

The True Cross

THESE are a number of churches that claim to have relics of the True Cross of Jesus, and we are one of them. Even the container of our relic (the reliquary) is very old, and the fragment that has come down to us over the centuries is an unusually large piece. More recently, *soi disant* Rationalists have sought to rubbish such claims as relics, saying - in the case of the True Cross fragments - that all of these slivers of the True Cross put together would amount to something the size of Noah's Ark. It may be an amusing surmise, but is it true?

In fact, all the known fragments of the True Cross make up only 2.25% of the total volume estimated of the vertical beam of the cross alone. That leaves 97.75% still unaccounted for! No grounds for mockery at all.

The fragments and slivers of the True Cross most likely go back to the cross found by the Empress Helena, early in the fourth century. Here as well, there are good reasons to believe that the cross she uncovered was the genuine article. The site of the crucifixion had been desecrated by the Romans who built a pagan temple over it, inadvertently preserving the scene of the crucifixion with the *stauroi* (vertical section of the cross) in a pit on Golgotha.

In the end, the question of the authenticity of the True Cross is epistemological. How do we know anything at all? How do I know my grandmother really is my grandmother? What amounts to enough evidence?

More importantly, relics remind us of the important fact: that Jesus Christ was crucified. Jesus was himself under no illusions about what the crucifixion would involve. *The Son of man will be delivered to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon; they will scourge him and kill him, and on the third day he will rise.* Yet that is not the full story. We heard in the Gospel, 'when I am lifted up I will draw all men to myself'. The lifting up of Jesus on the cross is not a mere hoisting. The word in Greek doesn't simply mean 'to lift up' but 'to raise in exaltation'.

The Cross is a *throne* for the Son of God, not raised in shame but in glory. What draws all men to the Cross is something beautiful, not something repulsive. Jesus-crucified is the King of Glory, as he says elsewhere, *When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I AM.*

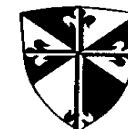
In the Cross we see the Father's love for the Son, breathed down in the Holy Spirit, and the Son's total offering of himself to the Father in that same Spirit. When we kiss the relics of the True Cross we say our 'Amen' to that love, that we too wish to be part of that love, the greatest love the world ever has and ever will know, for there is nothing greater than the Love that was crucified for us.

Fr Leon, O.P.

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross Year A (Weekdays II) 14 September 2008

The Newsletter of HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH, LEICESTER

Serving Leicester's Catholics since AD 1247



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 Parish Priest: Fr Leon Pereira 252 1501 For home visits: 255 3856

Sunday Masses	This week	Mass Intentions	Next week
7:30pm Vigil	Fr Isidore	Margaret Bailey (sick)	Fr Thomas
8:00am	Fr Thomas	Ashberry family & friends, RIP	Fr Isidore
9:30am Family	Fr Euan	Lily Day's intentions	Fr Peter
11:00am Solemn	Fr Leon	Anne Potterton (sick)	Fr Thomas
7:00pm	Fr Fabian	<i>Pro populo</i>	Fr Fabian

CALLING ALL STUDENTS!

The Mass for students will resume next Sunday at 5pm in the Lady Chapel.

Sunday Evening Services	13 September	Confessions	20 September
5:45 Rosary	Fr Thomas	10:30 - 11:30am	Fr Isidore
6:15 Sung Latin Compline	Fr Isidore	4:00 - 5:00pm	Fr Peter
6:40 Benediction	Fr Euan	7:00 - 7:20pm	Fr Fabian

Entrance Antiphon:	We should glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he is our salvation, our life and our resurrection; through him we are saved and made free.
1st Reading:	Numbers 21: 4-9
Psalm Response:	Never forget the deeds of the Lord. (Ps 77)
2nd Reading:	Philippians 2: 6-11
Alleluia:	We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you; because by your Cross you have redeemed the world. <i>At 11:00</i> - O precious wood, O precious nails, bearing so precious a weight; you were uniquely honoured in supporting the Lord and King of heaven.
Gospel:	John 3: 13-17
Communion Antiphon:	When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself, says the Lord. <i>At 11:00</i> - O God, by the sign of the Cross, save us from our enemies.

