
Ñ Contra Mundum Ñ

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

<http://www.locutor.net>



Notes from the Chaplain

IN my sermon on Advent Sunday one year ago I did some reminiscing about “Palmer Method,” the way many older people learned handwriting. Here is part of what I said: “Our young hands were awkward. Large letters, even just parts of each letter, were set before us on ruled paper; and we copied, traced them, tracing the back side of the capital letter ‘C’ over the dark line, then again, then over a lighter line, then all on your own on the ruled paper. At first the pen stumbles, but day by day, as you do your copies faithfully, it becomes easier, until finally you can make the letter ‘C’ without effort and without the ruled paper. Then it was no longer the Palmer Method’s perfect letter ‘C’; it was your very own.”

And I went on to explain in the sermon that in Advent it is not a new story, but the old story made new that is proclaimed to us, and that, in the coming year, if it pleases God, each of us will hear a part of the story we have missed, or not been ready to receive, in years past. By patient copying we become conformed to Our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Holy Ghost who takes the things of Christ and shows them to us to copy, and then helps our awkward souls, guiding us to practice and practice again what He has revealed to us.

I thought of the Palmer Method analogy again as I was selecting lessons to be read during an Advent Procession with Carols. Holy Church from earliest times has asked

us to spend the four weeks preceding Christmas in reading about and pondering on the centuries of preparation for Christ’s coming. We have in the prayers and scriptures of the prophets this ardent longing for what we know finally came to pass. It is as if we are temporarily to think ourselves out of our Christian heritage and enter once again the helplessness of mankind unredeemed. Why do that? Why dwell on it?

The answer is that God wills to be praised and thanked “for the means of grace and for the hope of glory.” By reading the wonderful story again and again, hearing the prophets speaking with increasing clearness, the signs growing both in number and precision as Advent draws to a close, our own gratitude for the Birth of Christ is sharpened and we begin to understand the immensity of God’s love in sending His Son.

Go back, says the Church in Advent, and search the Scriptures. Read in them the story of God’s plan for your redemption and mark well the details. Such contemplation will strengthen the faith needed by every one of us to persevere in our Christian discipleship. Advent looks back. But it is active, not passive. It is intended to enable us increasingly to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ.” Moving slowly again and again over the old story is like using the Palmer Method. With practice we get to the point where that lovely capital “C” belongs to us. Christians put it another way: with some degree of truth we can say, “I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.”

Faithfully in Christ,
Father Bradford

Short notes

Parishioner Sarah Greenaway is recovering at home from surgery done in mid-November.

Parishioner Don Smith is recovering from surgery and is at home in North Easton.

Don and Brenda Bubeck have moved to a new home in Brockton, but the telephone number remains the same.

Michelle (Smith) and Kevin O’Donnell were married in a civil ceremony on October 23 and live in Plymouth.

Travelling parishioners include Sarah Weekes (England), Winsome Perry (Jamaica), Terry Maltsberger (Germany, Holland, and Greece), Elizabeth Peters (Montserrat) and Jessica and Jonathan Bradford (Rheinland, Switzerland and the Tirol).

Our fall parish retreat was attended by people from Connecticut, Vermont, and New York, as well as the Boston metropolitan area.

Good friend, Dr. Wayne J. Hankey (Prof. of classics in King’s College, Halifax and Dalhousie University) visited the congregation in October while in the city to give a paper at Boston College.

Fr. Bradford gave a presentation on conversion at the Holy Name Society Convention in Weymouth Landing.

The Anglican Use conference in Arlington Texas, approved the publishing of the *Book of Divine Worship*, which is receiving its final proofreading before going to the publishers.

Carney Hospital is holding its Tenth Annual Holiday Raffle. Tickets are

\$25 (3 for \$100) and the grand prize is \$10,000. There are 44 additional cash prizes.

The Portiuncula Chapel (400 Washington Street, Hanover) has an annual outdoor Festival of Lights, beginning December 5th at 6pm. The Shrine is a replica of the Assisi Portiuncula and all the building materials came from Assisi. Cardinal Cushing is buried there. Saint Francis built the original Portiuncula Chapel in Assisi to preach penance and thus convert all men and women.

Fr. Joseph Wilson will conduct a Memorial Day Retreat at St. Mary's Convent (Episcopal) in Peekskill, New York, May 26-30. Details in the parish office.

Honor the Lord with your wealth, with first fruits of all your produce; Then will your barns be filled with grain, with new wine your vats will overflow.

Proverbs 3:8-9

Pledge cards were mailed out to the members and friends of the Congregation in mid-November. Please return yours by mail or place it in the alms basin at Sunday Mass. Your prompt reply is much appreciated!

Saints of the Month



St. Nicholas
6 December

SAINT Nicholas was a fourth century bishop of Myra (southwestern Turkey) and one of the most universally venerated saints in both East and West. His reputation survives, but little hard evidence of many wonderful events in his life. Showing great piety and love for others from childhood, he is said to have inherited a fortune from his parents and used it to benefit his fellows, often saving people from death. He is patron of children, sailors (churches dedicated to Nicholas are often built so that they can be seen off the coast as landmarks), unmarried girls, merchants, pawnbrokers, apothecaries, and

perfumers! In stone and ivory carvings, in wood, and stained glass, for many centuries Nicholas was the most frequently depicted saintly bishop. He was an extremely popular figure in medieval drama, a tradition continued by Benjamin Britten's musical play, *St. Nicholas*. And he is the inspiration for Santa Claus especially in North America, via the Low Countries.



