
✠ Contra Mundum ✠

Volume V, Issue 4

November 2002

Notes from the Chaplain

IN the Bible there is no clear injunction to pray for the dead. But it does not follow that Jesus did not pray for the departed. We are, in fact, certain that He did, and His followers have ever since. Every time Our Lord attended the Jewish synagogue, which He regularly did (Luke 4:16) He would have joined in the prayers for the dead. And He told the Sadducees (who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead) that even the founders of Israel, who had died about 2000 years earlier, were to be regarded as living and not dead. "God is God, not of the dead but of the living." (Mt. 22:32). It is no coincidence, either, that on the Mount of Transfiguration Moses and Elijah appeared in glory with Jesus. (Luke 9:28-36).

Christian belief in life after death does not develop only from such clues so pervasive in the New Testament, but logically from Biblical faith in God's enduring relationship with man, and from belief in the resurrection of Jesus.

When the Nicene Creed expresses belief in eternal life, the eternal quality of that life does not come from the fact that it goes on without stopping, but that it is life with God. Nor does the Creed, or the Scriptures, imply there is some sort of immor-



*Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord;
and let light perpetual shine upon them.*

tality of the soul built in to each of us. Rather, eternal life in us is a life, which begins at the beginning of Christian life, and, as God provides, grows from strength to strength until it comes to its fullness in the future. Eternal life does not begin at the end of our present life. We are not like the cat with nine lives. Christians do not have an additional life in prospect at the end of this one. Eternal life has *already begun* in us, and its full development is in the future. Christ said "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

We have entered everlasting life when we become a living member of the Body of Christ. And this has consequences. It changes how we view the present world. When we enjoy a hike in the hills of western Massachusetts on a lovely fall day, we see rocks that will eventually crumble and rotting trees mixed in with the autumnal colors. We walk

with loved ones or friends who are destined for the grave. But rather than view it all as a tragic passing away, Christians know that all these beautiful transitory things are mixed up with an order of things that cannot pass away.

When we say God's Kingdom is eternal, one of the things we mean by that is that it interpenetrates this natural world. And we get glimpses in this life of what lies ahead. This extra dimension means our view of the world is so much richer and joyful, even in our tragedies, than the narrow confines of the secular materialist.

Our prayers reflect all of this. They are not limited to those who share this present life. We naturally pray for those whom the Lord has redeemed and loved, and we do not ask what our prayers achieve. Prayer is a focusing of the love of God

where it is needed, and that love is not limited to the sick and lonely but also extends to the dead and the dying.

In the Body of Christ we are sometimes conscious of just how very close is Heaven, and the joys of the departed who share our faith in Jesus. We pray that the departed may come as we hope to come to the fullness of life God has prepared for those who love Him. May they and we be raised with Christ on the Last Day and be changed from glory to glory.

FATHER BRADFORD

Short Notes

Our Parish Retreat is scheduled for February 14-16 at St. Benedict's Abbey, Still River. Retreat conductor is Fr. Carleton Jones, OP. You may register after the holidays.

Pledge cards have been mailed to our membership and friends. Monies pledged will help us formulate our operating budget for the coming year. Please return your filled-in pledge card promptly, and many thanks.

The Feast of Dedication of the Lateran Basilica is Saturday, November 9th. There is Low Mass at 9:00am in the Convent Chapel.

Now is the time to stock up on your Advent Season supplies: candles for your wreath, and any Advent calendars and devotions which may help you in your devotions. Beginning on Advent Sunday, December 1st the Sunday Mass gospels will be taken primarily from Saint Luke.



Saint of the Month St. Cecilia

Martyr, 3d Century

Feast Day 22 November

SAINT Cecilia has been famous since the 16th century, when she was chosen as patroness at the foundation of the Academy of Music in Rome in 1584. Of Cecilia it had been written, "as the organs (at her wedding feast) were playing, Cecilia sung (in her heart) to the Lord, saying: may my heart remain unsullied, so that I be not confounded." Ever since she has been known as patroness of musicians.

