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# Ñ Contra Mundum Ñ

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Volume I, Issue 4

November 1998

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The Congregation of St. Athanasius - Roman Catholic, Anglican Use

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## Notes from the Chaplain

**T**HIS month we continue our series of Evensongs (November 1st, All Saints' Day) and have our parish retreat (November 13-15). Both occasions bring the return visits of old friends of the Congregation of St. Athanasius.

Dr. Peter Kreeft first visited us at All Saints' Ashmont for Candlemas in 1995, then returned for the same feast in the Dedham Convent in 1997. He is Professor of Philosophy in Boston College and a well-known writer with over thirty-five books, including such best sellers as Fundamentals of the Faith (1988) and Ecumenical Jihad (1995). He writes frequently for *Crisis*, *Fist things*, and *Christianity Today*, and is much in demand as a speaker and lecturer.

Fr. Joseph Wilson is a priest in the Diocese of Brooklyn, from which he has visited us, both in the All Saints' Rectory and in the Dedham Convent, celebrating Sunday Masses and giving Lenten programs. Fr. Wilson generously supplied our first set of Mass vestments. Most recently he attended my ordination in May, 1998. He is a popular retreat conductor, having been invited to give missions in New York, Pennsylvania,



Chicago, Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas.....as well as here with us! His articles appear in *Christian Challenge*, *Fidelity*, and *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*. He is a Curate and Director of Education at St. Luke's Church & School in Whitestone, New York.

Of interest is Dr. Thomas Howard's short list of readings, prepared at my asking, as a follow-up to his wonderful visit to us September 13th. Enjoy! You and I have reason to give thanks for good friends.

Our Every Member Canvass will take place November 8th. Please become informed both of our needs and great opportunity for good in the life of the Church in Boston as you consider your pledge of financial support of our ministry.

Please keep Ronald Jaynes (home now) and Marysia Swanberg

(presently at Braintree Rehab Hospital) in your prayers as they regain strength. Also Fr. Titus Oates sends his thanks for our cards and good wishes and the assurance of his prayers for us. Some of you will know that Fr. Oates entered the Catholic Church earlier this year, has been seriously ill, and lives in retirement in Maine.

Blessings!  
Fr. Bradford

## Death and the Communion of Saints

**D**EATH is the touchstone of our attitude to life. People who are afraid of death are afraid of life. It is impossible not to be afraid of life with all its complexity and dangers if one is afraid of death. This means that to solve the problem of death is not a luxury. If we are afraid of death we will never be prepared to take ultimate risks; we will spend our life in a cowardly, careful and timid manner. It is only if we can face death, make sense of it, determine its place and our place in regard to it, that we will be able to live in a fearless way and to the fullness of our ability. Too often we wait until the end of our life to face death,

whereas we would have lived quite differently if only we had faced death at the outset.

Most of the time we live as though we were writing a draft for the life which we will live later. We live, not in a definitive way, but provisionally, as though preparing for the day when we really will begin to live. We are like people who write a rough draft with the intention of making a fair copy later. But the final version never gets written. Death comes before we have had the time or even generated the desire to make a definitive formulation.

The injunction 'be mindful of death' is not a call to live with a sense of terror in the constant awareness that death is to overtake us. It means rather: 'Be aware of the fact that what you are saying now, doing now, hearing, enduring or receiving now may be the *last* event or experience of your present life.' In which case it must be a crowning, not a defeat; a summit, not a trough. If only we realized whenever confronted with a person that this might be the last moment either of his life or of ours, we would be much more intense, much more attentive to the words we speak and the things we do.

Only an awareness of death will give life this immediacy and depth, will bring life to life, will make it so intense that its totality is summed up in the present moment. All life is at every moment an ultimate act.

METROPOLITAN ANTHONY OF  
SOUROZH

**E**VERY day call this prayer to mind, and repeat it to yourself as often as possible: 'Lord, have mercy upon all who appear before thee today. For at



**Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, O.C.D. (Edith Stein)  
Canonized October 11, 1998**

every hour and every moment thousands of people depart from this earthly life and their souls appear before God -- and how many of them depart in loneliness, unknown to anyone, sad and dejected because no one feels sorrow for them or even cares whether they are alive or not! And then, perhaps, from the other end of the earth your prayer for the repose of their souls will rise up to God, although you never knew them nor they you. How deeply moving it must be for a man's soul, as he stands in fear and trembling before the Lord, to know at that very instant that there is someone to pray even for him, that there is still a fellow creature left on earth who loves him! And God will look on both of you more favourably, for if you have had so much pity on him, how much greater will God's pity be, for God is infinitely more loving and merciful than you! And he will forgive him for your sake.

FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY  
'The Discourses of Father Zossima'

## Tom Howard's list of excellent books for those *en route* to the Church:

Karl Adam: *The Spirit of Catholicism*, Franciscan U., Steubenville.

David Currie: *Born Fundamentalist, Born Again Catholic*, Ignatius.

Stephen Ray: *Crossing the Tiber*, Ignatius

Patrick Madrid, ed.: *Surprised by Truth*, Basilica Press.

Thomas Howard: *On being Catholic*, Ignatius.

Robert Sungenis: *Not by Faith Alone*, Ignatius (?.. or Queenship).

The Currie, Ray, and Madrid ones are the least scholarly, and hence probably the most accessible to your ordinary lay reader.

## Meeting of the Congregation

At a meeting of the Congregation of Saint Athanasius, following Mass on October 18, Father Bradford presented a budget for the fiscal year, July through June of \$58,600. The clear message of the meeting is that we have been able to meet challenges in the past with God's help, and we will be able to meet this challenge, which obviously presupposes an increase in our membership.

### Memorable Quote:

"The past must be abandoned to God's mercy, the present to our fidelity, the future to divine providence."

Francis De Sales

## Sixty some years from then to now

**Y**EARS ago, in 1937, two Congregationalist girls growing up in Wethersfield CT wished they were Catholics -- my friend so she could have some pretty rosary beads and I in order to ride the weekly school bus to catechism class. I never did get to ride the bus, but now I have beads on which to pray my Rosary. In the sixty some years between then and now, my journey from South Congregational in Hartford where my parents belonged has been lengthy and varied.

I had been baptized in a Chapel which merged with South Church (the second in the city). When I was old enough for Sunday School, my aunt took me on the trolley to Center Church (the first in the city, founded by Thomas Hooker when he came to Connecticut). At age 12, in 7th grade, and back at South, my friend and I with our SS class "joined the church" and "took communion" for the first time (cubes of bread and grape juice). My parents didn't go to church very often. By then we had moved to West Hartford and I often went with friends to their churches. Those visits included Lutheran, Methodist, and Episcopal. About that time, with friends whose father was a Mason, I joined the Order of Rainbow for Girls which had a yearly church Sunday, several of which were in the Episcopal Cathedral.

After I had been graduated from high school, my father joined the Masons. In his class was a man named Homer who asked Dad if we went to church. When he said "no," Homer invited us to join him and his

wife at First Baptist where there was a "terrific new preacher". We went and soon became members. They did not ask us to be immersed but accepted us by letters of transfer and profession of faith. I was active in the choir, the young adult group, went to several American Baptist summer conferences, and was appointed in 1953 to the search committee after the minister had been forced out by members who wouldn't have in their homes magazines with alcohol ads and "discovered" that he drank wine at home.

At the 1954 Northfield Conference (founded by D.L. Moody, famous Protestant evangelist) I met a Baptist minister who was going to teach at Andover Newton Theological School in Newton, the oldest (1807) Protestant school of theology in the country, and would need a secretary. The idea of working in a church-related setting appealed to me. I applied, went for an interview, was hired, went home, gave notice where I was working, resigned from the search committee, and went to ANTS with the class of new students in 1954.

The Baptist Churches in Massachusetts would accept me only as an associate member since I had not been immersed. Knowing I had been baptized, and not believing in re-baptism, I looked elsewhere, went "shopping" in Newton, Brookline, and Boston, and ended up at Trinity Episcopal in NC where, after some time, I asked to be confirmed. The priest gave me a very small flyer to read, the extent of my catechism. My parents were not happy I had left a "free church" denomination, but I was confirmed by Bp. Frederic Lawrence in May of 1957. Trinity was "low" church, Sundays at 11 was

HC once a month and MP the others, so low that the only way to go was "up."

