



TIMES OF THE LITURGY

Sunday - 7.45am - Lauds | 8.15am - Low Mass | 9.15am - Dominican Rite Mass (Extraordinary Form) | 11am - Sung Conventual Mass | 6pm - Low Mass | 7pm - Vespers.

Monday - Friday - 7am - Lauds | 7.30am - Conventual Mass | 6.15pm - Devotions and Meditation | 6.30pm - Vespers. [N.B. First Fridays of the month, Vespers in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament with a period of Adoration from 6.15pm.]

Saturday - 9am - Lauds | 9.30am - Conventual Mass | 4.30-6pm - Confessions | 6.15pm - Sung Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary | 6.30pm - Vespers.

THIS WEEK

- Sun 23 **XII SUNDAY PER ANNUM**
- Mon 24 **THE NATIVITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST**
- Tue 25 *feria*
- Wed 26 THE DEDICATION OF THE DIOCESAN CATHEDRAL
- Thu 27 *feria*
- Fri 28 St Irenaeus
- Sat 29 Our Lady on Saturday
- Sun 30 **Ss PETER & PAUL (TRANSFERRED)**



THE NATIVITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

First Vespers 23 June - 7pm | Lauds - 7am | Sung Conventual Mass - 7.30am | Rosary & Meditation - 6.15pm | Vespers - 6.30pm.



Lauds, Mass, and Vespers are broadcast daily on Radio Maria. To listen visit: <https://radiomariaengland.uk/>

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cambridge.bursar@english.op.org



SOLEMNITY OF SS PETER & PAUL

SUNDAY 30 JUNE - TRANSFERRED FROM 29 JUNE.

First Vespers - 6.30pm | 7.45am - Lauds | 8.15am - Low Mass | 9.15am - Dominican Rite Mass (Extraordinary Form) | 11am - Sung Conventual Mass | 6pm - Low Mass | 7pm - Vespers.

Men's Day Retreat: CALLED TO SERVE, Saturday 6 July 2024 at the Catholic National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. Join Fr Sean Connolly and a group of Catholic men from the Diocese of East Anglia to discuss and reflect on the mission of service to family, parish and the wider community. Includes confession, Mass, Holy Mile and Rosary as well as talks and discussion. Please bring your own packed lunch. Cost for the day is £12.50. To book, email <mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk>.

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You're invited to the LOOK! THIS IS MY FAITH exhibition, featuring artworks from "The Material Rendering of 'Divine' and 'Faith' of Practising Christian Adults with Artistic Skills" research project led by Sr Marie Kašparová OP. Explore how Christian artists express their beliefs through art, symbols, and language. This exhibition not only displays diverse artistic expressions but also provides a space for deep exploration of profound themes at the confluence of art, science, and spirituality. Dates/times: In person 25-27 June 2024, opened 12.30-20.30. Private View on 25 June at 18.30. Online from 25 June 2024. Venue: Garden Room, St Edmund's College, Mount Pleasant, Cambridge CB3 0BN. Weblink: <<https://www.creativenun.com/the-artists-project>>.

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The next talk in the Holy Preaching series will be "Hallowed by Thy Name" on Wednesday 26 at 7.30pm at the convent, 155 Huntingdon Road Cambridge, CB3 0DH. All welcome.

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What is knowing? From 23 to 26 August 2024, the Christian Heritage Centre at Stonyhurst, Clitheroe will be offering a residential course on Divine, human, and artificial intelligence. For more information, please visit <<https://christianheritagecentre.com/events>>

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The Historical Association in association with Waterstones is putting on a History Day on the morning of Saturday 29 June at Waterstones, in which Dr Lucy Underwood will be speaking on Catholics in Tudor England. Dr Underwood is a Research Fellow at Warwick University and her academic career has been rooted in researching the lives of Catholics, notably children, in Tudor England. The event starts at 10am and continues until lunchtime. Tickets cost £8.00 and are available from Waterstones: <<https://www.waterstones.com/events/history-days-in-collaboration-with-the-historical-association/cambridge>>.

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Theology After Blackfriars: You are invited to an engaging two-day discussion of the intellectual contributions of the Oxford Dominicans of the last century. The conference will take place at Blackfriars Oxford, from Tuesday 25 to Wednesday 26 June. For further details, please visit <<https://www.english.op.org/latest-news/theology-after-blackfriars-academic-conference>>.

IS IGNORANCE BLISS?

For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law (Romans 2:12).