St. Stephen the Martyr
December 26

IN the Church's early days the Apostles soon found they needed helpers to look after the widows and the poor, so they ordained seven

deacons to assist them. Stephen is the most famous of the seven. He proved to be a remarkable preacher and through him God performed a number of miracles. His preaching was so successful that many were drawn to Christ, and this enraged the enemies of the Church. Unable to answer his wise and graceful arguments, at last they laid a plot against him, raising a mob, claiming Stephen was speaking sinfully about God. A great assembly of his enemies gathered about him, but he faced them without fear. The Bible says that his face looked like that of an angel as he faced down the mob. He spoke to them about Our Lord, and rebuked his enemies for not believing in Him. This so infuriated them that they ground their teeth and plugged up their ears in order not to hear another word, dragged him outside the city of Jerusalem, and stoned him to death. As he died Stephen looked up to Heaven and said he saw the heavens open and Jesus standing at God's right hand. Dying, he prayed that God might not punish his enemies, and commended his spirit to Jesus. Stephen was the first of countless martyrs to die for the faith. He is commonly depicted with a thurible as a signal of his service as a deacon, and with a palm leaf as a symbol of his martyrdom. Saul, before his conversion, approved of Stephen's stoning. The name Stephen means "crown." All we know of his life is recorded in the Book of Acts, Chapters 6 and 7.



Christmas Schedule

Friday, December 24th

Christmas Eve

Procession, Blessing of the Creche

Solemn Mass of Christmas

8:30.pm

Sunday, December 26th

Solemn Mass

11:00am

A Festival of Christmas Lessons and Carols

5:00pm

Saturday, January 1st

Mary, Mother of God

Octave of Christmas

Solemn Mass

11:00am

*This day is a holy Day of Obligation for the Archdiocese of Boston
by decree of Bernard Cardinal Law.*

Saint Mary's Advent Days
Dec. 5-7, 1999 at St. Aidan's
Church

Sunday, Dec. 5: Evening Prayer
Monday, Dec. 6: Penance Service
Tuesday, Dec. 7: Evening Mass
(All services at 7:00pm)



FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE
CONCEPTION
Solemn High Mass (Anglican Use)
Weds., December 8th, at 7:30pm.
(Holy Day of Obligation)

Watching

Year passes after year, silently; Christ's coming is ever nearer than it was. O that, as he comes nearer earth, we may approach nearer heaven! O my brethren, pray him to give you the heart to seek him in sincerity. Pray him to make you in earnest. You have one work only, to bear your cross after him. Resolve in his strength to do so. Resolve to be no longer beguiled by 'shadows of religion', by words, or by disputings, or by notions, or by high professions, or by excuses, or by the world's promises or threats. Pray him to give you what Scripture

calls 'an honest and good heart', or 'a perfect heart', and, without waiting, begin at once to obey him with the best heart you have. Any obedience is better than none, -- any profession which is disjoined from obedience, is a mere pretence and deceit. Any religion which does not bring you nearer to God is of the world. You have to seek his face; obedience is the only way of seeking him. All your duties are obediences. If you are to believe the truths he has revealed, to regulate yourselves by his precepts, to be frequent in his ordinances, to adhere to his Church and people, why is it, except because *he* has bid you? And to do what he bids is to obey him. And to obey him is to approach him. Every act of obedience is an approach, -- an approach to him who is not far off, though he seems so, but close behind this visible screen of things which hides him from us. He is behind this material framework; earth and sky are but a veil going between him and us; the day will come when he will rend that veil, and show himself to us. And then, according as we have waited for him, will he recompense us. If we have forgotten him, he will not know us; but 'blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching. . . he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants'. May this be the portion of every one of us! It is hard to attain it; but it is woeful to fail. Life is short; death is certain; and the world to come is everlasting.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

The Congregation of
Saint Athanasius,

worshiping at

Saint Aidan's Church

158 Pleasant Street

Brookline, Mass. 02446-3149

Rectory: 192 Foster Street

Brighton, MA 02135-4620

Tel/Fax: (617) 787-0553

Web: <http://www.locutor.net>

Sundays 11:00am. Sung Mass, followed by coffee and fellowship in the sacristy.

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

Future Dates

Dec. 8, Weds.: The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mass at 7:30pm. (*Holy Day of Obligation*)

Dec. 24, Fri.: Christmas Eve, Procession, Blessing of the Creche, and Solemn Mass of Christmas at 8:30pm.

Dec. 26, Sun.: A Festival of Christmas Lessons and Carols, 5:00pm.

Jan. 1, Sat.: Mary, Mother of God, Octave of Christmas, Solemn Mass at 11:00am. (*This day is a Holy Day of Obligation for the Archdiocese of Boston by decree of Bernard Cardinal Law.*)

Here's where we are...



Contra Mundum

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

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.

