

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.

December 16th 2007: The Third Sunday of Advent "Gaudete"



THE LAST WEEK OF ADVENT

Tomorrow, Monday 17th is the beginning of the second and final part of Advent which is the immediate preparation for the Solemnity of Our Lord's birth. Each day is marked by a special Antiphon which is sung at Vespers with great solemnity in Monasteries and Cathedrals, where the Abbot or one of the principal Canons will vest as at Sunday Vespers and intone this antiphon before the Magnificat is sung and the Altar incensed, just as we do every Sunday here. They are called the "O" Antiphons for the simple reason that they all begin with this same cry, "O", calling out to Christ to come. You will find the text of each of them on the next page as given for each of the seven days before Christmas Eve.

Each antiphon takes an image of the Saviour drawn from the Old Testament and addresses Christ as the Lord who is fast approaching; e.g. "O Wisdom", and then calls out with longing for the Lord to "Come!" and set us free from the darkness of sin. Christ as the Son of God before ever He became a man is often referred to as the "Wisdom" of God who shares God's own nature. "Adonai" is a Hebrew word meaning *Mighty Lord*, reminding us that Christ, being God, appeared to Moses on Mount Horeb in the Burning Bush, and on Sinai to give him the Commandments. "Root of Jesse" refers to Jesse, the father of King David, who is one of Our Lord's human ancestors. "Key of David" speaks of the role of Our Lord as the King, the son of David, who alone has power to release mankind from the prison of sin. "Morning Star" reminds us of the prophecy of John the Baptist's father, Zechariah, who sees the coming of Christ as the dawn of a new day of salvation coming at the end of the dark night — an appropriate image at this darkest time of the year! "King of the Nations" reminds us that Christ is not only the King of the Jews, but of all mankind, as we will once again see at the Epiphany when the Magi represent all the pagan nations of the world worshipping Christ as God the Redeemer. Finally, we will ourselves sing the last antiphon here next Sunday at Vespers: "O Emmanuel", the name which the Prophet Isaiah tells us means "God is with us"; reminding us that in the Incarnation, God Himself becomes a man in order to dwell with us. You may also note that these themes will also appear in the Alleluia before the Gospel at Mass each day of the week.

THE NATIVITY TRAIL

If you find yourselves in town any day between now and January 4th, I would urge you to take time out of the frantic rush and go and see a beautiful exhibition of Christmas paintings entitled the "Nativity Trail" in the City Art Gallery between the Town Hall, Paradise Forum and the Council House. There is a free explanatory booklet to guide you around. It not only tells the Christmas story for the benefit of those who don't know it already, but also explains some of the features of the art works themselves. The paintings are all part of the permanent holdings of the Gallery, and they are very fine, being also of many styles and dates. Also, it is free—there is no admission charge! So take as many family and friends as you like. If you do go, please make sure to thank the staff, and tell them that you have appreciated their arranging it at this time of the year, and that you enjoyed it (assuming that you did! Well, I certainly did so!)

OUR LADY'S DECEMBER FEASTS: IMMACULATE CONCEPTION-GUADALUPE-HER EXPECTATION

On the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception the Gospel of the Annunciation told how the ever-sinless Mary heard Gabriel's message from God and willingly became God's Mother. Last Wednesday was the feast of Our Lady's appearance at Guadalupe in Mexico, honoured as "Patroness of the Unborn". Next Tuesday was formerly kept as the memorial of Our Lady's Expectation, a fitting commemoration in the days before the birth of her Son; and next Sunday's Gospel tells of St. Joseph's acceptance of the divine origin of Mary's child. All these commemorations of Our Lady during December speak of her carrying the Son of God in her womb, a fitting time to pray for all unborn children and their protection, so maybe you might continue to pray the Novena prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe (available at the Church doors) during this period? Also, the "Helpers of God's Precious Infants" will make a brief appeal at the end of Mass for us to help them.

Sunday December 16th: The Third Sunday of Advent (Rose)

Year 1 or A of the Lectionary at Mass

- 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. *Tridentine Mass (in the Cloister Chapel)*
- 5.30 p.m. *Sung Congregational Mass*
- *Solemn Vespers and Benediction at 7.30 p.m.*

The 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.

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

Monday December 17th: Weekday of Advent: 17 December (Purple)

'O Sapientia' O Wisdom who come forth from the mouth of the Most High; reaching from end to end and powerfully ordering all things; **Come!** and teach us the way of prudence.

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

Tuesday December 18th: Weekday of Advent: 18 December (Purple)

'O Adonai' O Mighty Lord, and Leader of the House of Israel, Who appeared to Moses in the flame of the burning bush, and gave him the Law on Mount Sinai; **Come!** and redeem us with outstretched arm.

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

Wednesday December 19th: Weekday of Advent: 19 December (Purple)

'O Radix Jesse' O Root of Jesse, standing as a banner of the nations, before Whom kings will keep silent and to Whom the Gentiles will make their prayers; **Come!** to deliver us—tarry no longer!