I think about this verse from St Paul a lot. It is from the Letter of St Paul to the Romans, the most important of the Epistles in the New Testament. Being the most important, it is also the most debated of the Epistles, as regards its meaning, its relevance and purpose. The Reformation is largely a dispute about the meaning of this letter, and as such, we cannot understand the history of the western world in the last five hundred years without having some inkling of what that dispute was about. There are so many commentaries and writings about the Letter to the Romans, that a lifetime would not be enough to read them. The commentaries themselves do not give us clear answers to the questions raised by the letter. One commentary gave about sixteen possible answers to the question of why St Paul wrote the letter. There are many more answers which could be given to that question. I think that everyone who studies St Paul would agree that it has something to do with the problem of the redemption of the Jews and the role of the Law in this redemption. Paul wrote the letter in Greek to Christians in Rome most of whom would be Jewish with probably only a few converts from Paganism. Yet Paul already knows that the message of Christ is not just for the Jews. In fact, he knows that the mission to the Jews will ultimately fail, and Christianity will be accepted among the Gentiles, the other nations, more than among the Jews.

In Romans, he makes a distinction between Jews and Greeks, which in some ways is a contrast between the Jews, the children of Abraham and the nations outside of the covenant. Yet there is also a clear awareness of the specific nature of the Greek speaking world, which Paul when he was known as Saul was a part of as Greek speaking Roman citizen from Tarsus in Asia Minor. He calls it 'no mean city', (Acts 21:39), showing an identity with this town, but he was also a Jew, an identity which was not taken away by his accepting Christ as the saviour.

I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin (Romans 11:1).

The Jews as a whole will not accept Christ, but Paul is quite clear that this is not going to be forever.

Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob" (Romans 11:25-6).

When Paul speaks of the law, we have a difficulty, since it is not clear to what extent he means the specific laws of Judaism, the Torah, and to what extent he is talking about law as a whole. There is something of both, but in Romans, it seems to me that Paul is talking about the moral law, while aware that this moral law is taught most clearly in the Jewish world. Much of the Torah, Paul believes to have passed out of use with the coming of Christ, but the moral law is the law which is not abolished by Christ but rather which is fulfilled and brought to perfection.

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them (Matthew 5:17).

Different civilizations have different laws, not all of them perfect by any means, and often unfair or irrational. Paul did not think that the Jewish law was a bad law which needed to be replaced by a new law, but that the old law was for a purpose, which ended with Christ. Yet much of the law which was about how to live a good life would remain. What though, if the law was itself a danger to our salvation? We Christians are rather prone to thinking just that. It is because we have an idea of salvation, that we sometimes find ourselves thinking that it might be better to leave people in ignorance of what is right and wrong. That way their ignorance would protect them from judgement. This is what makes the quotation from St Paul so relevant. Paul at this point is clearly thinking of law as what makes us able to live well on this earth. I would use the analogy of traffic laws. If we imagine someone coming from a strange country where red traffic lights mean go, and green lights mean stop, that person is liable to have an accident in our country. If somehow, they failed to notice the different practice here, they might well go through a red light, crash and be killed. They would have broken the law in one sense, since they went against the law, but in another sense, they would not have consciously broken the law.

Ignorance of the law might protect us from judgement, though Paul does not say that the ignorant will not be judged. What he says is that they will be destroyed. A consistent failure to live in the right way will lead to destruction. If we do know what the law is, that is to say, what it is to live well, but still break that law, then we will be judged from our own knowledge. Specifically, Paul is thinking of the Jews who are portrayed as knowing the law because they were taught it, and the Gentiles who are given a less reliable teaching, but as Paul says,

For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law (Romans 2:14).

With this verse, Paul subverts his own contrast between Jew and Gentile since even the Gentiles are not wholly unaware of the law in the sense that there are things we should do in our lives, and right ways to live. The term 'natural law' comes from this passage, but it does not mean that cultures cannot go wrong. Those who have a conscience about what is right and wrong will find themselves opposed to a society which may destroy them. Without the knowledge of the sacrifice of Christ, and the meaning of this for us, that in dying for what is right, we become martyrs for the truth, it is unlikely that many would face death rather than doing wrong. Those who do know the truth, those who are taught this in Judaism or Christianity are less likely to do wrong, even though judged more harshly for their wrongdoing. This is an answer to those who say that the immoral seem to prosper. If people do wrong consistently, they will not prosper but often immoral people have enough knowledge of the law to limit their wrongdoing. If they avoid serious harm in this life, it is often because of what is retained of the moral law, protecting them from ultimate destruction. It is better not to be ignorant. Ignorance is not bliss. We do well to be open about the law, to teach what is right and wrong. In doing so, we protect each other, we protect ourselves from destruction, together we make our way to redemption.