

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.

January 20th 2008: Second Sunday of the Year



St John the Baptist's Witness

"Behold the Lamb of God", cries out St. John the Baptist in the Gospel, when he points out the Redeemer as the sacrificial victim, the "Lamb" who will be offered up in sacrifice at the Passover. So these words look forward to Easter, which we celebrate at the time of year when that sacrifice was made for us on Calvary. These words "*Behold the Lamb of God*" are familiar to us from the ordinary of the Mass, when the celebrant holds up the sacred host before us as an immediate preparation for communion. John continues: "*behold Him who takes away the sin of the world*" Here "Sin" in the singular, as opposed to "sins" in the plural, refers to the original sin in which all other sins are founded. It is this original sin of our first parents whose effects we inherited, the stain of which is taken away in our baptism. John identifies Jesus at the very moment of His baptism as the One who will take human sin upon Himself on the cross, just as He has already done symbolically in accepting baptism from John, a sign of repentance for sin which Jesus has never committed. So here Jesus accepts baptism in order to take upon Himself the sin of mankind's rejection of God which is the meaning of Adam's fall.

The idea of original sin being in us seems strange to many people today. Yet what it means is that there is a basic solidarity in the entire human race. We all *share* in the sin of Adam. As St. Paul puts it: "In Adam" all men die. We have all been implicated in that original calamity which separated us from our loving Creator. But there is a counterpart to that. For unless we actually share in Adam's sin, we cannot share in the grace of the Redeemer and in His saving work. For as St. Paul explains, "In Christ" we are all made alive. So the necessary preliminary to being saved by Christ is being dead in Adam, through sin. Christ becomes man in every way like us except sin, so that we may share in His victory over sin in the same way that we have shared in Adam's death through sin. Yet there is a wonderful truth that whereas "sin abounded", St. Paul tells us that "grace abounded *even more*". The victory is greater even than the earlier defeat.

In the Mass, the word "sins" is in the plural to remind us that it is our own personal sins that we are concerned with now. Original Sin has been taken from us at baptism, but we are still left with its consequences in our fallen nature. The distorted love for sin and alienation from God need constantly to be fought against by the power of God's grace within us. Hence as well as Baptism which we receive only once, we need the continuing assistance of the Sacraments of daily life: Penance (or confession) and Holy Communion. These help us to drive out the power of sin in proportion to the increase within us of the love of God which they generate.

Septuagesima

Today in the old liturgical calendar, which is kept in the extraordinary rite or "1962" rite of Mass at 9.30 a.m., is Septuagesima Sunday, the beginning of the time of year which is governed by the date of Easter. The name "Septuagesima" means seventieth in Latin, and refers to the number of days left until Easter, though in reality there are slightly fewer than seventy. The reason for the number is taken from the number of days in Lent (forty), which gives the name for Lent in Latin and those modern languages derived from it: "Quadragesima" (e.g. *Carême* in French and *Quaresima* in Italian). In order to help us prepare for the approach of Lent, and so that Ash Wednesday might not catch us unawares, the custom grew up in ancient times of keeping a sort of "countdown" to Lent. Hence the Sunday before Quadragesima became known as Quinquagesima (50th), the one prior to that Sexagesima (60th) and finally today, Septuagesima. So although it is not exactly seventy days to Easter, today *is* exactly the ninth Sunday before Easter. Along with the countdown to Lent comes the use of purple vestments in the Old Rite, to prepare the way psychologically for the penance time. It is a good time to think in advance about our Lenten penances, and to seek God's grace by making a good confession in preparation.

Sunday January 20th: The Second Sunday of the Year (Green)

Year 1 or A of the Lectionary at Mass

- 8.30 a.m. **Low Mass**
- 9.30 a.m. **Tridentine Mass (in the church)**
- 10.30 a.m. **Solemn High Mass**
- 12.00 p.m. **(Families with young children)**
- 5.30 p.m. **Sung Congregational Mass**
- **Vespers and Benediction at 7.30 p.m.**

Second 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 January 21st: St Agnes, Virgin & martyr. Memoria. (Red) St Alban Roe, English Martyr.

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

St Agnes (c.304) She was only twelve when she was martyred as a Christian during the Diocletian persecutions. She had refused to give up her virginity which she had consecrated to God. She is included in the Roman Canon of the Mass.

St Alban Roe (Born at St Albans c.1580). He visited a Catholic prisoner with the intention of converting him to Protestantism, but was himself converted and went to France to study for the priesthood joining the Benedictines. He returned in 1615 and worked successfully until his arrest and banishment on two occasions. In 1625, once again having returned to England to care for Catholics he was arrested for the last time. He remained in prison for several years, with agonizing illness, before being sentenced with Thomas Reynolds, another priest. They were martyred at Tyburn in 1642.

Tuesday January 22nd: Feria. (Green). Optional memoria of St Vincent, Deacon & martyr. (Red)

- **Benediction at 8 p.m.** Brothers of the Little Oratory meet after Benediction in St Philip's Chapel.

St Vincent (d. 304) He was tortured and martyred during the Diocletian persecutions. Originally from Sargossa, he is the proto-martyr of Spain. Little is known of his life.