With all of the books available at ANTS to an avid reader from childhood, I read more and more in church history and theology, and came to believe that PE low church wasn't for me either. So on to the Church of the Advent which I decided was truly within the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. Obviously I hadn't "caught on" to the truth of the "one true church" but still really had the protestant concept of local autonomy. Two steps for Janet, but still more to go.

I stayed there for a while but didn't find it very friendly, so hadn't been going when a PE woman professor, who had been ordained shortly after the "after the fact" action of General Convention, (I had been at EDS when Dean Coburn told the students that women would be admitted to the M.Div. program the next year, I attended her two ordinations and first mass at St. John's, Bowdoin Street, and I knew two of that first group of women quite well.) suggested I might like Good Shepherd, Waban, which was a small friendly church and considered "high." I felt very much at home at GS and became very active, was a member of the Altar Guild, and on the Vestry. Because the priest was active in the more "Catholic" organizations, several of us became members of the ECM and were at Fort Worth for the founding of the ESA which we then believed would solve our problems with the ordination of women to the priesthood, inclusive language, etc., but it didn't. It only got progressively worse! Living and working in an environment where each year things became more "di-

verse,” “inclusive,” “different language doesn’t mean different beliefs” (one could claim to be a Trinitarian but pray to “Creator, Redeemer, and Friend”), “political correctness” was required of everyone no matter their faith, one dare not speak against anything liberals would consider to be allowable. What happens in the Church happens earlier on in the seminaries, if we would only recognize it sooner.

After the priest moved on (1990) with the help of some who weren’t ESA, etc. inclined — I was on the profile committee but soon realized most did not want a “catholic” priest as at that time I understood one to be but a “warm fuzzy” who wouldn’t make waves with such things as the ESA. So, with proper papers of transfer in hand, on to All Saints in Ashmont. In less than a month, I was in the ICU at Newton-Wellesley Hospital on death’s doorstep according to the doctors. My new priest was there early the next morning, followed by his assistant the next day and my former rector the following. Their obvious faith in the healing power of sacramental anointing I know helped me to recover and strengthened my faith in God and Catholic teaching. At first I was able only to receive the Sacrament of Healing, but a few days later also Communion. One of them brought a rosary as I hadn’t taken one with me.

A few days before going to the hospital as I was smoking, I said “this tastes terrible” and put out what was to be my last cigarette. I had been a smoker of up to 4 packs a day for almost 45 years. Before I went home the doctor said, “Now, you aren’t going to smoke any more, are you?” To this day, he still asks me if I have

had a cigarette, and I still say “no.” For a long time I would walk and pray the rosary when I had a real urge for a butt, asking God and Mary to help me not give in. When I was allowed to drive, the first place I went was over to All Saints for morning prayer and mass, which continued until the day we left there. I was happy there, but before long came more trouble and the priest was not allowed by the bishop to be our rector. Then Fr. Bradford came and we had wonderful leadership, good sermons with sound catholic teaching, and the opportunity to look at where we might go to save our souls given where the Episcopal Church was headed. Although at one time it seemed that the whole congregation would support a move, that was not to be the case. On January 21, 1996, Fr. Bradford preached his last sermon and celebrated his last mass at All Saints, and on January 28th thirty some of us knelt for mass on the floor of the rectory dining room. It was a sad but happy occasion. We hoped we were on our way into the Catholic Church. I didn’t have any questions in my mind but that was where I wanted very much to be.

In 1991, my former rector in Waban began conducting retreats, the second one at Saint Benedict Priory (now Abbey) in Still River. One visit there and I was hooked. Every three-day weekend would find me in Still River with the monks. It became a joke that they could tell when there was a secular holiday weekend because I was there. They became my very good friends, like family. One day, one of the priests asked me what would happen to me if I were to die the next day. They were concerned for the soul I wasn’t really that worried about.

When they heard we had left All Saints and why and were meeting in the rectory, they were praying for all of us, and for our preparation and reception into the Church and for Fr. Bradford’s ordination. The Abbot and a number of the monks and staff came to our reception. One of the priests from there was my sponsor and heard my confession prior to confirmation. The Abbot gave me my first communion after reception. He invited our whole congregation out to the Abbey a couple of months later for an evening of prayer, entertainment, and a wonderful dinner. They continue to be a source of strength to me and to our congregation. I look forward to a retreat out there in November with our whole congregation. But before that I will have been there again for another holiday - the last cookout of the year, Columbus Day.

