

THE ORATORY—dedicated to THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

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Registered as a Charity

Parish Weekly Newsletter

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

July 20th 2008: THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR



THE SOWER OF CONFUSION

Today's Gospel follows last Sunday's parable of the Sower with a very different parable on the same theme: this time it is God's enemy that is pictured as sowing weeds where God had sown good seed. Our Lord wants us to understand that so many things that go wrong after promising beginnings are the devil's doing. The devil hates both God and us because we are made "in God's own image and likeness". Since we are dear to God, therefore the devil aims above all at destroying us. Satan sows confusion, distrust, lies and hatred among humanity throughout the world in every age. We are victims of his determination to see us damned along with him and thereby to destroy God's work of salvation.

It is therefore a grave error to discount even the existence, and yet more the enmity, of the devil. Nor should we be fooled into thinking that just because he does not make himself *personally* apparent, that there-

fore he does not exist or is no threat to us. If you want to ambush your enemy the more effectively to defeat him, you don't advertise your presence or else he might escape or even launch an effective counter-attack. So it is with Satan. He so cleverly uses weapons of confusion within the hearts and minds of men and women, so that many people are fooled into thinking that evil is only found in wicked human persons, and not in some greater and more malignant spiritual power behind them.

Our Lord also tells us this parable of the weeds in the field to help us understand another important truth: why it is that God does not seem to act more decisively against the devil's influence on us. As He says in the Gospel, if He commands the weeds to be uprooted too soon, some of the good crop may be uprooted with the weeds and lost. God's long-suffering patience in the face of the devil's malice is not caused by any lack of care for us on God's part. Nor is God indulgent towards evil. It is rather that God is always aiming at saving everyone and does all that He can to allow those under the devil's influence to escape from the fate that awaits them unless they repent and convert. As Our Lord teaches in other parables, God is always waiting patiently and giving us many chances to repent and find His grace. He calls us to find Him in the sacraments, especially Confession and Communion, and is often prepared to wait even for many long years to win back those who are careless about His gifts and about their own salvation. Yet in the end time will run out. There will be a reckoning: the Last Judgement. Our Lord warns us not to delay until it is too late to repent, or we may well regret it for all eternity.

In this Gospel passage Our Lord also tells a couple of much shorter parables, including the image of the leaven in the dough; a small amount of which can raise an entire batch of bread. He clearly means us to understand that His disciples may seem, and indeed may be, very few in comparison to the world's disciples. Yet we can, and must, continue to act as an influence on the ungrateful world. One day God will reveal to us the effect we have had on others by our faithfulness to Him in regularly coming to Mass and receiving the Sacraments. With Cardinal Newman we can pray: "I am born to serve Thee, to be Thine, to be Thy instrument. Let me be Thy blind instrument. I ask not to see—I ask not to know—I ask simply to be used."

THE YEAR OF SAINT PAUL

Today's second reading at Mass again continues the 8th chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. St. Paul explains the role of the Holy Spirit in our prayers. We may often not know what to ask God for, or how to do so. Yet this should not alarm us or make us despondent about praying. We have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit precisely in order that He may express us in ways that we cannot even put into human words. In our prayers we should explicitly place ourselves under the Holy Spirit's guidance, calling upon Him by name to help us in our prayers, so that even when we feel that we are getting nowhere, our awareness of the Spirit's presence within us can give us confidence that God hears and understands us better than we know. The vital thing is never to give up trying to pray and always to trust the Holy Spirit to pray in us to the Father.

Sunday July 20th: The Sixteenth Sunday of the Year (Green)

Year 1 or A of the Lectionary at Mass

- 8.30 a.m. *Low Mass*
- 9.30 a.m. *1962 rite Mass (in the church)*
- 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. *Solemn Vespers and Benediction*

SIXTEENTH WEEK OF ORDINARY TIME: Liturgical Calendar

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.

Monday July 21st: Feria. (Green). Optional memoria of **St Laurence of Brindisi**, Priest. (White)

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

St Laurence (1559-1619) Born near Naples, he joined the Capuchin Franciscans. He studied at the University of Padua and acquired a number of languages. He was a gifted theologian and had great success preaching in Northern Italy before having similar success after being assigned to work with Jews and Lutherans. In 1601, as chaplain to forces fighting against invading Turks, he led the troops into battle holding a crucifix, and many attributed the ensuing victory to him. He also served as a peacemaker in several royal disputes in Europe.

Tuesday July 22nd: St Mary Magdalene. Memoria. (White)

- **Benediction at 8 p.m.**

St Mary Magdalene: We hear of her in the Gospels as one from whom Our Lord had driven seven devils, and she was one of His most devoted followers. She was present at the foot of the Cross and was also the first of the disciples to see Our Lord after the Resurrection.

Wednesday July 23rd: St Bridget of Sweden, Patroness of Europe. Feast. (White)

St Bridget of Sweden (1303-73) She and her husband were very pious. They had eight children (one of whom is also a saint). With his wife's permission, her husband retired to a monastery shortly before his death, and Bridget founded the Order of the Holy Saviour—the *Bridgettines*, at Vadstena which became an important religious centre. She was a visionary, and lived an austere life, ministering to the poor and sick. An adviser to the Pope, she assisted in restoring the papacy to Rome from Avignon.

