

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 16th 2009: THE SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION



IN MY FLESH I SHALL SEE GOD

Those who know Handel's Oratorio "Messiah" will surely remember these words: *"I know that my Redeemer lives...and from my flesh shall I see God"*. They are taken from the Book of Job (Job 19:25-26) and Handel sets them immediately after the famous "Hallelujah" chorus in which he jubilantly announces our Lord's Resurrection from the dead. Job's words are a statement of faith made in the midst of excruciating suffering—a suffering which tests his faith to the uttermost limit. Even in Old Testament times, long before the Son of God became *incarnate*, (that is, "took flesh"), the Holy Spirit inspired the writer of Job to look forward beyond suffering and death and even beyond the corruption of the body in the grave to a wonderful fulfilment of God's mercy and love in the "resurrection of the body".

We proclaim this faith every time we come to Mass on Sundays and great feasts, for it is the final clause of the Creed: *"We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come"*. Think for a moment about those words. We do not *simply* believe in "life after death", the survival of the soul. We do most *certainly* believe that the soul survives death, but that even when they are in the presence of God, the souls of the saints are not yet fully themselves as God plans that they will be.

For it is a great truth that God does not intend our bodies to remain dust in the grave for ever. Our bodies are an intrinsic part of our human nature, not some kind of "shell" which we can put off and yet remain fully human. Even though the saints in heaven are already in bliss unimaginable

to us on earth, there is nevertheless a far greater bliss to come—the bliss of eternal life after the resurrection on the Last Day. Then the words of Job will be fulfilled in all redeemed humanity: *"and from my flesh I shall see God"*.

This week we are celebrating the Assumption of Our Lady, and so interrupt the series of Sunday Gospels we have been hearing from the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel. Still, there is a very profound connection between Our Lord's teaching on the Eucharist, the "Living Bread from heaven", and this feast of His Mother's journey to heaven. Our Lord is teaching us during these Sundays that He is that "living Bread from heaven" and that He will give us "his flesh for the life of the world" so that "anyone who eats my flesh will live for ever". This is very important. Christ did not only promise to give us His Spirit, **He also gives us His flesh**. Moreover, His flesh is not dead, but living. What He gives us in Holy Communion is not dead but alive, not mere bread but living flesh. He promises that those who eat His flesh "He will raise up on the Last Day". Death will have no more dominion over us any more than it has over Him.

For Christ's resurrection was never intended by God to be for Him alone. It is not merely a happy ending to the terrible injustice of the crucifixion. St. Paul teaches us that *"Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep"* (i.e. those who have died) (1 Cor 15:20). In other words, Christ's resurrection is the beginning of something wonderful and mysterious: the resurrection of all the redeemed. In the same chapter, St. Paul also teaches that *"as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive"* (1 Cor 15: 21-22) Death is the consequence of sin for all human beings who share in Adam's sin, and Christ willingly took upon Himself our death, our punishment for sin, so that He could then overcome both in His glorious resurrection. It follows from this, therefore, that Christ's victory is for all the redeemed, and that death, the final consequence of human sin, has been overcome by Christ's own death and resurrection, and that His victory will in time be shared by all the redeemed.

But for our Lord's Blessed Mother, that victory has already been won. Since she never shared in sin, she has not needed to share in its consequences, that is, death of the body. She already lives in heaven the kind of life that God promises to all the redeemed after the Resurrection on the Last Day. That is the meaning of today's wonderful feast. By her Son's redeeming merits, Our Lady has been taken up, body as well as soul, into heaven so that even now "in her flesh she sees God".

Sunday August 16th: The Assumption of Our Lady (White)

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

TWENTIETH WEEK OF ORDINARY TIME: Liturgical Calendar

Year 2 or B of the Lectionary at Mass and Psalter Week 4

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 17th August: FERIA. (Green)

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

Tuesday 18th August: FERIA. (Green)

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

Wednesday 19th August: FERIA. (Green). Optional memoria of St John Eudes, Priest. (White)

St John Eudes (1601-79) He was a priest of the French Oratory for twenty years and was known as a missionary and for his care of the sick in two plague epidemics. He left the Oratory to found the *Sisterhood of Our Lady of Charity* to care for prostitutes, and shortly after, founded the *Society of Jesus and Mary* (the "Eudist" Fathers) to run seminaries. He was also instrumental in bringing about an increase in devotion to the Sacred Heart.

Thursday 20th August: St Bernard, Abbot & Doctor of the Church. Memoria. (White)

St Bernard (1090-1153) With several friends, he joined the recently founded, very austere Benedictine monastery at Cîteaux, the first "Cistercian" Abbey (at that time under the rule of the great English abbot, St Stephen Harding). Bernard was sent to found a daughter house at Clairvaux where he remained as abbot until his death. His personal qualities and holiness attracted many followers. He was a powerful preacher and a man of wisdom and judgement, whose counsel was frequently sought after by popes and kings.

