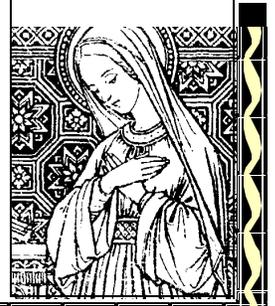


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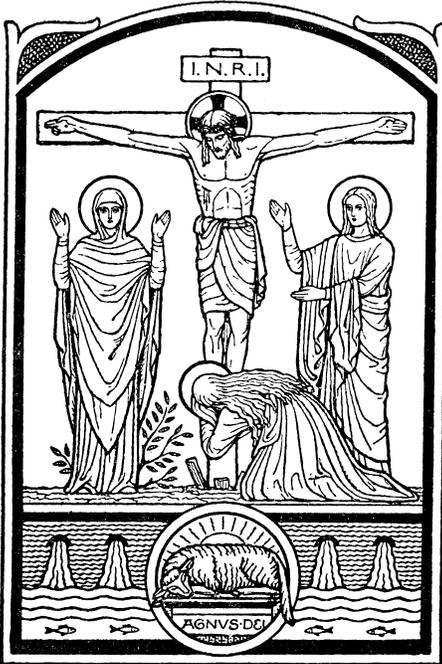
Parish Weekly Newsletter

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.



March 22nd 2009: THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (LAETARE)



THEY SPURNED GOD'S MESSENGERS

In today's first reading from the Old Testament Book of Chronicles, we are told how God "tirelessly sent messenger after messenger to His people, since He wished to spare them...but they not only became more and more unfaithful to God, but actually ridiculed God's messengers, despised His words and laughed at His prophets, until at last the wrath of the Lord rose so high against His people that there was no further remedy." So God allowed their enemies to burn down the Temple and demolish the walls of Jerusalem, setting fire to its palaces and destroying everything of value in it. Those who survived this disaster were taken off to captivity in Babylon for seventy long years of exile.

Our Lord told His contemporaries a story with a similar theme: the parable of the Wicked Tenants of the Lord's Vineyard. They, too, maltreated God's messengers, and even killed the Landowner's son. Their punishment was to be brought to a wicked end and see their vineyard taken from them.

We should not read these stories as something only from the remote past. They must apply to us as well. Our land had so many blessings, and yet we have squandered them. Once this was a Catholic country, then it cruelly persecuted the Catholic faith and people. Even so, the laws of the land were still basically Christian in outline until the later twentieth century. Since then, mockery of God and of his religion and of his representatives on earth has become all too commonplace. The Commandments are not only blatantly broken in law but aggressive, intolerant secularism, of which Cardinal Pell spoke recently at Oxford, threatens the freedom of conscience. At least until now it has been possible to claim conscientious objection to bad laws, but soon it may be impossible even to do that without falling foul of the law. For many years our country has ignored God's Will and even laughed at it, like

the Israelites of old. We may well be on the brink of some dreadful punishment for that sin, as the Israelites were. We must pray and work for a conversion of hearts and do our own duty as citizens in keeping our laws obedient to God's law.

THE CAUTIOUS VISITOR

We are told by St. John that Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a leader among the Jews, a member of the Sanhedrin (as Our Lord also states in Jn 3:10: "You, who are a leader in Israel...") He came to Jesus "by night", because he was cautious of the reaction of his fellow-leaders and Pharisees should they discover that he was an admirer of Jesus. What would they think of him not just for sitting at the feet of an unlearned Galilean carpenter, but even more for addressing the One who had driven the money-changers and traders from the Temple as "Rabbi"?

Our Lord tells Nicodemus that He must be "lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert". This recalls a scene in the forty years journey of the Chosen People from slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land. This short distance took them so long to cover because they found it so hard to adapt to freedom and were in constant danger of abandoning faith in the One True God. One of their sins of complaint against God was punished by a plague of fiery serpents, recalling the connection between the serpent and Satan. Many of the people died from the bite of these serpents. Moses prayed for the people to God, who instructed him to place an image of a serpent, made from bronze, upon a tall staff and hold it up for the afflicted people to see. Whoever looked upon this bronze serpent with faith in God would be saved from the plague of serpents. It is significant that Our Lord sees Himself in the same way as the bronze serpent, lifted up on a staff. It is a prediction, although obscure, of the crucifixion. It also shows how Our Lord understands even at this early stage of His public ministry, that His death will be for the salvation of all who believe in Him. He goes on to instruct Nicodemus that God gave His only Son, just as Abraham was called on by God to give his only son, Isaac, as a sacrifice. But whereas God spared Isaac, He did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all (cf. Romans 8:32). Nicodemus, having come in the darkness, goes away enlightened by Christ's teaching, and subsequently he bears witness to the light by taking care of the arrangements for Christ's burial.

Sunday March 22nd: The Fourth Sunday of Lent (*Rose*)

- 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**
- 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.

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

St. Turibius died in 1606. Born of a noble Spanish family he became a gifted lawyer and a member of the Inquisition. In 1579 he was appointed Archbishop of Lima and spent the rest of his life as devoted pastor of his huge diocese. He defended the native population from cruelty and exploitation by the imperial establishment. He also baptised St. Rose of Lima and St Martin de Porres.

