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# ‡ Contra Mundum ‡

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Volume III, Issue 11

June 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

**Y**EARS ago when the General Theological Seminary gave its Prayer Book content exam (1928 Prayer Book) one of the questions invariably concerned the existence of the only prayer in the book addressed to God the Holy Spirit. [It is on page 572, and a wonderful prayer it is too!] In formal treatises on theology we do find recognition of the being and work of the Holy Spirit, but over the years it seems that the Third Person of the Holy Trinity has meant very little to the theologian and churchgoer alike. One prayer in 600 pages is thin soup! As a result, more than a few of us can take up the cry of the Ephesians “We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.” (Acts 19:2)

This state of affairs has devastating results. It means that there is a Person of the Blessed Trinity with Whom we do not appreciate our relation. What are the results of this impoverishment? One of them certainly is the crisis of authority in the Church. Since the 16th Century we have the spectacle and scandal of Christianity split off into a multitude



of sects, each claiming to be in possession of the “pure Gospel.” When we have turned our backs on what Christ promised- the continuous teaching of the Holy Spirit through the Body of Christ- then we are free to disparage dogma and center our desire on the so-called “simple gospel” theory, and the accumulated wisdom of the Church down the ages is dumped in favor of getting on with the “practical aspects of life.” But this has led to a mess, and the proliferation of schism. Without the guidance of the Holy Spirit, fallen human nature is no more likely to think alike in morals than in theology.

Of course to demand an undogmatic religion is absurd. We don't do that in any other department of

human endeavor. In order to make progress in anything, you build upon givens. There is no such thing as an undogmatic biology or undogmatic chemistry. Because there is a definite establishment of fact, researchers are free to expand their efforts in the establishment of other facts. That process works in theology as well, and the Catholic Church has been enabled to settle facts not provisionally but finally and completely. Contemporary theology then, like contemporary science, goes on in an effort to broaden the area of truth. And anyone who speaks of dogma as hindering the investigation of truth is one who does not believe in the office of the Holy Ghost, or else relegates the Third Person of the Holy Trinity to a rubber stamp of the human endeavor.

The gospel is Jesus Christ. And our knowledge of Christ is aided and made intelligent by the writings of St. John and St. Paul. We used to say these and other writings were inspired by the Holy Spirit. Nowadays it is more fashionable to say that John and Paul were culturally conditioned! When we recognized the continuous work of the Holy Spirit in the Church, and that He is still at work, we recognized that He has something to do with the fact that our knowledge of the meaning of St. John and St. Paul and the rest of the Holy Scriptures has been aided and

made intelligent by the subsequent writings of St. Athanasius and St. Augustine. And so on down the ages. That presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit is what gives divine authority to all of the Church's statements. If we do not know what is true, it is because we have turned our backs on the only Voice which can tell us the truth.

Whatever else He is, God is God the Holy Ghost. To forget that is a disaster. For He is the Lord and Giver of Life. And the spiritual life is not the collection of our thoughts and habits according to rules, but our thoughts and will surrendered to the will of the Living God. The spiritual life is the life of God the Holy Spirit in us, in our souls, as a result of our self-surrender. The alternative? There is only one; to be enticed by the banana, the tantalizing bait of uninspired free thought once successfully thrown to Adam and Eve in Paradise. And you know where that leads.

FATHER BRADFORD

## SHORT NOTES

On the Feast of Pentecost we are in need of volunteers to read the lesson (Acts 2:1-11) in foreign languages. Last year we had nine languages, much enjoyed by all. Please notify the Chaplain or Mr. David Burt if you are willing to read.

Everyone can wear RED clothing on Pentecost. And perhaps with some forethought, we can have red food items at coffee hour.

Father Bradford spent the weekend of May 19-20 in Rochester, N.Y. with a group of Catholics and Episcopalians interested in the Anglican use. Both Evensong and a sung Mass were offered. Please remember this

community in your prayers.