She was martyred in the 3d century but little is known about her for certain. It is said that she was a young Christian patrician, betrothed

to a pagan named Valerian. She had already vowed her virginity to God and refused to consummate the marriage. Remarkably, both her husband and his brother Tiburtius were converted to Christianity. Valerian and Tiburtius were arrested and put to death. Shortly after burying them Cecilia was brought before the Roman prefect, and commanded to sacrifice to the imperial gods. She refused to submit, insulted the judge, and converted her persecutors. She was then sentenced to be suffocated in her bath. When this plan failed a soldier was sent to behead her, but three blows failed to kill her. She survived for three days before she finally died.

Her relics and those of her companions were removed and preserved in 820 at a church in Rome named for her. When the church was rebuilt in 1599 her tomb was opened and the body discovered to be incorrupt,

though it quickly disintegrated when it came into contact with the air.

The English poet John Dryden wrote “A Song for St. Cecilia’s Day” and Pope wrote “An Ode for Music on St. Cecilia’s Day.” The traditional account of her life is set forth in the Second Nun’s Tale of Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*. Numerous musical compositions have been dedicated to her honor by such masters as Purcell, Britten, Gounod, Handel and Mozart.

Churches are named for her around the world, including one in the Archdiocese of Boston: St. Cecilia’s Church on St. Cecilia Street in the Back Bay.

A commentator, David Kopel, had this to say about her. “Saint Cecelia is about living, not dying. Saint Cecelia represents the truth that has been understood by countless martyrs—of all faiths—that dying is a temporary condition, and that the temporal power of religious persecutors is likewise temporary. Risking one’s own life to bury some dead martyrs, and then insulting a judge with the power to impose a death sentence, are both profoundly irrational—unless one knows that there is a spiritual existence of far greater significance than earthly existence. This is the truth affirmed by the veneration of Saint Cecelia; for whether or not the stories about her life are true, they reflect a higher truth. This same truth is affirmed by great music, which is one of the reasons that so many dictatorships have censored even musical performances that do not contain words.

“The Jewish musicians who played Klezmer music in the extermination camps, as well as the mil-

lions of people who have prayed to Saint Cecelia, draw from a common spiritual fountain which vindicates “an ode for Saint Cecelia, that ‘song could prevail O’er Death and o’er Hell, A conquest how hard and how glorious!’ No matter what the powers of evil, ‘music and love were victorious.’” Love never dies.

THE BRITISH MARTYRS

OVER the years 200 men and women have been beatified for their heroic witness to the Catholic Faith in the British Isles during and after the Protestant Reformation. Here we continue brief mention of some of these individual martyrs.

BLESSED THOMAS PORMORT Priest (1559-1592)

When Thomas was a student at Cambridge, he decided to join the English College in Rheims, and later studied in Rome. He was ordained a priest at the Lateran in 1587. After remaining in Italy for some time, he then returned to England clandestinely, passing through Brussels disguised as a servant under the pseudonym of Whitgifte. Once in London, he received help, money, and clothing from St. Robert Southwell. He was soon arrested as a “missionary”, fled, was recaptured, and finally condemned to death for treason.

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BLESSEDS GEORGE ERRINGTON, WILLIAM GIBSON, AND WILLIAM KNIGHT Martyrs († 1596)

During the imprisonment of these three English Catholic laymen, all arrested for their faith, a Protestant minister held in the same prison for committing a misdemeanor sought to ingratiate himself with the authorities by entrapping his fellow prisoners. Fooled by the minister’s pretended interest in Catholicism, the three Catholic prisoners endeavored to convert him, for which they were subsequently executed in York on November 29, 1596.

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Notable Quotes

“‘No-fault’ divorce has spread across the land, making marriage the only contract that can be severed by one party unilaterally, without any evidence of misbehavior or bad faith by the other party.”

