
Ñ Contra Mundum Ñ

Volume III, Issue 1

August 2000

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

<http://www.locutor.net>

Notes from the Chaplain

OUR readers will notice in this issue of the Parish paper a new location for the anglican use congregation in Boston. We are gathering for Mass on Sundays at 10:30am in the Saint Theresa Convent Chapel in West Roxbury, which is part of Boston in the south west part of the city. Monsignor William Helmick had kindly offered use of the chapel some months earlier, knowing that Saint Aidan's Church was slated to be closed July 1st. And we are most grateful to Msgr. Helmick and to the Sisters of Saint Joseph who live in the convent, for the use of their chapel (and their very nice solarium for coffee hours). Msgr. Helmick provided altar flowers for our first Mass on July 2nd, and joined us at the start of Mass to greet us personally. Our people were much impressed. The anglican use congregation is welcome at St Theresa's for as long as we need to be there. Many in the congregation said how happy they were to have these circumstances.

None of us, I think, view West Roxbury as our permanent home, and we keep looking for a location which will be accessible to our people, and help us reach non-catholic Christians

AUGUST

6th

TRANSFIGURATION



whose attraction to the Catholic Church may be helped by anglican ethos and liturgy. The danger in moving about is that we lose credibility, both within and without the Church. But I know that there is great good will in the Archdiocese of Boston that we succeed. And we all recognize that there are forces at work which must be about the business of re-configuring the Archdiocese, and which will sometimes involve the closing of churches. Not to be about this business would be to be poor stewards of what we have been given. Indeed, I warned the anglican use congregation of the possibility that St Aidan's would close even before we moved into the church in July, 1998

I am on record as having expressed our gratitude to Monsignor

Leonard Copenrath for his welcome to us in 1998 and kindness and hospitality. In no small way he invited us into his house, and we took advantage of the use of the St Aidan Rectory for our program that needed parish house facilities. We have greatly missed those facilities during this past year

Thanks go to Fr Jack Ahern, pastor of St Mary of the Assumption parish in Brookline, who inherited us along with the sensitive task of absorbing the parish family of Saint Aidan's into his own busy parish, and preparing for the closing of the St Aidan's buildings. There is no "handbook" on how to do this. Fr Ahern offered us classroom space in his rectory, and voice-mail in his telephone system, and told us we could use his lower church until we found a new location. I did not take up these kind offers for various reasons, but they were and are appreciated nonetheless.

During our time at St Aidan's, we grew from a Sunday average attendance in the thirties at the beginning, to the fifties at the end. Had we the continued use of a proper parish hall, these figures may have gone higher. We will be looking for a church location that includes some parish hall facilities.

FATHER BRADFORD

SHORT NOTES

Please keep Bob Molloy in your prayers. He has had both knees operated on this July. Also pray for Don Bubeck, who had hip replacement surgery in Carney Hospital in mid-July. His wife Brenda is also recovering from knee surgery.

While we are in West Roxbury, we will take advantage of some of the schedule in the very busy St Theresa of Avila Parish.

- ✦ Every Saturday: Mass at 6:45am followed by Exposition until 3:30pm in the chapel, Confessions 3:00-4:00pm in the chapel.
- ✦ Thursday before first Fridays: Confessions after 4pm Mass, also in the chapel. That would be August 3 and 31.
- ✦ We will join St Theresa's Parish for Mass on the Feast of the Assumption, Tuesday, August 15 at 7:30pm. This is a holy day of obligation.

MEMORABLE
QUOTE

"...With lips full of purity, let us raise our hymn to the God born of a virgin...for neither is it holy to worship the mere man, nor is it pious to say that he is God only, apart from His manhood. If Christ is God, as indeed He is, but did not assume human nature, then we are strangers to salvation....Let us confess the presence of the King and Physician; for Jesus the King, when about to become our Physician, girded Himself with the linen towel of humanity, and healed that which was sick."

ST. CYRIL OF JERUSALEM (D. 386)

Saint of the
MonthSt. Monica
27 August

St. Monica: in her we have a formidable woman and a very great saint. The patron of married women and of mothers, she was an African by birth, and she knew first hand what marital trouble was about.

