

# THE ORATORY—dedicated to THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

141 Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B16 8UE

Registered as a Charity

## Parish Weekly Newsletter

Telephone: 0121 454 0496

Fac simile: 0121 455 8160

E-mail: parish@theoratory.org.uk

Web-site: www.theoratory.org.uk

Oratory Primary School: web.oratory.bham.sch.uk



*This newsletter is available in large-print format. Ask at the Sacristy.*

### March 8th 2009: THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

#### THE SONS OF SACRIFICE

In today's first reading we hear how God put Abraham's faith in Him to the test. God had promised to make Abraham the father of a great nation, yet He had given him only one son, Isaac. God asked Abraham to show his trust in God by giving up this only son as a sacrifice.

Not only did Abraham love his son Isaac most dearly, but also knew that he was the only hope he had of any future descendants in accordance with God's promise. So God's request that he sacrifice his only, well-beloved son was a shocking and grievous blow. Yet he obeyed. He took Isaac to a high mountain and prepared to sacrifice him there. It was then that God intervened, sending His angel to stay Abraham's hand as he was about to slay his son. Instead the angel pointed out a ram nearby which he was to sacrifice in Isaac's place. God said to Abraham, "Because you have shown this obedience, and have been prepared to give up your only son in sacrifice, I will shower you with blessings."

By contrast, in the second reading, St. Paul tells the Romans that whereas God *did* spare Abraham's son, He did *not* spare His own Son from dying as a sacrifice. As Our Lord was in agony in Gethsemane, He prayed that He might be spared the terrible suffering of the cross. Yet despite this heartfelt prayer, His Father would not spare Him. At first sight it might seem to us that God the Father was harsh and cruel. Yet it was not so, since, as St. Paul reminds us, God gave up His Son *even though He loved Him*, in order to benefit us all. The Sacrifice of the Son was a gift, says St. Paul, of *love* not only on the part of the Son, but on the part of the Father, too. Just as Abraham would have been deeply grieved if he had been made to kill his son, so God was grieved. In the Gospel, we hear God the Father say: "This is my *beloved* Son." Can we doubt that the sacrifice of Christ cost the Father as dearly as it did Christ?

Yet still we may wonder why God the Father asked such a terrible price from His beloved Son. We can see two things here. First, as St. Paul reminds us, Christ's sacrifice is a reassuring proof of God's infinite love: "*We may be certain, after such a gift, that He will not refuse anything He can give*". Secondly, there is another, and wholly mysterious, aspect to Christ's sacrifice, which we can learn from the Gospel of the Transfiguration. Peter, James and John were witnesses to this astounding event, when Our Lord suddenly shone with brilliant light and was seen by them to be conversing with Moses and Elijah—foretelling the sufferings of the Redeemer. We are told, significantly, that the Apostles were *frightened*. We might be tempted either to pass over this detail or even to deny its meaning. We tend to think of God's presence as always reassuring, as by His grace it is for us most of the time. Yet the closer we come to the real presence of the great God, the more awesome He will be perceived to be. The Apostles were not so much blinded by this light that came out of Christ, as *awestruck*. This is the effect

of encountering God's infinite holiness. Yet it is another aspect of the need for the sacrifice of the Cross. God's infinite holiness makes clear the horror of sin. What can atone for it? What can mend its terrifying ugliness when seen in the light of the true and living God? This is why Christ, the sinless One, accepted the death caused by our sins, so as to take away the eternal death of sin from us. Sin is a horrible deformity in us and an insult to God's love which only the sinless Son of God could take from us by His loving sacrifice on the cross.

#### THE FATHERS ON EWTN

Finally, those of you who are able to get the American Catholic Television Station "EWTN" can see the Fathers giving a series of 30 minute reflections on the Mass readings of the Sundays of Lent over the course of the next few weeks. They can be seen on Sunday mornings at 11 a.m., and are repeated the following Wednesday at 5.30 p.m. and on Saturday at 12.30 a.m. (half-past midnight).



### Sunday March 8th: The Second Sunday of Lent (*Purple*)

- 8.30 a.m. *Low Mass*
- 9.30 a.m. *Latin Low Mass—1962 Missal*
- 10.30 a.m. *High Mass*
- 12.00 p.m. (*Families with young children*)
- 5.30 p.m. *Sung Congregational Mass*
- 7.30 p.m. *Vespers and Benediction*

#### Liturgical Calendar

*Year 2 or B of the Lectionary at Mass and Psalter Week 2*

*Monday to Friday: Masses at 7.30 a.m., 12.45 p.m. and 5.45 p.m. Rosary at 7.45 p.m.*

*Confessions are heard from 12.30 p.m. and from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass.*

*Stations of the Cross at 1.15 p.m. and 8 p.m. on Fridays in Lent*

**Monday March 9th: Monday of Lent Week 2. (Purple) Optional memoria of St Frances of Rome, Religious.**

- **Blessing with St Philip's relic at 8 p.m.**

**St Frances of Rome** (1384-1440) A noblewoman, wife and mother, she was dedicated to helping others especially the victims of civil war and plague. Several other Roman ladies shared her ideals of self-denial and good works and so she organised a community of Benedictine oblates. When she became widowed, she joined the community herself and directed it until her death. She was renowned for her mystical experiences and was a religious power in Rome, greatly esteemed by Pope Eugenius IV.