Thanks to the generosity of Joseph Blake we now have an extra set of choir robes (cassock and surplice) for use of the schola.

Our FALL RETREAT DATES are November 2-4. We will be at Saint Benedict Abbey, Still River, Friday evening to midday Sunday. Our conductor is Father Peter Stravinskis, who has visited us both at All Saints' Ashmont and at St. Mary's Dedham. Fr. Stravinskis is editor of *The Catholic Answer*, a publication of *Our Sunday Visitor*. Details soon.

Speaking of *The Catholic Answer*, a sermon of Father Bradford's is featured in the current issue of the magazine.

Thanks to an aunt of Fr. James O'Driscoll, who has sent us some English pounds sterling as a contribution to our fund for vestments. We accept donations from closer to home as well!

A conference of the Anglican Use Parishes will be held in San Antonio, Texas on October 3-5. Father Bradford is planning to attend. It would be wonderful if we had a parish delegation.

Our good friend Dr. Wayne J. Hankey is in residence in Boston for a few weeks doing research at Boston College and Harvard University. He is a former priest of the Anglican Church of Canada and continues to teach in the department of classics at King's College, Halifax, Nova Scotia. This summer he becomes head of the department. Dr. Hankey was received into the Church in Rome much encouraged by Cardinal William Baum. Later, he was Fr. Bradford's sponsor for confirmation/

reception. If you do not know Dr. Hankey, please introduce yourself when you see him at Mass. He is a great friend of our congregation.

## Saint of the Month



### St. Justin Martyr

June 1st. Died 166 A. D.

**T**HE early days of the Christians in Rome were troubled ones. Their persecutions under Nero are a bloody legend, but the imperial attitude began to soften under Trajan and his successor, Hadrian (AD 117-138). Popular prejudice persisted, however, and the common people continued to scapegoat Christians whenever some civil mischance occurred. If the Tiber rose above its

usual height and caused floods, the Christians were blamed; if the imperial armies were defeated in war, the blame was on the Christians. When Antoninus Pius became emperor in AD 138, however, governors and magistrates were commanded to stop the persecutions altogether, and Christians were no longer punished for their religion.

This new tolerance made it possible for more public teaching and writing to begin, and into this era came Justin, born in Samaria, who had been trained in Greek learning. He and others like him were called “philosophers,” that is, lovers of wisdom. Among the philosophical schools were the Epicureans and the Stoics. (We know that St. Paul had some disputation with philosophers such as these at Athens-Acts xvii:18). Justin had tried one kind of philosophy after another, but one day he met an old man while walking at the seashore. This gentle sage taught Justin about Our Lord, and thus he was converted. Still calling himself a philosopher, and wearing the long cloak which marked him as such, he began teaching Christian wisdom, mostly at Rome, where scholars flocked to him in great numbers. He wrote books; the texts of some still survive. He appears to have been familiar with what we know as the Fourth Gospel, and he is identified with those early fathers who introduced the stream of Plato’s thinking into pre-Nicene Christianity.

Unfortunately for the Christians, when Antoninus Pius died in 161, the new emperor developed a hostile attitude toward the Christians, whom he apparently misunderstood. Marcus Aurelius, otherwise a humane and wise emperor, a philoso-

pher himself, reopened the old persecutions, blaming rebellions, military defeats, plague, and famine on the Christians.

A rival philosopher of the Cynic school, a certain Crescens, arranged to have Justin carried before a judge on the charge of being a Christian. When questioned about his belief, Justin confessed it. When he refused to offer sacrifices to heathen gods, he was threatened with scourging. Still he refused, and he further refused to betray his friends. He told the judge that the sufferings of this world were nothing in comparison to the glory which Christ has promised his people in the life to come.

Justin and some of the friends who had been arrested with him were beheaded in 166, and he has been known ever since as Justin Martyr.