Her parents were Christians and so she was raised, but she married a pagan Patricius who had a violent temper. Her mother-in-law took against Monica, and together she and Patricius made Monica's life wretched. Patricius was particularly contemptuous of his wife's prayerful devotion and of her generosity to the poor, but Monica met all their

insults with silence. Patricius did not much like his wife, but he respected her, and never struck her. When other women showed her the bruises they had received when their husbands beat them, Monica told them that their tongues brought the mistreatment on them.

In time Monica's patient dignity, humility, and prayers melted Patricius's heart, and was converted, as was his shrewish mother. He died a happy man soon after his baptism in 370.

There were three children, the most remembered of whom is St. Augustine, born in 354. He was not baptized as a child, and grew up to be a worldly and wanton young man. He could not bear his mother's admonitions and ran off to Carthage to study philosophy and science at the university. At first he led a dissolute life, but moderating somewhat he settled down into a common-law marriage which lasted for fifteen years, and produced a son. Augustine was converted to the Manichean heresy, which taught that bodily actions had no moral significance. When Monica learned of Augustine's Manichean conversion and of his dissolute life, she turned him out of her home and told him he could not return until he renounced his errors and submitted to Christian truth.

She wept and prayed continuously for Augustine for the next 17 years, fasting and exhorting heaven. A bishop told her that Augustine was young and stubborn, but that God's time would come because "The son of so many tears cannot possibly be lost." Meanwhile, Augustine began to have his doubts about Manicheanism, but fled Carthage and his mother, who tried to follow



CHRISTIAN BELIEVING

Twice I have been to Europe alone. Both times these trips were experiences of frustration, for I saw much that excited me but there was no one with me to share the discovery— “Come here and see this!” Have you ever known a person to be passionate about Bach or a rock group, and keep it to himself? Have you ever become devoted to a great teacher and held it within yourself?

Such considerations make the proper context in which to consider Christian witness. It is shared discovery, shared joy. Aggressive proselytizing is different in kind; it becomes a revolting parody which convinces nobody. But keeping the knowledge of God to oneself is unthinkable.

Should a Christian try to convert a non-Christian? Are not all religions

means of knowing God? Is the Christian faith the only true faith? The questions seem strangely disturbing now. Most Christians appear peculiarly unaware of the one Christian conviction which directly pertains to the answers: Jesus Christ is the Logos, the Word of God, “the real light which enlightens every man” (John 1:9). The Incarnation is the enfleshment of all that is true, in Jesus. To put it the other way round, Jesus is the light which shows what is true in every faith. Surely the American Indian religions and Hinduism have truth in them, and it is not necessary or even honest to deny it. This can be appropriated, baptized, if you will, into Christian life. It has happened a million times, and still happens. But there are points of conflict which a real study of comparative religion will reveal. In that case, nothing which diminishes or contradicts the revelation of God in Christ can be acceptable. Remember this: there would have been no Christian faith unless somebody had convinced somebody else originally. In the deepest sense the actual conversion is God’s business, but the witness is ours. If the resurrection is real and the Incarnation is true, every Christian believer is sent to proclaim Christ by what he says and how he lives

ROBERT E. TERWILLIGER



MEMORABLE QUOTES

“...With lips full of purity, let us raise our hymn to the God born of a virgin...for neither is it holy to worship the mere man, nor is it pious to say that he is God only, apart from His manhood. If Christ is God, as indeed He is, but did not assume human nature, then we are strangers to salvation....Let us confess the presence of the King and Physician; for Jesus the King, when about to become our Physician, girded Himself with the linen towel of humanity, and healed that which was sick.”

ST. CYRIL OF JERUSALEM (D. 386)

“Men go abroad to wonder at the height of mountains, at the huge waves of the sea, at the long courses of the rivers, at the vast compass of the ocean, at the circular motion of the stars, and they pass by themselves without wondering.”

AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO (D. 430)

Book Notes & Seasonal Reflections

The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580, by Eamon Duffy. Yale University Press, 1992.

