

those who had abandoned the faith under Roman persecution. “Novationists” held that they could never be received back into the Church, while Pope Cornelius (251-253 A.D) decided that, after proper penance, they should be. Bishop Cyprian of Carthage supported this but became involved with Pope Stephen in a consequential dispute. Cyprian condemned Stephen’s ruling that those baptised by Novationists, or other heretics, did not need re-baptism, since any baptism performed in the name of the Trinity was valid (still the accepted teaching). Stephen wrote to the churches in Asia Minor threatening to cut off communion with those who followed Cyprian. In doing so, Stephen relied on his succession to Peter as rock of the Church. Though Cyprian did not accept Stephen’s claimed authority he avoided open attacks on the authority of Rome. Stephen died shortly after in 257 A.D., followed by Cyprian’s martyrdom in 258 A.D – thus defusing the confrontation. By this date, as Duffy states: *“Rome remained a fundamental symbol of the unity of the episcopate, with whom an absolute breach was unthinkable”*. So the scene was set for the later, permanent primacy of the Bishop of Rome as Pope and leader of the Roman Catholic Church as direct successor of St Peter. (1) Professor Eamon Duffy (1997) (2) 130 A.D. – 202 A.D; Bishop of Lyon
-Stephen. S

Entrance Antiphon: Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.

First Reading: Deuteronomy 18 15-20

Responsorial Psalm: 24 Response: O that today you would listen to his voice! Harden not your hearts.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:32-35

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Blessed are you, Father Lord of heaven and earth, for revealing the mysteries of the kingdom to mere children. Alleluia!

Gospel: Mark 1:21-28

Memorial Acclamation: We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

Communion Antiphon: Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.



Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B, 2024 Weekly Reflection: The Emergence of the Papacy (2)

Based on Professor Duffy’s book *“Saints & Sinners – A History of the Popes”* (1), I explained in the first

article that, although New Testament passages imply that Peter’s authority continued in the early Christian community after his death, nevertheless there was no Bishop of Rome well into the 2nd century A.D., despite bishops having begun to emerge and speak authoritatively in other Christian centres from towards the end of the 1st century.

In A.D. 140 one Marcion arrived in Rome preaching that there were two Gods, the “angry” Old Testament God and Jesus Christ. He taught that much scripture had to be rejected. This heresy, and others, led to Rome, in about 150 A.D., accepting the need for Church rule by a single bishop and tighter organisation. The Roman church, conscious of the tradition that SS. Peter & Paul were martyred in Rome under Nero, began to reflect more on its apostolic pedigree. In about the mid-150s a succession list of Roman bishops after Peter’s death was compiled, drawing on the names of leading presbyters which still remain in the Roman Canon of the Mass - Linus, Cletus and Clement. As Duffy writes: *“The list is certainly a good deal tidier than the actual transition to rule by a single bishop can have been”*. About the mid 2nd century, shrines were constructed in Rome to St Peter and St Paul. All this led to a general belief in the precedence of Rome in the church. St Irenaeus (2) wrote: *“it is necessary that.... the faithful everywhere, should resort to this Church [of Rome], on account of its pre-eminent authority in which the apostolic tradition has been preserved continuously”*. By the early 3rd century Rome was an accepted point of reference for Christians throughout the Mediterranean. Yet allegiance to Rome was by no means unqualified. There were other seats of apostolic authority (e.g. Corinth and Ephesus); other bishops used the title ‘pope’, which only became confined to the Bishop of Rome from the 6th century. Duffy summarises the position thus: *“Christ had indeed founded the Church on Peter, but all the Apostles and all bishops shared fully in the one indivisible apostolic power”*. An incident involving Pope Stephen (254-257 A.D.) is illustrative. A dispute had arisen involving



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28- January-2024

Eucharistic Prayer II or III

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time Day of Special Prayer for Racial Justice

R.C DIOCESE OF SHREWSBURY REG. CHARITY No.234025

Saturday (Vigil) 6.00pm	Parishioners
Sunday 8.30am	Peter Sivori
10:00am	P.J. Martin
Monday 10.00am (Please note change of time)	
Tuesday 9.30am	
Wednesday 9.30am	St John Bosco
Thursday 9.30am	
Friday 9.30am	The presentation of the Lord/Feast
Saturday 11.30am	St Werburgh
Saturday (Vigil) 6.00pm	Parishioners
Sunday 8.30am	5 th Sunday in Ordinary Time Dermot Dunleavy
10.00am	Richard & Agnes Purcell

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Confessions - Every Saturday at 11.00am. Morning Prayers 9.15am -Monday to Friday

Bishop Mark's Visitation to the Parish. Masses Saturday 9th March (6pm) and Sunday 10th March (8.30 and 10am): Bishop Mark will preside at all these masses during his visit to our Parish. After each mass he would like to meet parishioners in the parish hall. This is a wonderful occasion to welcome and speak to our bishop. We hope that as many as possible will benefit from the opportunity to show that we at St Pius are an active, devoted parish who appreciate his pastoral care.

December Finances

Offertory Envelopes	Loose Plate	Standing Orders	Donation	Total
£908.00	£1,243.50	£1,201.50	£100.00	
Christmas Envelopes	£ 200.00			£4,666.90
Christmas Loose Plate	£ 1,013.90			

Annual collection for the Retired Priests' Fund is taken during this time. Your generous offerings will help meet the future needs of our sick and retired priests. To donate online please go to www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/retired-priests-fund Plain envelopes & gift aid forms are available at the back of the church for donations. Sealed envelopes (marked priest's retirement fund) can be returned via the collection basket until the third Sunday of February.

Churches together in Alderley Edge: Last Sunday evening's ecumenical service for the week for Christian Unity was well attended by St Pius parishioners and by parishioners of the other Churches in Alderley. A big thank you to all of you who came and especially to those who gave of their time to make it such a success.

Lourdes Hospitality Next Meeting: A meeting of the Shrewsbury Lourdes Hospitality will take place at St Columba's Church (meeting room), Plas Newton Lane , Chester CH2 1PL on Saturday 20th January at 2pm . All members of the Hospitality are welcome to attend.

Christian Marriage: Marriage Week runs from February 7th to 14th 2024. A Loving 4 Life Marriage Enrichment Retreat for couples has been organised by the Mission for Marriage Team to take place over the weekend in the middle of Marriage Week from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon on February 9th to 11th, at Wistaston Hall in Crewe. The Betrothed Marriage Preparation Course which runs over two consecutive Saturdays, will take place on the 2nd and 9th of March 2024 at Westleigh, St Vincent de Paul Parish Hall, in Altrincham. For bookings and further information, please contact Jane Deegan: jane.deegan@dioceseofshrewsbury.org Mobile: 07517 906435. To see marriage week booklet please visit our website.

Mission at St Joseph's, Stockport: A parish mission will be held from 4th to 6th March. Sister Briega McKenna will lead the mission together with Father Pablo Escriva De Romani.

Diocesan Choir Festival – 'Sing a New Song' You are invited to come along and sing as part of a diocesan choir. On Saturday 24 February, 10.30am-4.30pm with Mass beginning at 5pm. Learn music throughout the day. At St Anthony's, Dunkery Road, Woodhouse Park, Wythenshawe, M22 0WR. Details on the notice board.