## When Father Bradford Goes Away....

Fr. Joseph F. Wilson

**E**VERY once in a while, my friend Father Bradford will take the opportunity to get away for a brief break. I’m always glad to encourage him to do so. I’m sure that I always encourage friends to take their breaks and refresh the spirit, with the zeal of one who is thoroughly bored by vacations and thus avoids them while living them vicariously through others; but my reasons are more than a bit selfish for urging Father Bradford to get away and take his time, with Mrs. Bradford. You see, Father Bradford is an Anglican Use Priest of the Roman Rite (which is why there is a Mrs. Bradford), chaplain to the Anglican Use congregation in Boston. And when he folds

his tent and steals away, I get to fill in for him. And I have a few thoughts to offer on that experience.

The “Anglican Use” is a fruit of the Second Vatican Council. The Council Fathers, expressing their hopes for Christian unity, said that in the future it should be possible that worthy elements of the patrimony of piety of other Christian bodies might find a home in the Catholic Church (as radical as this might have sounded to Catholics before the Council, it was seriously discussed at the time of the Council of Trent, four hundred years earlier). In the early 1980’s, responding to the overtures of groups of Anglicans who were seeking to come into the full communion of the Catholic Church, the Holy Father established the “Pastoral Provision.” By it, Anglican clergymen received into the Church had the opportunity to present themselves for the possibility of ordination as Priests even if they were married, and groups of former Anglicans could, with the permission of the Bishop, continue to worship together using rites based on the Anglican liturgy, carefully adapted to conform in essentials to the Roman Rite.

A group of parishioners of All Saints Episcopal Church in Ashmont, Massachusetts, parted company from their Episcopal brethren several years ago, and, under the leadership of Father Bradford, were received graciously by Bernard Cardinal Law into full Communion, and Father Bradford was ordained. They are the staunchest group of Catholics you could ever want to meet, having studied the Catechism and embraced the Faith whole and entire. They form the “Congregation of St. Athanasius,” worship at present in the con-

vent chapel of St. Theresa's, West Roxbury, and I count it a great privilege when I can be of service to them as a Priest.

And the experience of celebrating Mass in a different ritual has led me to reflect on my experience of fifteen years as a Priest celebrating the Novus Ordo. Celebrating according to the Anglican Use is a very different thing, you see; and one realizes that from the start of the rite.

Having vested, and joined in the sacristy with the servers and the gentlemen of the schola in the preparatory prayers -- the old "prayers at the foot of the altar" -- the procession begins, and makes its way to the Altar as the opening Hymn is sung.

From the very beginning, I experience the Anglican Use liturgy in a very different way from the Novus Ordo. Daily and Sunday in my own parish, I reverence the Altar, go to the chair and, facing the people, initiate a dialogue with them, and I am even encouraged by the Liturgy to offer introductory comments.

Ascending the Altar in the Anglican Use Liturgy, I first reverence it with a kiss, then proceed to the epistle side to charge the thurible, and incense the Altar. The text of the Mass is based upon the Book of Common Prayer; the ceremonies are the traditional ceremonies of the Roman Rite. When I am standing at the Altar, I am facing eastward, in the same direction as the People, the direction of the rising sun, in the ancient symbol of the whole Church gathered in prayer awaiting the Second Coming of the Lord. Therefore, upon finishing the incensation of the altar, I move to the epistle end to begin, "Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit," to which the people re-

spond, and I then pray the ancient Collect for Purity, "...cleanse the thoughts of our hearts... that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy holy Name..." Then, to the center of the altar as the Kyrie is sung, and the Gloria. I kiss the altar and turn to the People to sing, "the Lord be with you;" with their response, "And with thy spirit," I move to the epistle end of the Altar and sing the collect, and we sit for the readings.

I set out the beginning of the rite in some detail for a reason; the ceremonies described will be familiar to anyone who is acquainted with the traditional ceremonies of the Roman Rite. The reason I offer the detail is to set the context for my reflection on how different my experience of this ritual is from the Novus Ordo, for I find the Anglican Use rite with the traditional ceremonies extraordinarily liberating.

