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# ‡ Contra Mundum ‡

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Volume III, Issue 7

February 2001

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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

**T**HE specific characteristic of a Catholic spiritual life is not only that God speaks to us (as the Jews have believed ever since the Old Covenant) and that He has done so through Christ (as the protestants believe with us) but that in addition to all of this, God continues to speak to us in Christ by and in the Church.

Catholicism is the only form of Christianity that continues to be what ancient Judaism already was.... the religion not only of a Word once spoken and preserved in memory, but a living Word always present and always spoken here and now.

In protestant Christianity there is the sense that the Incarnation ended with the Ascension and that the individual soul has access to a memory of Christ preserved in the gospels. But in the Church, founded upon the apostles, the distinguishing mark of their mission is that they are "sent" and that He Who sends them remains mysteriously present. He "who hears you, hears Me, and he who receives you, receives Me. Go, baptize all nations, teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you. I am



THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST  
IN THE TEMPLE, OR  
THE PURIFICATION OF SAINT  
MARY THE VIRGIN

COMMONLY CALLED CANDLEMAS DAY

Friday, February 2, 2001

Blessing of Candles, Procession, and  
Solemn Mass

Saint Theresa of Ávila Church  
West Roxbury

7:30pm

with you always, until the end of the age."

The gospel is not about Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ IS the gospel, and His personal presence dwells beneath the words of the inspired texts of which the church is the guardian He appointed.

There can be no question of interpreting or describing the Christian spiritual life apart from the God Who dominates it. Christ is the moving force behind the steps we take and the aspirations of every soul. Spirituality is not then a quest for some vague syncretistic amalgam called

"the religious experience." It is a drawing of the soul to Jesus Christ. And since the Word of God is inseparable from the Church, our personal relationship with Christ is developed in the Church. That is the form in which God has given us the Word. And since His Word is given so that we may live, we can be quite sure He knew how to present His revelation to us in such a way as we can indeed have it and live.

You and I certainly have the freedom to study the Christian faith "on our own" with the aid of all sorts of commentaries, encyclopedias, and dictionaries. But revealed truths have been given us not to add to our "general fund of knowledge" but to make us live the life that God has destined us to live. The only way to have our spiritual life nourished (and to avoid the pitfalls of rationalization and sentimentalization) is to return to Divine Truth as it has been presented to us by the Word of God Himself....in the celebration of the liturgy. That is the preeminent place where our assimilation of the sacred scriptures is not just an intellectual exercise but a vital understanding. Again, our understanding of Christian truth is not "just so you know" but that we "have life, and have it more abundantly." That is what the Word Incarnate said.

Whatever methods of prayer we have (And there are many available

to Catholics) must never operate in a vacuum. Remember that the great spiritual classics, such as the Rule of St Benedict, presuppose this living liturgical celebration and the Divine Office, as the most practical and effective school of prayer possible.

FATHER BRADFORD

This is a story told of a young boy who lived with his parents in a cottage on a hillside, overlooking a wide valley. His greatest joy was to sit on the doorstep on summer evenings, and gaze across the valley to a house miles away on the opposite hillside, for, just as the sun was sinking in the west, the windows of that house would burst into flame, shining dazzlingly with golden light. How perfectly happy the people must be who live there, he thought! One day he packed sandwiches and set off to find the house with the golden windows, but it was farther off than he expected, and it was already towards sunset as he climbed steeply uphill. To his disappointment the house was a plain cottage after all, and the windows ordinary windows. The good people there offered him supper, and made up a bed in the kitchen, for it was too late now for him to return. That night, in his dream, he asked directions of a girl about his age. 'The house with the golden windows? Yes, I've seen it.' And she pointed. He woke to the early song of the birds. Drawing the curtain aside he looked out. There far across the valley, was his own house - and, wonder of wonders, its windows flashed with gold in the brightness of the morning sun.

And the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.

T.S. ELIOT

## Saint of the Month



St. Blaise

February 3

**S**T. Blaise, Bishop of Sebaste in Armenia, ran afoul of the Emperor Licinius early in the fourth century when he refused to worship false gods. He was scourged, and, according to legend, torn with wool-combs, but would not betray his faith. Finally he was beheaded in the year 316.