Tuesday March 24th: Tuesday of Lent Week 4. (Purple)

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

Wednesday March 25th: Solemnity of the Annunciation of our Lord (White)

- **High Mass at 8 p.m.**

The Annunciation is the Solemnity of the Incarnation, the moment that Our Blessed Lady virginally conceived the son of God in her womb. As she heard the Angel's greeting, "Hail, full of grace!" she pondered what this could mean. "Fear not, Mary, for you will conceive and bear a Son." And Mary gave her consent: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be done to me according to your word".



Thursday March 26th. Thursday of Lent Week 4. (Purple)

Friday March 27th. Friday of Lent Week 4. (Purple)

- **STATIONS OF THE CROSS at 1.15 p.m. and 8 p.m.**

Saturday March 28th. Saturday of Lent Week 4. (Purple).

- **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 the Fifth Sunday of Lent: at 5.45 p.m.**

(12 up 10)

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: Dean Farrell, Patrick Walshe, Katie Hayward, Mary Cunliffe, Kim Potter, Raymond Colquhoun, Margaret Casey, Carole Halls and Louise Southwell. **Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently:** Peter Wells; **and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:** Michael Brennan, Peter Leicester, Marie Mealand, Gladys Morel, Eamon Mulleady and Tilly Gallagher

The following are requested to read at Mass next weekend, March 28th/29th, The Fifth Sunday of Lent:

- Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Brigid Hogan
- Sunday 8.30 a.m.: Murray Wilson-Browne
- 12.00 p.m.: Dennis Wood
- 5.30 p.m.: Simon Stacey

Collections:

Third Sunday of Lent:
15th March, 2009

Offertory: £1,480
Second: Music in our Church: £585

Many Thanks

TODAY

The second collection today will be for the Diocesan Development fund.

The **PIETY STALL** is open after all Sunday Masses. It also includes a wide selection of books for spiritual reading in Lent, and gifts for Baptism, Confirmation and First Holy Communion.

THIS WEEK

ADORATION AT REDNAL takes place this week on **Wednesday**, commencing with Mass at 2.30 p.m. and ending with Benediction.

Our **TALKS on ST PAUL & HIS TEACHINGS in this Year which Pope Benedict has designated as the Year of St Paul** continue on Saturday in the Lower Cloister Hall after the 11 a.m. Mass (approx 11.30 a.m.) This week the talk will be given by Fr Philip on the subject of "St Paul's Letters to Sts. Timothy and Titus" **These talks are extremely interesting and informative. Please come along and encourage your friends in other parishes to do so.**

THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE is holding a meeting entitled "Being Salt and Light in God's World" at the Evangelical Church, Greatfield Road, Kidderminster on Wednesday 25th March at 7.30 p.m. to discuss some very important and current threats to Christian life in this country such as: legalised attacks on Religious liberty—proposed Free speech Amendment by the Government—the Sanctity of Life. There are leaflets available for anyone who is interested in attending, describing the subjects under discussion and directions to the venue. Although this is the Feast of the Annunciation, it is such an important set of issues facing all Christians in this country now that it is important for as many persons as possible to attend and support this initiative.

The **LEGION OF MARY** Annual Acies will take place at St Patrick's Church, Dudley Road at 7 p.m. on Wednesday March 25th. All active members and auxiliaries, senior and junior, are invited.

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE (CWL) is holding its annual Study Morning on Saturday, March 28th in the Grimshaw Room at St. Chad's Cathedral from 10.45 a.m. to 12.45 p.m., at which Mgr. Moran will give a talk on the life of St. Paul followed by reflection and prayer. £2 admission includes tea and coffee. All are welcome.

day, March 29th at 3.15 p.m. in the Oratory House. Subject: "The best way of keeping Holy Week well".

THE SEVEN CHURCHES WALK will take place this year on Saturday 4th April beginning from St. Catherine's Bristol Street at 2 p.m., including stations for prayer at St. Catherine's, St. Chad's, St. Francis's, the Convent of Mercy, Handsworth, St. Patrick's, St. Paul's Convent and the Oratory. You are welcome to join us for all or part of this walk St. Anne's).

NOTICES

YOUNG ADULTS' GROUP (aged 20 to 35) will meet on the first Thursday of each month at 7.30 p.m. in the Oratory house to share and deepen their faith and to socialise. All are welcome. The first meeting will be on Thursday April 2nd. All enquiries to Richard on 07905 601721, or to Fr Anton.

APF RED BOXES should be returned next week for the end of the Quarter-year.

CONCELEBRATED MASS COMMEMORATING CARDINAL NEWMAN'S MINISTRY AT ST ANNE'S, ALCESTER STREET (1849-1852) will be offered on Wednesday, 22nd April at 7 p.m. by Bishop Gilles Cabazon, OMI, Emeritus Bishop of St. Jerome, Quebec, Canada. The Preacher will be Fr Paul. Mass will be followed by a Reception hosted by Trident Housing in Cherish House (opposite

PILGRIMAGES:

1) **DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES**, Saturday 23rd May to 30th May. Prices: £589-710. Please see the Notice Boards. Fr Guy has a couple of booking forms. As usual this conflicts with St. Philip's Day, so there will be no official Parish contingent.

2) **FATIMA**, 10th-17th July. £559 with Mgr. Tom Fallon. Tel 429 4145
SUDANESE ORPHANS IN UGANDA. Although the parish and its members give great support year by year, the needs are enormous. We have received a request for sponsorship for Exam fees and School fees for 15 children: 9 @ £26 each, 2 @ £31 each, 2 @ £60 each and 2 @ £111 each (university fees). Anyone willing to sponsor a child is asked to give money to Fr Gregory. Cheques should be payable to "South Sudan Education Support Group". Cash should be handed