

INTROIBO AD ALTARE DEI

The new stone altar in Fisher House completes the marvellous renovation of the Chapel begun by Fr Alban, and is in itself a tribute to him; friends and colleagues raised the funds as a gift when Fr Alban was leaving Fisher House.

That sense of completion is no mere decorative assertion. As a place where the Mass is offered, the altar encapsulates and fulfils the whole purpose of our Chaplaincy, which is to place Christ at the centre of our lives, particularly in celebrating the Eucharist. It is, then, worth thinking about what an altar means, and what it represents.

Firstly, it is the place of sacrifice; the unique sacrifice of Christ on the cross, offered daily by the Church. Of old, altars were made of stone whereupon animals were offered in sacrifice to God. But now God has said that he “delights not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs or of goats” (Isaiah 1:11). The sacrifice of Christ, the lamb who takes away our sins, has made all other sacrifices irrelevant, for Christ “sacrificed for [our] sins once for all when he offered himself” (Hebrews 7:27). Our stone altar is a reminder that this is where the perfect, once-for-all, sacrifice is offered.

Secondly, the altar is a table of communion – where our ‘Amen’ to the statement ‘The Body of Christ’ means, “Yes: I am part of this communion of faith”. Communion with the Church throughout space and time. It is at this altar that we, in union with the saints and angels, will sing with one voice ‘*Holy, Holy, Holy*’. It is at this altar that we proclaim communion with the saints throughout the ages, as witnessed by the relics that shall be placed within it.

In the third place, our altar itself represents Christ, who is called in the Easter Preface the ‘*priest, altar and lamb*’ of his own sacrifice. Thus the altar top bears five crosses, alluding to the five wounds of Christ. The priest kisses it at the beginning of Mass, we bow to it during Mass, and we bless it with incense. Its very stone reminds us that Christ is the cornerstone; indeed, St Paul calls him ‘*the rock*’ (1 Cor 10:4), while to St Peter Christ is the ‘*living stone*’ (1 Peter 2:5). Thereby we are reminded that we too are ‘living stones’ offering an acceptable sacrifice through Jesus Christ.

Fr Mark

The consecration of the altar takes place on Sunday 31 May



FISHER HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Sunday 1 February - 4th Sunday of the Year

CALENDAR

Sunday 1		FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR	
	9.00	Sung Latin Mass	
	11.00	Sung English Mass	
Monday 2	12.30	Mass	The Presentation of the Lord
Tuesday 3	1.05	Mass	
Wednesday 4	1.05	Mass	
	12.30	<i>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</i>	
Thursday 5	1.05	Mass	St Agatha
Friday 6	1.05	Mass	St Paul Miki and Companions
	7.30	Mass	
Saturday 7	1.05	Mass	(Extraordinary Form)
	4.30—5.30	<i>Confessions</i>	
	6.00	Vigil Mass of Sunday	
Sunday 8		FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR	
	9.00	Sung Latin Mass	
	11.00	Sung English Mass	

BENSON DINNER

The annual Graduate Society Dinner will take place on Saturday 7 February. Please contact Hugh Burling (*hdpd2*).

IMPERIAL COLLEGE CHAPLAINCY VISIT

Members of Imperial College will be with us at 11.00am Mass today, and will join us for lunch in the Fisher Room immediately after. Cost of lunch £2.

PALM BRANCHES

The ash used on Ash Wednesday is traditionally made from last year's palms used on Palm Sunday. If you have any old palms, please bring them in to one of the chaplains, so that we can burn them in preparation for Lent.

THE CERTAINTY OF

NEWMAN An exhibition following Cardinal Newman's conversion, focusing on the role of conscience in his decision, will be held at Fisher House from 8 - 15 February. Tours available on Sundays 8 and 15: please see noticeboard for times.

NEWMAN LECTURE

On Thursday 5 February, Paul Hitchings will speak on Cardinal Newman, as an introduction to the exhibition to be held at Fisher House. 8.00pm Fisher Room.

CHAPLAINCY ASSISTANT

We are delighted that Ryan Day will be working as Chaplaincy Assistant for this academic year. Ryan is well qualified for chaplaincy work, is a keen sportsman and an excellent photographer, and will be a welcome addition to our team. Do say hello when you see him around.

REMEMBER VATICAN II?

The Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology, Cambridge, is seeking the opinions of local Roman Catholic parishioners who remember the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) and its immediate aftermath. If you are interested in more information and participating in the project by answering a short survey, please contact Ms. Emma Harris (ejh@cam.ac.uk).

ARE YOU AN ARTIST? We

know you are out there! If you have produced paintings or sculptures, and you would like to contribute to a Fisher House Art exhibition, please contact Fr Mark on ml709.

STUDENT CROSS: ELY LEG

2015. Student Cross meets in Ely on Tuesday 31 March, to walk for three days to Walsingham for Good Friday and Easter. If you would like to join in the fun and fellowship, please contact Colin and Leonie Wilding (leonie@thewildings.eclipse.co.uk). Please see poster for details.

FISHER SOCIETY ELECTION

Please see the board outside the chapel for details of those standing for election for the Fisher Society Committee. Voting takes place on Sunday 8 February after 11.00am Mass, and any Catholic member of Fisher House can participate.

APOLOGETICS GROUP

Meeting in the Library on Saturday at 7.00pm. For more information contact Hania Wyciszczok (*hmw56*) or Max Nussbaumer (*mn406*).

SPIRITUAL READING GROUP

Meets on Thursday for Vespers at 6.30pm in the chapel, and then in Sr Ann's room to discuss a spiritual classic over wine.

SAINTS AND SCONES

This week a special guest will speak on St Kateri Tekakwitha, the first Native American saint to be canonised.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

The next course for couples preparing for marriage will begin on Monday 9 March at 7.00pm. If you wish to attend, or would like more information, contact Fr Mark (ml709).

CATHOLICISM FOR

THE CURIOUS On Monday, at 1.15pm over lunch, Fr Mark will talk on the Japanese Martyrs. All welcome.

EXTRAORDINARY FORM

MASS Will be celebrated next Saturday, 7 February, at 1.05pm.

SCRIPTURE GROUP

Fr Bruno OP will lead the Scripture Study Group on Wednesday at 8.00pm in the Library.

SENIOR MEMBERS' GROUP

The group will meet to discuss the forthcoming Synod on the Family, and then to study a Lent Book. All senior members of the University are welcome. For details please contact Jan Lash (*jal49*).

DANTE CIRCLE

The Circle meets in the Great Chamber at 6.30pm on Wednesday, to discuss Cantos V of Inferno, and III of Purgatorio and Paradiso. For further details, please see the Circle's page on www.facebook.com/groups/655496891227108/

MEDICAL ETHICS GROUP

The group, of special but not exclusive interest to medics, meets on Mondays at 7.00pm in the Fisher House library. This week: "The moral responsibility of the NHS towards patients and the role of consent in medical ethics" Contact Basia Chmielewska (*bjmc2*).

WEEKLY COLLECTION

Collection last week: £559.12
Thank you!