

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 21st 2008: THE TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR



Go you also into my Vineyard

THE UNEQUAL REWARD

Today's Gospel is the parable of the Workers in the Vineyard—those men hired by the Master at different times of the day and so working different lengths of time and under different conditions of heat and discomfort. The first to be hired at the beginning of the day agree to accept one *denarius*, which was a fair day's wage. Then gradually as the day passes they are joined by more and more hired men, who obviously do less work than the first, until at the end of the day the Master calls them all to get their wages, beginning with the last. So when those last arrivals receive one *denarius*, the men who have worked all day assume that the Master has changed his mind. After all, if the Master pays the latecomers (who have worked only an hour at the end of the day) the same wage he had originally agreed for a day's work in the heat of the sun, then justice demands that those who originally agreed on one *denarius* must

now be entitled to more. It is surely inconceivable that the Master will now still hold to the original agreement, isn't it?

Well, to their consternation, the original full-day workers do receive exactly what they agreed to at the beginning of the day. So is the Master unjust? No, he insists: "*We agreed on this wage, so why do you grumble? Is it because I am generous? Remember that I can do what I like with my own money!*" To this the workers have no reasonable answer. How could they? This is what they agreed was fair in the first place. If the Master chooses to pay the same wage to others who have done less, then so long as they have not been cheated of what they bargained for, then they are not treated unjustly.

Yet, of course, Our Lord is not seriously proposing a new Social Contract for industrial relations. Indeed the very point He is making is that God's reasoning is very unlike human reasoning. God is dealing in eternal truths and in the outpouring of His own divine love and mercy. In the end, we do not earn heaven as a kind of wage for what we have done in this life. Nonetheless, out of His mercy God does allow us to *merit* what He gives us., so that we are not entirely without responsibility for our own eternal destiny. But whatever we merit in this life can only be in union with Christ, who alone has won for us the reward of heaven for all eternity, and not we ourselves.

ST. PAUL TEACHES

Today's Second reading is the first of a series of four over the next few Sundays taken from St. Paul's Letter to the Christians of Philippi in ancient Macedonia, one of the local Churches St. Paul founded in person.

He deals with a problem that many saints have wrestled with and puzzled over down the centuries, and which we may well recognise, too. It is this: if at the end of this life we will have the true fulfilment of knowing God in heaven, would it not be better to be finished with this life sooner rather than later? Yet, at the same time, if God has put us here on earth to do good works for Him, shouldn't we accept that it is better to stay here as long as possible to do even more for His sake? This is why he says: "*I want to be gone and be with Christ, which would be very much better, but for me to stay alive in this body is a more urgent need for your sake.*" In the end, of course, we have not the means to make this decision. We cannot know when God sees that it is the right moment for us to leave this life and come to Him. This, of course, is at the heart of our rejection of *euthanasia*, in which persons decide either for themselves, or for others, the answer to the question: "*When is the right time for this particular life to come to an end?*" With St. Paul all Christians believe that our life has been given us by God in order to serve Him to the best of our talents and abilities, and that just as He alone has decided when our life should begin, and in what circumstances, so He alone has the true vision to determine the proper time and manner of ending that same life which He has given

Sunday September 21st: The Twenty-fifth Sunday of the Year (Green)

Year 1 or A of the Lectionary at Mass and Psalter Week 1

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| • 8.30 a.m. Low Mass | • 12.00 p.m. (Families with young children) |
| • 9.30 a.m. 1962 Rite Mass (in the church) | • 5.30 p.m. Sung Congregational Mass |
| • 10.30 a.m. High Mass | • 7.30 p.m. Solemn Vespers and Benediction |

TWENTY-FIFTH WEEK OF ORDINARY TIME: Liturgical Calendar

Monday to Friday:

Masses at 7.30 a.m., 12.45 p.m. and 5.45 p.m. (Wed this week: Mass also at 7.30 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 22nd: Feria. (Green).

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

Tuesday September 23rd: St Pio of Pietrelcina, Priest. Memoria. (White)

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

St Pio (1887-1968) Born to peasant farmers in the small Italian village of Pietrelcina, he was a devout child and drawn to the priesthood at an early age. He joined the Capuchin friars when only sixteen, and was ordained in 1910. In 1918, whilst praying, he received the Stigmata, the first priest in the history of the Church to receive Our Lord's wounds. He also suffered much from slander and suspicion, even within his own community. Renowned for his devotion and piety, several miracles were attributed to him in his lifetime. He could see into people's souls and was therefore a much sought-after confessor, spending several hours a day in the confessional. He could also bi-locate. He was canonised in 2002.

Wednesday September 24th: Our Lady of Walsingham. Memoria. (White)

- **Mass and Procession in honour of Our Lady of Walsingham at 7.30 p.m.**

Our Lady of Walsingham: In 1061, Richeldis de Faverches, widow of the Lord of the Manor of Walsingham, had a dream in which Our Lady requested that she have built a replica of the house at which the Annunciation took place. The vision was repeated three times. Although the account was not verified by the Church, the original shrine became one of the greatest pilgrimage sites of Medieval times, but it was destroyed by Henry VIII during the Reformation.

Thursday September 25th: Feria. (Green)

Friday September 26th: Feria. (Green) Optional memoria of Sts Cosmas and Damian, Martyrs. (Red)

Sts Cosmas and Damian (d. c. 303) Arabian twins, they were both physicians who gave their services free to the poor, but their high prominence in society made them a marked target during the Diocletian persecutions. Legend has it that they were tortured before their martyrdom. Their remains were enshrined in a church in Rome, which is one of the earliest churches still in existence.

