
HOLIDAYS 18.00 (previous day) Vigil Mass 7.30 Lauds 10.00 Mass 12.30 Mass 17.45 Vespers 19.00 Mass
BANK HOLIDAYS (& MON TO FRI AROUND XTMAS & NEW YEAR) 7.30 Lauds 12.30 Mass, after which the church is closed
SUNDAYS 8.00 Mass 9.00 Lauds 9.30 Mass (Family) 11.00 Mass (Solemn: Latin on 2 nd , 4 th and 5 th 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
Leicester Royal Infirmary Catholic Chaplaincy: 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.
Parish Website: www.holycrossleicester.org Website & Newsletter Editors: holycrosswebsite@gmail.com holycrossnewsletter@gmail.com
CONTACT DETAILS Holy Cross Priory 45 Wellington Street, LE1 6HW Priory phone: (0116) 255 3856 For home visits/recorded times of services: 255 3856 Fax: 255 5552 Parish Priest: Fr Leon Pereira: 252 1501 leicester@english.op.org