

# THE ORATORY—dedicated to THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

141 Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B16 8UE

Registered as a Charity

## Parish Weekly Newsletter

*This newsletter is available in large-print format. Ask at the Sacristy.*

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## December 5th 2010: THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### PREPARING A WAY FOR THE LORD

(From an Advent Sermon by Blessed John Henry Newman)

YEAR after year, as it passes, brings us the same warnings again and again, and none perhaps more impressive than those with which it comes to us at this season. The very frost and cold... which now befall us, forebode the last dreary days of the world... Such is the frame of mind which ... comes alike on good and bad at the end of life. The days have come in which they have no pleasure; yet they would hardly be young again, could they be so by wishing it. Life is well enough in its way; but it does not satisfy. Thus the soul is cast forward upon the future, and in proportion as its conscience is clear and its perception keen and true, does it rejoice solemnly that "the night is far spent, the day is at hand," ...

One year goes and then another, but the same warnings recur. The frost or the rain comes again... And then, amid this unprofitableness of earth and sky, the well-known words of the Prophet Isaiah return; ... O blessed they who obey these warnings, and look out for Him whom they



have not seen, because they "love His appearing!"

We cannot have fitter reflections at this Season than those which I have entered upon. ...this we know to be our own fearful lot, that before us lies a time when we must have the sight of our Maker and Lord face to face. ...We are destined to come before Him; nay, and to come before Him in judgment; and that on our first meeting; and that suddenly. We are not merely to be rewarded or punished, we are to be judged... One by one we shall have to endure His holy and searching eye. At present we are in a world of shadows. What we see is not substantial. Suddenly it will be rent in twain and vanish away, and our Maker will appear. And then, I say, that first appearance will be nothing less than a personal intercourse between the Creator and every creature. He will look on us, while we look on Him... Such is our first meeting with our God; and, I say, it will be as sudden as it is intimate.

Now, when this state of the case ...is brought home to our thoughts, surely it is one which will lead us anxiously to ask, Is this all that we are told, all that is allowed to us, or done for us?

Now observe, that it is scarcely a sufficient answer to this question to say that we must strive to obey Him, and so to approve ourselves to Him. This indeed might be enough, were reward and punishment to follow in the mere way of nature, as they do in this world. But, when we come steadily to consider the matter, appearing before God, and dwelling in His presence, is a very different thing from being merely subjected to a system of moral laws, and would seem to require another preparation, a special preparation of thought and affection, such as will enable us to endure His countenance, and to hold communion with Him as we ought. This indeed is the most momentous reason for religious worship, as far as we have grounds for considering it a true one.

Men sometimes ask, ... Why need they go to church? ...Why need they watch, pray, fast, and meditate? Why is it not enough to be just, honest, sober, benevolent, and otherwise virtuous? Is not this the true and real worship of God? ... Why must they be partakers in what the Church calls Sacraments? I answer, they must do so, first of all and especially, because God tells them so to do. But besides this, I observe that we see this plain reason why, that they are one day to change their state of being. They are not to be here for ever. Direct intercourse with God on their part now, prayer and the like, may be necessary to their meeting Him suitably hereafter: and ... sacramental communion, may be necessary in some incomprehensible way, even for preparing their very nature to bear the sight of Him.

### Sunday December 5th: The Second Sunday of Advent (Purple)

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| • 8.30 a.m. <b>Low Mass</b>                   | • 12.00 p.m. <b>(Families with young children)</b>  |
| • 9.30 a.m. <b>Latin Low Mass—1962 Missal</b> | • 5.30 p.m. <b>Sung Congregational English Mass</b> |
| • 10.30 a.m. <b>High Mass</b>                 | • 6.30 p.m. <b>Vespers and Benediction</b>          |

### Liturgical Calendar

*Year 1 of the Lectionary at Weekday Mass and Psalter Week 2 in the Divine Office*

**Monday to Friday:** Masses at 7.30 a.m., 12.45 p.m. and 5.45 p.m. Rosary after the 12.45 & 5.45 p.m. Masses.

**Holy Hour:** Each morning from 8 a.m. - 9 a.m.

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

(For **Saturday and Sunday:** see over)

**Monday 6th December: Monday of Advent Week 2. (Purple) Optional memoria of St Nicholas, Bishop. (White)**

- **Holy Hour 8 a.m. –9 a.m. ? Rosary after the 12.45 Mass**
- **Novena before the Immaculate Conception at c. 6.20 p.m.**

**St Nicholas** (d. c.350) He was Bishop of Myra in present day Turkey, and is one of the most popular saints in Christendom. He is venerated as the patron saint of sailors, captives and, as the original *Santa Claus*, (Saint Nicklaus) of children.