In a sense, it is paradoxical that I should find it so liberating -- from the modern perspective, it offers very little freedom. From the very beginning of the Liturgy to the end (except for my sermon) my words, and actions, and posture are carefully ritualized. Instead of mounting my "president's chair" (I generally refer to it as the "Captain Kirk Chair") and initiating a dialogue with the people, offering ad-libs on the feast or whatever, I deliberately, consciously have to enter into this liturgy with the assembled Faithful. I have my part to fulfil in this rite; they have theirs, and together we enter into the worship. This is not something I am directing, or coordinating. My gestures are carefully prescribed, and once I am done with the incensation of the Altar I stand before it, facing God as it

were, in the same direction as the People, and we begin to address Him, we begin our worship. I'm not putting it too strongly at all when I characterize my reaction as feeling "liberated" by the form the ritual takes. I'm not carrying this rite forward by the force of my wonderfully magnetic personality. I'm entering into it, submitting to the Liturgy's rhythms, with the People, and the effect of this on me is a much deeper sense of common worship.

Here, I need to offer an observation about the music. There is nothing more frustrating than attempting to discuss music in Catholic worship. It is maddening. Many Catholics are fierce partisans of the contemporary "renewal music" of the Eagles' Wings variety. They are insensible to how transitory this music actually proves to be, how quickly the new hits become tired (and how most of the congregation doesn't even attempt to sing them!), how much of the music in Glory and Praise, the folk hymnal, has dated terribly after just a few years and is never sung at all. Traditional Catholics, on the other hand, often long for the glory days of "Mother Dear, O Pray for Me," the St. Gregory hymnal and the old devotional hymns.

It was my experience as a choir boy in my parish church which first sparked my interest in Anglican liturgy -- our choirmaster was a convert, which was a blessing, and one soon figured out where all of these wonderful motets and hymns were coming from. In the Anglican Use liturgy, one draws upon a hymnal of six to eight hundred hymns, solidly Scriptural and Liturgical (you come for Mass on the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels, you get hymns hon-

oring the Angels; you come on the Annunciation, you get Annunciation hymns!!). The hymns are PART OF THE WORSHIP -- the whole congregation joins prayerfully in the whole hymn, from beginning to end, instead of using it as "filler" and doing a verse and a half until Father gets to the chair. And the parts of the Mass - Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sursum Corda, Agnus Dei - are all set to beautiful, singable music.

For me, the whole experience of worship is transformed when I have the chance to celebrate in the Anglican Use. I'm a cradle Catholic; I made my First Holy Communion in 1967. I grew up in the age of postconciliar liturgical renewal. I vividly remember making my way to the altar rail in 1968 as the folk group bawled out, "Blowin' in the Wind." I am used to polyester vestments, incredibly banal liturgical texts, poorly chosen hymns rushed through and cut off as soon as possible, the forty-five minute Sunday Mass (the Catholic Church's answer to fast food restaurants).

What a joy it is, then, when Father Bradford goes away. What a pleasure, to join with a congregation in a rite which seems utterly timeless, which is theirs as much as mine, in which we are never looking to entertain each other, but rather join together to approach God. The words of the rite are traditional, rich, profound and lovely, and a deep part of each of us gathered there. How heartening it is to be saying things like, "And grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please Thee in newness of life, to the honor and glory of Thy Name," or those lovely words we say as I kneel at the altar before Communion, "...grant us

therefore gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink His Blood, that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us..." I once, in an acerbic moment, explained to someone who had asked about the difference between the Anglican Use Rite and our Novus Ordo, "The difference is that at Vespers, when the Anglican Use folks sing in the Magnificat, 'For, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed,' we are reciting, 'I betcha everybody calls me Happy.'" Slightly exaggerated, I suppose, but there's a point to it. And, may I add, I'm NOT saying that Elizabethan English would work for regular Catholic parish liturgy, at all, at all. But cafeteria English hasn't worked, either!