Of St. Blaise it is said that he was originally a physician who in the practice of his profession saw so much human misery that he resolved to spend the rest of his days in the service of God. His sanctity and miracles of healing soon attracted crowds of people seeking cures of physical and mental ills. Agricolaus, the Emperor's Governor in Cappadocia, learned of this, and began the persecution. During this time Blaise hid in a cave, blessing sick and

wounded animals. A woman brought her dying son to him; the boy had a fishbone caught in his throat. Through St. Blaise's intervention he was healed. Later, hauled away to prison, the same woman met him on the way and gave him food and candles. Thus arose the "blessing of St. Blaise," still afforded sufferers of throat diseases, wherein two candles are applied to the throat. Water with the blessing of St. Blaise is also given to sick cattle.

He was long the patron of wool-combers.

St. Blaise had a shrine at Canterbury where reposed some of his relics. At least four miracles were recorded there, one in 1451.

## SHORT NOTES

Fr Bradford writes "On the Fourth Sunday of Advent some of you presented me with the handsome gift of a new computer and some of its accessories, attachments, and gizmos! I am now in the process of figuring out how the beast operates! I know it must have been an expensive gift and so I am especially grateful for the generosity shown by the gift, and that it represents your continued enthusiasm for the work of the Anglican use. God willing, that work will benefit greatly from both your generous enthusiasm and this valuable addition to our office equipment. Many thanks."

Our Christmas Festival of Lesson and Carols held in St Theresa's Church was much appreciated by many who had never attended any anglican use service. At the conclusion, many people said "promise you will do this again next year!" Our

thanks to readers Joyce Horton Sherman, Terry Maltsberger, Winsome Perry, Wilfred Veldkamp, Deacon Michael Connolly, David Burt, Marcia Rand, Arthur Swanberg, and Robert Alpert.

On the Feast of the Epiphany we had the joyous occasion of witnessing Nathaniel Lloyd's reception into full communion. His parents Tom and Anne drove up from Christendom College for the occasion, and with Nat's sister Gen, hosted a lovely reception after Mass. Congratulations to all! Many of you had been praying all along for this happy day.

On January 21st, the parish priest, servers, and gentlemen of the schola offered Choral Evensong in the Jeanne Jugan Residence in Somerville. The Little Sisters of the Poor host a service annually on the Sunday in the Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity. Father Bradford had also preached at this service in a previous year.

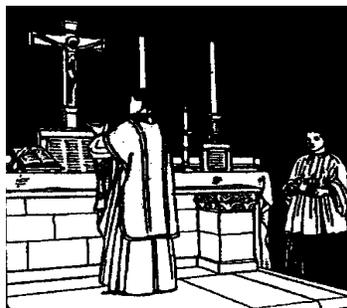
Ash Wednesday is February 28th. You may bring your old blessed palms from home for burning beginning Sunday, February 18th. The burnt palm ash is blessed for use on Ash Wednesday.

The Prelature of Opus Dei is hosting a men's retreat THAT ALL MAY BE ONE at Arnold Hall in Pembroke on February 9-11, 2001. The retreat is for non-catholics and recent converts to the faith seeking a deeper understanding of Catholicism. Two of the three main speakers are former Episcopalians. Father Bradford has been a speaker at this retreat on a previous occasion. There is a brochure with details.

Our own PARISH SPRING RETREAT will be held May 4-6, 2001 at Saint Benedict Abbey in Still River. Fr Romanus Cessario, OP is our conductor. The cost of the Friday - Sunday Retreat is \$90. This covers lodging for two nights, five meals on Saturday and Sunday, and a contribution towards an honorarium for the retreat conductor. You may register by sending your payment to our treasurer, Bruce Rand. Make your checks payable to the Congregation of St. Athanasius.

At a meeting of leaders of the congregation held after Mass on November 19th, there was a lively discussion about things we could be doing to make the Congregation of St. Athanasius more visible. Father Bradford expressed the wish that some of the ideas which had been discussed earlier now be put into effect, even though we have not yet found a permanent home. Accordingly, it was decided to begin a Christian Education program for children and adults, update the website, prepare a set of tracts that we might publish, advertize more extensively, and to put the Anglican Use on the road through a series of services held in other places in order to give us more exposure.