Wednesday January 23rd: Feria. (Green). Optional memoria of St Nicholas Owen, English Martyr. (Red)

St Nicholas Owen (d. 1606) He was a Jesuit lay-brother and an excellent craftsman, and was responsible for making many of the priests' hiding places, probably the most notable of which are at Harvington Hall. He was captured in 1594 and tortured but refused to give any names, and was released. In 1606, in order to create a distraction from concealed priests about to be discovered, he gave himself up. This time, he died at the hands of the torturers, still not having given them any information.

Thursday January 24th: St Francis de Sales, Bishop & Doctor of the Church. Memoria. (White)

St Francis de Sales (1567-1622) A French nobleman, he became a priest. Over the mountains from where he lived was Geneva which had become a Calvinist stronghold and he set out for there to convert souls back to Catholicism. He suffered great difficulties but his perseverance proved successful. His sensitivity, manner and clarity of expression meant that he was very highly thought of, even by his enemies. His spiritual writings are still very relevant and to be recommended.

Friday January 25th: The Conversion of St Paul. Feast. (White)

Saturday January 26th: Sts Timothy & Titus, Bishops. Memoria. (White)

- **Mass 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. until the end of Mass**
- **Vigil Mass of THE THIRD SUNDAY OF THE YEAR at 5.45 p.m.**

St Timothy and St Titus: Companions of St Paul, three of his Epistles were addressed to them. They were appointed bishops of Ephesus and Crete respectively. St Paul refers to them as "successors of the Apostles".

Sunday January 27th: The THIRD SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (Green)

Mass & Service Times:

- **8.30 a.m. Low Mass**
- **9.30 a.m. Latin Mass 1962 Missal** (Please note new time—now in Church)
- **10.30 a.m. Solemn High Mass**
- **12.00 p.m. (Families with young children)**
- **5.30 p.m. Sung Congregational Mass in English**
- **Vespers and Benediction: 7.30 p.m.**

Please pray for the sick: Jeanette Dunkley, Michael Miller, Frank McGuinness, Marie-Thérèse Jones, Margaret Casey, Jacqueline Griffiths, Tommy Smyth, Margaret Walshe, George Saunders, Thelma Havelin and Desmond Williams.

Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently: Doreen Hunt; **and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:** Gerard Tracey, Elsie Harris, Ian Johnstone, Joshua Dearn, Margaret Allen, Teresa Power, Peter Wright, Paul Mullen, Peter Mullen and Nelly Pryer.

Catherine Walsh's funeral is on Thursday at 12.45 pm. Reception of remains: Wednesday at 4.30 p.m.

The following are requested to read next weekend, January 26th/27th: The 3rd Sunday of the Year

Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Jenni Hardwick

Sunday 8.30 a.m.: Margaret Hawkins

12.00 p.m.: Peter Leather

5.30 p.m.: Jason Mahoney

Collections

The Baptism of Our Lord, 13th January:

Offertory: £1,476

Second: Diocesan Development Fund: £426

Crib Collection total: £1,226

Many thanks

The second Collection today will be for the Diocesan Development Fund

TODAY

The LOWER CLOISTER HALL will be closed today for both the Piety Stall and Refreshments.

1962 "Tridentine" MASS: please note that the Sunday Mass time and venue are both changed: It is now at 9.30 a.m. in Church for an experimental period.

THIS WEEK

ADORATION AT REDNAL will take place this week on Wednesday, commencing, as usual, with Holy Mass at 2.30 p.m., followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, with prayers, and ending with Benediction at 3.45 p.m. Please keep the long-term safety of Rednal as one of your prayer intentions this New Year.

ORATORY PRIMARY SCHOOL TALKS FOR PARENTS/ Carers:

The new season of talks commences on Monday 21st January from 2.00—3.15 p.m. in the Oratory School Hall, on the subject of **Sex Education**, and is open to all parents of children in the school. The title of the introductory talk is: **"Moral Formation : the Internet, T.V. and all that."** The talk will be given by Greg and Agghi Clovis. Greg is the Director of Human Life International. We

hope that, if at all possible, parents will attend these very important talks.

The PARISH COUNCIL AGM is on Monday at 8 p.m. in the Lower Cloister Hall. (The AGM is an open meeting).

The SOCIETY OF ST HUGH meets on Saturday 26th January at 10.15 a.m. in the Oratory House. (Please note that this earlier time will be time of all meetings in future).

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ANNUAL MASS WITH ANOINTING OF THE SICK: The sick, elderly and disabled, together with their families, are invited to join the Knights of Malta at a special Mass on Saturday 9th February at 11 a.m. in our church. Lunch will be available afterwards at a cost of £5. *Please note that booking for lunch is essential;* forms are available at the doors of the church.

NOTICES

CONFIRMATION will be administered on March 5th. If there is anyone who wishes to receive the Sacrament, please contact the Parish Priest, Fr Guy, *in writing* as soon as possible.

Finally— If you have not seen the recent Press coverage on the safety of Cardinal Newman's grave, there is a display in the Lower Cloister Hall