

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.

November 18th 2007: The Thirty-third Sunday of the Year



THE LAST TIMES—WHEN WILL THEY COME?

There's almost a feeling of "unreality" about Our Lord's sayings concerning the End Times of the world. Maybe we don't want to listen too closely to those words of His because they are, on the surface, rather frightening. It's much more comfortable to act as though the world is going to go on for ever. Yet, on the other hand, it can also be all too easy to assume that the "End is nigh", as some people, for instance the Jehovah's Witnesses, tend to think. Our Lord certainly *wants* us all to be ready for the End, *should* it come in our lifetime, but not to assume that it *will* come in our lifetime. "*You know not the day nor the hour*", He says.

THE LAST TIMES—CAN WE ESCAPE THEM?

So if we find His words in today's Gospel reading disturbing, then that's as it should be. Our Lord never says anything for mere shock value. He has a good and serious purpose. This life is not for ever. Sooner or later it will come to an end for every one of us, young as well as old. What will happen to us after that? Our Lord came to make it possible for us to be forever with God in the bliss of heaven. Yet without His coming that could never have happened. We would all be lost for eternity. This is a serious thought. How often do we easily assume that we are all going to heaven because even if God does not exactly owe us a place in heaven, He is at

least good, merciful and forgiving? Yes, He *is* merciful, but the price of His forgiveness is the death of His Son. What can possibly be the cause of so great and terrible a price for our salvation? The answer is in one short word: sin. This does not mean that God extracts a kind of price for our sin, like a "fine" which we cannot pay and which therefore Christ generously pays on our behalf. It is far more profound than that. It is because sin is such a terrible disfigurement and wounds our nature so deeply that we cannot help ourselves out of it. We take sin lightly at our peril. It seems a fairly small and insignificant thing. Yet *all* sin is an offence to the infinite goodness of God. We might think that only really serious sins deserve damnation, but in actual fact, *all* sin deserves damnation.

That is where God's mercy shows itself to be so truly great. Because He might have abandoned us to our fate or even destroyed us. In the Book of Genesis the Flood from which Noah escapes alive is a sign to us of the meaning of God's justice. Yet God also shows His mercy when He freely invites Noah to find safety. The only price Noah must pay is the labour of building the ark and enduring the mockery of those who do not believe in what is coming—the Great Flood which will destroy them and their evil ways. For us, the ark of the Old Testament is fulfilled in the Church and her Sacraments. They are a free gift to us of God's mercy which enables us to build up the life of grace and to bring us safely through the destruction of this sinful world into the joy of heaven. Christ came to destroy sin and its terrible effects. This He did by His infinite holiness and love. It was love that made Him accept such a death! Without that love there would have been no merit even in His death, but His love makes our salvation possible. Faithfulness to Christ and His Body, the Church, frequent use of the Sacraments of confession and communion, and perseverance in love of God and neighbour will save us from everlasting death!

THE HUMAN FERTILISATION AND EMBRYOLOGY BILL

Many thanks to all of you who rallied to Lord Alton's call to arms last week and wrote to members of the House of Lords to ask them to reject this dangerous Bill which aims to permit so much that is opposed both to God's Laws and to human dignity. We must remember to pray that the debate in the House of Lords tomorrow (Monday) may be guided by the Holy Spirit. There is a truth we can no longer hide from: powerful forces are at work in this country desperately trying to wipe out all trace of Christianity from the public arena. Some MPs and Lords actually believe that no religious-based argument in favour of life should even be allowed to be aired in a debate, let alone considered seriously. That kind of bigoted intolerance must be resisted firmly. That is why we must pray especially for Lord Alton and all who, along with him in the two Houses of Parliament, have constantly to face blind hatred of God and of all who believe and trust in Him and respect His laws. Our Lord gives His followers great courage and confidence when He says today: "*You will be hated by all men on account of my name, but not a hair of your head will be lost. Your endurance will win you your lives.*"

Sunday November 18th: The 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time (Green)

Year 3 or C of the Lectionary at Mass

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

The THIRTY-THIRD WEEK OF THE YEAR: 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.

Stations of the Cross: 8 pm. Fridays in November

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

Monday November 19th: FERIA. (Green)

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

Tuesday November 20th: FERIA. (Green).

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

Wednesday November 21st: The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Memoria. (White).

The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary: Though not recorded in the Scriptures, this event has a long history, especially in the Eastern Church. It beautifully commemorates the welcoming of the infant Virgin Mary into God's Temple in Jerusalem as part of her preparation for the Incarnation of Our Lord.

Thursday November 22nd: St Cecilia, Virgin & Martyr. Memoria (White)

St Cecilia (2nd-3rd century) One of the most famous of the early martyrs, a great deal of legend surrounds St Cecilia, but little is actually known. What we do know is that her remains are below the High Altar of the beautiful basilica dedicated to her in Trastevere, reputedly the site of her noble family's palace in Rome. She is the patron saint of musicians and her name is included in the Roman Canon of the Mass.

Friday November 23rd: FERIA. (Green) Optional memorias of St Clement I Pope & Martyr. (Red); or of St Columban, Abbot. (White)

- **Stations of the Cross for the Holy Souls at 8 p.m.**

St Clement (d. c.101) The third successor to St Peter, Pope Clement I governed the Church for about ten years and St Irenaeus says that Clement had seen and consorted with the Apostles. One of the most important documents of the early Church is a letter he wrote to the Church in Corinth to settle some disputes. He is venerated as a martyr and is included in the Roman Canon.

