

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.

February 1st 2009: THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR



SICKNESS AND HOLINESS

St. Mark's Gospel, which forms the usual Sunday Gospel reading throughout this year, begins not with Our Lord's infancy, but with His public ministry. Today's reading, still only in the first chapter of the Gospel, already shows Our Lord healing the sick, casting out the devil from the possessed, and preaching the good news throughout His native Galilee.

St. Mark, following the lead given by Our Lord in His teaching and His miracles, makes a strong connection between sickness and Satan. Wherever Our Lord heals the sick, the lame and diseased of all kinds, He also casts out the power of the devil—often from the same persons. It has been customary in some circles to treat these accounts with scepticism. It has been suggested that St. Mark is being rather superstitious in connecting illness with the devil. Of course, it would be going too far to suggest that every illness is caused directly by the devil. But then that is not what St. Mark does. He sees Our Lord's healing of the sick in these early days of His public ministry as a sign of something deeply hidden. The devils whom Our Lord casts out all want to speak and identify Him, *because they knew who He was, yet He would not allow them to do so.*

The reason why the devils want to speak out is that Our Lord is not simply a healer of the body, or even of the mind, in the way that a doctor, surgeon, neurologist or psychiatrist heals the body or mind. Our Lord has come into the world as the **Saviour**—the One who makes whole **all** that is broken in human nature. Mankind, the offspring of fallen Adam and Eve, is a being of body, mind *and* soul. Mankind has fallen into a state of confusion that embraces body, mind and soul, thanks to the disobedience of Adam and Eve. So when Our Lord is confronted with sickness, He sees not merely disorders of the body and of the mind but also of the soul. These disorders are the result of the devil's cunning—he misled Eve and Adam into identifying their happiness with independence from God. Ever since then their descendants—all of us—have been affected. Our souls are diseased as much as our bodies. Christ has come to heal us *entirely*, not simply our souls, nor simply our bodies, but our whole nature.

Of course, not every illness is related to a particular sin. Rather, illness is a phenomenon of life which results from sin entering into the world through the devil's hatred of God and of us, God's favoured creature. Because God loved Adam and Eve so much, the devil out of envy set about destroying them and their descendants. Sin destroyed the original harmony of our nature in which God had created us. Only Our Lord can restore that harmony. Ultimately, illness will be destroyed when holiness has been re-established throughout the human race, which will fully happen in the Eternal Life for all the redeemed.

Hence our Lord's healings are more than just the driving out of disease from a body or a mind—they are the making whole of human nature broken by sin. This is why the devils want to cry out in horror when they encounter Our Lord, because they know He has come to destroy their hold over mankind. The healings He works in these early days of His public ministry are the declaration that the long reign of sin, sickness and death is coming to an end.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK—SACRAMENT OF HEALTH AND FORGIVENESS

In the light of today's Gospel reading, it is fitting that this week sees our annual Mass of anointing of the sick. One of the seven sacraments given us by Our Lord, in which He is at work in His church, is that of the Anointing of the sick. On Saturday we bring our sick to Church and anoint them in Our Lord's name in the manner described by St. James in his Letter. "this prayer and anointing will save the sick persons and any sins they have committed will be forgiven." Even when the sickness is not taken away, as is often the case, this does not mean that the sacrament is worthless. On the contrary, it always produces a great harmony and peace in the soul, which can also be the best preparation for death, should that be God's will for the person concerned. But it is not only the sacrament of "extreme unction", given at the end of a person's life; it can certainly strengthen both body and soul against illness, fear and spiritual confusion. We pray for all those who will receive the anointing on Saturday next that they may be filled with such grace from God and freed from sin and from the devil's snares.

Sunday February 1st: The Fourth 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 (1962 Missal) | • 5.30 p.m. Sung Congregational Mass |
| • 10.30 a.m. High Mass of the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul | • 7.30 p.m. Vespers and Benediction |

Liturgical Calendar

Year 2 or B of the Lectionary at Mass and Psalter Week 4

Monday to Friday: Masses at 7.30 a.m., 12.45 p.m. and 5.45 p.m. Rosary at 7.45 p.m.

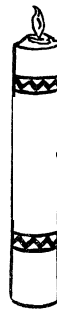
Confessions are heard from 12.30 p.m. and from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass.

Monday February 2nd: The Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord: "Candlemas"

(White)

- **Solemn High Mass, Blessing of Candles and Procession at 8 p.m.**

The Presentation of Our Lord commemorates Our Lord's recognition by Simeon and Anna in the Temple. Simeon prophesies Jesus's sufferings at His own people's hands, and Our Lady's sorrows. He calls the little child "the light to enlighten the gentiles, and the glory of God's people". Hence the imagery of light on this day, that it is known as "Candlemas" and candles are blessed and carried in procession before High Mass begins. The blessed candles are then given to the faithful and lit when the Blessed Sacrament is brought to the sick in their homes.



Tuesday February 3rd: Feria. (Green). *Optional memoria of St Blaise, Bishop & Martyr.* (Red)

- **The Blessing of Throats on St Blaise's day will be given after all Masses**
- **Benediction at 8 p.m. Brothers of the Little Oratory meet in St Philip's Chapel**

St Blaise (d. 316) He was reputed to have been a physician before becoming Bishop of Sebaste in Armenia, where he was martyred. Several miracles were attributed to him during his life, one of which was saving a small boy who had swallowed a fish bone which could not be removed; hence the rite of the blessing of throats on his feast day.

