

The Bible calls our world 'sin', because it is in a state of estrangement from God. The Eternal Son of God, in becoming one of us, becomes 'sin' for us. St Paul says, 'For our sake God made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God' (2 Corinthians 5.21). Christ, the incarnate Word of God, is '*sin who knew no sin*'. He became 'sin', that is, he became one of us. But he 'knew no sin', because he is the Father's obedient Son, and by his obedience we have been made righteous sons and daughters of God.

If Christ is '*sin who knew no sin*', then as his mother Mary is the mother of '*sin who knew no sin*'. Through the thorough redemption God achieved in her, Mary was never in rebellion against God. She is the sinless mother of '*sin*'. And as she is the mother of '*sin*', she is the mother of sinners, because her child, '*sin who knew no sin*', was born for us sinners.

In being born we leave the security of the womb, and are driven out forcibly into the world, into the arms of human history, to be entangled with other people and not to remain solitary in the womb anymore. We celebrate the birth of Mary on 8 September; Mary who was driven out from her mother's womb that she might be caught up in human history, to take her place in the human family. Our first parents were driven out of Eden, out of the natural bliss which God had given them and into the world of sin, with the way back blocked by cherubim with swords of fiery flame. Our Lady, higher than the cherubim and more glorious than the seraphim, was born to live in this 'vale of tears', to become the mother of '*sin who knew no sin*' and consequently to become the mother of sinners.

Because of her Son whom God made to be '*sin who knew no sin*', we have something far more exalted and glorious than the simple return to Eden. A return to Eden would have meant a pretence that nothing had happened at all, as though we could return to the security of the womb and ignore all our ties in the world - ties of friendship, of love and indeed, of sin. Because of Christ, everyone in Christ is 'a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come' (2 Corinthians 5.17). It is not a movement backwards, as though sin could be undone in a way that pretended it had never been. It is a movement forwards, *beyond sin*, showing to the whole world that there is a Power greater than sin which can swallow it up and transform it. When Christ rose from the dead, he did not return to an ordinary mode of human life. The resurrection is not a mere resuscitation. Christ's wounds are not erased as though they had not happened. As St Paul says, 'For while we are still in this tent, we sigh with anxiety; not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life' (2 Corinthians 5.4).

The birth of the sinless Mother of '*sin who knew no sin*' shows us that we need not fear the world. Our Saviour tells us, 'In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world' (John 16.33). In Christ we are already his new creation, and though we are *in* the world we are not *of* the world. Our sufferings, our sorrows, our sins will not become as though they had never mattered, but they will be transformed in Christ. And these our scars will be glorious.

Fr Leon Pereira OP

23rd Sunday of the Year

Year C

9th September 2007

The Newsletter of
Holy Cross Priory Church, Leicester



Served by the Dominican Order; website <http://www.torch.op.org>

Holy Cross Priory, 45 Wellington Street, LEICESTER LE1 6HW

Priory phone: (0116) 255 3856 Fax/recorded times of services: 255 5552

Parish Priest, Fr. Tony Rattigan: (0116) 252 1501

For home visits: (0116) 255 3856 - if no answer, leave message on 252 1501

Sunday Masses	This week	Mass Intentions	Next week
7:30pm Vigil	Fr Isidore	Irene Olszewska, RIP	Fr Tony
8:00am	Fr Isidore	Ashberry family and friends, RIP	Fr Isidore
9:30am Family	Fr Leon	For the People	Fr Euan
11:00am Solemn	Fr Leon	Susan Donnelly, RIP	Fr Leon
7:00pm	Fr Euan	Special Intention	Fr Fabian

Sunday Evening Services	1 September	Confessions	8 September
5:45 Rosary	Fr Tony	10:30-11:30am	Fr Fabian
6:15 Sung Latin Compline	Fr Euan	4:00-5:00pm	Fr David
6:40 Benediction	Fr Leon	7:00-7:20pm	Fr Euan

Entrance antiphon:	Lord, you are just, and the judgments you make are right. Show mercy when you judge me, your servant.
1st Reading:	Wisdom 9: 13-18
Psalm Response:	O Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to the next.
2nd Reading:	Philemon 9-10. 12-17
Gospel Acclamation:	Alleluia! Alleluia! I call you friends, says the Lord, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father. Alleluia!
Gospel:	Luke 14: 25-33
Communion Antiphon:	I am the light of the world, says the Lord; the man who follows me will have the light of life.