Thursday December 20th: Weekday of Advent: 20 December. (Purple)

'O Clavis David' O Key of David and Sceptre of the House of Israel. What You open no man can shut; what You close no man can open; **Come!** and bring out of prison the captive sitting in darkness and the shadow of death.

Friday December 21st: Weekday of Advent: 21 December. (Purple)

'O Oriens' O Star of the Morning, brightness of Eternal Light and Sun of justice; **Come!** and enlighten those who sit in darkness of the shadow of death.

Saturday December 22nd: Saturday of Advent: 22 December (Purple)

- **Mass at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.** (N.b. Advent talk afterwards)
- **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. until the end of Mass**
- **Vigil Mass of THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT at 5.45 p.m.**

'O Rex Gentium' O King desired by the nations, You are the corner stone that builds up unity from what is divided; **Come!** and save man whom You formed from the dust of the earth.

Sunday December 23rd: The FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Purple)

'O Emmanuel' O Emmanuel, our King and Lawgiver, the One awaited by the nations, and their Saviour; **Come!** and save us, Lord our God.

Mass & Service Times:

- **8.30 a.m. Low Mass**
- **10.30 a.m. 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.**

N.b. the 1962 Mass will be celebrated at 9.30 a.m. in Church from December 30th

Please pray for the sick: Nellie Cowan, Ingaborg Willis, Margaret Walshe, Barry Whelan, George Saunders, Margaret Casey, Jacqueline Griffiths, Desmond Williams and Kerry Mooney. **Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently:** Alfons Maria Cardinal Stickler, José Reina and Philip Joseph Leighton; **and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:** Pearl Harper, Mary Barber, Peter Mitchell, Robert Wolfe, Thomas McAlinden and James Colquhoun.

Molly Rigby's funeral is on Monday at 12.45 p.m. Reception of remains: Sunday at 4 p.m. Philip Leighton's funeral is on Wednesday at 12.45 p.m. Reception of remains: Tuesday at 4.30 p.m.

Collections:

Second Sunday of Advent, 9th December:
Offertory: £1,318
Second: Poor parishes of the Diocese: £870
Thank you

The 2nd Collection today will be for poor families in our parish

The following are requested to read next weekend, December 22nd /23rd: The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Sunday 8.30 a.m.: Paddy Martin Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Anne Roebuck
12.00 p.m.: Sr Hilary 5.30 p.m.: Brendan Cummins

TODAY

THE HELPERS OF GOD'S PRECIOUS INFANTS will be making a short appeal for new members at all Masses next weekend, (*This is not an appeal for money*). 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."

The CHRISTMAS DRAW : Tickets are available at the doors of the church. There are many excellent prizes, including a first prize of £500. Please take and sell as many books as you can; your help is greatly appreciated. Stubs and money can be handed in the Oratory House or at the sacristy (preferably in an envelope marked 'Christmas Draw') (Tickets: £1 per book or 20p each.)

The NEW CATHOLIC DIRECTORY IS NOW ON SALE at the piety stall (in the Lower Cloister Hall) together with **CHRISTMAS CARDS, Calendars, diaries, books** for *Aid to the Church in Need*; also a large selection of books, DVDs, cribs, children's books, rosaries, statues etc. We recommend the life of Cardinal Newman 3 CD set as a Christmas gift. It includes interviews with Fr Paul and Fr Guy, amongst others.

THIS WEEK

ADORATION AT REDNAL will take place this week on Tuesday, commencing with Holy Mass at 2.30 p.m.

ADVENT TALKS this year are 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. The last of the three talks will be next *Saturday after the 11 a.m. Mass (beginning c. 11.30 a.m.)*; and will be given by Fr Paul on "**How can we help the Souls in Purgatory and how can we avoid going there?**"

ST PAUL'S SCHOOL SENIOR CITIZENS' CHRISTMAS PARTY will be taking place at the school in Vernon Road, on Wednesday 19th December from 1.30—3.00 p.m. If you would like to go, please contact St Paul's on 0121 454 0895 as soon as possible.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

NEW YEAR'S EVE VIGIL: making plans for New Year's Eve? Why not consider seeing in the New Year with Our Lord? Exposition from 9.30 p.m. with prayers (as requested by Our Lady of Fatima) for World peace, the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for the sins against her Immaculate Heart. Mass of the Solemnity of the Mother of God will be at 11.45 p.m. Refreshments will be served after Mass.

The ANNUAL PRO-LIFE VIGIL of the Feast of the Holy Innocents, will take place in the Cloister Chapel commencing at 10 p.m. on Thursday, 27th December and ending with Holy Mass at 6 a.m. on Friday 28th.

SUNDAY 5.30 p.m. MASS CHOIR: Newcomers are always welcome! Please turn up at 5 p.m.