

THE ORATORY—dedicated to THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

141 Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B16 8UE

Registered as a Charity

Parish Weekly Newsletter

Telephone: 0121 454 0496

Fac simile: 0121 455 8160

E-mail: parish@theoratory.org.uk

Web-site: www.theoratory.org.uk

Oratory Primary School: web.oratory.bham.sch.uk



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

February 22nd 2009: THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

YES, WE CAN!

On Wednesday the holy season of Lent begins our long yearly journey towards Calvary and Easter. We call it a "journey" not only because it takes over seven weeks to complete, but because it begins a long way from its destination.

We begin Lent with the ashes of death. Death is one of the few things in life that we can be certain about. It is also one of the few things in life which every one shares in. The manner and the timing of our deaths may differ, but the fact that our lives come to an end in this world is unavoidable for us all. Yet, strange to say, death is not originally part of God's plan for us. Death, St. Paul tells us, came into the world through one man: Adam. It was Adam's disobedience to God's command that brought about death, as God had warned in Genesis 2:17. So the words which we will hear on Wednesday as the ashes are put on our foreheads were first said by God to Adam on that very day that Adam sinned: "*Dust you are, and unto dust you shall return*" (Gen 3:19).

Yet after the disaster of the Fall, God did not abandon Adam and all mankind, his doomed descendents. Instead, God promised to send a Saviour. That is the story of Our Lord: of His Incarnation, His ministry, His death and resurrection. Christ Our Lord took the sins of the whole world upon Himself at His baptism. He then carried them with Him onto the cross, and they were killed there with Him. His death, freely accepted, was the means of taking away our death.

Even so, despite that, we still have to die. Yet even though death is not taken away from us at the end of this life, its meaning and its final outcome are utterly **changed** by Christ's death. We are not condemned to everlasting death and darkness, because Christ has shattered death by His resurrection. This is why St. Paul can say to the Corinthians: "*Death is swallowed up in victory...O death, where is your sting?*" (1 Cor 15: 55)

This is the background to the drama of our Lenten journey—from the despair of death which sin has brought upon us, to the victory of Christ's death and resurrection, in which we can share by taking part in this Lenten journey. That is why our Lenten destination is Calvary, and beyond Calvary stands...eternal life! Christ has dealt with us most respectfully and lovingly in associating us with His death and resurrection. It is as though He says: "*I have won the hope of eternal life for you, which you would never have been able to dream of, much less aspire to, had I not become your brother and taken your sin and death to myself. Yet I also honour you with a share in bringing about your own salvation. You have the privilege of being able to spend your lives working out the details of your own salvation.*" This is what Lent is about. Our penances, our fasting—all that we do in Lent is designed to enable us to take our place with Christ in heaven by exercising our human free will.

So we begin Lent besprinkled with the dust of death on Ash Wednesday. We recognise that, left to ourselves, our prospects are hopeless. We can do nothing to save ourselves from the death that sin has brought upon us. Yet by the end even of that first Lenten Mass the message we take away with us is that death is *not* our final end. Can we, then, find the way to eternal life? Yes, we can! This really is change we can believe in—Lent is the time when we really can change by the grace of God which Christ our brother alone has won for us by His death and rising to new life at Easter.

Read the Pope's wonderful letter on the meaning of Christian Fasting. He explains how fasting is not simply a matter of depriving ourselves of things which are bad for us, *but of making spiritual progress through self-denial even of things which are good for us*—a concept the modern world finds incomprehensible. Now is the time for us to enter into the spiritual combat of Lenten fasting with courage and great hope. Lent is a time when change for the good is possible for us all; change we really can believe in, because it comes not from us, not from any mortal man, but from Christ who is God, yet one of us!



Remember, man, that thou art dust, and into dust thou shalt return

Sunday February 22nd: The Seventh Sunday of the Year (Green)

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| • 8.30 a.m. Low Mass | • 12.00 p.m. (Families with young children) |
| • 9.30 a.m. Latin Low Mass—Quinquagesima (1962 Missal) | • 5.30 p.m. Sung Congregational Mass |
| • 10.30 a.m. High Mass | • 7.30 p.m. Vespers and Benediction |

Liturgical Calendar

Year 2 or B of the Lectionary at Mass and Psalter Week 3 (Week 4 from Wednesday)

Monday to Friday: Masses at 7.30 a.m., 12.45 p.m. and 5.45 p.m. Rosary at 7.45 p.m. (Please see overleaf for exceptions this week)
Confessions are heard from 12.30 p.m. and from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass.

Monday February 23rd: St Polycarp, Bishop & Martyr. Memoria. (Red)

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

St Polycarp (d.155) As a young man, he knew St John the Apostle and 'others who had seen the Lord'. He became Bishop of Smyrna and was renowned for his candour and wisdom in dealing with many heresies which began to spring up. When he was eighty-six, he was betrayed by a servant. Refusing to denounce Our Lord, he was sentenced to be burned alive but, miraculously, the flames formed an arch around him, failing to burn him, and so the executioner was ordered to stab him to death. The account of his martyrdom was written down at the time, and survives to this day.

Tuesday February 24th: Feria. (Green).

