

'YOU ARE THE MESSIAH' - 'YOU ARE THE ROCK'

JESUS' question to the disciples is as much a challenge to us as it was to them: 'Who do people say that I am?' Their answer is: John the Baptist, or Elijah, or Jeremiah or one of the prophets - not surprising, because Jesus had been behaving like one of the prophets of old. Popular opinion apparently did not include thinking of Jesus as the Messiah; at least they do not mention this.

Then comes the real challenge: 'Who do YOU say that I am?' And Simon Peter replies: 'You are the Messiah', and then he adds: 'the Son of the Living God'. His instinctive response is to say that the Messiah is not just an ordinary human being, but in some special sense 'the Son of the Living God'.

Jesus responds to Simon Peter with a blessing. 'Blessed are you' - in other words: 'God blesses you, Simon'. Why? Because you have not come to this understanding by your own reasoning or by common human knowledge (which would not be possible anyway), but because you have been receptive to the revelation from 'my Father'. And because Simon Peter has declared who Jesus is, so Jesus in turn declares who he, Simon, is. 'You are Peter and on this rock I will build my church'. From that moment onwards, Simon is called Peter.

There is of course a pun on the word 'petra', which in both Aramaic and Greek means 'rock'. Jesus is saying: 'You are Rock, and on this Rock I will build my church'. But this is a pun with a serious intent. The one on whom the church is based is the firm rock which the powers of evil will never be able to destroy. The church as a whole, listening to the Word which is Jesus, and based on the rock, is indestructible. Jesus says this at the end of the Sermon on the Mount: those who listen to my words and do them will be like the man who built his house on a rock, and the storms and the floods could not destroy it.

So the rock is in a mysterious sense both Jesus and Peter, and Peter as leader of the church takes on something of Jesus' role. Just as the Church is 'the Whole Christ', head and members, so Peter (and each of his successors) represents the church as a whole, as St Augustine and St Leo teach. This relationship between an individual and the whole (Jesus as the Second Adam) is almost impossible to describe in its reality ('flesh and blood has not revealed it'). Instead we have to use models from human society to describe both Church and Papacy because they are the only models we have. And then we are tempted to think that the Church IS a monarchy or a democracy or whatever. But Jesus explicitly rejected this. The rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, he said, and their great ones are tyrants. 'But it is not so among you. Whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant'. Always, our model and pattern is Jesus who came not to be served but to serve. And Jesus is also the model for Peter who, together with him, is the Rock on which the Church is built.

Fr Fabian OP

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year A (Weekdays II)

24 August 2008

The Newsletter of

HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH, LEICESTER

Served by the Dominican Order: website www.torch.op.org



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 Priory phone: (0116) 255 3856 Fax/recorded times of services: 255 5552
 Parish Priest: Fr Leon Pereira 252 1501 For home visits: 255 3856

Sunday Masses	This week	Mass Intentions	Next week
7:30pm Vigil	Fr Fabian	Anne Downey, RIP	Fr Peter
8:00am	Fr Isidore	John & Andrew Irwin, RIP	Fr Isidore
9:30am Family	Fr Euan	Book of Prayer Intentions	Fr Euan
11:00am Solemn	Fr Euan	<i>Pro populo</i>	Fr Fabian
7:00pm	Fr Isidore	Paddy Collins, RIP	Fr Euan

There is a Novena to Our Lady each Saturday, at 10:30am. It is taking place every week, leading up to the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary on 7 October. Books for recording your petitions and thanksgiving are in the Lady chapel.

Sunday Evening Services	23 August	Confessions	30 August
5:45 Rosary	Fr Euan	10:30 - 11:30am	Fr Peter
6:15 Sung Latin Compline	Fr Fabian	4:00 - 5:00pm	Fr Euan
6:40 Benediction	Fr Euan	7:00 - 7:20pm	Fr Isidore

Entrance	Listen, Lord, and answer me. Save your servant who trusts in you.
Antiphon:	I call you all day long, have mercy on me, O Lord.
1st Reading:	Isaiah 22: 19-23
Psalms Response:	Your love, O Lord, is eternal, discard not the work of your hands. (Ps 137)
2nd Reading:	Romans 11: 33-36
Alleluia:	God in Christ was reconciling the world to himself, and he has entrusted to us the news that they were reconciled. At 11:00 - Thou art Peter and upon this rock I shall build my Church.
Gospel:	Matthew 16: 13-20
Communion Antiphon:	Lord, the earth is filled with your gift from heaven; man grows bread from earth, and wine to cheer his heart. Or - The Lord says: The man who eats my flesh and drinks my blood will live for ever; I shall raise him to life on the last day. At 11:00 - Lord, the earth is filled with your gift from heaven; man grows bread from earth, and wine to cheer his heart, oil to make his face shine and bread to strengthen man's heart.

