

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 2nd 2007: The Twenty-second Sunday of the Year

The Provost writes:

This Sunday's Gospel commends to us the important virtue of Christian humility. In a day and age like ours humility is seen as something deeply suspect, if not absolutely bogus. The humble person is probably like Uriah Heep, the character in Charles Dickens, who makes a great show of humility, but is in fact a cruel and scheming villain. The humble person is a hypocrite, so the world argues, and it turns its attention to situations where success and prestige dominate, where the powerful and the rich hold sway.

In the Christian life, what does it mean to be truly humble? If we look at the lives of the Saints, we find there that the truly humble are the people who acknowledge both their strengths and their weaknesses in a realistic way. They are free from illusions about themselves and, in all humility, witness to the working of the Holy Spirit within them. True humility and true holiness go hand-in-hand. Both are possible here and now – they are not things that wait until we get to heaven. True holiness and true humility mean that we live the life of heaven here on earth. Being truly humble and therefore realising exactly who and what we are, helps us want more and more what Our Lord offers us and to be ever more receptive to His mercy in our midst. Pope Benedict XVI has taught: “Humility recognises God as He is ... humility and trust are what makes a person truly human.”

True humility and true holiness look out for ways to be of service to others, especially to the poor. There are many appeals made on us in this regard – to give money for clothing and shelter and such like. But we need to remember as well that we are called upon to give generously of our love, respect and kindness. There are many who long for these things to be given them, and sometimes we need look no further than our own street, or among our family and friends for those who are really poor in these ways and who need our help.

Wednesday of this week sees the feast of Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, one of the great Saints of the 20th century. She taught that humility helps us to acknowledge our sins, and that the knowledge of sin helps us to rise and to go to the Father. Mother Teresa's example of humility and holiness, of thoroughgoing service to her neighbour, in giving not just material help but real love as well, is one that has inspired so many. In a new book, compiled by the Postulator for her Cause from her letters and other writings, we now know just how extraordinary her holiness was and what a model she is for so many of our contemporaries. We now know that for the best part of 50 years Mother Teresa was bereft of any feeling of God's closeness, whether in her own prayers, or in the Blessed Sacrament. This inner struggle would have defeated lesser people, yet she persevered through the spiritual pain and desolation she experienced and eventually came to see in it a profound sharing in the loneliness experienced by our Saviour on the Cross. She clung to her faith in Our Lord, which was solid and profound, even though she was utterly devoid of feeling. Our age gives more weight to feelings than fact, to sensation than to sense. Mother Teresa teaches us, in all humility, that we must persevere through pain, doubt and loneliness. In the dark spiritual night of this century, Mother Teresa is a shining beacon for us all.



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

This weekend we have a joint Pastoral Letter from the Archbishops and Bishops of England and Wales. It is about our Schools and the ways in which they should be supported and valued for what they have accomplished and what they still have to offer. Our Bishops remind us that a truly Catholic education, because it has Our Lord at its centre, is one which offers a whole way of looking at life, a coherent philosophy, which prepares our children for so much more than just worldly success – a preparation for our ultimate destiny with God.

Sunday September 2nd: The 22nd Sunday of Ordinary Time (Green)

Year 3 or C of the Lectionary at Mass

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

The TWENTY-SECOND WEEK OF THE YEAR: Liturgical Calendar

Monday to Friday: (See overleaf for additional Devotions)

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 3rd: St Gregory the Great, Pope & Apostle of the English.
Memoria. (White)

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

St Gregory the Great (c.540-604): A natural leader, he was a civil magistrate in Rome. He used some of his wealth for the foundation of monasteries in Sicily and when he joined the Benedictines himself, he turned his ancestral home on the Caelian Hill into a monastery. In 590, he was elected Pope, the first Monk to be chosen for that office. He was a great diplomat, brokering peace between warring factions in Italy. He reformed the administration of the Church's estates releasing large sums of income which were spent on the poor, ransoming prisoners, and relief for the victims of war. He protected the Jews. He maintained the Church's independence from the state; he restored discipline throughout the Church; he embellished the liturgy in its sacramentary and chant and was a prolific writer. Importantly for us, he sent missionaries to England: St Augustine of Canterbury and forty other monks were from the Pope's own monastery, and he took a very keen interest in the progress of the missions, hence his title of 'Apostle of the English'.

Tuesday September 4th: Feria. (Green) Optional memoria of St Cuthbert, Bishop.
(White)

- **Benediction at 8 p.m.** Brothers of the Little Oratory meet after Benediction

St Cuthbert (d.687) He was a Briton and shepherd and whilst tending his sheep, he had a vision which led him to become a monk under St Eata at Melrose. To keep the spirit of Christianity alive among the scattered people of the north, he undertook long journeys on foot or horseback to minister to them. He accompanied St Eata to Lindisfarne, where he was later appointed Bishop, and following the Council of Whitby, he set about reforming the English Church to comply with the Council and so further Roman customs. He devoted his life to others and was said to have performed many miracles. After the Vikings destroyed monastic life at Lindisfarne, St Cuthbert's body was found to be incorrupt and was moved to Durham Cathedral, where his remains still lie.

