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# Ñ Contra Mundum Ñ

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Volume II, Issue 12

July 2000

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

<http://www.locutor.net>

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## Notes from the Chaplain

**C**ATHOLICS of the older generation will remember July as the Month of the Precious Blood. That is because the month began with the Feast of the Precious Blood. [The Sacramentary now provides for a “votive” Mass which can be said at many other times during the church year.] But the term “precious blood” will not be unfamiliar to those of an anglican background either, thanks to the words of one of the most beloved of hymns “There is a green hill far away.” In it we sing:

He died that we might be forgiven,  
He died to make us good,  
That we might go at last to Heaven,  
*Saved by His precious Blood.*

In the general thanksgiving at anglican Morning Prayer, happily provided in the *Book of Divine Worship*, we are bidden to give thanks to Almighty God “for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, but above all for his inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.”

What is that redemption? What are the means of grace and the hope of glory? At the heart of the gospel



is the plain statement that we are saved by blood. It is the assertion of the gospel that Christ rescued us from certain destruction, and that it needed Christ’s death to accomplish that rescue.

Make no mistake about it, salvation has to do with the precious blood of a saviour. What the Church understood from the beginning we must not forget or deny in our own day and age. For they did not give advice to “follow Jesus,” that God is a good sort and it will all turn out well in the end for those who are sincere! Rather, the record is clear that they preached “Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” They preached it as good news. Christ’s death is the means of grace and the hope of glory for us.

We are inclined to reject a scenario that puts us in such dire straits as require Christ’s death. Something in us wants to reject the more “extreme” assertions of the gospel. Thomas Carlyle once said that if Christ returned to earth He wouldn’t be crucified but invited to dinner, listened to, and then laughed at. The world today makes fun of your religion when it isn’t trying to suppress it. But even with all the advances in technology and the growth of consumerism, men and women are still making a mess of their lives. And you will never help them by watering down the truth of the gospel. Nineteenth century fire and brimstone sermons have done far less damage to religion than has the insipid teaching that treats sin lightly and avoids all reference to judgment.

The Bible gives some terrible warnings. “The wages of sin is death” is a flat, blanket, statement, but I do not see it modified anywhere in the New Testament. That same New Testament is quite clear that an earthbound, godless, life will inevitably come to grief in a moral universe that has Almighty God as its creator. Our souls are given physical life not necessarily so that they may be happy here, but that they develop communion with God, and having done so, to pass on and encourage that ability in others. The

Bible is also quite clear that this adventure is always a desperate battle against an enemy whose whole business is to stop us from developing such communion with God and passing it on to others.

Everyday appearances to the contrary, the deck is stacked against sin. For Christ has won the battle, and the fruits of His victory are ours unless we deliberately reject them. For the Blood of Christ is His life, poured out in living, dying, and in His endless priesthood now.

Jesus is our friend. He is our helper. He is our hero, our influence, and our example. But we will never get to the heart of the gospel unless we acknowledge Him as our Saviour. For the good news for us and the world is that we are *saved by His precious blood*.

O loving wisdom of our God!  
When all was sin and shame,  
A second Adam to the fight  
And to the rescue came.

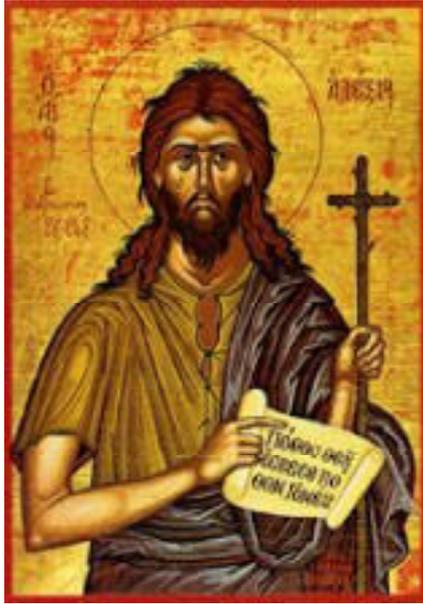
O wisest love! that flesh and blood,  
Which did in Adam fail,  
Should strive afresh against the foe,  
Should strive, and should prevail.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

July is the Month of the Precious Blood. And so you have some thoughts to take with you and build upon, in your summertime opportunities for reflection. With blessings and prayer for you all, and faithfully in Christ,

FATHER BRADFORD

## Saint of the Month



St. Alexis  
Feast Day, 17 July

**A** THEME one encounters over and again in lives of the saints is their capacity for total renunciation of happiness and comfort in this world, and a total concentration on God. Many of these stories seem very strange to us, living as we do so much in the secular world of the early 21st century. We read tales of hermits who half starve themselves to death in desert caves, of virgins who die rather than surrender to sex. These stories were much admired in the Middle Ages, and afterward. One such legend concerns a young Roman, St. Alexis.

