

Salvation and the Jews

ABOUT a year and a half ago, I met an interesting man, and inspiring speaker, called Roy Schoeman. Some of you may know his book, *Salvation is from the Jews*. He was Jewish-American by birth, but after a devout period in his youth, he'd given up his religion and even any definite belief in God. While still very young, he rose high in the famous university of Harvard. One day in the early 1980's he had a sudden experience of the kind that is called 'mystical'. It set him off on a long search which eventually led him where he had never expected to go – the Catholic Church. Today he speaks all over the world about Christ, and the faith.

I asked him when we met if anything that Catholics did was an obstacle that prevented Jews from converting to Christianity. His answer was emphatic: 'they're not praying for it!'. He was saddened that many Christians had apparently imbibed the idea that the Jews have their own parallel path to God, and so don't need Christ. As far as he was concerned, nothing could be further from the truth. After all, Christ's own mission on earth was specially directed to his own people according to the flesh: 'I was sent to the lost sheep of the House of Israel'. Our Lord is the one Mediator between God and man, the Way, the Truth and the Life for every person on earth. But St Paul tells us that the Jewish people are particularly dear to God on account of their ancestors, such as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Hence, as Roy Schoeman urged upon me, our special duty to pray, in the words of the Good Friday prayer, that 'they may recognise Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all men'.

These thoughts came to mind on looking at today's second reading, from the *Epistle to the Hebrews*. The Apostle is talking of how the old temple sacrifices of lambs and bulls hadn't ever been able to take away people's sins. Only the one offering that Christ makes to his heavenly Father can really do that. So were the old sacrifices just a mistake? How many thousands of animals must have been put to death in the Temple down the centuries, how many gallons of blood shed! – was it all for nothing? No, those sacrifices served to keep men's hopes alive during the long years of waiting for the 'Lamb of God'. But in themselves, they had no value; they were simply signs of a Sacrifice that only God could make. That's why, in the fullness of time, when He came among us in Person, the old Covenant faded away like the glory on Moses' face, and the new and eternal Covenant was born.

This new Covenant is open to all, 'Jew' and 'Gentile' alike. They enter the Mystical Body as equals. Yet, it is especially moving whenever someone who has been brought up within Judaism receives the grace of faith in Christ, 'the Lion of Judah', and comes to baptism. Roy Schoeman has produced a book of 16 such conversion stories. It is called *Honey from the Rock*, and is published by Ignatius Press. As we recall our Lord's own birth in Bethlehem, from the stock of David, I recommend it to you as spiritual reading.

Fr Thomas OP

4th Sunday of Advent

Year C

20 December 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 Thomas	Maeve Teresa Bourke	Fr Thomas
8:00am	Fr Fabian	Michael & Gayle Shell (40 th wedding ann'y)	Fr Isidore
9:30am Family	Fr Duncan	Michal & Dolores Galvin and family	Fr Fabian
11:00am Solemn	Fr Leon	Fr Robert Sharpe OP, RIP	Fr Leon
12:30pm Old rite	Fr Thomas	Holy Souls	Fr Thomas
5:00pm Students	----	No Mass now until next term	----
7:00pm	Fr Peter	Juan Diego & Lina Roberts	Fr Duncan

OTHER SUNDAY SERVICES	6:00pm Rosary	19 December	Confessions	26 December
9:00am Lauds	6:20pm Compline	Fr Leon	10:30 - 11:30am	Fr Leon
5:45pm Vespers	6:40pm Benediction	Fr Fabian	5:00 - 6:00pm	Fr Peter

TIMES OF SERVICES OVER CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR. There are cards by the doors giving full details. Please take as many as you need, and please do not ring the Priory asking about service times...

Parish Christmas Carol Party: TODAY, Sunday December 20th, 7.30pm - 11.00pm in the Centre (bar open). Please bring a 'Christmassy' snack to share – perhaps a traditional food from your own culture. All are welcome, including children. No entrance fee or ticket required, just turn up. Feel free to sing or read something of your own choice, or just join in.

Entrance Antiphon:	Let the clouds rain down the Just One, and the earth bring forth a Saviour.
1 st Reading:	Micah 5: 1-4
Psalm Response:	Restore us, O God, let your face shine, that we may be saved. (Ps 80)
2 nd Reading:	Hebrews 10: 5-10
Alleluia:	<u>At 11:00</u> – Come Lord! Do not delay. Forgive the sins of your people. <u>Otherwise</u> – Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.
Gospel:	Luke 1: 39-44
Communion Antiphon:	The Virgin is with child and shall bear a son, and she will call him Emmanuel.

MONEY MATTERS: Last Weekend's collections – Offertory Collection £1099.13; SVP £10.86; Friends of Holy Cross £14.27; Holy Souls £10.88; Crib restoration £16.60. The McNabb Appeal fund still stands at £4046.97. Last week's collection for Christmas flowers for the church raised £378.33.

Very many thanks for your continuing generosity.

Church Heating. The heating system has not been working as it should, but most of you may have already worked that out for yourselves. Dalby Engineering, who installed the system in the first place, have given it the heating equivalent of an M.O.T. and the fault lies in the 'high temperature oil capillary', which we hope will be replaced in time for Sunday. They also noted that the curtains behind the high altar actually assist the system, and help to make the church warmer. Only the oil capillary's failure has meant that the church hasn't been heating up properly anyway. In terms of parish gossip (which will always exist), we urge you to trust the people who installed the system over any self-appointed experts. The heating system is now around 30 years old, so it is not surprising that there will occasionally be failures like this.



