

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.

September 14th 2008: THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

THE TRIUMPH OF THE CROSS

Today's feast is one of those that can take the place of an ordinary Sunday. This is so because it celebrates an important aspect of Our Lord's crucifixion, - that far from being a defeat for our Lord, it was a defeat for sin and death. On Good Friday the crucifixion is, rightly, a source of great sorrow to us, when we remember that our sins have brought such suffering on Our Lord. But today we rejoice in the benefits Christ has won for us by enduring His cross.

The imagery of the Cross is closely connected with the Fall of our first parents. The cross is sometimes described in Scripture as a "tree", since it was made of the wood from a tree. Now it was from a tree that Adam and Eve took the forbidden fruit and so brought ruin on our race. The Triumph, or Exaltation, of the Cross celebrates Christ's undoing of the evil effect of Adam's sin of disobedience by His own obedience to His Father's Will. Christ humbly accepted God's decree that Salvation for the human race would effectively come from the same tree as had brought our original disaster. The wood of disobedience and defeat became the wood of obedience and victory. The Preface of the Mass, which opens the Eucharistic Prayer, makes this clear in addressing our heavenly Father: "You decreed that man should be saved through the wood of the cross. The tree of man's defeat became his tree of victory; where life was lost. There life has been restored" So we pray: "**We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee; because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world**".



ST. PAUL TEACHES THAT JESUS IS GOD WHO HUMBLING HIMSELF ON THE CROSS

Today's Second reading is a very famous and important passage from St. Paul's Letter to the Christians of Philippi, a city in the Greek province of Macedonia. In it St. Paul reminds his congregation that Jesus is, by His very existence, Almighty God: "*His state was divine*", says St. Paul. This means that Jesus is by nature equal to the Father. So how does Jesus come to be a man if He is already truly God? St. Paul explains that this can only be because Jesus "*did not cling to His equality with God (the Father) but emptied Himself...*" What does this "emptied Himself" mean? Certainly not that He put aside His Godhead. Jesus could not by any means cease to be God. But He could, and did, put aside His majesty and glory in order to "*assume the condition of a slave*". The slave is, of course, Man. Our human nature is enslaved through sin to Satan. This is the human nature Jesus took upon Himself when He became man in His Mother's womb, though of course He was altogether untainted by sin, even though He submitted to the state of human slavery to sin and death. This is the mystery of the Incarnation—that the Son of God truly became man "like us in all things but sin", yet without losing His divinity. This "emptying" of Himself is the description St. Paul applies to His humility in becoming man. Yet, says St. Paul, Christ's humility did not stop simply at accepting His Father's Will that He should become a "slave"; "*He was humbler yet, even to accepting death...*" Jesus would have humbled Himself infinitely simply by becoming man, but this was not enough to express His love for His Father and for us. He went even further still by accepting the pain and sorrow of death; and not even death as most people experience it, but the most terribly painful and shameful death of a common criminal: crucifixion.

St. Paul goes on to explain that on account of this act of loving obedience, God the Father *has raised Jesus high and has given Him the name which is above all names*. As God, Jesus can never be raised higher than He already is. But in His human nature, in return for humbly accepting the status of a slave and for being yet more humbled in death, Jesus's humanity has been exalted to share fully in divine glory in heaven. Then what is the "name" of which St. Paul speaks? Of course, the name "Jesus" had already been given to Him by Our Lady according to Gabriel's instruction at the Annunciation. It is the name, or title, of "Lord", which is especially given to Jesus as the risen and glorified Saviour in heaven. Yet the Holy Name of Jesus, too, is given a new power after His Resurrection, so that all creation must worship it.

Sunday September 14th: The Feast of the Exaltation of The Holy Cross (Red)

Year 1 or A of the Lectionary at Mass and Psalter Week 4

- 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*

TWENTY-FOURTH 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 September 15th: Our Lady of Sorrows. Memoria. (White).

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

Tuesday September 16th: St Cornelius, Pope & Martyr, & St Cyprian, Bishop & Martyr. (Red)

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

St Cornelius (d.253) and **St Cyprian** (d.258) As Pope, Cornelius favoured gentleness to all those who repented, rejecting the teaching of a priest called Novatian who said that the Church had no power to forgive those who had lapsed during persecution. The Pope was supported in this by Cyprian, who was bishop of Carthage. Cyprian wrote on Church matters including explaining the divine origin of the Pope as head of the Church. Persecution of Christians was still heavy at this time, and Cornelius was forced into exile which contributed to his death, so he has always been honoured as a martyr. Cyprian was martyred under the Emperor Decius.

Wednesday September 17th: Feria. (Green). Optional memoria of St Robert Bellarmine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church. (White)

St Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621) He was educated by the Jesuits in Italy, where he was born, and joined the Society himself in 1560. He became an Apologist, i.e. one who defends the Doctrines of the Church against its opponents. (Many of his students at the English College in Rome were among the Forty Martyrs). He was also a theological adviser to Popes. As a friend of Galileo's, his advice to him when he was in trouble for confusing science and Scripture was sadly ignored. As their Oratorian contemporary, Cardinal Baronius (d.1607) put it: "The Scriptures tell us how to go to heaven, not how the heavens go."

Thursday September 18th: Feria. (Green)

Friday September 19th: Feria. (Green) Optional memorias of St Janarius, Bishop & Martyr. (Red); or of St Theodore of Canterbury, Bishop. (White)

St Janarius (d.304) Bishop of Benevento in Southern Italy, he was martyred during the Diocletian persecutions at Naples and became Patron of that city. A phial of his blood kept at the Cathedral liquefies miraculously every year on his Feast Day, as has been verified for several hundred years.