Our almost three years in the Congregation of Saint Athanasius has been a happy experience for me. Along with Father Bradford we went on faith that it would be God’s will that it would work out for us to become Catholics and be accepted as an Anglican use congregation. In the convent at St. Mary’s, Dedham, under Fr. (now Msgr.) Lennon’s tutelage, we studied the catechism (even though I didn’t get to ride the bus there). So that meant we were on our way. But sometimes it seemed as though it would never happen. I read book after book about the conversions of very well-known persons and solid catholic newspapers and magazines about the Catholic Church and what was happening in it.

Then finally on September 30, 1997, I was a Catholic. As I said in 1937, I wished I were, and now I am. And finally we have a home at Saint

Aidan's with a priest we love and a congregation happy to be here in a Church which welcomed us and where we can worship God as Catholics with a liturgy which means much to us.

Janet E. Ray

### Parish Retreat

November 13-15 at  
St. Benedict Abbey, Still River,  
Massachusetts

Fr. Joseph Wilson, conductor.  
Cost is \$70 per person. The cost includes 2 nights and 6 meals. Reserve space now. We have places for thirty people. Call 617-787-0553 or give your reservation in writing to Fr. Bradford.

### Video Tapes of Father Bradford's Ordination and First Mass.

\$35 for the set of two tapes, or  
\$20 individually.

### Advent Pilgrimage

December 4-6 to New York  
and Bethlehem, PA

see the

"Best Christmas Pageant  
Ever"

\$349 - single occupancy  
\$269 - double, \$259 - triple  
all meals included.

Price benefits the Congregation  
of St. Athanasius. To indicate  
interest, call Sarah Weekes 265-  
9499



## A PROCESSION WITH CAROLS FOR ADVENT

Sunday, November 29, 1998 at 5:00 p.m.  
Reception following

**Nov. 1:** Evensong and Benedic-  
tion at 5:00 followed by supper  
and a talk by Dr. Peter Kreeft.

**Nov. 2:** All Souls Day. Mass at  
10:00am.

**Nov. 13-15:** Parish Retreat

**Nov. 15:** Fr. George Greenway is  
Celebrant at the regular 9:30  
Mass in Brookline.

**Nov. 21:** *Navigating to the Truth*,  
St. Brendan Church, Bellingham.  
9:00 to 5:00. Fr. Bradford is speak-  
ing at this conference. See him  
for details.

**Nov. 29:** Lessons and Carols,  
5:00pm, Reception following.

**Dec. 8:** (Tuesday) Feast of the Im-  
maculate Conception (Holy Day  
of Obligation. Mass at 7:30pm,  
Reception following.

#### Weekly

**Sundays 9:30am.** Sung Mass fol-  
lowed by coffee and fellowship.

**Saturdays 11:30 - 1:30** Confes-  
sions in the chapel, Fr. Raphael  
Caamano. No appointment nec-  
essary.

Here's where we are...



# Contra Mundum

The Congregation of St. Athanasius  
158 Pleasant Street  
Brookline, MA 02446

### **Saint Aidan's Church, 159 Pleasant Street in Brookline. Parking Available.**

**Commonwealth Avenue:** From east or west, turn onto Pleasant Street south to the church at the corner of Freeman Street.

**Boylston Street:** From east, turn onto Harvard Street, veer right onto Sewall Avenue and left on St. Paul Street. At the corner of Freeman, turn left to the Church. From west, you cannot make a left turn onto Harvard Street. Turn right around the fire station, cross Boylston Street and proceed northbound on Harvard Street. Follow directions above.

**Beacon Street:** From east or west, turn onto James Street and right onto Pleasant Street and proceed to church.

**Mass Pike:** Exit at Allston-Brighton tolls, take ramp for Cambridge Street-Allston to Harvard Street, Left on Harvard and left on Brighton Ave. which merges into Commonwealth Avenue. See directions for Commonwealth Avenue above.

**MBTA Green Line B car,** stop request at Pleasant Street. Walk four blocks south on Pleasant Street.

