

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.

August 23rd 2009: TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

IT IS THE SPIRIT THAT GIVES LIFE



In today's final instalment of chapter 6 of St. John's Gospel, we hear the outcome of all that Our Lord, having fed the crowds miraculously, had gone on to teach them about Himself as the Living Bread.

These men and women, over five thousand all told, were His enthusiastic followers. They hung on His words so much that they had gladly followed Him out into the wilderness. Not only did Our Lord win them by His teaching, but then He miraculously fed them with a mere five loaves and two fish. After all this, proving Himself to them by His deeds as well as by His words, you would imagine that they would have been prepared to accept His teaching at any cost.

Yet this was emphatically not so. Jesus had by now taught them that, having fed them with miraculous yet still ordinary bread, He was soon to give them a far greater bread, fruit of an even greater miracle, no less than *Living Bread*, that would be *His own flesh*. Even when they were puzzled and

asked "how can this man give us His flesh to eat?", far from revising His teaching and watering down His meaning, Jesus boldly went further still, saying: "unless you *do* eat my flesh and drink my blood you *cannot* have life in you!"

It is at this point that today's Gospel reading begins. The crowd are shocked at our Lord's words and, far from putting their faith in the One who has just fed them and whose teaching they have enjoyed hearing, they now react indignantly, saying: "this is a hard saying, who can accept it?" Yet again Our Lord refuses to back down. He challenges them: "do you take offence at this? What if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where He was before?" In this cryptic question Our Lord reveals another extraordinary and bold claim: that He has not originated, as do the rest of mankind, at His conception in His mother's womb, but rather He has come down to earth from above, i.e. from heaven, which means from God Himself.

Then He says another mysterious thing: "It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh is of no avail." Does this mean that He has changed His mind about the importance of giving them His flesh to eat? Does it mean that His flesh has nothing to offer them after all? This cannot be His meaning, since far from backing down, He is intensifying his teaching about His Flesh and Blood as food and drink. He means that the Holy Spirit will give life to the Sacramental Body which Our Lord will give His Apostles at the Last Supper. As He speaks to the crowds who are murmuring against Him, Jesus already sees in His mind's eye all that He will do when He will take bread and consecrate it saying "This is my Body". Throughout the whole history of the world to come, whenever and wherever His followers "do this in memory of Him", the Holy Spirit comes upon that bread and transforms it, giving it life as the Flesh of our Saviour—in order to give life to all who receive Him with faith in that wondrous presence. So it is that Our Lord's flesh in Holy Communion is not dead, but living. Without the Holy Spirit there would be no living bread, no sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.

Alas, this was too much for many of those who had until now been Jesus's followers. St. John tells us that after this "many of them left Him and no longer went about with Him". We can picture for ourselves Our Lord's sadness at their lack of faith in Him. How it must have grieved His heart as He turned to the Apostles and asked them, "Do you also wish to go away?" As so often in the Gospels, it is Peter who speaks up, to express His faith on behalf of them all in His own vigorous words: "Lord, if we left you, to whom should we go then?" Peter is hardly likely to have understood Our Lord's teaching without some amazement at His words, yet unlike those who grumble and then walk away for good, Peter's reaction is to put His total trust in Jesus and proclaim: "You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed, and have come to know, that You are the Holy One of God." Let those wonderful words, which surely consoled Our Lord, be our act of faith also in His wonderful sacramental presence in the Eucharist. Here on the Altar He is truly alive and from here He constantly gives His flesh to us, so that He may raise us up on the Last Day when His heavenly Father's plan of salvation is finally fulfilled.

Sunday August 23rd: Twenty-first Sunday (Green)

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| • 8.30 a.m. <i>Low Mass</i> | • 12.00 p.m. <i>(Families with young children)</i> |
| • 9.30 a.m. <i>Latin Low Mass—1962 Missal</i> | • 5.30 p.m. <i>Congregational Mass</i> |
| • 10.30 a.m. <i>Solemn High Mass</i> | • 7.30 p.m. <i>Vespers and Benediction</i> |

TWENTY-FIRST WEEK OF ORDINARY TIME: Liturgical Calendar

Year 2 or B of the Lectionary at Mass and Psalter Week 1

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

Rosary at 7.45 p.m. Benediction on Tuesday. Exposition on Saturday: 8.30–10.45 a.m.

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

Monday 24th August: St. Bartholomew, Apostle. Feast. (Red)

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

St. Bartholomew, one of the Twelve Apostles, is also called "Nathanael" in St. John's Gospel. He is believed to have preached in Armenia and North India and to have been martyred by being flayed alive at Darbend on the Caspian Sea.

Tuesday 25th August: Feria. (Green) Optional memoria of St Louis of France, King. (White) Or of St. Joseph Calasanz, Priest (White)

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

St. Louis (1214-1270) personified the highest ideals of a mediaeval Catholic King. He was a Franciscan tertiary, deeply concerned with the administration of justice in his realms, who cared personally for the poor and the lepers. He led two crusades to protect the Holy Places in Palestine and died while on crusade in Tunis.

St. Joseph Calasanz (1557-1648) was a Spanish priest who went to work in Rome and founded the "Piarists" to educate poor children whom he encountered there in great squalor and ignorance. His order spread to Spain, Bohemia and Poland but not without difficulties brought upon St Joseph by jealous subordinates..