Saturday September 27th: St Vincent de Paul, Priest. (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 and from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass**
- **First Mass of Sunday: The Twenty-sixth Sunday of the Year, at 5.45 p.m.**

St Vincent de Paul (1580-1660) Born in Gascony, the son of a peasant farmer, he joined the priesthood and was ordained at the early age of twenty. For the first ten years, he enjoyed a life of ease until he was captured by African pirates and enslaved for two years. This brought about a conversion, and following his escape with his slave-master, whom he had converted, he devoted his life to the care of slaves and the needy of all classes, from children to the elderly. He founded the Congregation of the Missions (*Vincentians*) and assisted St Louise de Marillac in the founding of the Daughters of Charity. He approached each undertaking with the same single-minded goodness, generosity and humility.

Sunday September 28th: The Twenty-sixth 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. 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 Sr Anne of the Holy Spirit D.C., Mary Houston, Mary Clarkson, Nora Thornton, David Reynolds, Carole Halls, Kitty O'Driscoll, Evelyn Arrigho, Marie-Therese Jones, Patrick Hurley, Margaret Casey and Frank McGuinness. **Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently:** Marion Arnott-Job, Richard Foster, Nora Palmer, Brenda O'Donaghue and Ellen Westwood; **and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:** Henry Aloysius Bowyer, Philippa Reid, Cecilia Brunt, Nicola Cozzi, Giovanni Cozzi, Winifred Hammond, Reginald Green, Margaret Murray, Raymondo Tombora, Cosmos Rababa, Albert Arasmo, Aizac Majak Joseph Tombura, Rose Malynn, Philip Mills and Thomas Gannon.

Richard Foster's funeral is on Monday at 12.45.
Reception of remains: before Mass
Ellen Westwood's funeral is on Thursday at 12.45.

**The following are requested to read next weekend, September 27th/28th
Twenty-sixth Sunday:**

Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Brigid Hogan
Sunday 8.30 a.m.: Murray Wilson-Browne
12.00 p.m. Peter Leather
5.30 p.m.: Jason Mahoney

Collections

Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 14th September:
Offertory: £1,463
Second: SVP: £607
Thank you

TODAY

The SECOND COLLECTION TODAY IS FOR FR. HUDSON'S SOCIETY: Gift Aid envelopes are available at the doors of the church for your donation.

TODAY IS HOME MISSION SUNDAY. Please pray for the urgent and difficult work of bringing the Catholic Faith back to our land.

The PIETY STALL is open in the Lower Cloister Hall after Mass.

ST CATHERINE'S CHURCH, Bristol Street, is holding a Taize Hour for Justice and Peace work and workers in Birmingham, from 6—7 p.m. All are welcome.

THIS WEEK

ADORATION AT REDNAL will take place on Wednesday, afternoon commencing with Mass at 2.30, followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and ending with Benediction.

The FEAST OF OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM is on Wednesday, 24th. There will be a Mass and procession in our church at 7.30 p.m., after which the Walsingham Association will serve refreshments in the Lower Cloister Hall. All are welcome.

THE NEWMAN ASSOCIATION is holding its first lecture of the new season on "The Holy Land" on Saturday September 27th from 11.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. in St. Dunstan's conference room, Kings Heath. The Speakers are Fr. Chris Fitzpatrick and Richard Burden M.P.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CANDLES FOR FORTY HOURS, which will take place from Tuesday, 7th—Thursday 9th October, will be on sale for the next two weekends. Please also remember the Altar Society blue collection box (outside St Charles' chapel at the front of church) for your offerings to buy flowers during this very special time in our calendar.

ARCHBISHOP VINCENT NICHOLS is the main speaker at a Service in the Town Hall on Sunday, September 28th at 6.30 p.m. This is being organised by the Conservative Christian Fellowship. Please attend this meeting to demonstrate the strength of Christian commitment to ethical issues which arise in Parliament. **ALSO:-** 'ABORTION & THE HUMAN EMBRYOLOGY BILL' is the subject of a Cornerstone Fringe Event, at which the speakers will be Edward Leigh M.P. and Nadine Dorries M.P. and the chairman, John Hayes M.P., taking place on Tuesday 30th September at 1.00 p.m. in the Upper Cloister Hall. All are welcome.

ANNUAL NEWMAN PILGRIMAGE TO LITTLEMORE: Saturday 4th October. Including a tour of the College, Confessions, and Mass. (Celebrant and Preacher: Bishop Kenney), a talk on "Newman and St Paul", and Benediction at the Carmelite Priory at Boar's Hill, Oxford. Tea and coffee will be provided at lunch-time, but you will need to take a packed lunch. Coach leaves the Oratory at 9.00 a.m. and returns at 6.45 p.m. (approx). Cost £20. (Booking forms at the church doors.) Only 10 places left on this pilgrimage!

ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION welcomes all former pupils and staff to the 100th Anniversary Annual Mass on Saturday 4th October 2008 at 2.30 p.m. in St. Paul's Convent Chapel, Vernon Road, followed by Tea and the AGM. Contact Anne Russell on 0121 705 4400 for further information.

WORLDWIDE DAY OF PRAYER for peace and to uphold the sacredness of human life takes place on Sunday, 5th October. There will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 2-5 p.m. during which our Rosaries will contribute to the several million being said throughout the world.