So, what's the point to this article? Well, it's written, as I have noted, by one who grew up in the postconciliar mess, who made his First Communion in 1967 at the age of seven, and watched the Church collapse around him as he grew older. And who cannot help but wonder -- was all of this really necessary?

If the goal was liturgical renewal, was it really necessary to so violently overhaul the form of the Mass that people had to lose the sense of continuity with the Tradition? If you're tempted to protest that observation, please stop and recall the folk group bawling "Blowin' in the Wind" as a communion hymn in 1968. People in my generation grew up with no sense of continuity at all -- the only things valuable and valued were innovations and novelty. And look at the devastation that resulted.

I readily concede the usefulness of the vernacular, and that there were aspects of the Liturgy which needed

revision, but the rite we used for Mass before the Council was truly ancient, well-established by the time of Gregory the Great, and gave full expression to the vertical dimension of worship. The richness of that rite, very conservatively revised where needed, traditional ceremonies intact and made more accessible to the people through use of the vernacular as appropriate, and with texts carefully married to plainchant and with good hymns, could have resulted in every parish having the kind of experience I have with the good folk of St. Athanasius -- the profound sense of joining together in a communal stepping into the worship and submitting ourselves to the rhythms of the Liturgy and Tradition of the Church. And had that been done, Catholics might not have gotten the impression that, the Mass having been turned upside-down, everything else in the Church's teaching was up for grabs, too... Presently, the music, manner of celebrating, and entire atmosphere of the Novus Ordo all too often leaves one feeling that this is a prayer service cobbled together by the relative genius of the participants; there's no sense of anything having been handed on at all.

And this is especially true at major ceremonies. It seems that, every time I am present for a liturgy celebrated by a Bishop, he experiences the driving need to assert that he is the host of the occasion -- lengthy commentaries from him open and close the rite (after he has marched down the aisle as though he were running for reelection, kissing babies and glad-handing congregants). But it is Jesus Who is the Host of the occasion; and I know that I have experienced this most notably at the Anglican Use Mass.

That there is something lacking in the Novus Ordo is beyond question, as far as I can see -- it was to have been the occasion of a great renewal, and after thirty years we can look back and see how many people simply stopped coming to Mass! Being able, as a Priest, to celebrate with a different rite has perhaps given me a new perspective on something I find lacking in the revised Liturgy. It has certainly convinced me that there is something wrong with the "president's" role as currently understood, enthroned as I am in my Captain Kirk chair, facing the people and dialoguing with them. I'd dearly love to be free of the tyranny of that Chair. I really long to be able to skip the dialogue, abandon the liturgical talking points and the jabbering and the chatter, and to be able to --have you guessed?? -- just go with my People to the Altar of God, to God who giveth joy to my youth.

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THE AUTHOR

### *Veni, Creator Spiritus*

Creator spirit, by whose aid  
The world's foundations first were laid.  
Come visit every pious mind;  
Come pour thy joys on human kind;  
From sin and sorrow set us free,  
And make thy temples worthy thee.

O source of uncreated light,  
The Father's promised Paraclete!  
Thrice holy fount, thrice holy fire,  
Our hearts with heavenly love inspire;  
Come, and thy sacred unction bring  
To sanctify us, while we sing.

Plenteous of grace, descend from high,  
Rich in thy sevenfold energy!  
Thou strength of his Almighty hand,  
Whose power does heaven and  
earth command.

Proceeding spirit, our defence,  
Who do'st the gift of tongues dispense,  
And crown'st thy gift with eloquence.

Refine and purge our earthly parts;  
But, O, inflame and fire our hearts!  
Our frailties help, our vice control,  
Submit the senses to the soul;  
And, when rebellious they are grown,  
Then lay thy hand, and hold them down.

Chace from our minds the infernal foe;  
And peace, the fruit of love, bestow;  
And, lest our feet should step astray,  
Protect and guide us in the way.