Wednesday February 4th: Feria. (Green)

Thursday February 5th. St Agatha, Virgin & Martyr. Memoria. (Red)

St Agatha (d. 251) Venerated from early times and included in the Roman Canon of the Mass, she was a virgin martyr from Catania in Sicily and was martyred during the persecution of Christians during the reign of the Emperor Decius.

Friday February 6th. St Paul Miki & Companions, Martyrs. (Red)

St Paul Miki (d 1597) Son of a Japanese military leader he joined the Jesuits in 1580 and was a renowned preacher. He was tortured and crucified at Nagasaki with twenty-five others, priests and lay-people. They were the first martyrs of the Far East to be canonised. Nagasaki remains the most Christian city in Japan.

Saturday February 7th: Our Lady on Saturday. (White); or *Feria.* (Green)

Please note changes to today's programme:-

- **Mass at 8 a.m.**
- **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 8.30 to 10.00 a.m. only**
- **Benediction at 10.00 a.m.**
- **11 a.m.: Knights of Malta Mass with anointing of the sick (See below)**
- **Confessions from 10.55 a.m. to 12 noon and from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass**

Sunday February 8th: The Fifth 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: Mary Yates, Mary Cunliffe, Patricia Healey, Raymond Colqhoun, Marie-Therese Jones, Margaret Casey, Carole Halls Ingeborg Parkes Patrick Fullerton and Kim Potter.

Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently: and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now: Mary Beesley, John Brunt, William Joseph Fell, Annie Kearney, Jack Quigley, Catherine McAlinden, Elizabeth Donnelly, Mary Lawler, Mollie Adams, John Beardsmore, George Dunbar and Ethel Griffiths.

The following are requested to read at Mass next weekend, February 7th/8th, 5th Sunday of the Year:

Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Jenni Hardwick
Sunday 8.00 a.m.: Margaret Hawkins
12.00 p.m.: Chris Sammons
5.30 p.m.: Jason Mahoney

Collections:

Third Sunday of the Year: 25th January, 2009
Offertory: £1425
Second: DDF: £390
Thank you

TODAY

The second collection this weekend will be for the Maintenance of our church

The PIETY STALL is open after all Sunday Masses. (The 2009 Diocesan Directory is on sale.)

THIS WEEK

MONDAY IS THE FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD: There will be High Mass at 8 p.m. with Blessing of Candles and Procession. (Rosary will be at 7.45 p.m. as usual).

ADORATION AT REDNAL this week Adoration is expected to take place as usual on **Wednesday**, commencing with holy Mass at 2.30 p.m. and ending with Benediction. However, due to the winter weather and illnesses at present, kindly please telephone (454 0496) on Wednesday morning to confirm that adoration is taking place there.

The ANNUAL MASS WITH ANOINTING OF THE SICK will take place on **Saturday 7th February** at 11 a.m. **Forms for those eligible and who wish to receive the Sacrament are available at the church doors. Lunch will be available after Mass at a cost of £5. This must also be booked by completion of the appropriate section of the form. Forms must be returned to Fr Paul no later than Thursday.**

Our **TALKS on ST PAUL & HIS TEACHINGS** will be suspended for one week owing to the Knights of Malta Mass taking place on Saturday.

PAULINE MISSION PROJECT 2009 invites people from the Deanery Parishes, members of different Catholic organizations or groups, and individuals who may be interested in giving time (2 to 3 hours a week) to help with visiting homes and families in the city centre parishes. To look at the possibilities a meeting has

been arranged at Cathedral House, St Chad's on **Wednesday 4th February** at 7 p.m. Please telephone 230 6209 for more details.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ORDER OF MALTA PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES: Friday May 1st—Friday May 8th 2009: Flying from Stanstead Airport, the cost for sick pilgrims is £240. The cost for other pilgrims (who must be prepared to help with the sick in some capacity, however small) is approx £550. Anyone interested should contact Fr Paul or Fr Guy **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** in order to send off for an application form as places are very limited.

The SOCIETY OF ST HUGH will meet on Saturday, 14th February, at 2 p.m. in the Oratory House. *All are welcome.*

The ANNIVERSARY OF CARDINAL NEWMAN'S BIRTH, Saturday 21st February: Instead of the Annual Musical Oratory, the combined choirs of the Oratory School, Woodcote will sing First Vespers at 4 p.m., which will be followed by Benediction. Refreshments will be available in the Lower Cloister Hall beforehand, at 3 p.m. finishing promptly at 3.45 p.m. (The Saturday evening Mass will be at 5.45 p.m. as usual).

CONFIRMATION. The Sacrament of Confirmation will be administered here by Bishop Pargeter on March 10th 2009. **Anyone other than children at the Oratory Primary School wishing to be confirmed should give their names in writing to Fr. Guy no later than today, February 1st.**

NOTICES

TRANSLATION FROM CATALAN: Fr Paul has a short article that requires translation from Catalan to English and would be most grateful if any of you could be of assistance.

SERVERS: volunteers are still wanted for all Sunday Masses. Please see one of the Fathers.