MSGR. GEORGE A. KELLY
Catholic World Report August/
September 2002 issue

Colin Hardie was Fellow of Magdalen College and Tutor in Classics at Oxford when C.S. Lewis was a member of the English Faculty. One evening as Lewis, Hardie, and some others were together, “someone started the question ‘whether God can understand His own necessity’; whereupon Hardie got down St. Thomas’ *Summa* and after ferretting in the index pronounced, without any intention of being funny, ‘He doesn’t understand anything.’ This

led to great amusement. The best being an imaginary scene of God trying to explain the theory of vicarious punishment to Socrates.”

*As told by C.S. LEWIS
in C.S. Lewis:
Images of His World*

THE END OF THE ROAD

EVERYMAN will be getting on his way now. You get stiff if you stand long. There is a nasty bit of country just ahead, heavy fighting he can see going on, certainly hardship, and probably sorrow, and a quite possible chance of meeting his own personal death. That doesn't worry him as much as it once used to. He will do again as he has learned keeps his peace interiorly—he will do, as he sees it, the will of the God who set him on his journey, and chance what comes in the doing of it. It may be that in another mile or so the mist will come before his eyes, and a sure guide will lead him swiftly up one of those steep, dark, little valleys which lead up off the road and over the eternal hills—or it may be that he will tread the way through all the turmoil to the end of the road which he can see clearly running on beyond the fighting. Whether for him the end of the journey comes soon or late, Everyman is ready for it. He doesn't bother his head much over the details of what may happen at the end. He'll see that when he gets there. He knows God, has gradually, through serving Him, grown to know Him better—and he has come through a good deal of struggle to a very deep love of God,

and so he trusts God. And when you trust a person you don't fear what he is going to do.

DOM BERNARD CLEMENTS

On Purgatory

It is, of course, open to anyone to say that the whole idea [of Purgatory] is morbid and exaggerated—open even to those who think nothing of queueing for twenty-four hours in acute discomfort to see the first night of a musical comedy which lasts three hours at most, which they are not sure of liking when they get there, and which they could see any other night with no trouble at all. Heaven offers only joy eternal and inexhaustible, and offers it once and for all. It is a question of value and proportion.

¶ DOROTHY L. SAYERS in her book translating Dante's *The Divine Comedy* (1955).

On Purgatory

I do not believe that after the happiness of those who enjoy glory there can be a joy like that of those in purgatory. This happiness ever increases by a continual influx of God into them, which increases in proportion as it destroys the hindrances to these blessed communications which arise from the stain and rust of their sins. It is this rust that is consumed in such a manner by these purifying flames that the soul becomes more and more open to the love of God

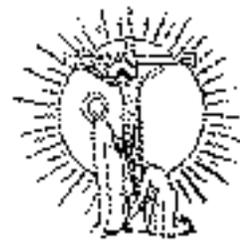
When a body is hidden from the sun by a cover which hinders it from receiving light, the more the cover is withdrawn, the more the sun be-

comes present to the body which had been in the shade. The rust and the remains of sin are like this strange body which hides for a time from these souls the presence of God, who is their sun.

ST. CATHERINE OF GENOA

¶ Catherine of Genoa (1447-1510) was an outstanding laywoman and matron of a hospital at Pammatone. She wrote a treatise on Purgatory which inspired Newman's *Dream of Gerontius*.

GOING TO MASS IS LIKE BEING AT THE CROSS ON CALVARY



Blessed Mary, Saint John and Saint Mary Magdalene stood by the Cross of Jesus as He offered the Sacrifice of His Life to make up for the sins of the world. At Mass we stand by their sides, and join in offering to God the same sacrifice. That is why we sometimes call the Mass THE HOLY SACRIFICE. Jesus is just as really on the Altar as He was on the Cross, but in a different way. Of course He does not die again—that could never happen—but His Death is offered in every Mass, just as He is always offering it in Heaven.



Feast of Christ the King

Solemn Evensong & Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament
 Sunday, November 29, 2002 5:00pm
 St. Theresa of Ávila Chapel

All Saints' Day

Friday, November 1, 2002
 Solemn Mass and Sermon at 7:30pm
 Saint Theresa Convent Chapel
Holy Day of Obligation

Remember, Christian Soul,

*That thou hast this day,
 and every day of thy life,*

- God to Glorify.
- Jesus to imitate.
- A soul to save.
- A body to mortify.
- Sins to repent of.
- Virtues to acquire.
- Hell to avoid.
- Heaven to gain.
- Eternity to prepare for.
- Time to profit by.
- Neighbors to edify.
- The World to despise.
- Devils to combat.
- Passions to subdue.
- Death, perhaps to suffer.
- Judgement to undergo.

