

THE ORATORY—dedicated to THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

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Registered as a Charity

Parish Weekly Newsletter

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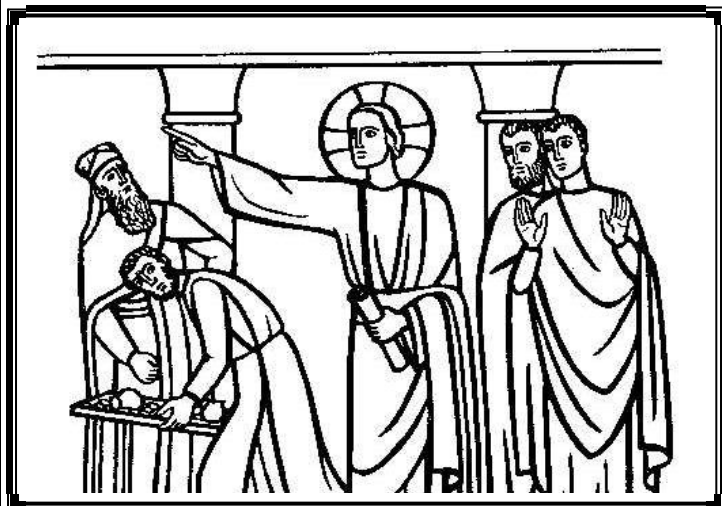
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This newsletter is available in large-print format. Ask at the Sacristy.

August 30th 2009: TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME



LIP-SERVICE

In today's Gospel, which brings us back to St. Mark once again after five weeks with St. John, Our Lord exposes the hypocrisy of His implacable foes, the Pharisees.

It was after they had accused His followers of failing to keep the letter of the Old Testament Law that Our Lord took the attack to the Pharisees. While they poured scorn on His disciples for not respecting the tradition of the elders, Jesus Himself unmasked their own vain posturing.

The Pharisees took enormous care to clean vessels with minute attention to detail, all in order to prove to themselves and others that they were fulfilling not only the commandments of the Old Testament but also the instructions of generations of rabbis who had commented on them and elaborated them still further. This is why Our Lord spoke of "*putting aside the commandment of God to cling to human traditions*".

For what Our Lord revealed was the emptiness of the Pharisees' attitude to God Himself. What good was it for the

Pharisees to be attentive to detail about outward observances to the point of scrupulosity, while they were ignoring inner righteousness in relation to God? What did they gain by washing their arms up to the elbow before eating, and sprinkling themselves on returning from the market place, when they were offering what Isaiah called "worthless worship" to God?

What made the Pharisees' worship "worthless" anyway? First, there was the Pharisees' sense of superiority. They believed that they were better than all others simply because they observed these rules in the most minute detail. This superiority resulted in *pride*, a smug self-satisfaction which expressed itself not only in contempt of others, but in a sense that God must hold them to be worthy of Him. Secondly, they neglected their true responsibilities to God and neighbour. The Pharisees generally avoided all that was difficult in terms of self-sacrifice. They "*put aside the commandments of God*" by perverting the justice due to their parents, their neighbours, the stranger and the orphan. This they justified by appealing to the Law in different ways. For instance, in a passage left out of today's reading, Our Lord explains that some Pharisees avoided God's commandment to "honour their father and their mother" by dedicating their property to God (a device of human origin called "Corban") so as to avoid having to use that money to support their elderly parents (Mk. 7:11-12).

So it is by contrast with such human trickery that Our Lord explained what true cleanliness is—a good conscience and right behaviour towards God and neighbour. Our Lord taught that nothing that comes from without us can make us unclean; nothing we can eat or drink can defile us since it simply passes through our bodies and out again. What defiles us is not what goes into us but what comes out of us.