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

THE HOLY SEASON OF LENT

**Wednesday February 25th: ASH WEDNESDAY (Purple) (Psalter week 4)
DAY OF FASTING AND ABSTINENCE***

- **Blessing and imposition of Ashes at all Masses: 7.30 a.m., 11.30 a.m. (Tridentine), 12.45 p.m., 5.45 p.m. and High Mass at 8 p.m.**
- **Oratory Primary School: Liturgy of the Word, Blessing and imposition of Ashes (without Mass) at 9.30 a.m.**
- **N.b. During Lent the word "Alleluia" is omitted at all times until the Easter Vigil, even on Feast Days when, for instance, the Gloria is sung or said.**

* **Fasting consists of eating only one full meal at any point during the day, and at two other times taking only a "light collation" or snack. All persons between their 18th birthday and their 60th birthday are obliged to keep this law (unless it would endanger life or health to do so). Abstinence from meat and food containing meat products must be observed by all who have reached their 14th birthday.**

Thursday February 26th. Thursday after Ash Wednesday. (Purple)

Friday February 27th. Friday after Ash Wednesday. (Purple) St Anne Line, English Martyr.

- **Stations of the Cross at 1.15 p.m. and 8 p.m.**

St Anne Line. Born in Essex, she was disowned by her family for marrying a Catholic. Her husband was imprisoned and then exiled to Flanders (where he died in 1594.) Anne suffered poor health and remained in London providing a safe house for priests until her arrest on Candlemas Day. She was hanged in Tyburn on February 27, 1601.

Saturday February 28th: Saturday after Ash Wednesday. Optional memoria of St Oswald. (Purple).

- **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 & from 5.30 p.m.**
- **First Mass of the First Sunday of Lent: at 5.45 p.m.**

St Oswald (d. 992) A Benedictine monk who became Bishop of Worcester. He reintroduced ecclesiastical discipline and revived monasticism. He subsequently became Bishop of York, retaining government of the see of Worcester.

Sunday March 1st: The First Sunday of Lent (Purple)

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 Alf Cooke, Mary Cunliffe, Kim Potter, Patricia Healey, Raymond Colqhoun, Marie-Therese Jones, Margaret Casey, Carole Halls, Ingeborg Parkes Thomas Quinn, Priscilla & John Seery, and Nicola Moore-Bridger.

Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently: Mary McKay and Kathleen Senger;

and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now: Fr Edward Pereira of this Oratory, Bishop Joseph Cleary, George Harvey, Paul Ahern, Josephine Hawkins, Marie-Louise Jones, Dorothy Miller, Martin Ford, John Curtis and Bolek Kuzminski.

The following are requested to read at Mass next weekend, February 28th/March 1st, The first Sunday of Lent:

Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Jenni Hardwick
Sunday 8.00 a.m.: Murray Wilson-Browne
12.00 p.m.: Dennis Wood
5.30 p.m.: Jason Mahoney

Collections:

Sixth Sunday of the Year:
15th February, 2009
Offertory: £1,527
Second: Church heating: £782
Many thanks

TODAY

The second collection today will be towards heating the Church.

THE POPE'S LENTEN MESSAGE ON FASTING is available at the Church Doors.

The ARCHBISHOP'S "WALK WITH ME" prayer books (price £1) and Calendars (30p) are available at the main Church Doors.

The PIETY STALL is open after all Sunday Masses.

THIS WEEK

ADORATION AT REDNAL will take place this week on **Thursday**, (as Wednesday is Ash Wednesday) commencing with holy Mass at 2.30 p.m. and ending with Benediction.

Our TALKS on ST PAUL & HIS TEACHINGS in this Year which Pope Benedict has designated as the Year of St Paul continue on Saturday in the Lower Cloister Hall after the 11 a.m. Mass (approx 11.30 a.m.) This week the talk will be given by Fr Guy on the subject of "St Paul's Letter to the Romans" **These talks are extremely interesting and informative. Please come along and encourage your friends in other parishes to do so.**

REPLICA OF THE SHROUD OF TURIN EXHIBITION at St Chad's Cathedral, from Saturday 21st February to Saturday 28th February. The exhibition includes two full length photographic replicas of the Shroud. One is 14.5 feet long, printed on cotton and very rare. There are also replica nails, a whip and a spear. This Lent, come and read again the story of the Passion and Resurrection of Our Lord, and with the Shroud as a majestic and beautiful visual aid, see how He suffered for us. Admission free.

PROCESSION OF THE RELICS OF ST CHAD takes place after the 12 noon Mass in the Cathedral on Saturday, 28th February. Year 6/5

children who have visited the Cathedral are encouraged to go with their parents.

HANDEL IN ITALY: a concert of chamber and choral music performed by Music Students from the University of Birmingham Centre for Early Music Performance and Research, including several singers from our own choir, will be given in St. George's Anglican Church, Edgbaston, on Saturday, 28th February at 7.30 p.m. Tickets (max. £8) available at the Barber Institute (tel 0121 414 7333) or at the door.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CLOISTER SALE NEXT WEEKEND: The Union of Catholic Mothers will be holding a sale in the Cloisters next Sunday, March 1st. Proceeds will go towards the UCM's own funds and to Fr David Cullen, a White Fathers missionary working in Zambia. Please give the sale your best support.

NOTICES

HOLY COMMUNION: Please remember that Holy Communion may only be received by practising Catholics in a State of Grace, i.e. those who are not in a state of mortal sin, or who have been to confession recently. Whether you receive in the hand or on the tongue, you **MUST** consume the Sacred Host **immediately, before leaving the altar rails**. Please do not walk away from the rails holding the Host!

OUR LADY'S 'PILGRIM' STATUE is available for all who wish to welcome Our Lady into their home and deepen their love for her, particularly by saying the Rosary. Our Lady's prayers are all powerful with God. The more we invite her into our hearts, the greater her influence for us with God. She will not only pray for our deepest needs and intentions, but will help us to find the way to a renewal of prayer in our daily lives. Forms are to be found at the doors of the church.