

JESUS AND THE JEWS

ALIVERPOOL-IRISH friend of mine told me this story. When he was a child, back in the 1930s, there was a group of fellow Catholics chatting one evening at his house and the conversation got round to the Jews. A lot of anti-Jewish feeling was expressed, even contempt and hostility; but my friend's mother stayed quiet, just listening. She clearly did not approve of what was being said, and was probably thinking out a suitable comment. Then, during a lull in the conversation, she quietly remarked: 'Let me see, Our Lady was a Jew, wasn't she?'

What impressed my friend was that his mother did not attempt to meet her guests' prejudice head on, or use any strong arguments. She simply tried to make them reflect on their attitude by delicately pointing out that Our Lady was a Jew. She did not say 'Surely, Jesus was a Jew?', because she knew that speaking about Our Lady would make a deeper impact on their Liverpool-Irish-Catholic hearts.

Anti-Jewish prejudice has been a tragic element in European history right through to the present. It is rooted in the split that was taking place between Synagogue and Church in the later part of the first century AD, when John's Gospel was being written. We know from the other three Gospels that during his ministry Jesus often clashed with the Pharisees. In John's Gospel the conflict is more bitter, and it is directed both against Jesus himself and against his followers. So John's Gospel reflects what was happening as Church and Synagogue separated.

This is very clear in today's Gospel reading. On one level it is a story about Jesus giving sight to a man born blind. On a second level it is a story about someone coming to faith in Jesus. But on a third level it reveals the separation between Church and Synagogue, and the reasons for it. The Jews believed that God spoke through the Law. Yet by working on the Sabbath Jesus had broken the Law. The Pharisees retorted: 'This man cannot be from God; he does not keep the Sabbath'. They went on: 'We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this man, we don't know where he comes from'. Jesus acted as though he were God. For the Jew this is blasphemy. According to their own lights, they had good reason to reject Jesus, and the Church.

Alas, this hostility continued through the centuries, on both sides, with Christians often condemning the Jews as 'god-slayers'. In our own country terrible crimes were committed against Jews in the early Middle Ages; and from 1299 until 1655 they were expelled. Such prejudice and hostility is counter-productive, and in any case is against the Gospel. St Paul, who was always very much a Jew, declared that though 'a hardening has come upon part of Israel', yet in the end 'all Israel will be saved', because 'the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable' (Romans 11:25-29). The Church has sprung from the Jewish faith; and this is the basis for a more peaceful and positive attitude that is gradually spreading, for example in the decrees of Vatican II. May we work and pray for this spirit to grow in ourselves, and throughout the Church and the world.

Fr Fabian OP

4th Sunday of Lent - Laetare Sunday

Year A

2 March 2008

The Newsletter of **HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH, LEICESTER**

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



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Sunday Masses	This week	Mass Intentions	Next week
7:30pm Vigil	Fr Isidore	Beth Larkin, RIP	Fr Isidore
8:00am	Fr Duncan	Ashberry family and friends, RIP	Fr Euan
9:30am Family	Fr David	For the People	Fr David
11:00am Solemn	Fr Fabian	Mick Fadden, RIP	Fr Duncan
7:00pm	Fr Euan	Barbara Price, RIP	Fr Tony

SUNDAYS IN TERM: MASS FOR STUDENTS at 5pm (in the Church).
 The last Mass this term will be next Sunday, 9 March.

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

Entrance Antiphon:	Laetare Ierusalem! Rejoice, Jerusalem! Be glad for her, you who love her; rejoice with her, you who mourned for her, and you will find contentment at her consoling breasts.
1st Reading:	1 Samuel 16: 1. 6-7. 10-13
Psalm Response:	The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. (Ps 22)
2nd Reading:	Ephesians 5: 8-14
Gospel Acclamation (Tract at 11:00):	I am the light of the world says the Lord; anyone who follows me will have the light of life. At 11:00 - Those who trust in the Lord will be like the mountain of Zion. He will not be disturbed for eternity, who dwells in Jerusalem.
Gospel:	John 9: 1-41
Offertory Antiphon (at 11:00):	Praise the Lord for he is good. Sing a psalm to his name for he is loving. The Lord does whatever he wills, in heaven and on earth.
Communion Antiphon:	The Lord rubbed my eyes: I went away and washed; then I could see, and believed in God.

MONEY MATTERS: Last Weekend: Offertory Collection £1049.04; SVP £28.96; St. Martin's Missions £15.30; Holy Souls £23.04; Grenada £6.50. The special collection for CAFOD raised £1007.95.

There will be a retiring collection this week for Easter flowers to decorate the church.

Very many thanks for your continuing generosity.