**Tuesday 7th December: St Ambrose, Bishop & Dr of the Church. Memoria. (White)**

- **Holy Hour 8 a.m. –9 a.m. ? Rosary after 12.45 Mass**
- **First Vespers of the Immaculate Conception at 6.15 p.m.**
- **Benediction at 8 p.m.**

**St Ambrose** (d.397) Born of a Roman noble family, he became governor of Milan at the age of only 35. When the bishop died, Ambrose was so popular that he was elected bishop, despite being still under instruction and not yet baptised! However, he was to become one of the greatest bishops of all time: an excellent administrator, a champion of the poor, fearless when dealing with the tyranny of state rulers; and he was a profound theologian, yet simple preacher. He was also the first bishop to write hymns for the use of the people.

**Wednesday 8th December: SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, Patroness of this Oratory. (White)**

- **Low Masses at 7.30 a.m.; 9.30 a.m. (Schoolchildren); 12.45 p.m.; & 5.45 p.m. (EF)**
- **Holy Hour 8 a.m. –9 a.m. ? Rosary after 12.45 and 5.45 Mass**
- **SOLEMN HIGH MASS AT 7.30 p.m.**

**Thursday 9th December: Thursday of Advent Week 2. (Purple). Optional memoria of St Juan Diego Cuatlatlatoatzin. (White)**

- **Holy Hour 8 a.m. –9 a.m. ? Rosary after 12.45 and 5.45 Mass**

**St Juan Diego** (d. 1548) An Aztec Indian & convert, Our Lady appeared to him on the Feast of The Immaculate Conception on the site of an Aztec temple to *Tonantzín* (the “mother of gods”) and asked that a shrine be built in her honour. The reluctant bishop asked Juan to request that Our Lady give a sign and she told Juan to gather up the flowers that had miraculously sprung up on the hill. When Juan returned to the bishop and opened his cloak, Our Lady’s image (Our Lady of Guadalupe) was emblazoned on his cloak.

**Friday 10th December: Friday of Advent Week 2. (Purple). Optional memoria of St Edmund Gennings, Priest & English Martyr. (Red)**

- **Holy Hour 8 a.m. –9 a.m. ? Rosary after 12.45 and 5.45 Mass**

**St Edmund Gennings:** Born in Lichfield, he became a Catholic as a young man. His protestant brother betrayed him and he was arrested whilst saying Mass. In mockery of his priesthood, he was dragged to his execution wearing his vestments. His death was particularly brutal as he was still conscious when he was disembowelled. He was only 24. His brother was converted as a result of witnessing Fr Edmund’s bravery.

**Saturday 11th December: Saturday of Advent Week 2. (Purple). Optional memoria of St Damasus, Pope. (White).**

- **Low Masses: at 8 a.m., and in Latin (EF) at 9.30 a.m. in the Shrine.**
- **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 8.30—concluding with Benediction at 10.45 a.m.**
- **Pilgrim Mass at 11 a.m. followed by prayers in Bl John Henry’s Shrine.**
- **Confessions from 11 a.m. to 12 noon & from 5.30 p.m.**
- **First Mass of Sunday (Third Sunday of Advent) at 5.30 p.m.**

#### **TODAY**

**The SECOND COLLECTION** will be for the poor parishes of the Diocese. **RELIGIOUS CHRISTMAS POSTAGE STAMPS are on sale at the PIETY STALL** which is open all day on Saturdays from 10.00 a.m., after all Sunday morning Masses and on Sunday afternoons. **Christmas cards (including those sold on behalf of Aid to the Church in Need), Nativity sets, calendars, diaries and other Christmas items are on sale**, together with books, DVDs and CDs. There are also commemorative items of Bl John Henry and books about him, and by him. **Pope Benedict’s new book *The Light of the World* is also in stock.** (Please remember, you help to support the Oratory by using our shop.)

#### **THIS WEEK**

**There will be a HOLY HOUR** from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. each day this week, and Adoration from 8.30 a.m. to 10.45 a.m. on Saturday.