Wednesday September 5th: Feria. (Green)

Thursday September 6th: Feria. (Green)

Friday September 7th: Feria. (Green)

- **HOLY HOUR AND BENEDICTION IN HONOUR OF OUR LADY'S BIRTHDAY AT 7.45 P.M.**

Saturday September 8th: The Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Feast. (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 and from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass**
- **Vigil Mass of the TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY OF THE YEAR at 5.45 p.m.**
(Green)

Our Lady's Birthday: Although the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is now the greater Feast, the celebration of Our Lady's birthday has been in existence since at least the 7th century, and probably dates back to early Christian times.

Sunday September 9th: The TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (Green)

Mass Times:

- **8.30 a.m. Low Mass**
- **10.30 a.m. High Mass**
- **12.00 p.m. (Families with young children)**
- **12.45 p.m. In the Tridentine Rite (In the Cloister Chapel)**
- **5.30 p.m. Low Mass**
- **Vespers and Benediction: 7.30**

Please pray for the sick: Carole Halls, Ann Stokes, Elizabeth Snape, Edward Snape, Mary Mackay, John McCann, Richard Sturgis, Jacqueline Griffiths and Emily Nugent.

Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently: Fr William Cook, Patrick Thomas Kelly and Thomas Henry Mannion; **and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:** Fr Vincent Reade of this Oratory, Margaret & David Leather, Sarah & Terry Feely, Richard Wilson-Browne, Tony Ganado and Ivy Coutts.

Patrick Kelly's funeral is on Tuesday at 12.45 pm. Burial at Quinton. Reception of remains: Monday at 4.30 p.m.

Thomas Mannion's funeral is on Friday at 12.45 p.m. Burial at Quinton. Reception of remains: Thursday at 4.30 p.m.

The following are requested to read next weekend, September 8th/9th, Twenty-third Sunday of the Year:

Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Brigid Hogan
Sunday 8.30 a.m.: Paddy Martin
12.00 p.m.: Sr Hilary
5.30 p.m.: Simon Stacey

Collections:

Twenty-first Sunday, 26th August:
Offertory: £1,242
Second: DDF: £409
Thank you.

The Second Collection today will be for the D D Fund
Next week's Second Collection will be for Aid to the Church in Need

TODAY

SUNDAY 5.30 p.m. MASS CHOIR: *The choir will resume today. Newcomers are also welcome. Please turn up at 5 p.m.*

PILGRIMAGE TO HARVINGTON HALL: The annual pilgrimage to the shrine of the English Martyrs takes place today. Confessions from 1.45—2.30 p.m. Mass at 3 p.m. Please note that it is essential to take your own chairs.

THIS WEEK

HOLY HOUR IN HONOUR OF OUR LADY'S BIRTHDAY will be on **Friday 7th commencing with the Rosary at 7.45 p.m. and ending with Benediction at 8.45 p.m.** We hope many of you will come to honour Our Lady on the eve of her birthday, and to offer prayers for our Parish which is dedicated to her.

AFTERNOON OF ADORATION AND PRAYER AT REDNAL will take place on Wednesday commencing with Holy Mass at 2.30 p.m. followed by Exposition, and ending with Benediction.

UNION OF CATHOLIC MOTHERS: meetings recommence this Tuesday, after Benediction, in the Lower Cloister Hall. *Open to all women; new members would be most welcome.*

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED: as next Sunday is Racial Justice Sunday, the second collection will be for Aid to the Church in Need.

A NEW BOOK: John Henry Newman In His Time' which, amongst others, includes chapters by Fr Paul Chavasse and Fr Daniel Seward, who preached here on August 11th, will be launched in Birmingham on September 11th at

4.30 p.m. in the Upper Cloister Hall. *All are welcome to attend.* Meanwhile, the book is available from the Friends of Cardinal Newman, or on the Piety Stall.

"THE KINDLY LIGHT" the LIFE OF CARDINAL NEWMAN in 3 Audio CD's is also highly recommended. It includes contributions from Fr Paul, Fr Guy, Frank McGrath, our Archivist and also Cardinal Newman's hymn 'Lead Kindly Light' sung by our choir. It is on sale in our Piety Stall at a cost of £10.

The CATHOLIC WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB meets on Tuesday 11th September from 12—2 p.m. Jackie Parkes writes: "We will be reading Pope Benedict XVI's book 'Jesus of Nazareth' and you will need your own copy. It is available at the Piety Stall at the special offer price of £12.95". New members welcome. Contact Jackie on 688 4154

NOTICES

HAGLEY ROAD will be **CLOSED** for a Marathon run on Sunday September 16th from 9.30 to 12 noon. During this time it will be possible to cross over at Five Ways Traffic Island, so that access to the Oratory can be made via Ladywood Middleway, Monument Road and Plough & Harrow Road. Exiting Plough & Harrow Rd will be possible via Beaufort Rd.