St Columban (c.543-615) He went from his Irish monastery with twelve companions on a mission to Europe and was very successful, quickly founding three monastic centres in France. Due to his criticism of lax bishops and of the immorality of the royal court, he was forced to travel, but continued in his mission along the way. He was eventually given land at Bobbio in Italy, and began the foundation of a great abbey in 614. He died there the following year.

Saturday November 24th: St Andrew Dung-Lac and Companions, Martyrs. Memoria. (Red)

- **Mass at 8 a.m.**
- **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 8.30 to 10.45 a.m.**
- **Benediction at 10.45 a.m.**
- **Walsingham Association Requiem Mass at 11 a.m.**
- **Confessions from 10.55 a.m. to 12 noon & from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass**
- **Vigil Mass of THE SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST THE KING at 5.45 p.m.**

St Andrew Dung-Lac & Comps (16th—19th cents) We commemorate the first Catholic martyrs in Vietnam. St Andrew was one of ninety-six native Vietnamese who were canonised in 1988. Another twenty-one canonised at the same time were missionaries from Spain and France. In all, over 300,000 Catholics have been martyred in Vietnam since the 16th century.

Sunday November 25th: The SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST THE KING (White)

Mass & Service Times:

- **8.30 a.m. Low Mass**
- **10.30 a.m. Solemn High Mass**
- **12.00 p.m. (Families with young children)**
- **12.45 p.m. Latin Mass 1962 Missal (in the Cloister Chapel)**
- **5.30 p.m. Sung Congregational Mass in English**
- **Solemn Vespers and Benediction: 7.30 p.m.**

Please pray for the sick: Joe Houston, Margaret Casey, Lucia Tambura, Janina Stolarewicz, Frank McGuinness, Jacqueline Griffiths, Miles Drew, Desmond Williams, Elizabeth Snape, John McCann, Kerry Mooney and Emma Wilson. **Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently:** Fr Willy Boyle and John Barlow; **and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:** Rose & Arthur Plant, Kitty McQuaid, Esther deVere, David Ingram and Patrick Logan.

David Tully's funeral is on Monday at 12.45 p.m. Burial at Handsworth. Reception of remains: Sunday at 8.30 p.m.

The following are requested to read next weekend,

November 24/25th, Christ the King

Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Jenni Hardwick

Sunday 8.30 a.m.: Margaret Hawkins

12.00 p.m.: Dennis Wood

5.30 p.m.: Brendan Cummins

Collections:

Thirty-second Sunday, 11th November:

Offertory: £1,387

Second: Diocesan Development Fund: £517

Thank you

**The Second Collection today will be for the DDF
Next week's Second Collection will be for the Catholic Youth Service**

TODAY

A CLOISTER SALE in aid of sending children to Lourdes is being held after Sunday Masses this weekend. Please give it your support.

PIETY STALL: There is a very good selection of books and DVDs together with a beautiful selection of Christmas cards from *Aid to the Church in Need*. Also cribs, advent calendars, calendars, diaries, children's Christmas books and DVDs, rosaries, statues etc now on sale. Still in stock is the life of Cardinal Newman 3 CD set, highly recommended by customers as a Christmas gift. (£10 RRP £12)

THIS WEEK

STATIONS OF THE CROSS for the Holy Souls take place on Fridays in November at 8 p.m. after the Rosary at 7.45 p.m.

ADORATION AT REDNAL will take place this week on **Tuesday** beginning with Mass at 2.30 p.m. Please continue to pray for the protection of Rednal.

ORATORY PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENTS/ carers: There will not be a session this Monday, but the series of talks will recommence on Monday 26th.

FUNERAL MASS OF ARCHBISHOP MAURICE COUVE DE MURVILLE: **Please note that it will not be possible to attend the funeral itself because the Cathedral will be too full.** However, you are welcome to attend one of the other services taking place in the Cathedral as follows: **Monday 19th at 4 p.m.:** Reception of the body and Evening Prayer for the Dead; **Tuesday 20th at 12.15 p.m.:** Mass with representatives from Secondary Schools; **7 p.m.:** Vigil Mass. Archbishop Maurice's remains will also be lying in state after the reception of the body on Monday, until 8 p.m. and then on Tuesday from after the 7.30 a.m.

Mass until 6 p.m.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The PATRICIANS DISCUSSION GROUP meets next Sunday, 25th, at 3.15 p.m. in the Oratory House. The subject will be "What is the best means of Evangelisation today?" *All are welcome to attend.*

The LEGION OF MARY is having a Holy Hour at 12 noon in St Philip's Chapel on Saturday December, 1st to pray for Legionnaires' mission to Berlin. All are welcome.

ADVENT TALKS this year will be on the subject of PURGATORY: what it is, how we know about it, why it exists, how we can avoid it, how it is possible to help those who are in it to get through it more quickly, and related issues. There are three talks all on Saturday mornings after the 11 a.m. Mass (beginning c. 11.30 a.m.); December 1st, 15th, and 22nd. Refreshments will be served as usual before each talk.

NOTICES

THE HELPERS OF GOD'S PRECIOUS INFANTS will be making a short appeal for new members at all Masses on the weekend of Sunday 16th December (Gaudete Sunday). The Helpers meet at the back of Church every Saturday after the 8 a.m. Mass to go and pray outside the Calthorpe Clinic on Arthur Road. Their witness is of great importance outside one of the busiest death-factories in the country. They ask you; "Please come and join us, or support us in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, on Saturday mornings."

CHRISTMAS DRAW : Tickets will be available next weekend. **We are still hoping for donations of some smaller cash sums for prizes (say: £100 & £75)!**

SUNDAY 5.30 p.m. MASS CHOIR: Newcomers are always welcome!