

The incarnation

If you were to throw a brick through a window, say a jewellers shop, and were arrested, it is unlikely that the court would accept the following defence. 'It wasn't me that smashed the window, it was the brick'. The court would say that you had smashed the window, using the brick. The brick would be as much a part of you, as your arm, as regards responsibility. Human beings are great users of instruments, we extend ourselves through those instruments, be able to do things we could not do otherwise. The clothes we wear are a sort of tool, which is particularly easy to see in the winter, when we would hesitate to leave the house, without the right clothing.

The incarnation, has been explained according to this analogy. The Son of God uses the humanity of Christ as an instrument. This was how St Athanasius, the great defender of the divinity of Christ explained it, and how later, St Thomas Aquinas explained how Jesus could be both God and Man. Yet it might seem like a very weak way of saying that Jesus was really God and really human too. When you throw a brick at something, you don't really care about the brick. In terms of care, of love, of compassion, the brick is not really you. You throw it away when you have used it.

That is not how the Incarnation works. It is interesting that the word does not mean, became human, or became Man, but became flesh, John 1:14. To become flesh, is to accept the limitations of the flesh, the limitations of humanity. God the Son does not use the humanity of Jesus, as if it were a robot he was controlling, an error which the successors of St Athanasius as Bishops of Alexandria, were accused of falling into.

The humanity of Jesus is a full humanity, with body and soul, with choice and will. Yet God uses that humanity to be himself, and in so doing commits himself to being with humanity as that human being forever. If God were to bring to an end the Incarnation, he could only do it by either bringing the humanity of Jesus to an end, or by that humanity becoming a different person from the Son of God.

Many theologians worry about the 'instrument' theory being too weak. This is to underestimate the capacity of God to be intimate to his own creation. God the Son, uses the humanity of Jesus, right enough, but he uses it to be himself, he is utterly bound to that humanity, and through the humanity of Jesus, he is utterly bound to us.

Fr Euan Marley O.P.

Gaudete Sunday (3rd of Advent)

Year A

16 December 2007

The Newsletter of
HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH, LEICESTER

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| Sunday Masses | This week | Mass Intentions | Next week |
|----------------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 7:30pm Vigil | Fr Duncan | Evelyn Dixon, RIP | Fr Isidore |
| 8:00am | Fr Isidore | Gerry Quigley, RIP | Fr Duncan |
| 9:30am Family | Fr Fabian | For the People | Fr David |
| 11:00am Solemn | Fr Leon | Clare & Bill Barradale, RIP | Fr Leon |
| 7:00pm | Fr Euan | Gerry Quigley, RIP | Fr Fabian |

Full details of CHRISTMAS SERVICES and CONFESSIONS are given on the cards by each entrance.

Please take one, rather than ringing the Priory to enquire.

SUNDAYS IN TERM: MASS FOR STUDENTS AT 5pm (in the Church).

No Mass today; the first Mass of next term will be on Sunday 13 January.

| Sunday Evening Services | 15 December | Confessions | 22 December |
|--------------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 5:45 Rosary | Fr Isidore | 10:30-11:30am | Frs Fabian & Leon |
| 6:15 Sung Latin Compline | Fr Fabian | 4:00-5:00pm | Fr David |
| 6:40 Benediction | Fr Tony | 7:00-7:20pm | Fr Duncan |

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| Entrance | Gaudete in Domino semper! Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice! The Lord is near. |
| Antiphon: | |
| 1st Reading: | Isaiah 35: 1-6, 10 |
| Psalm | |
| Response: | Come, Lord, and save us. (Ps 145) |
| 2nd Reading: | James 5: 7-10 |
| Alleluia: | The spirit of the Lord has been given to me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor. At 11:00 - O Lord, rouse up your might. O Lord, come to our help. |
| Gospel: | Matthew 11: 2-11 |
| Communion | Say to the anxious: be strong and fear not, for our God will come to save us. |
| Antiphon: | |

MONEY MATTERS: Last Weekend: Offertory Collection £926.08; SVP £6.15; St. Martin's Missions £3.55; Holy Souls £0.89; Grenada £2.76.

Christmas Flowers. Last week's collection came to £313.04. Help will be very much appreciated on Saturday 22nd December at 10.30am when the decorating of the church for Christmas will begin.

Last month's 200 Club winners were: 1st D Clancy, 2nd J Timms and 3rd K Shevas. Congratulations!

