

A BUNDLE OF BONES ...?

What's a saint? It's not a bad thing for us to ponder at the beginning of the month of November.

In the *The Dream of Gerontius*, Blessed John Henry Newman puts this very question into the mouths of the demons he pictures tormenting the poem's hero on his death bed. Their reply, though deliberately crude and shocking, might help to clarify our own thinking. A saint, the wicked spirits assert, is nothing but "a bundle of bones which fools adore, when life is o'er". How might we respond?

The first thing to notice is that Newman's demons are very bad theologians. Catholic Christians do not adore the saints: that would indeed be foolish. The saints, after all, are our brothers and sisters; they are not God. And God alone is worthy of adoration, the loving, grateful acknowledgement that he is the creator of heaven and earth, on whom we depend for all that we have and are. But though we do not adore the saints, reflecting on them can – and should – deepen our adoration. Christians of other traditions are sometimes concerned that the Catholic emphasis on the saints may lead us away from the worship of God. But if, as St Paul tells us, we are all God's works of art, the saints are his masterpieces of grace, in whom he expresses himself with particular beauty. To speak of the saints distracting us from God is a little like speaking of *Hamlet* distracting us from Shakespeare or the *Missa Solemnis* distracting us from Beethoven.

And if human beings are God's work of art, no human body is something to be treated with contempt, as though it were nothing but a "bundle of bones". That has implications for how we think about heaven, and for how we remember our beloved dead, as we are called to do especially in November. When we pray for the faithful departed, we express our hope, not for a vaguely spiritual "afterlife" where bodies will be surplus to requirements, but for a new reality unimaginably richer and more solid than anything we know here and now.

Sr Ann



FISHER HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Sunday 5 November: 31st Sunday of the Year

CALENDAR: WEEK V OF TERM

Sunday 5	31st SUNDAY OF THE YEAR 9.00 Sung Latin Mass 11.00 Sung English Mass
Monday 6	1.05 Mass
Tuesday 7	1.05 Mass
Wednesday 8	1.05 Mass 12.30 <i>Exposition of Blessed Sacrament</i>
Thursday 9	1.05 Mass <i>Dedication of Lateran Basilica</i>
Friday 10	1.05 Mass <i>St Leo the Great</i> 7.30 <i>Exposition, Evening Prayer & Reflection</i>
Saturday 11	1.05 Mass <i>St Martin of Tours</i> 4.30 - 5.30 <i>Confessions</i> 6.00 Vigil Mass of Sunday
Sunday 12	32nd SUNDAY: REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 9.00 Sung Latin Mass 11.00 Sung English Mass

MONS. MARK LANGHAM : SR ANN SWAILES OP : FR PHILIP MOLLER SJ

MASS AT FITZWILLIAM

Mass will be celebrated in the chapel at Fitzwilliam College on Tuesday, at 5.30pm (note change of time). This is a great opportunity to see the chapel of a different college and meet its community. All are welcome.

TAIZE

A groups meets for Taize prayer on the first Monday of each month in the chapel. All are welcome next Monday, 9.00pm.

REFORMATION SERVICE

This afternoon, Sunday 5 November, at 4.00pm, Fr Mark will be representing the Catholic Community in an Reformation commemoration at St Edward's, - where the reformers preached their first sermons. All welcome.

CAFOD

The CAFOD group meets on Sundays at 12.15pm in the Library for 45 minutes to discuss Pope Francis' teaching on the Care of Creation.

CAMBRIDGE CHURCHES' HOMELESS PROJECT

If you will be here over the Christmas holiday, or want to help early in the new year with this project, please contact Stephen Barwise on stephenbarwise@btinternet.com

TUESDAY TALKS:

APOLOGIA

This week, Fr Nicholas Crowe will speak on *Love and What You Will*. All welcome. Dinner at 7.00pm, talk at 7.45pm, followed by Compline and Bar.

CONSIDER YOUR CALL

A group for those thinking about religious life or priesthood, to pray, discuss and support each other. Meeting in the Great Chamber on Thursday 9 November at 4.00pm

SAINTS AND SCONES

Hear about a saint as you enjoy a real Devon cream tea. This week: *St Charles Borromeo* - with a chance to view his relic! Sunday 4.30pm Sr Anne's room.

3-6 DEC. RETREAT TO MOUNT ST BERNARDS

If you would like to take part, please sign the notice outside the chapel. List closes next weekend.

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

Cambridge City Foodbank has a scheme to donate Christmas hampers to struggling families in the area. If you would like to participate visit cambridgecity.foodbank.org.uk/2017/10/30/2017-christmas-hamper-scheme/ which tells you all about it. You can sign up there. For any queries, email Jan Lash (jal49)

REFORMATION PANEL

One of the major events of term. On Wednesday at 7.30pm, a panel discussion chaired by Prof. Duffy. Distinguished members of the panel, representing Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican and Calvinist traditions, will speak and answer questions. Full details on the noticeboard.

INTERFAITH TALK

On Thursday, at 7.30pm, Mr Jay Lakhani will speak on the Hindu religion.

INTERFAITH SABBATH

You are invited to take part in an interfaith sabbath on November 10th, at 6.00pm. Dinner will be served afterwards (optional, but recommended). £5 Meet at Fisher House 5.45, or for the dinner for 7.00pm at 3, Thompson's Lane. Contact Michael Miller on mhlm2

GIVING TREE

The SVP's traditional 'Giving Tree' will be here next week, encouraging us to buy a gift for a homeless person over Christmas.

BENSON CLUB

We are reading Graham Greene's masterpiece *The Power and the Glory*. Every Catholic should have read this book! We will discuss it on Wed. 22 November.

CUCA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND ELECTIONS

The CUCA Annual General Meeting will be held at 12:00 on 26 November 2017. Elections for positions on CUCA Council will take place at the AGM. The following positions are to be filled: President;

Secretary (Dr Mark Retter standing for election); Treasurer (Dr Damian Crowther standing for re-election); Librarian (Ms Alex Browne standing for re-election); three Ordinary Members.

If you wish to stand for election for one of these positions, please contact the Acting Secretary at least 7 days before the meeting and arrange for your nomination to be proposed and seconded. For all enquiries, please contact: cuca_secretary@fisherhouse.org.uk.

FAITH IN POLITICS INTERNSHIPS

A tremendous opportunity for recent graduates to gain experience in Parliament and Public life. These internships are sponsored by the Bishops of England and Wales. Details on the poster outside the chapel.

COLLECTION LAST WEEK

£361.74

Thank you!