

## A rich harvest

THE poet and story writer, George Mackay Brown, lived most of his life in his native Orkney islands, writing about the life of the islands throughout history. He had been received as a Catholic convert, though sympathetic to the other forms of Christianity by which other Orcadians live their lives. He once said in a television interview that all his work was based on the verses in today's Gospel,

'I tell you, most solemnly, unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest.'

There was a certain wryness about his choosing this verse, as he was well aware of the long tradition of John Barleycorn folk verse and song, where John Barleycorn is seen as a Christlike figure, who is killed but comes back to life, but where it becomes obvious that what is really meant here is the process of producing beer and whisky from wheat. He himself drank too much, which together with his life-long ill health, made him unable to work at any formal occupation.

Yet the verse meant more than that for him. He saw the Orkney Islands as one of the last bastions of a life in touch with nature, though his Catholicism did not permit him to turn them into a sort of Paradise. His stories and poems testify to the ever present sin that would tarnish even his beloved islands. Nature itself depended on the willingness of some to make sacrifices, to allow the rich harvest to be shared among many. His best known novel, *Magnus*, is about the death of the Earl of the Orkneys, St Magnus Erlendsson. He was executed in 1115, after a dispute about who was to rule the Orkneys. Since his death was a political one, it is not obvious that it was a martyrdom, yet a cult soon grew up around his tomb, and the Cathedral of the Orkneys is dedicated to him.

The immediate aftermath of his death in the novel, is the end of the civil war which had led to his death, and indeed the end of a famine. The land itself is healed by the martyr's death.

In all his writings, George Mackay Brown tries to show that martyrdom is always for the good of the world in which it occurs. The John Barleycorn verses are not anti-christian but are themselves based on that sense of the life which comes from the death of Christ and those who are conformed to that life. It is more than a metaphor. The Church has farmed the world throughout its existence, and sacrifice makes things grow. Faced as we are now, with such threats to our world, with water shortages, and areas turning into desert, we need more than ever to believe in the power of the Cross, to give life to the world, to yield a rich harvest.

Fr Euan Marley, O.P.

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent

Year B

29 March 2009

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 Isidore	Andrade and Henderson family	Fr Duncan
8:00am	Fr Isidore	Sisters' intentions	Fr Isidore
9:30am Family	Fr Euan	<i>Pro populo</i>	Fr Peter
11:00am Solemn	Fr Peter	Dan Collins, anniversary	Fr Leon
12:30pm Old rite	Fr Duncan		Fr Thomas
5:00pm Students	Fr Peter	Last Mass today before next term	---
7:00pm	Fr Euan	Chernan Guerrero & Elvia Arango, RIP	Fr Leon

OTHER SUNDAY SERVICES	28 March	Confessions	4 April
6:00pm Rosary	Fr Isidore	10:30 - 11:30am	Fr Peter
9:00am Lauds	Fr Duncan	5:00 - 6:00pm	Fr Thomas
5:45pm Vespers	6:40pm Benediction		

**HOLY WEEK & EASTER SERVICE TIMES** are given on a yellow sheet, available by the doors. Please take as many as you need, and please do not phone the Priory for this information...

<b>Entrance Antiphon:</b>	Give me justice, O God, and defend my cause against the wicked; rescue me from deceitful and unjust men. You, O God, are my refuge.
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Reading:</b>	Jeremiah 31: 31-34
<b>Psalm Response:</b>	Create in me a clean heart, O God. (Ps 50)
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:</b>	Hebrews 5: 7-9
<b>Verse before Gospel (Tract at 11:00):</b>	Glory and praise to you O Christ. ☩ If anyone serves me, he must follow me, says the Lord; and where I am, there shall my servant be also. <u>At 11:00</u> - They have often fought against me from my youth. They have prolonged their iniquity. The just Lord will cut the necks of sinners.
<b>Gospel:</b>	John 12: 20-33
<b>Offertory (at 11:00):</b>	I will thank you, Lord with all my heart. Bless your servant and I shall live and obey your word; By your word, revive me O Lord.
<b>Communion Antiphon:</b>	I tell you solemnly: Unless a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it remains a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. <u>At 11:00</u> - If a man serves me, he must follow me; wherever I am, my servant will be there too.

**MONEY MATTERS:** Last Weekend's collections: Offertory Collection £1045.85; SVP £18.11; Friends of Holy Cross £6.09; Holy Souls £11.91; Crib restoration £7.35. The retiring collection for Easter flowers for the church came to £336.66.

Blackfriars Market will be on **Saturday 25 April**. We are starting to collect items for sale at the Market. In particular we hope for saleable items: please do not send us books or videotapes though, as these are hard to sell. Thank you.

If you are a tax-payer and would like to donate to Holy Cross by Gift Aid, please speak to one of the community. NB: It is not necessary to give a fixed amount each week.