Thanks
 be to
God



Thanksgiving Day
 Mass at 10:30am
 St. Theresa Convent Chapel

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. Adult Christian Education two Sundays a month.

THE COMMEMORATION OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Saturday, November 2, 2002
 SOLEMN REQUIEM MASS
 10:00am St Theresa Convent
 Chapel



St. Andrew the Apostle
 Saturday, November 30
 Low Mass at 9:00am
 St. Theresa Convent Chapel

St. Theresa Church and Convent
Chapel, West Roxbury, MA 02132
Pine Lodge Road (off St. Theresa
Avenue)

Park either in the church parking lot or on Pine
Lodge Road. The side door of the convent is
open during the time of our services.

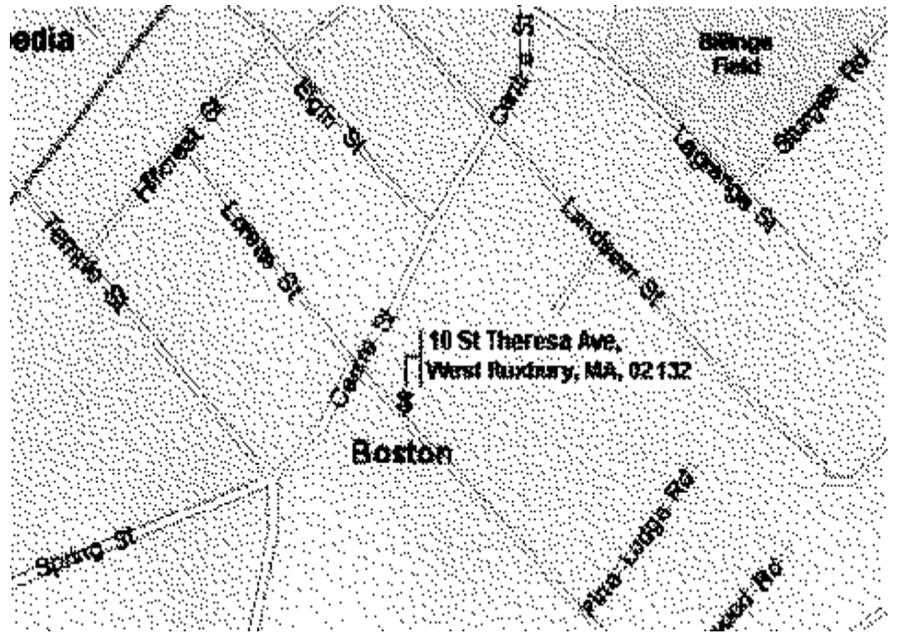
Directions by Car: *From the North:* Route
128 to Route 109, which becomes Spring Street
in West Roxbury. Spring Street ends at a
traffic light at Centre Street in sight of the
church. At this light bear left onto Centre St.
and immediately turn right at the next light
onto St. Theresa Ave.

From the South: Route 1 north through
Dedham to Spring Street. Turn right onto
Spring Street then follow the directions above.

From Dorchester and Mattapan: Cummins
Highway to Belgrade Avenue to Centre Street
left on St. Theresa Ave.

From Boston: VFW Parkway to LaGrange
Street. Turn left onto LaGrange Street, crossing
Centre Street and turn right onto Landseer
Street. Turn left into the church parking lot.

Directions by Public Transportation: *Orange line*
to Forest Hills terminal. Bus to West Roxbury.
#35 bus to Dedham Mall. #36, #37, and #38
also stop at St. Theresa's. *Commuter train* to
West Roxbury Station is a short walk to St.
Theresa's. Departs from South Station, but
no Sunday service is available.



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