MONEY MATTERS: Last Weekend's collections: I'm afraid there are no figures available at the time of going to press but, nevertheless, very many thanks for your continuing generosity.

The week ahead...		
Monday:	St Louis of France, husband and father, king or St Joseph Calasanz, priest, religious - <i>both optional</i>	
Tuesday:	Bl Dominic Barberi of the Mother of God, priest, religious - <i>optional</i>	
Wednesday:	St Monica, wife and mother	
Thursday:	OUR FATHER ST AUGUSTINE, BISHOP, DOCTOR	
Friday:	The Passion of St John the Baptist	
Saturday:	THE DEDICATION OF THE CATHEDRAL OF ST BARNABAS, NOTTINGHAM. Novena to Our Lady at <u>10:30am</u> .	
Next Sunday:	22 nd Sunday <i>per annum</i> . Readings:	
	Jeremiah 20: 7-9	Romans 12: 1-2
		Matthew 16: 21-27

HOLY CROSS GOSPEL SINGERS: If you enjoy singing and would like to meet people and have fun, please join us from 7pm every Tuesday, during school term-time, in St. Clement's Hall. First session - September 9. BEGINNERS WELCOME.

Please note that the **Children's Liturgy** will not occur during the summer until 31 August. More information about it will be available in a leaflet nearer the time (please look out for it). In the meanwhile, a trolley with religious books and stories will be left by the door of the church for children during the 9:30am Family Mass.

Missed last week's Newsletter and want to catch up? Back copies of the Newsletter are available, technology permitting, on the Choir's website <http://holycrosschoirleicester.co.uk/> on the 'Links' page.

Enrich your marriage. If you are a married couple, here is an opportunity to enrich your relationship away from the stresses of everyday life. A Marriage Encounter Weekend is for couples who have stable marriages and gives them time to look at their relationship. The weekend is spent listening to a series of presentations on various aspects of relationship, including the Church's Vision for Marriage. Apart from mealtimes and the concluding Mass, the weekend is spent together as a couple. The next weekend in this region is at Chesterfield from 19-21 September. Visit the website www.wvme.org.uk or ring 0115 877 7694 for details, and see the noticeboard.



Today's Gospel: "But you, who do you say that I am?"

During July Br Robert Verrill visited the parish on a pastoral placement, and he has prepared an account of his time here to help us all learn about this aspect of Dominican training. He writes: "This was my first experience of parish life as a Dominican brother. For the brief time I was in Leicester I didn't have a chance to get to know all of you, but of those of you I did meet, I greatly appreciated the warmth and encouragement that I received. I am also grateful to my Dominican brothers who made me feel so at home at Holy Cross.

"During my pastoral placement, I went into the Leicester Royal Infirmary and Leicester Prison. For the hospital placement, I accompanied Fr Euan as he visited the patients who were registered as Catholic. Whilst I was there, there were usually about 50 Catholic patients registered. In a morning we would only manage to visit a handful of patients, so some people during their hospital stay would have missed out on receiving a visit from a chaplain unless they explicitly requested one. Usually when we visited a patient we would chat for a few minutes before offering them Holy Communion. Sometimes Fr Euan would administer the Sacrament of the Sick. This is a sacrament that not many people are aware of, but it is definitely something worth considering to receive if you are ever in hospital.

"Going into prison was a very interesting experience - a real eye opener. I had imagined there would be a very tense atmosphere in prison, but in fact I found it surprisingly relaxed. Of course some of the inmates were difficult characters who were hard to get through to, but others were genuinely trying to come to terms with what they had done, and the Gospel message of repentance and forgiveness seems especially relevant to them. Prison can be an opportunity for inmates to rediscover the faith of their childhood. Usually between 15 and 20 prisoners attend the weekly Catholic Mass, many of whom would never think of going to Mass on the outside. It's a challenge to think how they might be encouraged to keep practising their faith once they are released. There is also a weekly bible study in the prison. It is run by volunteers and is normally attended by about 10 prisoners. Some of the questions that were raised were quite challenging, but they seemed to be motivated by a sincere desire for the truth.

"So my experience of visiting the prison and the hospital has been very valuable and it has given me a lot to think about. Seeing how the Catholic faith touches people's lives has been a strong reminder of the important role the priest has to play in society. I believe that my pastoral placement has really helped me to see how my studies relate to serving the people of God."

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 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 Divine Mercy Chaplet, Rosary and simple Benediction at 12noon.**  
**Novena to Our Lady: Saturday at 10:30am**  
 On Mondays to Fridays (except Bank Holidays) the church is open from 8am until 4pm.  
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