Very many thanks for your continuing generosity.

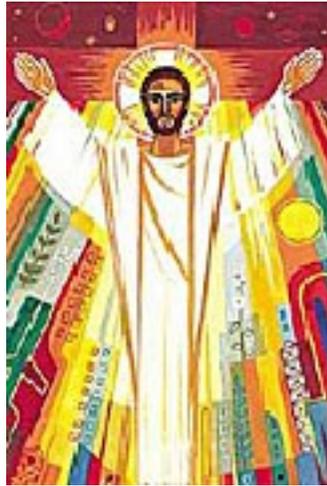
**THIS WEEK'S LENTEN TALK** on 'Aspects of St Paul' will be given after both Masses on Thursday, and Fr Peter will speak on 'Paul and the Resurrection'. And, throughout Lent, there will be Stations of the Cross at 1pm on Wednesdays and Fridays.

**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. Volunteers welcome.

**Fair Trade.** There will be a talk, 'A Christian and Islamic Approach', given under the auspices of the Muslim Christian Dialogue Group at St Philip's Church, Evington Road, on 31 March at 7:30pm. See noticeboard.

**Maundy Thursday - Watching until Midnight at the Altar of Repose.** Please sign the sheet to volunteer to guarantee to watch for a specific 15-minute 'slot'. We must have at least two people watching at all times. The sheet is on the table by the Wellington Street door.

**Midland Leg is part of the Student Cross pilgrimage** which walks for up to 7 days, carrying a wooden cross, starting in Leicester on Saturday 4th April, finishing in Walsingham on Good Friday, where the Easter Triduum is celebrated with other pilgrims. Student Cross has been a pilgrimage for 60 years, and has included several Dominicans as chaplains. Please pray for them, as they witness to Christ throughout Holy Week on their journey. Parishioners usually help by giving the pilgrims lifts to their start point in Leicestershire on Saturday morning. Please contact Christina Mottram on 0116 221 3066 or [cj.mottram@ntlworld.com](mailto:cj.mottram@ntlworld.com) if you can offer a lift, or if you think you might wish to join them.



Today's Gospel: "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."

Year 1	The week ahead...	Psalter Week 1
Thursday:	St Francis of Paola, religious, hermit - <i>optional</i>	
Saturday:	St Isidore, bishop, doctor	
Other days:	Lenten feria	
WEEKDAY MASS IN LATIN. This week, Fr Thomas will say Mass in the older form on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 8:30am. All welcome - especially a server. If you would like to learn to serve this Mass, please contact Fr Thomas.		
<b>Next Sunday - Palm Sunday. Prayers are recommended for candidates for the sacraments. Readings:</b>		
Isaiah 50: 4-7	Philippians 2: 6-11	Mark 14:1 - 15:47

**Home is a Holy Place** ([www.homeisaholyplace.org.uk](http://www.homeisaholyplace.org.uk)). This is a programme, a bit like 'Cafe', where you watch a DVD and do activities, and have discussions. For people of all ages. It was a programme arising out of the Bishops' Conference 'Listening 2004' consultation. It has 3 main aims:

- To help families recognise the holiness of their everyday lives at home and to offer practical support for them to grow in this awareness;
- To celebrate the presence of God as love in all loving families;
- To proclaim the holiness of our homes as places of life, love, service, teaching, fellowship, witness and prayer.

There will be a meeting on Friday 3 April, 7.30 – 9pm, in Blackfriars hall (Holy Cross Centre) Wellington St to experience it for this Lent. Fairtrade refreshments will be served. *It can also be shared in people's homes*, so if a group wishes to have one or a few sessions, please contact Christina Mottram 0116 221 3066 [cj.mottram@ntlworld.com](mailto:cj.mottram@ntlworld.com) or Tony Scarborough on 0116 270 7953.

**Red Cross Appeal for Refugees & Asylum Seekers.** The full list of items (recent additions are underlined) needed to support these destitute and vulnerable people is:

- ◆ Dried items: rice, pasta, cous-cous, maize mealie-meal, sugar, salt, porridge, cooking oil, flour (self-raising), spices, palenta, mashed potato (Smash), tea, coffee, powdered milk, water, fruit juice, semolina;
- ◆ Tins: fish, meat, pulses, baked beans, soup, fruit, rice pudding, sauces, vegetables;
- ◆ Pre-prepared food: cereal bars, chocolate, biscuits, nuts, crisps, pot noodles;
- ◆ Baby items: nappies (sizes 2-4), baby wipes, food, milk, lotion, talc, clothing, equipment;
- ◆ Toiletries: sanitary towels, shaving equipment, toothpaste, tooth brush, soap, moisturiser, shampoo, conditioner, toilet paper;
- ◆ Others: Tin openers, pans, cutlery, towels and sleeping bags.

Please leave these items at any Mass. Thank you.

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) 12.30 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