This is reassuring, since we can often be dismayed by the kinds of thoughts, words and images that come unbidden to us, either from what we see and hear around us, or from memory and imagination. Do such images defile us? Do they make us unclean? Not according to Our Lord. Such things are not sinful *because they have not come from within us*. On the other hand, Our Lord says that it is what *does* come from within us that defiles us and makes us unclean. Evil thoughts—"*fornication, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these things come from within a man and make him unclean.*"

This can help us all when examining our consciences and preparing to make a good confession. Our Lord wants us to distinguish between things that come unbidden into our consciousness from outside, to which we give no assent, and those things which we give assent to and encourage: envy, hatred, slander, lust, pride, foolishness. Only the latter are we obliged to confess. We need grace at all times in order to see clearly how to recognise our sins and confess them, and thereby avoid the Pharisees' sin of pride and blindness. When we confess our sins Our Lord comes to us in order both to forgive what is past and to strengthen us in the future. He also can give us the grace that counteracts our will and imagination.

Sunday August 30th: Twenty-second Sunday (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—1962 Missal | • 5.30 p.m. Congregational Mass |
| • 10.30 a.m. Solemn High Mass | • 7.30 p.m. Vespers and Benediction |

TWENTY-SECOND WEEK OF ORDINARY TIME: Liturgical Calendar

Year 2 or B of the Lectionary at Mass and Psalter Week 2

Tuesday to Friday: Masses at 7.30 a.m., 12.45 p.m. and 5.45 p.m.

Rosary at 7.45 p.m. Benediction on Tuesday. Exposition on Saturday: 8.30–10.45 a.m.

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

Monday 31st August: Feria (Green) Optional memoria of St. Aidan and the Saints of Lindisfarne, (White). Bank Holiday

- **Masses at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. only. No evening Mass or devotions.**

St. Aidan, (d. 651) was the first Abbot and Bishop of Lindisfarne, known also as "Holy Island" off the far north-eastern coast of England. He was an Irishman who had been a monk in the famous Scottish monastery of Iona and was consecrated bishop and sent to Northumbria to continue the evangelisation of the Angles there. Through his presence Lindisfarne became a renowned centre of education and missionary activity.

Tuesday 1st September: Feria. (Green)

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

Wednesday 2nd September: Feria. (Green)

Thursday 3rd September: St Gregory the Great, Pope, Doctor of the Church, Apostle of the English. Feast. (White)

St Gregory (c.540-604) born in Rome, he became the city's Chief Magistrate while still very young. He converted his ancestral home on the Coelian Hill into a monastery which still stands there to this day, and from which he was to send the monk Augustine to Canterbury in 597 to begin the evangelisation of the Anglo-Saxon people. Elected Pope in 590 he became one of the greatest successors of St. Peter, involving himself in the establishment of monastic life according to the Rule of St. Benedict, which he vigorously promoted—and in the reform of the Liturgy, whose body of chant still bears his name.

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

St Cuthbert (634- 687) was one of St. Aidan's young English protégés, a Northumbrian shepherd boy who became a monk first in Melrose, and then on Lindisfarne. He eventually became the bishop of Northumbria. He was deeply loved by all and promoted the use of the Roman liturgy and practices after the Synod of Whitby. He was eventually buried in Durham Cathedral near his great admirer, St. Bede.

Saturday 5th September: Feria. (Green) Optional memoria of Our Lady on Saturday (White)

- **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 Sunday (Twenty-third Sunday) at 5.45 p.m.**

September 6th: The Twenty-third 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. Latin High Mass**
- **12.00 p.m. (Families with young children)**
- **5.30 p.m. Congregational in English**

Please pray for the sick: Connie Hayward, Michael McCann and Philip McCann, David Pritchard, James Foynes, William O'Leary, Marie Staunton, Carolyn Knight, Ray Colquhoun and May Colquhoun.

Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently: Jean Reynolds; **and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:** Charles Chavasse, Fr. James Downey and Joshua Dearn.

The following are requested to read at Mass next weekend, September 5th/6th, The Twenty-third Sunday:

Saturday 5.45 p.m.:
Sunday 8.30 a.m.: Margaret Hawkins
12.00 p.m.: Chris Sammons
5.30 p.m.: Jason Mahoney

Collections:

21st Sunday: 23rd August, 2009

Offertory: £1,346

Second: Diocesan Development Fund: £426

Many thanks

TODAY

TODAY'S SECOND COLLECTION will be towards the Expenses of Cardinal Newman's Beatification.