Make us eternal truths receive,  
And practise all that we believe;  
Give us thyself, that we may see  
The Father, and the Son, by thee.

Immortal honour, endless fame,  
Attend the Almighty Father's name;  
The Saviour Son be glorified,  
Who for lost man's redemption died;  
And equal adoration be,  
Eternal Paraclete, to thee.

JOHN DRYDEN

Consider secondly, that the Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles, in the shape of tongues, to signify that he came to make them fit preachers of his word; and to endow them with the gift of tongues, accompanied with heavenly wisdom, and understanding, of the mysteries of God, and all the gospel truths; to the end that they might be enabled to teach and publish, throughout the whole world, the faith and law of Christ. And these *tongues* were of *Fire*, to signify how this divine Spirit sets those souls on fire, in which he abides; enflaming them with divine love; consuming the dross of their earthly affections; putting them in a continual motion of earnest desires and endeavours, to go forward from virtue to virtue, as fire is always in

motion; and carrying them upwards towards the God of gods in his heavenly Son; as the flame is always ascending upwards towards its element. O blessed fire, when shall I partake of thy sacred flames? O come and take possession of my heart; consume all these bonds that tie it to the earth; and carry it up with thee, towards the heavenly furnace, from whence thou comest. Sweet Jesus, thou hast said (Luke 12.49): *I am come to cast fire on the earth; and what will I but that it be kindled?* O cast this fire into my soul, that it may be kindled there!

RICHARD CHALLONER

Bishop Challoner (1691-1781) was Vicar-Apostolic of the London district from 1741. This paragraph is taken from Volume 1 of his *Meditations for Every Day in the Year* (1767).

### THE SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

Commonly Called Whitsunday  
Sunday, June 3, 2001

10:30am Procession, Solemn Mass  
& Sermon

5:00pm Solemn Evensong and  
Benediction

Saint Clement's Eucharistic  
Shrine, 1105 Boylston St. Boston.  
[http://www.omv.org/inglese/shrineboston/  
stclement.html](http://www.omv.org/inglese/shrineboston/stclement.html)



TRINITY SUNDAY  
Sunday, June 10, 2001

10:30am Procession, Solemn Mass & Sermon  
Athanasian Creed



Members of the Congregation of St. Athanasius with Father Bradford and Abbot Gabriel (center) on retreat at St. Benedict Abbey, Still River, MA, May 4-6, 2001.

## The Congregation of Saint Athanasius,

The Revd. Richard Sterling Bradford,  
Chaplain

worshiping 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.

### ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SCHEDULE Sundays following the Coffee Hour

June 3, Dr. Wayne Hankey speaks on Cardinal Bérulle.

June 10 Deacon Michael Connolly speaks on the History of the Eucharist in the East.

June 24: the History of the Eucharist in the West.

July 8 & 22

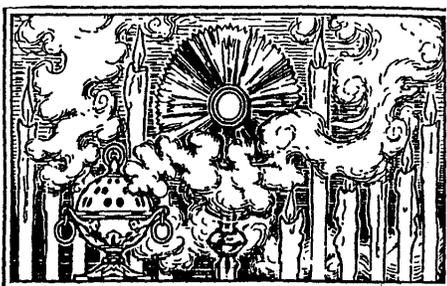
Old Testament: The Historical Books.

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.



THANKSGIVING FOR THE INSTITUTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR COMMONLY CALLED  
*Corpus Christi*

Sunday, June 17, 2001

10:30am Solemn Mass & Sermon,  
3:00 Solemn Evensong & Benediction,  
Saint Theresa of Ávila Church,  
Monsignor William M. Helmick, preaching.