This week's Feasts		
Monday:	Weekday of Lent	
Tuesday:	St Casimir, layman and prince - <i>optional</i>	
Wednesday:	Weekday of Lent	
Thursday:	Weekday of Lent	
Friday:	SS Perpetua and Felicity, wives and mothers, martyrs. Women's World Day of Prayer. Prayer for the upholding and protection of the dignity of human beings is encouraged.	
Saturday:	St John of God, religious - <i>optional</i>	
Next Sunday's Readings: 5 th Sunday of Lent		
Ezekiel 37: 12-14	Romans 8: 8-11	John 11: 1-45

Short Lenten Talks on the theme "Deliver us from evil"

will take place each Friday in Lent after the 10am and 12:40pm Masses. The next in the series is this Friday, when Fr Duncan will speak on "Good & Evil in the Family". We hope you can stay for some or all of these talks.



Stations of the Cross will take place each Wednesday in Lent after the 12:40pm Mass.

Refugee and Asylum Support: URGENT NEED FOR HELP. The Red Cross (244 London Road) has said: Our cupboards are empty! We need the following -

- **Tinned goods:** beans/ soup/ kidney beans/ tinned fruit/ tuna/ mackerel/ corned beef/ tinned veg;
- **Dried foods:** Rice/ pasta/ dried fruit/ cereal/ crisps/ noodles/ cereal bars/ nuts/ indian savoury mix/ chocolate;
- **Drinks:** Fruit juice/ tea/ coffee/ dried milk/ squash/ water;
- **Extras:** Baby milk/ baby food jars/ porridge/ nappies/ baby wipes/ oil;
- **Toiletries:** toothpaste/ soap/ toilet paper.

Please help with any of these if you can. The collection point after the 9:30 and 11:00 Sunday Masses is Holy Cross Centre. At the other Sunday Masses it is the Wellington Street entrance. We are very grateful to you for your support. It is good to do something to help.

The last Lenten Station Mass around Leicester will be celebrated:

- ◆ on Wednesday 5 March at St Mary's, South Wigston, at 7:30pm.

And there will be **Penitential Services:**

- ◆ on Monday 10 March at St Mary's, South Wigston, at 7:30pm; and
- ◆ on Wednesday 13 March at St Thomas More's, Knighton, at 7:30pm.

First Friday Coffee Morning: This coming Friday, at 10:30am in the Church Hall. Tea & scones or coffee & cake, a chance to chat with other weekday Mass-goers and members of the Community; and, of course, a raffle. Money raised goes towards the care and maintenance of the church fabric.

A Parish Day of Recollection, will be held on Saturday 8 March from 10:30am to 4:00pm (approx). Led by Fr David. See noticeboard and handbills.

In 2008 Nottingham became a **Fairtrade Diocese**, as significant number of parishes had committed to Fairtrade. This includes Holy Cross, so we aim to serve Fairtrade refreshment wherever possible, to source other Fairtrade goods, and to celebrate Fairtrade Fortnight, which runs until 9th March. Fairtrade products ensure that the producers get a fair price for their produce, and they also earn a cooperative 'social premium' to support community projects such as schools or safe water.

On the weekend of the 8/9 March Fr David Cain will be leading a **Vocations Promotion** in the parish of Our Lady of Victories, Market Harborough. Please pray for Vocations. If you'd like to have a chat either about the Vocation to the Priesthood or any ways in which you would like to be involved in promoting Vocations, please don't hesitate to contact Fr David Cain on 0116 251 9370 or frdavid@nrcdt.org.uk or even see www.rucalled.com.

People of the Passion: a day of recollection for Holy Week at the Diocesan Centre, Mackworth, Derby, on Saturday 15 March from 10am to 3:30pm. Through the course of the day, time will be spent in reflection, prayer, silence and sharing, focusing on the passion according to Matthew and the characters we encounter in the story. The cost of the day is £10 per person. Bring a packed lunch - tea and coffee are provided. To book a place contact Janet Hornsby on janet.hornsby@nottingham-des.org.uk or by phone on 01332 293833 ext 820.

And, finally, blessings to all mothers, especially today, **Mother's Day.**

Services at Holy Cross during the week:

Mass: Monday to Saturday, at 10:00am (with sermon) & 12:40pm.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Wednesday 10:30am - 12:30pm

with Rosary and simple Benediction at 12:15pm.

Stations of the Cross: Wednesdays in Lent after the 12:40pm Mass.

HOLY WEEK & EASTER: The times of services are on the cards which are by each door, and on the Choir's website www.holycrosschoirleicester.co.uk

On Mondays to Fridays during the winter months the church will be open from 8am until 3:30pm.