Wednesday 26th August: Bl. Dominic of the Mother of God, Priest. Feast. (White)

Bl. Dominic Barberi (d. 1849) from Viterbo, fifty miles north of Rome, he became a Passionist priest and was sent to England in 1841, founding four houses and enduring many difficulties. John Henry Newman so admired his apostolic zeal that he personally requested Fr Dominic to hear his confession and receive him into the Church in 1845.

Thursday 27th August: St Monica, Widow. Memoria. (White) and St David Lewis, Priest and Martyr.

St Monica (c.331-387) St. Augustine's mother, she married a pagan and suffered greatly over his and her son's unbelief. Her long continuation in prayer won both her husband's and Augustine's conversions.

St David Lewis (d.1679) was born in Abergavenny and martyred at Usk during the infamous "Titus Oates plot" after more than thirty years of zealous apostolic work.

Friday 28th August: St. Augustine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church. Memoria. (White) and St Edmund Arrowsmith, Priest and Martyr.

St Augustine (354-430) born in Roman North Africa, he was brought up in the faith by his mother St. Monica, though not baptised. He abandoned the faith and lived a dissolute life until his conversion and baptism by St. Ambrose at Milan in 387. He was ordained shortly afterwards and became bishop of Hippo, near his birthplace. He was one of the most prolific and profound of the Church Fathers, and is known as the "Universal Doctor" of the Church on account of the range of his writing.

St Edmund Arrowsmith (d.1628) was of a Lancastrian Catholic family and became a priest and a Jesuit. After 15 years' work in his home district he was arrested and condemned for "persuading to Popery". He was executed at Lancaster..

Saturday 29th August: The Beheading of St. John the Baptist, Memoria. (Red)

- **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 Sunday (Twenty-second Sunday) at 5.45 p.m.**

August 30th: The Twenty-second 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. Latin High Mass**
- **12.00 p.m. (Families with young children)**
- **5.30 p.m. Congregational in English**
- **7.30 p.m. Vespers and Benediction**

Please pray for the sick Connie Hayward, Ray Colquhoun and May Colquhoun.

Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently: Peter Young, Grace Danks and Pat Warburton;

and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now: Maria Stepney, Louisa Dutton, Freddie Williams, Albert Bizec and Anne Grimes.

The following are requested to read at Mass next weekend, August 29th/30th, The Twenty-second Sunday:

Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Anne Roebuck
Sunday 8.30 a.m.: Murray Wilson-Brown
12.00 p.m.: Dennis Wood
5.30 p.m.: Brendan Cummins

Collections:

Solemnity of the Assumption: 16th August, 2009
Offertory: £1,601

Second: Cause of Cardinal Newman: £772
August 11th: Cause of Cardinal Newman: £440

Many thanks

TODAY

TODAY'S SECOND COLLECTION will be for the Diocesan Development Fund

The PIETY STALL is open after all Sunday Masses, including the Saturday evening Mass.

RAFFLE TICKETS in support of the Poor Clares at Baddesley Clinton will be on sale after all Masses today at the Church Doors.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ADORATION AT REDNAL resumes on Wednesday, September 2nd, beginning with Mass at 3.30 p.m. and concluding with Benediction at c. 4.45 p.m.

ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE TO HARVINGTON HALL in honour of the English Martyrs takes place on Sunday September 6th with Holy Mass at 3 p.m., Celebrant and Preacher, Mgr. John Moran. Confessions will be heard from 1.30 p.m.

ORATORY LIFE WEEK will take place from September 13th to 20th, including a meeting particularly for those recently married or preparing for marriage, on Fertility and Life Issues, on Friday September 18th at 7.30 p.m. in the Cloister Buildings.

A CLOISTER SALE to raise funds for LIFE FERTILITY CARE will be held on the weekends of September 12th/13th and 19th/20th.

The seven-day **SIEGE OF JERICHO** around the abortion clinic on Arthur Road will also take place each afternoon during the week September 14th-20th.

ST. THERESE OF LISIEUX'S relics are touring England soon. On Tuesday, September 1st, at 7.30 p.m. Revd Dr. John Saward will give a talk on "**St. Therese and the Little Way of Our Lady**" at the Church of the Sacred Heart and St Teresa in Coleshill.

St. Therese's relics will be in St. Chad's Cathedral on 19th and 20th September, in the presence of the Carmelite Sisters from Wolverhampton. In addition to the rest of the programme for those days, there will be a special Midnight Mass for youth on the beginning of Sunday 20th September followed by a half-hour's quiet prayer (1 a.m.-1.30 a.m.) and an opportunity to meet the Carmelite Sisters. The following day, Monday September 22nd, the relics will be at Coleshill. Further details will follow soon.

MALTA DAY is being held on Saturday September 12th at Westminster Cathedral. Please see the Notice Boards for details.

THE LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR will be holding a Retiring collection at all Sunday Masses on September 5th/6th.

SUNDAY 5.30 p.m. MASS CHOIR resumes after the Summer break on Sunday, September 13th, at 5 p.m. in the Back Gallery.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK by St. John Vianney (Patron of Priests):

The other benefits of God would be of no avail to us without the priest. What would be the use of a house full of gold, if you had nobody to open you the door! The priest has the key of the heavenly treasures; it is he who opens the door; he is the steward of the good God, the distributor of His wealth. Without the priest, the Death and Passion of Our Lord would be of no avail. Look at the heathens: what has it availed them that Our Lord has died? Alas! they can have no share in the blessings of Redemption, while they have no priests to apply His Blood to their souls!