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# Ñ Contra Mundum Ñ

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Volume I, Issue 8

March 1999

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

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## Notes from the Chaplain

Dear friends in Christ:

In Isaiah chapter 54 the prophet announces that Zion will be restored and re-peopled after the exile. He says it this way: "Enlarge the place of your tent, and let the curtain of your habitations be stretched out; hold not back, lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes."

It was practical advice for a nomadic people in exile, a people who lived in tents. But in its own way it is God's word for us at the start of Lent. The ropes of a tent are always lengthened in stormy weather to ease the strain. One of the most important uses of Lent is that it can be a time when we relieve the stress upon our daily lives. Our tendency is to take on more during Lent when we should actually pare down and make room for our God.

Most of us live under a busy schedule of activities, rushing from one appointment to the next in haste. Instead of doing a few things well we do many things badly. And then comes Lent. We try to cram a Lenten rule and extra devotions into an already busy schedule. It is like cramming a size-eight God into a size-seven shoe. It won't work! Instead



of being worried or guilty about trying to do more good things, we should rather be concerned about the dissipation of being bad. Use Lent as a time to throttle down. For six weeks reduce the breakneck speed. This is what the Church wants us to give up in Lent, not candy or tobacco, or alcohol, although we may well need to do those things quite apart from a Lenten discipline. Rather the Church is concerned that no Lent is well-kept unless we obey the call of Jesus who said, "Come apart into a desert place and rest awhile." We may be coming apart in other ways.... cardiac attacks waiting to happen! If your Lenten observance is just one more thing attached by a magnet to the refrigerator door, then the next

six weeks will be something to get through, get done, and then get on with something else. What a waste of Lent!

Take Isaiah's advice. Lengthen your cords. Relax the strain. Whatever blessing this Lent has in store for you will only be realized by your coming just as you are before your God, and spending every day in some quiet way with Him. I leave it to you what is best taken out of your daily schedule. Perhaps some things need to be taken out, not just for six weeks but permanently. But we can give up even some good things in order to concentrate on the best, which is Jesus Christ our Lord.

May God richly bless your efforts to keep a devout and holy Lent!

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Fr. Bradford

## BRIEFLY NOTED

Parishioner Donald Smith is recovering at home from gall bladder surgery February 10th. Don was stricken in Aruba where he and Helen were on vacation. Please keep his recovery in your prayers.

Last fall's bus trip arranged by Sarah Weekes was not only a good time but produced a profit of \$372 for the congregation.

St. Patrick's Day (March 17) is the patronal feast of the Archdiocese of Boston. Cardinal Law will celebrate Mass at Noon in the Cathedral of the Holy Cross and you are invited to attend.

Parishioner Rita Strow will exhibit oil paintings in a show called "Celtic Myths and Icons" at Depot Square Gallery in Lexington, March 2-8.

The 1998 Cardinal's Appeal surpassed the goal of \$15,250,000. To date there have been 92,808 contributors.

Evensong and Benediction in April has been changed to April 25th. Please make a note of it.

Holy Week is March 28 - April 4.



**C**HRIST broke his mysterious body and gave it to his disciples at the Supper without explaining at that time what the breaking and giving would mean. There was no need, the facts would presently make it clear. What, then, was done to this body? It was stripped of all dignity and all possession, scourged with the stroke of penal justice, and nailed up like a dead thing while it was still alive. The body you receive in this sacrament accomplished its purpose by nailing to a tree. You are to become this body, you are to be nailed: nailed to Christ's sacrificial will. The nails that hold you are God's commandments, your rules of life, prayers, confessions, communions regularly

observed. Let us honor the nails for Christ's sake, and pray that by the virtue of his passion they may hold fast.

Austin Farrer

*The Crown of the Year*

## SAINT OF THE MONTH



### St. John of God

(Feast: 8 March)

**T**HE life of St. John of God (1495-1550) shows how through God's grace the most various and sometimes eccentric people are shaped into holiness. At the age of 27 this saint was a mercenary soldier, fighting for Spain against the Turks. He abandoned all practice of religion. Later he herded sheep until he was about forty. Undergoing a religious conversion, he set out for North Africa to help Christian slaves, a sure path to martyrdom.

Dissuaded from such a radical course, he became a pedlar of sacred books and pictures at Gibraltar. In time he opened a successful shop in Granada. In 1538 he suffered an episode of madness, running through the streets, tearing his hair, and giving away his stock of books. St. John of Avila, visiting at the time, calmed him, and persuaded him to devote his energies to the care of the sick and poor.

Recovering in 1539 he filled his house with sick poor people, devoting full energy to them, balancing his life with prayer and austerities. His final illness was precipitated by exposure when he rescued a drowning man in a flood. He died before the altar of his hospital chapel at the age of 55. His followers were inspired to establish the Order of Brothers Hospitalers, which continues to conduct a large number of hospitals in Europe to the present.

St. John of God is the patron of hospitals and the sick, but also of booksellers and printers.



### St. Joseph

SOLEMN MASS

& SERMON at 7:30pm

Reception follows in the rectory.

Friday, March 19

**25<sup>th</sup> ANNUNCIATION of the B.V.M.  
LADY DAY**



**SOLEMN MASS & SERMON**  
at 7:30pm  
reception follows in the rectory  
**Thursday, March 25, 1999**

**hamartia**

(hä'mär tē'ə) n. (in ancient Greek tragedy) error in judgment, esp. resulting from a character defect in a tragic hero; the tragic flaw

Pride, I'm afraid, may prove to be my brother's *hamartia*.

¶ This is the word used for "sin" in the N.T. (or trēs-päss). It was an archery expression meaning to miss the mark.

Singers wanted for Schola Cantorum.  
Speak to David Burt. 508-337-6241

The Congregation of  
Saint Athanasius,  
worshiping at  
Saint Aidan's Church  
158 Pleasant Street  
Brookline, Mass. 02146-3149

Parish House: (617) 227-0854  
Rectory: (617) 787-0553

**Weekly**

**Sundays 9:30am.** Sung Mass followed by coffee and fellowship.

**Saturdays 11:30 - 1:30** Confessions in the chapel, Fr. Raphael Caamano. No appointment necessary.

**Lent**

**Tuesdays 10am** Mass

**Fridays 6pm** soup supper, 7pm The Stations of the Cross and Benediction.

**Saturdays 9am** Mass

**Future Events**

**Mar. 19 (Friday)** St. Joseph, Solemn Mass and Sermon at 7:30 pm. reception following.

**Mar. 25 (Thursday)** Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Solemn Mass and Sermon at 7:30pm, Reception following.

**Sundays, February 21, April 25, and June 6:** Evensong and Benediction 5pm.

Here's where we are...



# Contra Mundum

The Congregation of St. Athanasius  
158 Pleasant Street  
Brookline, MA 02146-3149

### Saint Aidan's Church, 158 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.