Most accounts of the English Reformation concentrate on the politics, statecraft, and marriages of Henry VIII. Eamon Duffy in his book asks a different question. First he examines the religious life and practice of ordinary English people in the late fifteenth century, using contemporary documents. Then he considers how this religious life was affected by the legislated and enforced changes of the mid-sixteenth century,

What he finds is not a dead, hollow husk of formal and superstitious practices, but a vital and coherent piety. "It [is] one of the principal contentions of this book . . . that into the 1530's the vigour, richness, and creativity of late medieval religion was undiminished, and continued to hold the imagination and elicit the loyalty of the majority of the population." More people were learning to read in this period, and with the introduction of printing about 1500 many religious texts were available, both in Latin and increasingly in English. The "Primers" of this time, the ancestors of modern devotional manuals, teach an active, regular and informed life of religion for ordinary lay people.

The emphasis is not quite what we know today: The principal devotions are the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, prayers for the dead, and meditation on the Passion. The

best of these Primers know perfectly well the difference between piety and superstition, and their teaching on self-examination stresses faith and charity at least as much as legal observance. Because of the active belief in Purgatory, these people felt strongly the importance of praying for their dead, thus keeping them members of the community of faith, and also the vital importance of "shrift and housel" (confession and Communion) at the time of death. Lay people did attend Mass faithfully, although since Communion was customary only at Easter, adorning the Host at the Elevation came to take the spiritual place of Communion.

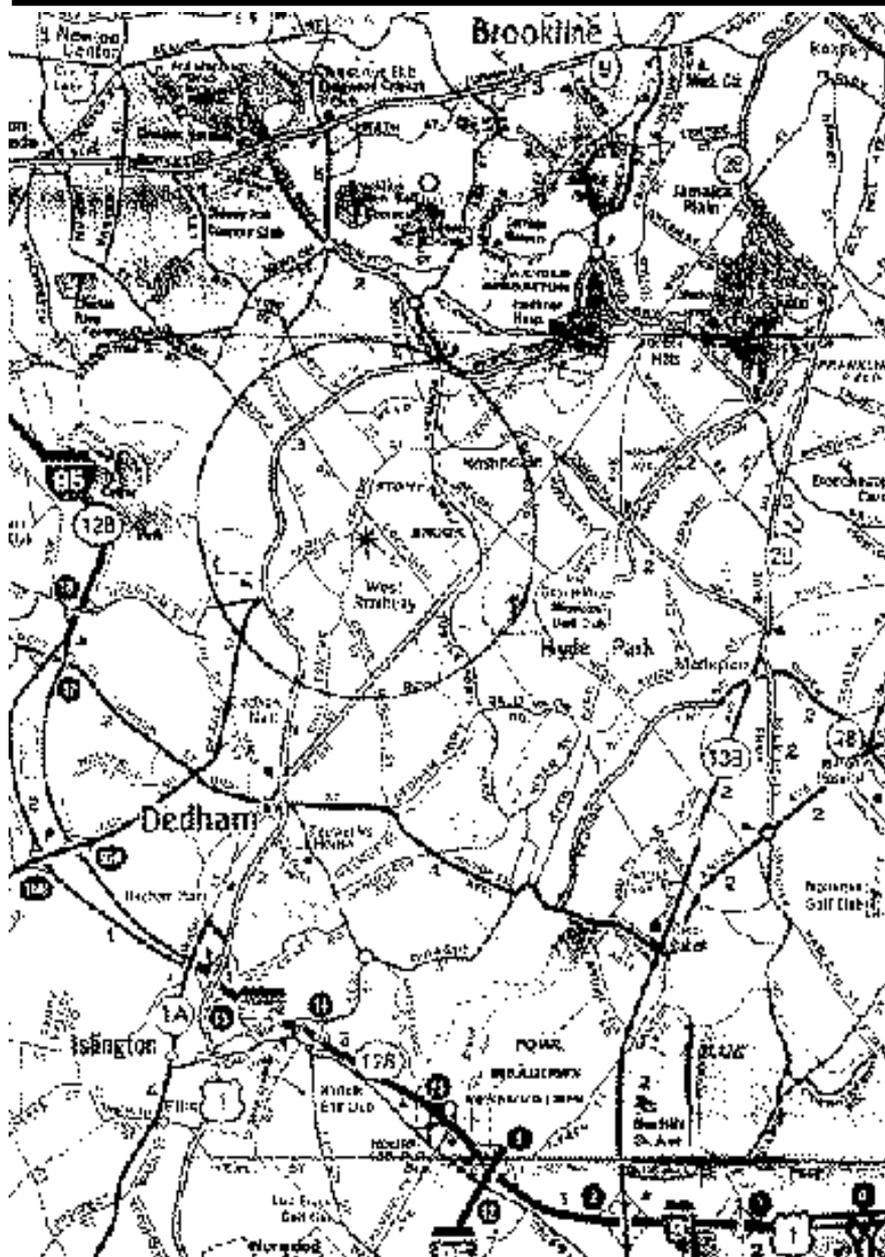
We have been taught to think of the Prayer Book of 1549 as a relatively minor innovation, with its chief features being the use of English. However, Duffy shows that even this first Prayer Book, and even more its successor of 1552, eliminated precisely the features that were the center of most people's religious practice and, at least at first, did not offer much in their place. The Elevation at Mass was eliminated. Masses, and most intercessions, for the dead were forbidden. The Holy Week ceremonies were omitted. The cycle of feasts and fasts by which people regulated their lives was very drastically curtailed. Deathbed "shrift and housel" were played down. No wonder there were rebellions and riots! In 1549 a zealous reformer was riding in Devonshire and met an old woman telling her beads on her way to Mass. He reproved her for superstition. She complained to her friends. A riot ensued in which several people were killed and the village burned.