24<sup>th</sup> Nativity (Birth) of S. JOHN the BAPTIST



Sunday, June 24, 2001

10:30am Solemn Mass & Sermon

## The Pastoral Provision

His Eminence, Bernard  
Cardinal Law  
*Ecclesiastical Delegate*

<http://www.pastoralprovision.org>

## The Congregation of Saint Athanasius

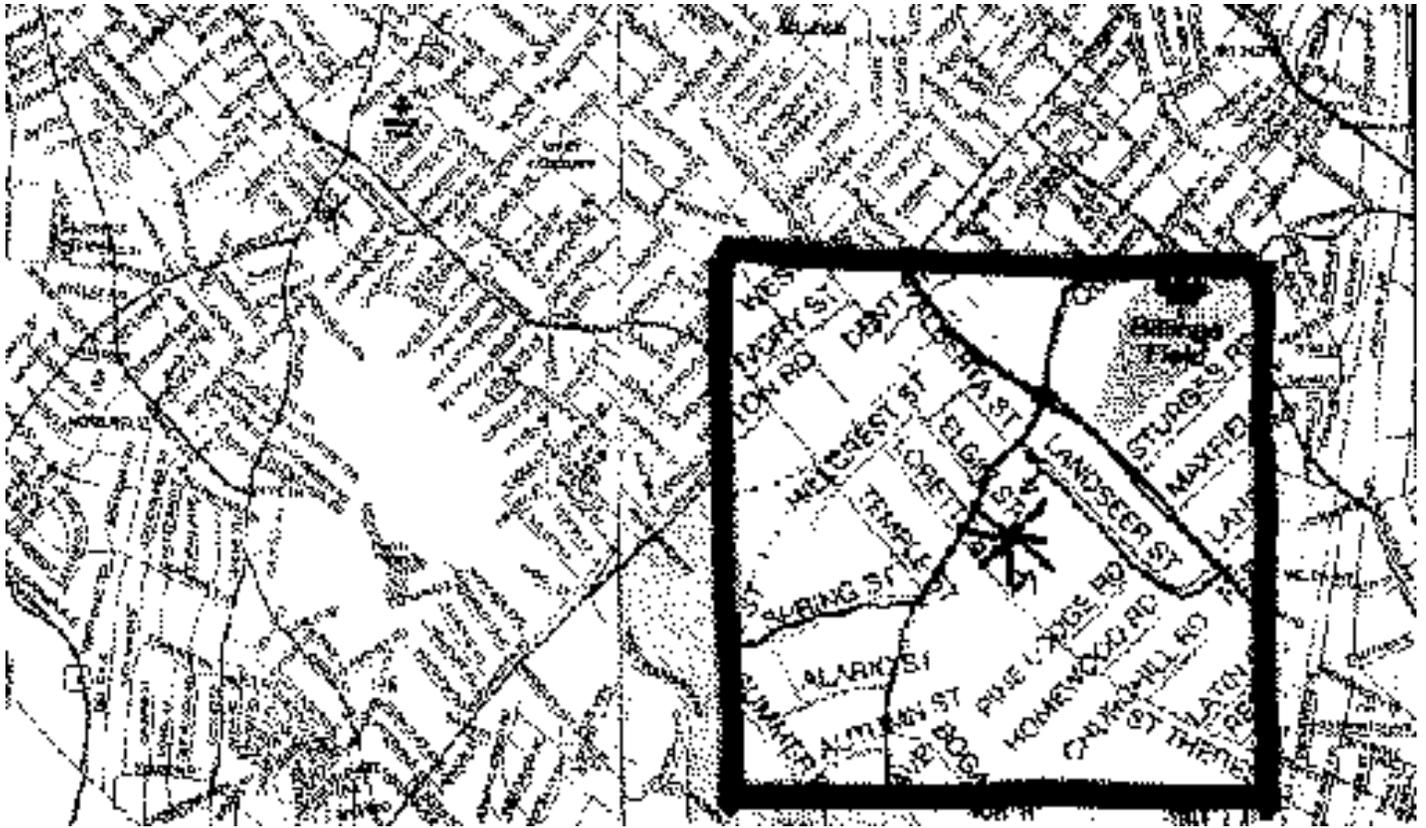
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For reservations please contact Sarah Weekes  
at 617-265-9499.





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