Thursday July 24th: Feria. (Green). Optional memoria of **St Sharbel Makhluf**, Priest. (White). *St John Boste, English Martyr.*

St Sharbel Makhluf (d.1898) Son of a Lebanese mule driver, he became a monk. He was devoted to the Blessed Sacrament and was renowned for his holiness and austerity, living the last twenty five years of his life as a hermit. Canonised in 1977, his memoria has been added to the Universal Calendar as a representative of Lebanese Catholics of the Maronite Rite.

St John Boste (d.1594) A native of Westmoreland, he became a fellow of Queens College Oxford where he gave up good prospects as an Anglican minister and converted. Following ordination at Reims he returned to England in 1581, and was so successful in his work that he became the object of a massive manhunt. He was eventually betrayed by an apostate Catholic who asked for confession, received Holy Communion, then went immediately to the authorities. He was crippled on the rack before being hanged, drawn and quartered.

Friday July 25th: St James, Apostle. Feast. (Red)

St James: Brother of St John, he was one of the three whom Our Lord chose to witness the Transfiguration and His Agony in the Garden. He preached in Spain, and was the first of the Apostles to suffer martyrdom. His relics are enshrined at *Santiago de Compostela*.

Saturday July 26th: St Joachim and St Anne. Memoria. (White)

- **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 and from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass**
- **First Mass of Sunday: Fourteenth Sunday of the Year, at 5.45 p.m.**

St Joachim and St Anne, the parents of Our Lady. Their names have come down to us from ancient tradition. Though we do not have scriptural facts about them, their holiness is inferred from the fact that they were the parents of Our Lady, Mother of God.

Sunday July 27th: The Seventeenth Sunday of the Year (Green)

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 Patricia Ogbaji, Marie-Therese Jones, Sheila Lord, Evelyn Arrigho, Frank McGuinness, Patrick Hurley, Margaret Casey, Lorna O'Shea and Peter Young, **Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently: and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:** Fr Louis Brodeur of this Oratory, John Chislett, Roger Kelly, Muriel Rose, Jack Jones, Maria Maguire and Anthony Jukes.

Vivian Beesley's funeral (Requiem in the Extraordinary Rite) is on Thursday at 11 a.m. Reception of remains: Tuesday at 4.30 p.m.

The following are requested to read next weekend, July 26th/27th: Sixteenth Sunday:

Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Morag Marinone
Sunday 8.30 a.m.: Margaret Hawkins
12.00 p.m. Dennis Wood
5.30 p.m.: David Doran

Collections
15th Sunday of the Year, 13th July:
Offertory: £1,478
Second: Diocesan development Fund: £414
Thank you
Second Collection today is for the Little Sisters of the Poor
Next weekend it will be for the Apostleship of the Sea

TODAY

The SECOND COLLECTION today is for the Little Sisters of the Poor.

The PIETY STALL is open in the Lower Cloister Hall.

ANTI-EUTHANASIA LIVING WILL forms are available at the Church Doors.

THIS WEEK

ADORATION AT REDNAL will take place this week on **Wednesday afternoon** commencing with Mass at 2.30 p.m. **Please continue to pray that planning permission for the security fence will eventually be granted.**

A CLOISTER SALE will be held here on the 26th and 27th July to support children going on the GOBS Pilgrimage to Lourdes at the end of August.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

LADYWOOD WARD COMMITTEE of the City Council is open to the public on Tuesday, 29th July at 7 p.m. in the new Deaf Cultural Centre on Ladywood Road. The agenda will include: The closure of the Huntley Road Post Office and plans for Cawdor Crescent. Further details on the Notice Board.

SOCIETY OF ST HUGH meets on Saturday, 2nd August at 10.15 a.m. in the Oratory House. All are welcome.

NOTICES

REDNAL: 1) You have probably heard the news that Cardinal Newman's remains will be translated from Rednal to our church, following his beatification. However, the problem of gaining

planning permission for the fence at Rednal is not helped by this, and it is still of utmost importance for the chapel, grounds and house to be protected. Visitors from all over the world will still come on pilgrimage to see where Newman wrote so many of his works. Also, of course, the Fathers' cemetery will remain there. We therefore beg your continued support and ask you **to sign the Petition** at the Back of the Church requesting the City Planning Department to come to a reasonable compromise with the Fathers and to withdraw their total and irrational opposition to the new fence, in advance of the Appeal planned for October. **Please also take a Petition sheet with you, if you are able to get signatures from other family members, friends and colleagues.**

2) There will be a sung Mass at Rednal on Tuesday, August 5th, the feast of the Dedication of the Church of St. Mary Major in Rome, (also known as "*Our Lady of the Snow*") to celebrate the 3rd anniversary of the reopening of the restored Chapel.

HFE BILL NEWS: The Government has now postponed until autumn the final stages of its Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill, including debate on pro-abortion amendments. The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) believes the government's decision was influenced by the marvellous opposition of courageous church leaders, churchgoers and supporters to this profoundly unethical Bill, for which SPUC is enormously grateful. More help is now needed to campaign against the bill over the summer. Telephone SPUC on 020 7091 7091 or email political@spuc.org.uk