**Tuesday March 10th: Tuesday of Lent Week 2. (Purple).**

- **Nb. Confirmation Mass at 7 p.m. (Therefore, no Rosary or Benediction this evening.)**

**Wednesday March 11th: Wednesday of Lent Week 2. (Purple)**

**Thursday March 12th. Thursday of Lent Week 2. (Purple)**

**Friday March 13th. Friday of Lent Week 2. (Purple)**

- **STATIONS OF THE CROSS at 1.15 p.m. and 8 p.m.**

**Saturday March 14th. Saturday of Lent Week 2. (Purple).**

- **Masses at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.**
- **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 8.30 to 10.45 a.m.**
- **Benediction at 10.45 a.m.**
- **Confessions from 10.55 a.m. to 12 noon & from 5.30 p.m.**
- **First Mass of the Third Sunday of Lent: at 5.45 p.m.**

**Sunday March 15th: The Third Sunday of Lent (Purple)**

#### **Mass & Service Times:**

- **8.30 a.m. Low Mass**
- **9.30 a.m. Latin low Mass 1962 Missal**
- **10.30 a.m. High Mass**
- **12.00 p.m. (Families with young children)**
- **5.30 p.m. Sung Congregational Mass in English**
- **7.30 p.m. Vespers and Benediction**

**Please pray for the sick** Emily Nugent, Katie Hayward, Alf Cooke, Mary Cunliffe, Kim Potter, Raymond Colqhoun, Marie-Therese Jones, Margaret Casey, Carole Halls and Ingeborg Parkes.

**Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently:** Mary O'Brien Margaret Higgins, Lilian Walker and Noel William Hird;

**and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:** Fr Thomas Fullerton, Robert Ahern, Caroline Wardell, Gertrude Arnold, Pat Quigley, Kate Brooks, Vincent Baker, Elizabeth Campbell, Agnes Howells and Mary McNamara.

Noel William Hird's funeral is on Friday at 10.30 a.m. Reception of remains before Mass. Cremation at Sutton

**The following are requested to read at Mass next weekend, March 14th/15th, The Third Sunday of Lent:**

**Saturday 5.45 p.m.:** Anne Roebuck

**Sunday 8.00 a.m.:** Murray Wilson-Browne

**12.00 p.m.:** Morag Marinoni

**5.30 p.m.:** Simon Stacey

#### **Collections:**

**First Sunday of Lent:**  
**1st March, 2009**

**Offertory:** £1,663

**Second: Cathedral Maintenance:** £589

**Thank you**

#### **TODAY**

**The second collection today will be for Lent Fast Day, which was on Friday.**

**THE POPE'S LENTEN MESSAGE ON FASTING** is available at the Church Doors.

**The ARCHBISHOP'S "WALK WITH ME"** prayer books (price £1) and Calendars (30p) are available at the main Church Doors.

**The PIETY STALL** is open after all Sunday Masses. It also includes a wide selection of books for spiritual reading in Lent, and gifts for Baptism, Confirmation and First Holy Communion.

#### **THIS WEEK**

**THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION** will be administered to children of our Parish on Tuesday at 7 p.m. during Holy Mass celebrated by His Lordship Bishop Pargeter. Please pray for the children to be confirmed and for their families and sponsors.

**ADORATION AT REDNAL** takes place this week on **Wednesday**, commencing with Mass at 2.30 p.m. and ending with Benediction.

**Our TALKS on ST PAUL & HIS TEACHINGS in this Year which Pope Benedict has designated as the Year of St Paul** continue on Saturday in the Lower Cloister Hall after the 11 a.m. Mass (approx 11.30 a.m.) This week the talk will be given by Fr Gregory on the subject of "St Paul's Letter to the Ephesians" **These talks are extremely interesting and informative. Please come along and encourage your friends in other parishes to do so.**

**EX CATHEDRA CONCERT 'Monteverdi made spiritual: In search of 1610'** will take place in our church on Saturday, 14th

March at 7.30 p.m. *Please note, we do not deal with ticket sales*

#### **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

**THE SEVEN CHURCHES WALK** will take place this year on Saturday 4th April beginning from St. Catherine's Bristol Street at 2 p.m., including stations for prayer at St. Catherine's, St. Chad's, St. Francis's, the Convent of Mercy, Handsworth, St. Patrick's, St. Paul's Convent and the Oratory.

This devotion is based the custom initiated by St. Philip of a walking pilgrimage round seven churches in Rome, which became very popular in and after his lifetime. We keep up this custom praying the Rosary around the streets, canalside towpaths and the Edgbaston reservoir as an act of intercessory prayer for the city of Birmingham. In addition to the various stations in the Catholic Churches of the locality, we also pray for the unity of Christians, and for the evangelisation of non-Christians whose churches and places of worship we pass. Although we encourage as many as possible to join us in this exercise which is both interesting and devotional, we must point out that it is entirely unsuited to anyone who has any difficulty whatsoever in walking.

#### **NOTICES**

**LAST WEEKEND'S CLOISTER SALE** raised £540. The Union of Catholic Mothers send many thanks to those who supported the sale and who gave donations. £300 has been sent to Fr David Cullen in Africa; the remainder to support the UCM funds.

**LENTEN ALMS BOX** is by Plough and Harrow door and the gate to St. Charles's chapel (where Cardinal Newman's relics are displayed). As usual the proceeds will go to Fr. Hudson's Society.

**SOME RULES FOR REVERENTLY RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION IN THE HAND:** 1) Place your left palm open and flat upon your right to receive the sacred Host, then carefully take the Host with your right hand to place it in your mouth. Never attempt to take the Host with your own fingers from the priest's hand. 2) Do not wear gloves! 3) Never leave the Altar Rail with the Host in your hand, or stand up as you are putting it into your mouth. 4) Always check your hands after you have placed the Sacred Host in your mouth, lest any fragments be lost or dishonoured. **Finally, please consider that, for children in particular, receiving on the tongue is preferable, that thereby they may better learn reverence.**