

## Christmas Thoughts...

IN Tavistock Square in London, there is a statue of Gandhi. The square is really a small park, near St Pancras station, and just next to London University. It's a peaceful place and yet on the 7th of July, 2005, a bomb went off on a bus, in view of the statue of Gandhi. Further down the street, there is the place where the physicist, Leo Szilard was caught waiting for the traffic lights to change. This was in 1933. The story goes that as he watched the lights change, he had the idea of a nuclear chain reaction, which was to pave the way for atomic energy but also unfortunately for atomic weapons. Maybe if they had had the congestion charge in 1933, Hiroshima would not have been bombed. Yet Tavistock Square is still a peaceful place, and evil leaves very little mark of its presence behind. Mark Anthony in Shakespeare's 'Julius Caesar' says, that

"The evil that men do lives after them;  
The good is oft interred with their bones;"

I don't think that that is true. Evil passes quickly, and the good survives. There is always more peace than war, more love than hate. That is true by definition. Evil is the absence of Good, some part of the Good which is missing, and in Tavistock Square life goes on. All over the world, people are trying to get on with their lives and that is the big truth, which no amount of terror and violence should make us forget. Even in war, the farmers farm, nurses care for the sick and mothers care for their children, and the struggle to live goes on.

Christmas seems to me to be a symbol of this. A great deal of evil happens in the Christmas story, homelessness, exile, indifference, jealousy and murder. Yet in the centre of this story, there is a hope which is not extinguished. The Christmas story takes place in cold bitter circumstances. Evil swirls around the Holy Family, yet they are safe. There is darkness here but it is not yet the hour of darkness. That comes later. The holy family are safe, and safe because they are meant to be safe. If the triumph of good were only at the end of time, when the definitive victory will come, then life would be insupportable. Hope is meant to lead us on through life, not just make us sit down and wait for the kingdom. If the cross is part of life, so are the many little resurrections. Shakespeare spoke through more mouthpieces than Mark Antony and in one of his last plays, A Winter's tale, he wrote about redemption. Winter seems to be a good season to write about redemption, as witnessed by A Christmas Carol. In the play, Cleomenes speaks to Leontes who has betrayed and lost his wife and daughter. There will be a reconciliation but before this happens he says to Leontes who has spent his life in penance for his sins:

"at the last,  
Do as the heavens have done, forget your evil;  
With them forgive yourself."

In the cold and the dark, we know that light and warmth are the natural things, we share them with each other while they are scarce, to get ready for the abundance of light and warmth, which one day, through Christ will be ours forever.

God bless and Happy Christmas,

Fr Euan Marley O.P.

## The Newsletter of HOLY CROSS PRIORY CHURCH, LEICESTER

Serving Leicester's Catholics since AD 1247



Sunday Masses	This week	Mass Intentions	Next week
6:00pm Vigil	Fr Peter	Sisters' Intentions	Fr Isidore
8:00am	Fr Isidore	Sebastian Castana, RIP	Fr Thomas
9:30am Family	Fr Euan	James & Doris McCarrick, RIP	Fr Duncan
11:00am Solemn	Fr Duncan	Sisters' relatives and benefactors	Fr Fabian
4:00pm Old rite	Fr Duncan	Ann Potterton (sick)	Fr Thomas
5:00pm Students	— —	<b>No Mass for Students until 18 Jan'y</b>	— —
7:00pm	Fr Leon	<i>Pro populo</i>	Fr Leon

OTHER SUNDAY SERVICES	27 December	Confessions	3 January
6:00pm Rosary	Fr Leon	10:30 - 11:30am	Fr Isidore
9:00am Lauds	Fr Isidore	5:00 - 6:00pm	Fr Duncan
6:20pm Compline			
5:45pm Vespers			

Full details of services over Christmas and the New Year are given on a card, available by the doors. Please take as many as you need (and please don't ring the Priory for this information...). **There will also be an anticipated Midnight Mass in the Dominican Rite at 9pm on 24 December.**

Please note that on weekdays (Monday - Friday) from 26 December to 2 January, there will only be one Mass, at 10am, after which the church is closed.

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH	
Entrance Antiphon:	The shepherds hastened to Bethlehem, where they found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.
1 <sup>st</sup> Reading:	Ecclesiasticus 3: 2-6. 12-14
Psalm Response:	<b>Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in his ways. (Ps 128)</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading:	Colossians 3: 12-21
Alleluia:	<b>Let the peace of Christ rule in your heads; let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. At 11:00</b> - Ring out your joy to the Lord, O you just; for praise is fitting for loyal hearts.
Gospel:	Luke 2: 22-40
Communion Antiphon:	Our God has appeared on earth, and lived among men. <b>At 11:00</b> - My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been looking for you. Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be busy with my father's affairs?

**MONEY MATTERS:** Last Weekend's collections: Offertory Collection £1735.50; SVP £15.84; Friends of Holy Cross £13.05; Holy Souls £12.30; Crib restoration £16.48.