Friday 21st August: St Pius X, Pope. Memoria. (White)

St Pius X (1835-1914) Giuseppe Sarto was a zealous priest and bishop in Northern Italy before being elected Pope in 1904. He dedicated his papacy to the reform of the liturgy, especially in the revival of Gregorian chant and sacred polyphony, aiming to bring about greater understanding of, and participation in the Mass by the faithful. He encouraged the reception of the Sacraments of Confession and Holy Communion by young children and was energetic in tackling false tendencies in theology which are generally known all together as "Modernism", the common characteristic of which is to subject the mysteries of the Faith to rational criticism and to insist on the necessity of altering Faith to fit the modern world. St Pius was known to perform miracles and even during his life, he was regarded as a saint.

Saturday 22nd August : The Queenship of Our Lady. Memoria. (White) St John Kemble, English Martyr.

- **Masses at 8 a.m and 11 a.m.**
- **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 8.30 to 10.45 a.m.**
- **Solemn 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-first Sunday) at 5.45 p.m.**

The Queenship of Mary: Celebrated on the Octave day of Our Lady's Assumption to heaven, we commemorate her crowning by the hand of her Son and Saviour, as so beautifully depicted in the mosaic above our High Altar.

St John Kemble Having worked for some fifty-four years as a priest in Herefordshire, he was over eighty when arrested for being part of the trumped up "Titus Oates Plot". On the scaffold he said: "I die only for professing the old Roman Catholic religion which first made this kingdom Christian, and whoever may be saved must die therein".

August 23rd: The Twenty-first 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: Michael McCann, Philip McCann, Thelma Havelin, David Pritchard, Connie Hayward, Patrick Walshe, Pat Healey and John Rose.

Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently: Evelyn Madden and Philomena Swingell;

and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now: Philip Holland, Kenneth Pope, Margaret Girling, Frank Howe, Marion Cole, Mary Coghlan and Reg Jenkins.

Philomena Swingell's funeral is on Thursday at 12.45 p.m. Reception of remains: Wednesday at 7 p.m.

The following are requested to read at Mass next weekend, August 22nd/23rd, The Twenty-first Sunday:

Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Jenni Hardwick
Sunday 8.30 a.m.: Margaret Hawkins
12.00 p.m.: Dulcie Robinson
5.30 p.m.: David Doran

Collections:

Nineteenth Sunday: 9th August, 2009

Offertory: £1,215

Second: Cause of Cardinal Newman: £901

Many thanks

TODAY

TODAY'S SECOND COLLECTION will again be for the Expenses of Cardinal Newman's Cause of Beatification.

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

ROSARY RALLY TO PRAY FOR WORLD PEACE & FOR YOUNG PEOPLE will be taking place at Grace Dieu Manor, Leicestershire, today, 16th August commencing with Mass at 3 p.m. and including Exposition, Blessing of the Sick and Benediction.

THIS WEEK

SOLEMN BENEDICTION: Saturday is the Memoria of Our Lady's Coronation as Queen of heaven, the final Glorious mystery of the Rosary. Several years ago the Fathers made a promise to Our Lady, to honour this feast with Solemn Benediction in return for her powerful inter-

cession before God. So now that invite you to join them in honouring the Queen of heaven with Solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at 10.30 a.m.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

FUND RAISING BARBEQUE, music and song in the grounds of **St Chad's Cathedral** on Monday, August 31st from 3-7 p.m. Admission £6. Proceeds to St Chad's Cathedral Maintenance Fund. Tickets available from Cathedral House Reception: 0121 230 6201.

NOTICES

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS WANTED: The SVP is looking for drivers to transport parishioners to Mass on Sundays, as follows: To and from Skipton Road, Ladywood for the 12 noon Mass; and to and from Henbury Court, Hagley Road for the 10.30 a.m. (High) Mass. Please telephone 0121 454 7179 if you can help.

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

Saint Bernard tells us that everything has come to us through Mary; and we may also say that everything has come to us through the priest; yes, all happiness, all graces, all heavenly gifts. If we had not the Sacrament of Orders, we should not have Our Lord. Who placed Him there, in that tabernacle? It was the priest. Who was it that received your soul, on its entrance into life? The priest. Who nourishes it, to give it strength to make its pilgrimage? The priest. Who will prepare it to appear before God, by washing that soul, for the last time, in the blood of Jesus Christ? The priest -- always the priest. And if that soul comes to the point of death, who will raise it up, who will restore it to calmness and peace? Again the priest. You cannot recall one single blessing from God without finding, side by side with this recollection, the image of the priest.