Again, it is often assumed that the English people became Protestants under Edward VI, were forced to conform to Rome under Mary, and eventually settled down as "Anglicans" under Elizabeth I. Our author finds more continuity than that. He writes that the majority of people never really abandoned their devotion to the old ways. They conformed to prevailing policy and hid their statues, vestments, and beads for the future. Mary Tutor's reign was not simply a time of reaction, but an attempt to develop a "broadly acceptable English Catholicism." Gradually under Elizabeth's rule, most people accepted the situation and transferred their loyalty and piety to the religion of the Book of Common Prayer.

This is a scholarly book about the sixteenth century, not a political treatise for the twentieth or twenty-first. But it sheds a great deal of light on the roots of Anglicanism as we know it, on the shape and coherence of popular piety, on the problems of reforming faith and liturgy by edict.

Editor: This book is 600 pages, with illustrations. There is also an excellent treatment of the subject in a book by Christopher Haigh, English Reformations, Oxford, 1993, 300 pages.

(Reprinted from *St. Mary's Messenger*)



Saint Theresa's Convent Chapel, 10 St Theresa Avenue in West Roxbury. Parking available.

North and Mass Pike. Take Route 128 South to Route 109 East towards Dedham. Route 109 ends at the VFW Parkway and becomes Spring Street which leads to St Theresa's Church.

South. Take Route 128 to Route 1 North at Dedham and continue on Route 1 to Spring Street and turn right onto Spring Street which leads to the Church.

Dorchester and Mattapan. Take River Street to Cummins Highway to Washington Street, south to LaGrange Street, and west (right) on LaGrange to Landseer Street and into St Theresa's parking lot.

Brookline. Take VFW Parkway to LaGrange Street, turn left onto LaGrange into West Roxbury. Cross Centre Street and turn right on Landseer Street and into the Church lot.

MBTA Orange Line to Forest Hills. Then take the #35 (Dedham Mall) bus, which has the most frequent service. Routes 36, 37, and 38 also stop in front of St Theresa's Church.

The Congregation of Saint Athanasius,

The Revd. Richard Sterling Bradford,
Chaplain

worshiping at

Saint Theresa Convent
Chapel

10 St. Theresa Ave.

West Roxbury, Mass.