MONEY MATTERS: Last Weekend's collections: Offertory Collection £960.52; SVP £30.97; St. Martin's Missions £42.48; Holy Souls £40.22; Grenada £33.10. The collection for the Dominican priests' training fund came to £264.32.

Very many thanks for your continuing generosity.

The week ahead...		
Monday:	Our Lady of Sorrows	
Tuesday:	SS Cornelius, pope, and Cyprian, bishop, martyrs	
Wednesday:	St Robert Bellarmine, bishop, doctor - <i>optional</i>	
Thursday:	St John Macías, friar	
Friday:	St Januarius, bishop, martyr <i>or</i> St Theodore of Tarsus, bishop - <i>both optional</i>	
Saturday:	SS Andrew Kim, priest, Paul Chông, layman, catechist, and Companions, martyrs of Korea. Novena to Our Lady at <u>10:30am</u> . Books for recording your petitions and thanksgiving are in the Lady chapel.	
Next Sunday: 25 th Sunday <i>per annum</i> . Readings:		
Isaiah 55: 6-9	Philippians 1: 20-24. 27	Matthew 20: 1-16

Have you accidentally picked up a red hand missal? If you came to the 9:30 Mass last Sunday and accidentally picked up a red hand missal inscribed to 'Olivia Frances Josephine', please will hand it one of the priests. Many thanks.

Racial Justice Sunday (this Sunday, 14 September) is an opportunity to affirm that we want to live together in mutual respect, and that it is possible to do so. It's about saying that human diversity can be a source of strength and delight, and does not have to be feared. It draws attention to injustices but says that we can overcome them peacefully. It says no to fear, prejudice and violence, and yes to diversity, love and respect. There will be a service at the Church of Christ the King, Beaumont Leys, at 5:30pm, to which all are welcome. The preacher will be the Archdeacon of Southwark, Ven Dr Michael Ipgrave, who has worked in Leicester on interfaith issues.

Refugees and Asylum Seekers - Leicester City of Sanctuary. We have now joined in the "Golden Giver Scheme" to measure the amount we give and (hopefully) earn a certificate for our efforts. The Red Cross are desperate for food and personal goods and we would ask you to be as generous as you can. No clothing or alcohol please but tins, rice, soup, pasta &c as per lists in previous Newsletters. If you want a list please e mail b-.hawcroft@ntlworld.com.

Please join us in the Parish Hall after the 9:30am and 11:00am Sunday Masses for tea, coffee, fruit-juice etc. The Hall is in Wellington Street. There is the chance for a chat with members of the Dominican Community and with parishioners. We particularly welcome visitors to our Parish.

The Catholic Chaplaincy at Leicester Royal Infirmary is covered by priests from Holy Cross. Please do not call the Priory if a relative in the LRI needs a priest urgently: instead ask the ward staff to bleep the Roman Catholic Chaplain. Messages for non-urgent visits to Catholic patients in the LRI can be left at the Priory or at the LRI Chaplains' office; but please note that messages may not be picked up until the end of the chaplain's working day.

Our relic of the True Cross. Fr Fabian has written a note about the history of the relic, and this is available on the tables by the transept doors.

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. BEGINNERS WELCOME.



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

If you have any event or information that you would like publicising in this Newsletter and/or on the noticeboards, please hand in posters/information to the Priory, marked 'Newsletter'. In the case of events and other dated material please try to give 4 weeks' notice for inclusion in the Newsletter. All publicity depends on space available.

Today's Gospel:
God so loved the world
that He gave His only Son.

Elections to the Parish Pastoral Council will be held on 27 and 28 September. All positions are available. If you would like to volunteer your services, please take a nomination form from any of the priests, and return it to Fr Leon by 21 September.

Services at Holy Cross during the week:

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

On Bank Holidays there is only one Mass, at 10am, after which the church is closed.

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

with Divine Mercy Chaplet, Rosary and 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.