It is said that Alexis wanted to live a holy and ascetic life, but his parents, thinking they knew best, insisted that he marry an eligible young woman. He obeyed them, but, on his

wedding night, begging his bride's pardon, he fled away in a long pilgrimage. Finding his way into Syria he lived as a beggar near a church dedicated to Our Lady. After seventeen years passed, a picture of our Blessed Mother spoke to tell the people that this beggar was very holy. She called him "The Man of God." Of course it followed that Alexis became famous, and that was the last thing he wanted, so he fled back to Rome. Returning secretly to his parents' home (they did not recognize him after so long) he was taken in and permitted to live under a stair, giving himself up to prayer and fasting. When at last he died he was identified by documents found on his body, and by miracles and voices from heaven, as their lost son.

The story of Alexis reached England in the 12th century where it became extremely popular as the subject for vernacular Lives of Saints, and for religious dramas.

## SHORT NOTES

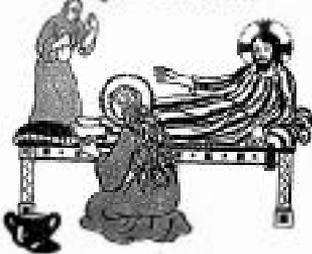
Thanks to the Revd. Allan Warren, Rector of the Church of the Advent, for his kindness in donating a carton of 1940 Hymnals for our use.

Thanks to those who read the Acts 2:1-11 lesson in foreign languages on the Feast of Pentecost: Ann and Brian Johansson, Terry Maltsberger, Bob Alpert, Aaron Reibstein, Rita Strow, Joe Huebscher, David Burt, and Jonathan Spence.

There is a guide book to Jubilee Pilgrimage sites in New England, and it is available in the sacristy or parish office and is free of charge. If you will be traveling in the region this summer and would like a copy, please help yourself.

**G**OD willing, Brother James Doran, OSB, will be ordained to the Sacred Priesthood in Saint Cecelia's Church, Leominster, on Saturday, July 8, 2000. He is a member of the Benedictine Community at St. Benedict Abbey, Still River. Let us offer prayers of supplication and thanksgiving on this joyous occasion, and our congratulations and best wishes to the ordinand.

22<sup>nd</sup>  
**S. MARY  
MAGDALENE**  
anointing Our Lord's feet



Low Mass at 9:00am.

25<sup>th</sup>  
**S. JAMES**  
a fisherman  
and  
Apostle



Low Mass at 10:00am

“In order thoroughly to appreciate the sense of beauty and inspiration, the powerful influence produced by the sacred liturgy on Christian people, it is necessary to see it performed in the full splendor of its architectural setting, of the clergy in their vestments, of the music, the singing, and the ritual, and not judge of it merely from a curtailed and simplified presentment.”

BLESSED IDELFONSO CARDINAL SCHUSTER

“Faith, then, is unhesitating assent, in the fullest conviction of their truth, to the things heard in what is, by God’s grace, proclaimed.... Plainly it is a falling away from faith and an offense chargeable to pride, either to reject any of those things that are written or to introduce things that are not written.”

BASIL THE GREAT

“What is our attitude to this world to be? Treat it as if it is all that there is and as if all that you need is to be found in it, and it will dangle its gifts before your eyes, decoy you, tantalize you, and finally mock and desert you, leaving you empty-handed and with ashes in your mouth. But treat it as the creation of God, as truly good because it is God’s handiwork and yet not the highest good because it is not God Himself, live in this world as one who knows that his true home is not here but in eternity, and the world itself will yield up to you joys and splendors of whose very existence the mere worldling is utterly ignorant. then you will see the world’s transience and fragility, its finitude and its powerlessness to satisfy, not as signs that life is a bad joke with man as the helpless victim, but as pale and splintered reflections of

the splendor and beauty of the eternal God....that beauty ever old and ever new...in whom alone man can find lasting peace and joy.

GRACE AND GLORY  
ERIC MASCALL

## The Congregation of Saint Athanasius,

The Revd. Richard Sterling Bradford,  
Chaplain

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

**Sat. July 22:** St. Mary Magdalene, Low Mass at 9:00am.

**Tue. July 25:** St. James, Apostle, Low Mass at 10:00am.

Please note: A change in location for the Congregation of St. Athanasius is imminent. Please check our web-page or call the Rectory for information.

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.