**Wednesday is the Solemnity of THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**, our Patronal Feast. Our novena before the Feast continues on Monday evening at 6.20 p.m. On Tuesday there will be First Vespers at 6.15 p.m. and, on Wednesday there will be a Solemn High Mass at 7.30 p.m. Please come and join our prayers to ask Our Lady’s intercession for our Parish and Community.

**Our ADVENT TALKS**, held in the Lower Cloister Hall, continue on Saturday the 11th, immediately after the Prayers in the Shrine following the 11 a.m. Mass (i.e. about 12.15 p.m.). The second talk will be given by Fr Paul.

**The UCM ADVENT RETREAT** led by Fr Paul is on Tuesday in the Cloister Buildings, commencing at 10 a.m. (for 10.30) and finishing c. 3.30 p.m. **All ladies are welcome.** Cost £4. Please bring a packed lunch; drinks will be provided.

**BIRMINGHAM ART GALLERY** is now running two exhibitions of particular interest: **PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE POPE’S VISIT TO BIRMINGHAM** in

**December 12th: The Third Sunday of Advent: “Gaudete!” (Rose)**

#### **Mass & Service Times:**

- **8.30 a.m. Low Mass**
- **9.30 a.m. Low Latin Mass (1962 missal)**
- **10.30 a.m. Solemn High Mass**
- **12.00 noon Family Mass**
- **5.30 p.m. Sung Congregational English Mass**
- **6.30 p.m. Solemn Vespers and Benediction (please note new time)**

**Please pray for the sick:** Harvey Mackenzie, Elizabeth Priday, James Foyne, Tony Colquhoun, Miles Drew, Carolyn Knight, Wendy Eddy, Leroy McCoy, John, Michael and Philip McCann and Brenda Molloy.

**Of your charity please pray for those who have died recently:** William Ryan, David Davies and Sister Petronilla;

**and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:** Fr Staniskaus du Moulin-Browne, Kenneth Chavasse, Bro John Anderson, John Barricott, Ivy Green, Charles William Nicholls, Thomas McHugh, Thomas McNamara, Jack McNamara, Esther Wilk and Sadie Christie.

**The following are requested to read at Mass next weekend, December 11th/12th The Third Sunday of Advent**

**Saturday 5.30 p.m:** Anne Roebuck  
**Sunday 8.30 a.m.:** Peter Bateman  
**12.00 p.m.:** Dulcie Robinson  
**5.30 p.m.:** Simon Stacey

#### **Collections last week:**

**First Sunday of Advent:**  
**28th November, 2010**

Offertory: £1,544  
Second Collection: DDF: £486  
Organ (for shrine) Fund £44

*Many thanks*

ings depicting Our Lord’s birth, until January 9th. Admission is free.

#### **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

**“RORATE” MASS:** There is an ancient and beautiful custom originating in Middle Europe of singing a very early morning Mass by candlelight during Advent, called by the first word of the Entrance Antiphon in Latin, “Rorate”. We will celebrate our own Rorate Mass on Saturday 18th December at 6.30 a.m. in Blessed John Henry’s shrine.

**LONDON ORATORY CAROL SERVICE AND CHRISTMAS SHOPPING TRIP:** It is proposed to take a group from our Parish to the Carol Service at the London Oratory on Wednesday 22nd December. Fr Ignatius Harrison, Provost of the London Oratory, will reserve front row seats for us. There will be time also to visit the shops. The coach will leave Plough & Harrow Road at 10 a.m. and leave London, after the Carol Service, between 9 & 10 p.m., arriving home approximately 2.5 hours later. The cost for the coach will be £15. **Booking forms are to be found at the doors of the church and we would be grateful if you would return your application as soon as possible—closing date for applications is Monday, 13th.**

**ST PAUL’S SCHOOL FOR GIRLS** (Vernon Rd) **SENIOR CITIZENS CHRISTMAS PANTO & PARTY** on Wednesday 15 December from 1.30 p.m. “We would like to invite you to join us for festive food and drink, Father Christmas, Bingo, good company and a great fun-filled afternoon”. Please call Sheila Pellowe on 0121 454 0895 a.s.a.p. if you would like to attend.

#### **NOTICES**

**RED BOX HOLDERS** are asked to collect their replacement boxes from the back of the church today. *Many thanks.*

**CARE HOME VACANCY:** Sisters of Charity of Saint Paul - Annie Bright Weston House, 6 Norfolk Rd has a vacancy for an elderly lady. For more de-