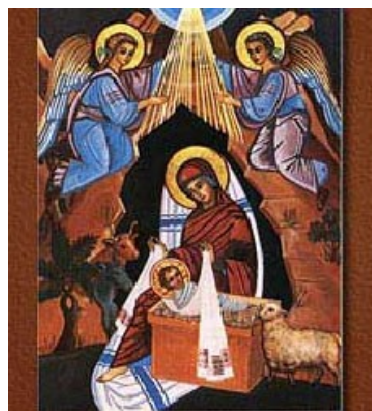
Very many thanks for your continuing generosity.

As 2 January will be a time when most people are either busy or away, the next **First Friday Coffee Morning** will be on 6 February.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of **Christine Doyle** who died suddenly last week and remember her family and all who mourn her in your prayers. We have no further details at this time.

The **Novena to Our Lady** is every Saturday at 10:30 in the morning, just after the 10 o'clock Mass.

The **Divine Mercy Chaplet** on Wednesdays will now begin at 11:45am, and be followed by the Rosary, and then Benediction.



Venite adoremus!



The Holy Family

'The Black Friars', the newsletter of the English Dominican Province - the Christmas issue is now available, *gratis*, by the church doors. One of the stars of this issue, all over page three, is Fr Leon, telling us about his life, and his priorities in Leicester. But that's not all. There's an obituary for Br John Martin McGowan whom many will remember from his days at Holy Cross twenty or more years ago. There is a write-up of this year's pilgrimage to Lourdes, and details of the new chapel planned for St Albert the Great's in Edinburgh.

Do pick up a copy!

Year 1	The week ahead...	Psalter Week 1
Monday:	St Thomas Becket, bishop and martyr, patron of the English Pastoral Clergy - <i>optional commemoration</i>	
Tuesday:	SIXTH DAY IN CHRISTMAS OCTAVE	
Wednesday:	St Sylvester I, pope - <i>optional commemoration</i>	
Thursday:	HOLY MARY, MOTHER OF GOD, solemnity	
Friday:	SS Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, bishops, doctors	
Saturday:	The Most Holy Name of Jesus - <i>optional</i>	
WEEKDAY MASS IN LATIN. This week, Fr Thomas will say Mass in the older form on Wednesday at 8:30am.		
<b>Next Sunday - The Epiphany of the Lord. Readings:</b>		
Isaiah 60: 1-6	Ephesians 3: 2-3a. 5-6	Matthew 2: 1-12

**Refugees and Asylum Seekers - Leicester City of Sanctuary.** The Red Cross remain 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](mailto:b-hawcroft@ntlworld.com).

**Mass in the Syro-Malabar rite.** From Christmas Day, and thereafter every Sunday, Mass in this rite in the Malayalam language will be celebrated at Mother of God Church, Greencoat Road. On Christmas Day the Mass will be at 3:30pm, and on Sundays it will be at 4pm. Members of our Kerala community especially are invited.

*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 opportunity for a chat with members of the Dominican Community and with parishioners.*

*We particularly welcome newly-arrived students and other visitors to our Parish.*



The Dominican Community wish all our parishioners a happy and holy Christmastide and New Year



REGULAR SERVICE TIMES	
<b>MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS</b>	
8.00	Lauds
10.00	Mass
12.30	Mass
17.45	Vespers
Old Rite Masses as announced. The church is open from 8.00 to 15.30 (winter) / 16.00 (summer)	
<b>WEDNESDAYS</b>	
10.30	Exposition until 12.30
11.45	Divine Mercy Chaplet, Rosary & Benediction
<b>SATURDAYS</b>	
9.00	Lauds
10.00	Mass
10.30	Novena to Our Lady
10.30	Confessions until 11.30
12.30	Mass
17.00	Confessions until 18.00
17.45	Vespers
18.00	Vigil Mass for Sunday
Old Rite Masses as announced.	
<b>HOLIDAYS</b>	
18.00	(previous day) Vigil Mass
8.00	Lauds
10.00	Mass
12.30	Mass
17.45	Vespers
19.00	Mass
<b>BANK HOLIDAYS</b>	
8.00	Lauds
10.00	Mass, after which the church is closed
<b>SUNDAYS</b>	
8.00	Mass
9.00	Lauds
9.30	Mass (Family)
11.00	Mass (Solemn: Latin on 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> Sundays)
16.00	Mass (Old rite in Latin)
17.00	Mass (for Students, term time only)
17.45	Vespers
18.00	Rosary
18.20	Sung Latin Compline
18.40	Benediction
19.00	Mass
<b>Leicester Royal Infirmary Catholic Chaplaincy:</b> For urgent visits, ask ward staff to bleep the Roman Catholic Chaplain. For non-urgent visits leave message at the Priory or the LRI Chaplains' Office. Messages may not be picked up until the end of the day.	
<b>Website for past Newsletters:</b> <a href="http://holycrosschoirleicester.co.uk">holycrosschoirleicester.co.uk</a>	
<b>CONTACT DETAILS</b>	
Holy Cross Priory	
45 Wellington Street, LE1 6HW	
Priory phone: (0116) 255 3856	
Fax/recorded times of services: 255 5552	
Parish Priest:	
Fr Leon Pereira: 252 1501	
<a href="mailto:leon.pereira@english.op.org">leon.pereira@english.op.org</a>	
For home visits: 255 3856	