We want to thank all the members of the parish who are heading up these efforts.



## FACING DESPAIR

I CAN picture one teacher there- I can't recall her name. She was short and spare, and I remember her eager jutting chin. Quite unexpectedly, one day (in the middle, I think, of an arithmetic lesson) she suddenly launched forth on a speech on life and religion. "All of you," she said, "every one of you - will pass through a time when you will face despair. If you never face despair, you will never have faced, or become, a Christian, or known a Christian life. To be a Christian you must face and accept the life that Christ faced and lived; you must enjoy things as he enjoyed things, be as happy as he was at the marriage at Cana, know the peace and happiness that it means to be in harmony with God and with God's Will. But you must also know, as he did, what it means to be alone in the Garden of Gethsemane, to feel that all your friends have forsaken you, that those you love and trust have turned away from you, and that God *himself* has forsaken you. Hold on then to the belief that that is *not* the end. If you love, you will suffer, and if you do not love, you do not know the meaning of a Christian life."

She then returned to the problems of compound interest with the usual vigor, but it is odd that those few words, more than any sermon I have ever heard, remained with me, and years later they were to come back to me and give me hope at a time when despair had me in its grip. She was a dynamic figure, and also, I think, a *fine* teacher. I wish I could have been taught by her longer.

AGATHA CHRISTIE



“And seeing the crowds, he went up the mountain. And when he was seated, his disciples came to him. And opening his mouth he taught them” **THE EIGHT BEATITUDES** (Matt. 5:1-10), thus called, because their practice will bring us happiness on earth as well as in heaven.

## ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Adult Christian Education program began in December with two sessions led by Peggy Evers based on the meditations of Francisco Fernández Carvajal in the series of books entitled *Conversation with God*.

In January, we focused on what happened to the Church in England at the time of the Reformation. David Burt and Joe Blake led the discussions, after viewing a taped program from the History Channel.

An ambitious syllabus of topics has been prepared, and we hope to be able to bring in people from outside as well as use the talents of people in the parish. The plan is to offer two sessions a month starting after Mass at about 20 minutes into the coffee hour. If you would like to volunteer to prepare and lead a couple of sessions, please speak to Peggy Evers or David Burt.

## Schedule

February 11

History: The early Church

March 11 & 25:

Doctrine: The Christological Controversies, the Fathers, The Councils.

April 1 & 22

Evangelism: The dynamics of personal conversion.

May 13 & 20

Christian Life: Prayer and a Rule of Life.

June 10 & 24

Worship and Liturgy: The History of the Eucharist.

July 8 & 22

Old Testament: The Historical Books.

August 12 & 26

New Testament: The Gospels.

September 9 & 23

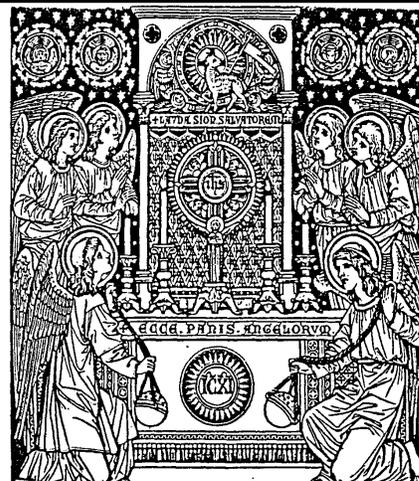
Spirituality: The Desert Fathers and Monasticism.

October 7 & 21

Iconography and Stained Glass.

November 11 & 18

Lives of the Saints: Legendary Saints.