The PIETY STALL is open after all Sunday Masses, including the Saturday evening Mass.

THIS WEEK

FUND RAISING BARBEQUE, music and song in the grounds of **St Chad's Cathedral** on Monday, August 31st from 3-7 p.m. Admission £6. Proceeds to St Chad's Cathedral Maintenance Fund. Tickets available from Cathedral House Reception: 0121 230 6201.

ADORATION AT REDNAL will take place on Wednesday this week beginning as usual with Holy Mass at 2.30 p.m. Adoration will then not be held at Rednal again until 23rd September.

ORATORY YOUNG ADULTS' GROUP will meet on Thursday this week at 7.30 p.m. in the Oratory House when Brian McCarthy will speak on "Arguments for the Existence of God". All young adults between 21 and 35 years are welcome.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR COLLECTION will be taken up at the Church doors next Sunday, September 5th/6th.

ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE TO HARVINGTON HALL in honour of the English Martyrs takes place on Sunday September 6th with Holy Mass at 3 p.m., Celebrant and Preacher, Mgr. John Moran. Confessions will be heard from 1.30 p.m.

THE NEWMAN ASSOCIATION: will meet at St Dunstan's Church, Kingsfield Rd, Kings Heath, on Saturday 12th September, 12 noon - 3.00 p.m. (Bring your own lunch. Tea and coffee provided. Cost £2.00) Fr R. Darwen, SJ will speak on Pope Benedict XVI's letter on social justice, "Caritas in Veritate", followed by Tony Sage (town planner): who will speak on the topic: "All property is theft: the built envi-

—ORATORY LIFE WEEK—

...will take place from September 13th to 20th, including a **Fertility and Life Issues** meeting, especially suited to those recently married or preparing for marriage, but at which **everybody is welcome**, to be held on Friday September 18th at 7.30 p.m. in the Cloister Buildings. **A CLOISTER SALE** to raise funds for LIFE FERTILITY CARE will be held on the weekends of September 12th/13th and 19th/20th.

The seven-day **SIEGE OF JERICHO** around the abortion clinic on Arthur Road will also take place each afternoon during the week September 14th-20th. Each Afternoon from Monday 14th to Saturday 19th there will be Mass in St. Philip's chapel at 3 p.m. Thence all gather outside the Clinic on Arthur Road for a procession during which the Rosary will be prayed. On Sunday 20th September there will be no extra Mass in the afternoon, but a solemn procession of the Blessed Sacrament will take place around the clinic commencing at 2 p.m. in Arthur Road.

A NIGERIAN MASS will take place at St Philip Neri, Smethwick on Sunday 13 September at 2 p.m. For more information and to confirm attendance please contact Chiji on 07846787814 or email: thankGodalmighty@hotmail.com

NOTICES

SUNDAY 5.30 p.m. MASS CHOIR resumes after the Summer break on Sunday, September 13th, at 5 p.m. in the Back Gallery.

New members are always welcome. No previous experience needed!

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS WANTED: The SVP is looking for drivers to transport parishioners to Mass on Sundays, as follows: To and from Skipton Road, Ladywood for the 12 noon Mass; and to and from Henbury Court, Hagley Road for the 10.30 a.m. (High) Mass. Please telephone 0121 454 7179 if you can help.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK by St. John Vianney (Patron of Priests):

The priest is not a priest for himself; he does not give himself absolution; he does not administer the Sacraments to himself. He is not for himself, he is for you. After God, the priest is everything. Leave a parish twenty years without priests; they will worship beasts. If the missionary Father and I were to go away, you would say, "What can we do in this church? there is no Mass; Our Lord is no longer there: we may as well pray at home." When people wish to destroy religion, they begin by attacking the priest, because where there is no longer any priest there is no sacrifice, and where there is no longer any sacrifice there is no religion.