Very many thanks for your continuing generosity.

| This week's Feasts | | |
|------------------------|--|------------------|
| Monday: | Advent Feria | |
| Tuesday: | Advent Feria | |
| Wednesday: | Advent Feria | |
| Thursday: | St Dominic of Silos, abbot (<i>optional</i>) | |
| Friday: | St Peter Canisius, priest, religious, doctor | |
| Saturday: | Advent Feria (Anniversary of the Approval of the Order of Preachers in 1216) | |
| Next Sunday's Readings | | |
| Isaiah 7: 10-14 | Romans 1: 1-7 | Matthew 1: 18-25 |

Short Advent Talks at Holy Cross - "The Origins of Christmastide". These talks take place on Fridays after the 10:00 and 12:40 Masses. On Friday, 21 December, Fr Leon will speak on 'Twelve Days of Christmas'. We hope these talks will help you to prepare for the birth of our Saviour.

International Young Leaders Network. There will be a training session held at Blackfriars, Oxford, in July 2008. See noticeboard.

This year's Service of Lessons and Carols will take place on Wednesday at 7:30pm. Forget late night shopping for the evening: come and prepare for the joyous season ahead! The service will consist of six Readings telling the Christmas story. Each Reading will be preceded by a short chant taken from the Office, and then followed by a motet and a congregational carol, so plenty of opportunity for a good sing. Parking space will be available in the gated car park just up Wellington Street beyond the Priory. Unfortunately this year we will not be able to offer the usual refreshments afterwards.



Midnight Mass. Fr Tony needs readers, at least four, for midnight Mass. Could readers who plan to come to midnight Mass and would like to read the scriptures please contact Fr Tony (252 1501).

The Parish Christmas Lunch last Sunday was a resounding success; great food and splendid company. Many, many thanks to "Chef Henri" and his team of cooks and helpers. The Diocesan Pastoral Plan continues in 2008 with the theme: "Handing on the faith". Events like last Sunday's help bring us closer together and, we hope, better able to take up the task of handing on the faith.

Training for Reading at Mass. A new formation course for both existing and prospective readers. Fr Tony has details of a Saturday event in Leicester in early February which will be the first presentation of the diocese's course for those who read at Mass or would like to become readers. The course will be repeated.

Carol Singing Party - Tuesday 18 December - 7.00pm onwards - Holy Cross Centre. Please join us for an evening of song, stories, poetry and other fun. Feel free to bring friends and family and, if you would like to do so, prepare your own contribution to the entertainment. There is no entrance fee but if you would bring some mince pies or any of your own traditional, Christmas snacks, that would be great. The bar will be open, children are welcome. See you there!

St Paul's School will celebrate its 30th Anniversary on the evening of Saturday 28 June, at the school. The event is open to all past pupils who are over the age of 18, staff and friends. For more details ring 241 4057, visit www.st-pauls.leicester.sch.uk or e-mail stpaulsrcschool@netscape.net. Do let anyone who is coming home for Christmas know!

2008 is the 150th anniversary of the apparitions at Lourdes. The Diocesan Pilgrimage, led by Mgr McGovern, will take place from 13 or 14 July (depending on mode of travel) until 20 July. Air pilgrims will depart from the East Midlands Airport, with coach pilgrims going from Newark and Leicester and returning via St Bernadette's shrine at Nevers. For a brochure and booking form (one per person) write to the Pilgrimage Office, Willson House, Derby Road, Nottingham NG1 5AW or telephone 07971 625764.

The National Board of Catholic Women (the consultative body for women to the Bishops' Conference for issues such as Education, Health, Marriage and the Family, Social Justice etc) is holding its AGM in Nottingham on 21-22 June 2008. In order to prepare for that meeting there will be a discussion session at Rearsby convent, 61 Station Road, Rearsby on Saturday 5th January from 10am - 4pm. Fair trade refreshments and a light lunch will be included - Contact Christina Mottram 0116 221 3066 cj.mottram@ntlworld.com to book or for further information.

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 Services at Holy Cross during the week:  
**Mass: Mon - Sat, at 10:00am (with sermon) and 12:40pm.**  
**Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Wednesday 10:30am - 12:30pm.**  
**with Rosary and simple Benediction at 12:15pm.**  
 During the winter months the church will be open from 8am each weekday until 3:30pm.  
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