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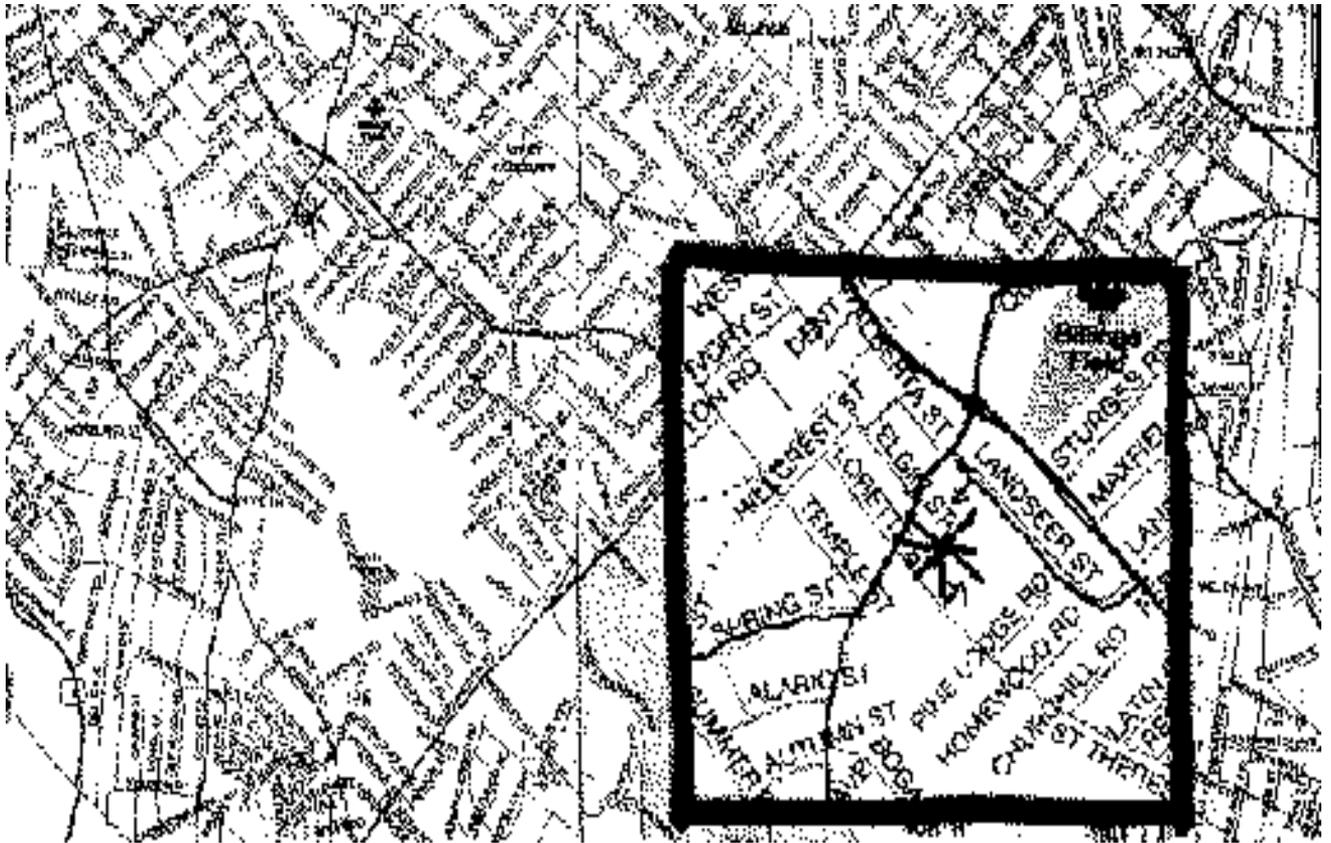
Sundays 10:30am. Sung Mass, followed by coffee and fellowship in the convent solarium.

Saturdays 6:45am Low Mass followed by Exposition until 3:30pm in the chapel connected to the church. Confessions 3:00 to 4:00.

Future Dates

Tue. Aug 15: Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mass at 7:30pm in the church. This is a holy day of obligation.

Thur. Aug 3, and 31: Mass at 4:00pm in the chapel of the church. Confessions after Mass.



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The Congregation of St. Athanasius
10 St. Theresa Avenue
West Roxbury, MA