Today's Gospel: "Why should I be honoured by a visit from the mother of my Lord?"

"**Ringing the changes at Holy Cross**". This is the headline of the latest issue of *The Black Friars*, Newsletter of the English Dominican Province. Get up to date with all the news by taking a copy as you leave the church.

CaFE (Catholic Evangelisation Services) Retreat Day 'Life to the full' will take place on Saturday 23 January at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Woodthorpe, Nottingham. Details from Pauline Payne on 288 0025.

Refugee Action is an independent, national charity working to enable refugees to build new lives in the UK. They can now make referrals for food, clothing, household items and baby equipment to Open Hands Trust on Highfield Street. This organization offers tea, toast and friendship to anyone in need, as well as a free cafe and crafty time for women and some free evening meals. If you know of anyone who would benefit from these services, please contact Open Hands at 53 Upper Tichborne St (tel 255 8672). There are more details on the noticeboard in the Narthex at the back of the church.

A Set Dance Weekend will be held at St Patrick's Parish Centre, Beaumont Leys Lane, on Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 January. Details are on the noticeboard. There are weekly Irish Céilí and Set Dance sessions at St Patrick's on Sunday evenings and at Blessed Sacrament Parish Hall, Gooding Avenue, on Thursday evenings. Details also on the noticeboard.

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land – 9 to 17 April. See noticeboard in the Narthex.

Please pray for our benefactors (mostly anonymous) who have donated or paid for the following items for the parish: bells, pulpit, statues of Ss Anne, George, Rita, Michael, & Anthony, sanctuary curtains, choir stalls, eight chasubles, mysteries of the rosary plaques, icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, altar rails for Lady Chapel, repairs to altar crucifix, and Martyrs' shrine (yet to be built). Thanks to their generosity, all these items have not cost the parish a single penny, and the church looks far more beautiful and as it ought. Pray for their intentions and welfare please.

Year II	The week ahead...	Psalter Week 4
Monday:	Feria. Confessions this Monday to Wednesday after both Masses.	
Tuesday:	Feria. Anniversary of the Approval of the Order of Preachers in 1216.	
Wednesday:	Feria	
Thursday:	Feria and Christmas Eve. Solemn First Vespers of Christmas at 5pm, and Vigil Mass of Christmas at 6pm. Carol Service and Midnight Mass at 11.30pm.	
Friday:	CHRISTMAS DAY – THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD. Masses at usual Sunday times, BUT NO EVENING MASS.	
Saturday:	ST STEPHEN, PROTOMARTYR. Masses and Confessions at usual Saturday times.	
WEEKDAY MASS IN LATIN. This week, Mass in the older form will be celebrated on Monday and Tuesday at 8:30am. All welcome, especially a server. If you would like to learn to serve this Mass, please contact Fr Thomas.		
Next Sunday – The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph. Readings:		
Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6. 12-14	Colossians 3: 12-21	Luke 2: 41-52

Churches together in Leicestershire are recommending us to contribute to the Shelter Housing Aid and Research Project (SHARP). SHARP provides help to those who find themselves in often desperate housing need. Donations, payable to SHARP, should be sent to them at 13 Welford Road, LE2 7AD. See noticeboard for more details.

Age Concern Leicester Shire and Rutland provide many basic support services to older people. The most popular offer practical support such as cleaning, shopping, gardening and basic maintenance work, all designed to help people live with dignity and confidence, and remain in their own homes rather than having to enter long-term care. But Age Concern very much needs help itself, both practical and financial. Home Helps, Gardeners and Handy Persons are needed – hours of work are flexible and everyone is paid on an hourly basis. Money is needed too, either in the form of cash donations or donations (eg. good quality clothing, bric-a-brac, furniture and books) to Age Concern's charity shops. Further information : www.ageconcernleics.com, enquiries@ageconcernleics.com or ring 299 2233.

Please join us in the Parish Hall after the 9:30am and 11:00am Sunday Masses for tea, coffee, fruit-juice etc. 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.

Noticeboards are situated in the New Walk and Wellington Street entrances and at the back of the church in the Narthex. If you don't see what you are looking for, please check the other boards.

REGULAR SERVICE TIMES
MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS 8.00 Lauds 10.00 Mass 12.30 Mass 17.45 Vespers Old Rite Masses as announced. Church is open from 8.00 - 18.00
WEDNESDAYS 10.30 Exposition until 12.30 11.45 Divine Mercy Chaplet, Rosary & Benediction
SATURDAYS 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.
HOLIDAYS 18.00 (previous day) Vigil Mass 8.00 Lauds 10.00 Mass 12.30 Mass 17.45 Vespers 19.00 Mass
BANK HOLIDAYS (& MON TO FRI AROUND XTMAS & NEW YEAR) 8.00 Lauds 12.30 Mass, after which the church is closed
SUNDAYS 8.00 Mass 9.00 Lauds 9.30 Mass (Family) 11.00 Mass (Solemn: Latin on 2 nd , 4 th and 5 th 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
Leicester Royal Infirmary Catholic Chaplaincy: 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.
Website for past Newsletters: holycrosschoirleicester.co.uk
CONTACT DETAILS
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For home visits: 255 3856