St Theodore of Canterbury: From Tarsus, St Paul's native city, he studied in Athens before going to Rome. In 667, Pope St. Vitalian appointed him to the see of Canterbury where he arrived in 669 with St Dominic Biscop and St Hadrian. He was determined to promote unity within the English Church and to this end he convened synods at Hereford and Hatfield. Such was his success that the Venerable Bede wrote that he was "the first archbishop obeyed by all the English Church." It was Theodore who appointed St Chad first Bishop of Mercia, (the Anglo Saxon kingdom of middle England) based at Lichfield.

Saturday September 20th: St Andrew Kim Taegon and Companions, Martyrs. (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 and from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass**
- **First Mass of Sunday: The Twenty-fifth Sunday of the Year, at 5.45 p.m.**

St Andrew Kim Taegon and Companions: St Andrew was the first native Korean priest and was martyred in 1846. We also commemorate on this day 103 other Catholics, men women and children, who were martyred for the Faith in Korea between 1839-67.

Sunday September 21st: The Twenty-fifth 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 Sr Anne of the Holy Spirit D.C., Mary Houston, Margaret Hawkins, **Kim Potter**, Brenda O'Donoghue, Carole Halls, **Kitty O'Driscoll**, Marion Arnott-Job, Evelyn Arigho, Marie-Therese Jones, Patrick Hurley, Margaret Casey and Frank McGuinness.

Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently: Mary Doohan, Martin Rahilly and Hraný Kessed Jian; **and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:** Fr Peter Allen, Patty Drinkwater, Ellen & Frank Gardner, Nellie McGough, Mary Clarkson and Anthony Osborne.

The following are requested to read next weekend, September 20th/21st: Twenty-fifth Sunday:

Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Morag Marinoni
Sunday 8.30 a.m.: Margaret Hawkins
12.00 p.m. Dennis Wood
5.30 p.m.: Simon Stacey

Collections

23rd Sunday of the Year, 7th September:
Offertory: £1,458
Second: Diocesan Development Fund: £453
Thank you

Second Collection today is for the SVP

Next Week it will be for Fr Hudson's Society

TODAY

The PIETY STALL is open in the Lower Cloister Hall after Mass .

THIS WEEK

ADORATION AT REDNAL will take place on Wednesday, afternoon commencing with Mass at 2.30, followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and ending with Benediction.

ST PAUL'S SCHOOL FOR GIRLS OPEN EVENING for September 2009 Year 7 intake will take place on Wednesday from 6.15—9 p.m.

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB: Meets on Friday, (12-2 p.m.), discussing *Saint Gianna Molla, Wife, Mother, Doctor*. (Available on the Piety Stall, priced at £8.95). Please see posters for more details.

The LEGION OF MARY invites past and present Active and Auxiliary members and all interested in supporting its apostolate by prayer/active work, to their September function on Saturday, 20th from 3.30 -5.00 p.m. in the Oratory House.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The SECOND COLLECTION NEXT WEEKEND will be for Fr Hudson's Society which helps the needy, throughout the Diocese. *Please take a Gift Aid envelope from the doors of the church, and return it next week with your donation, to the second collection.*

The FEAST OF OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM is on Wednesday, 24th. There will be a Mass and procession in our church at 7.30 p.m., after which the Walsingham Association will serve refreshments in the Lower Cloister Hall. All are welcome.

ARCHBISHOP VINCENT NICHOLS is the main speaker at an Ecumenical Service in Birmingham Town Hall on Sunday, September 28th at 6.30 p.m. The service is being organised by the Conservative Christian Fellowship. Regardless of political allegiance, please at-

tend this meeting to demonstrate the strength of Christian commitment to ethical issues which arise in Parliament. **ALSO:-**

'ABORTION & THE HUMAN EMBRYOLOGY BILL' is the subject of a Cornerstone Fringe Event, at which the speakers will be Edward Leigh M.P. and Nadine Dorries M.P. and the chairman, John Hayes M.P., taking place on Tuesday 30th September at 1.00 p.m. in the Upper Cloister Hall. All are welcome.

ANNUAL NEWMAN PILGRIMAGE TO LITTLEMORE takes place on Saturday 4th October. Included will be a tour of the College, Confessions, Mass at the Church Of Blessed Dominic Barberi (Celebrant and Preacher: Bishop Kenney), a talk on "Newman and St Paul", and Benediction at the Carmelite Priory at Boar's Hill, Oxford. Tea and coffee will be provided at lunchtime, but you will need to take a packed lunch. Coach leaves the Oratory at 9.00 a.m. and returns at 6.45 p.m. (approx). Cost £20. (Booking forms at the church doors.)

ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION welcomes all former pupils and staff to the 100th Anniversary Annual Mass on Saturday 4th October 2008 at 2.30 p.m. in St. Paul's Convent Chapel, Vernon Road, followed by Tea and the AGM. Contact Anne Russell on 0121 705 4400 for further information.

ST CATHERINE'S CHURCH, Bristol Street, is holding a Taize Hour for Justice and Peace work and workers in Birmingham, next Sunday, 21st September, from 6—7 p.m. All are welcome.

NOTICES

APF REDBOX Holders: The year comes to an end on 30th September and all boxes will need to be emptied. Please cooperate with your collector who will contact you in due course. *Many thanks.*

SVP: Please support the SVP this month.