**Sun. Feb 18**

Solemn Evensong and  
Benediction

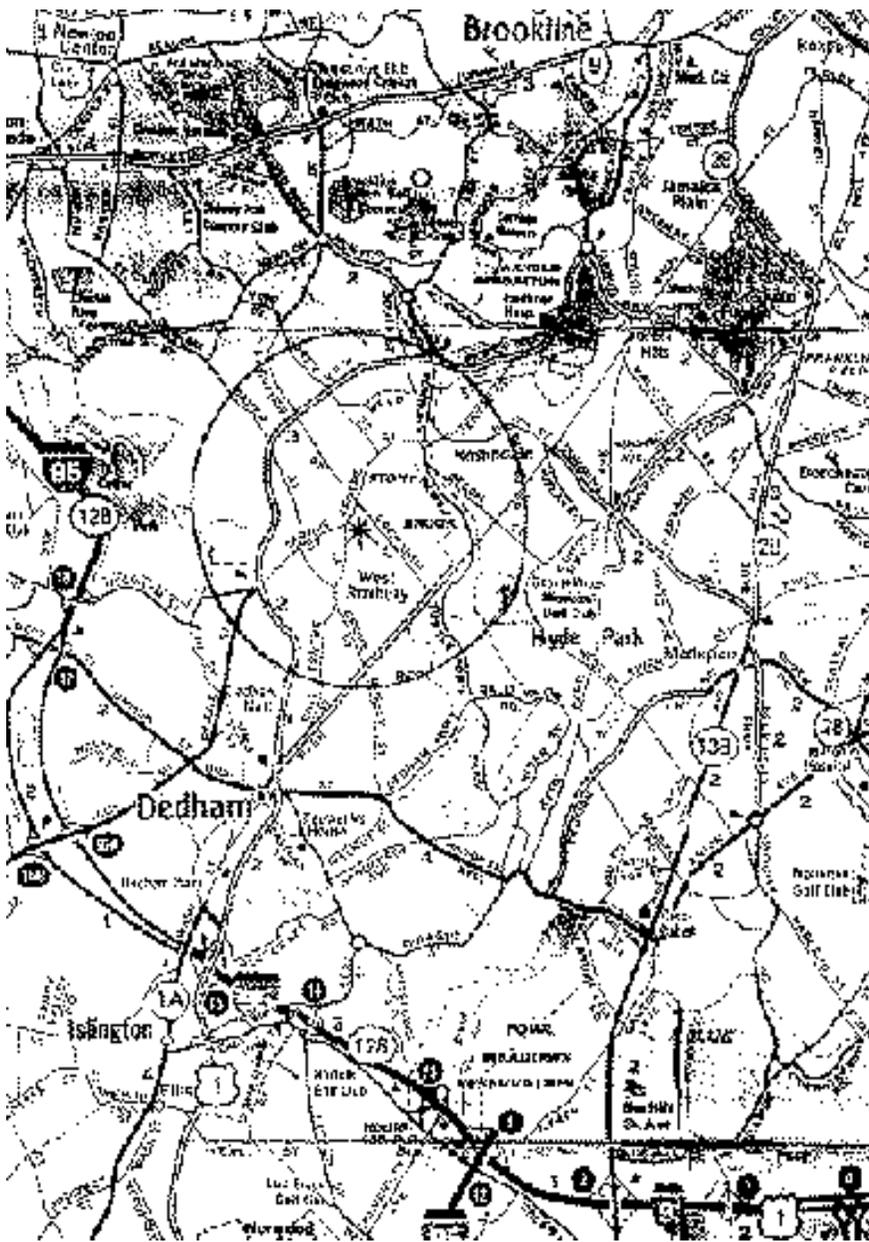
4:00pm

Saint Mary's Chapel, Boston  
College

## The Anglican Use Association

This is a devotional society comprised of Clergy and Laity of the Parishes and Communities of the Anglican Use within the Catholic Church, and any others who desire to participate in prayer for the Daily Intentions. The name and address of any person who wishes to be enrolled as a member of the Anglican Use Association should be sent to:

Our Lady of the Atonement Church  
Attention: Anglican Use Association  
15415 Red Robin Road  
San Antonio Texas 78255.  
(210) 695-2944  
FrPhillips@aol.com



**Directions**

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 1A 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 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

worshipping at

Saint Theresa Convent  
Chapel

10 St. Theresa Ave.  
West Roxbury, Mass.

Rectory: 192 Foster Street,  
Brighton, MA 02135-4620

Tel/Fax: (617) 787-0553

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

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

**Fri. Feb 2, Candlemas,** Mass at 7:30pm, St. Theresa of Avila Church.

**Sun. Feb 18,** Solemn Evensong and Benediction 4:00pm, Saint Mary's Chapel, Boston College.

**Wed, Feb 28, Ash Wednesday,** Mass at 7:30pm

**Future Dates**

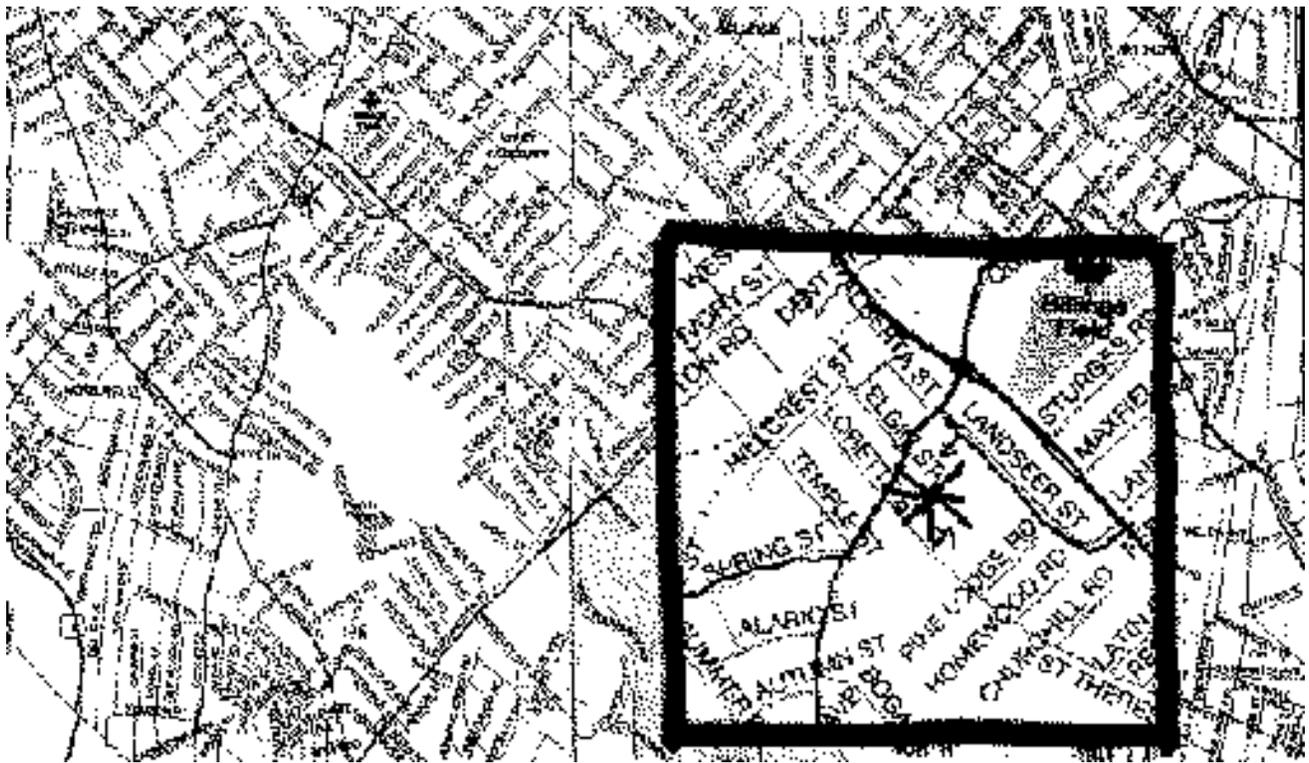
**May 4-6, Spring Parish Retreat,** St. Benedict Abbey, Still River, Fr. Romanus Cessario, OP, conductor.

**Ash Wednesday**



**February 28**

Mass at 7:30pm



**Contra Mundum**

The Congregation of St. Athanasius  
10 St. Theresa Avenue  
West Roxbury, MA 02132

