
✠ Contra Mundum ✠

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The Congregation of St. Athanasius

A Congregation of the Pastoral Provision of Pope John Paul II for the Anglican Usage of the Roman Rite

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NOTES FROM THE CHAPLAIN

THE Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary has been celebrated since the sixth century. It was about that time that Christians in Jerusalem began venerating the place near the Pool of Bethesda as Mary's birthplace. Pope Sergius I prescribed a litany and procession for this date; and by the year 1243 the feast had an octave, an eight-day festival observance.

Birthdays are popular in the secular culture, but there is nothing intrinsically religious about their observance. We keep birthdays at least until we get to an age when we would prefer not to do the math! In the civic calendar as well, there are only a few birthday observances. In recent years the birthdays of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln have been merged into Presidents' Day, and usually results in a three-day weekend and special prices in automobile show rooms. In Virginia, Robert E. Lee's birthday is still observed in January, and it provided a welcome break during exam weeks when I was in college.

But the Catholic Church is not big on birthdays. For Christian souls,



THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

[SEPTEMBER 8]

THE COLLECT

OALMIGHTY God, who didst endue with singular grace the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of our Lord: Vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to hallow our bodies in purity, and our souls in humility and love; through the same our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

it is the second birth, the baptism, which is by far the more significant remembrance. Yet how many of us remember the date of our baptism? Our first birth is into mortal life. Our second birth at baptism is into eternal life. And, in the Church's calendar, the saints' days are usually a third birth, their death dates, when they entered into that eternal life in glory. Holy Scripture reflects this indifference to natural birthdays. In the New Testament only King Herod is mentioned as keeping his birthday! (Matt. 14:6)

In the Church's calendar, three exceptions to the rule are made – the birthdays of Our Lord, Our Lady, and Saint John the Baptist. All three came into the world under special conditions of sanctity not common to mankind.

Jesus is God's Own Son, and the commemoration of His birth at Christmas is one of the Church's greatest and holiest days. But Our Lady and Saint John were also free from original sin – John having been sanctified before he came to birth (the angel had said, "he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb" Luke 1:15), and Saint Mary the Virgin, even more highly favored, was sanctified at her conception.

That means Our Lady came into the world sinless. The devil had

nothing in her, ever. Mary was never less than a child of God, and the holiness of God required that this would be so. It was through the anticipated merits of redemption achieved by her Son for us all that Mary was placed at her conception in the same state as would be all Christian souls at baptism. When we are baptized, we are regenerate and born into eternity. The Blessed Virgin remained in this state forever. For the rest of us, Almighty God provided the Sacrament of Penance as the remedy for post-baptismal sin.

And so on this day Holy Church celebrates Mary's birthday with great joy. In her there was finally a human being in whom dwelt all the fullness of divine perfection in a manner and degree unknown in all history. She is what the poet William Wordsworth said "our tainted nature's solitary boast" and the unspoiled first fruits of the redemptive work of her Divine Son. First fruits? Yes, because Christ came to save us all.

¶ *A sermon preached by Father Bradford on the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in 2002.*

WORTHINESS TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION

[N.B. A Catholic would be guilty of formal cooperation in evil, and so unworthy to present himself for Holy Communion, if he were to deliberately vote for a candidate precisely because of the candidate's permissive stand on abortion and/or euthanasia. When a Catholic does not share a

candidate's stand in favor of abortion and/or euthanasia, but votes for that candidate for other reasons, it is considered remote material cooperation, which can be permitted in the presence of proportionate reasons.]
¶ from a memorandum "Worthiness to receive Holy Communion: General principles." This document was sent to the United States bishops by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The complete text is available in many Catholic periodicals.

HISSING AND REPROACH

I KNOW that the Church repels. You look at some of its members and you see complacency, censoriousness, division, vacillating leadership. I feel that too, for I don't live in a sort of haze of purple! I see and I feel the defects of the Church acutely.

Now, it is a very old problem. Israel was chosen by God to represent his purpose in the world, and Israel sometimes became, in the scathing words of a prophet, "a hissing and a reproach". When Israel failed, judgment fell upon her as upon other nations, and God raised from her a "remnant" and used that remnant for the renewal of his purpose through Israel. There was scandal – in the failure of Israel's members, which caused her to be a "hissing". There was glory – in the unshaken purpose of God to use Israel for the showing of himself to the world, despite the obstacles they put in the way. And show himself he did, in Israel, through Israel.

So, too, with the Church of the

new covenant. Don't shut your eyes to scandal, or your ears to hissing. But have them open to the glory, and it is the glory of Christ in his saints. If you want to be a Christian, you have your duty to the scandal and the glory – both.

ARTHUR MICHAEL RAMSAY

¶ From *Introducing the Christian Faith*, SCM

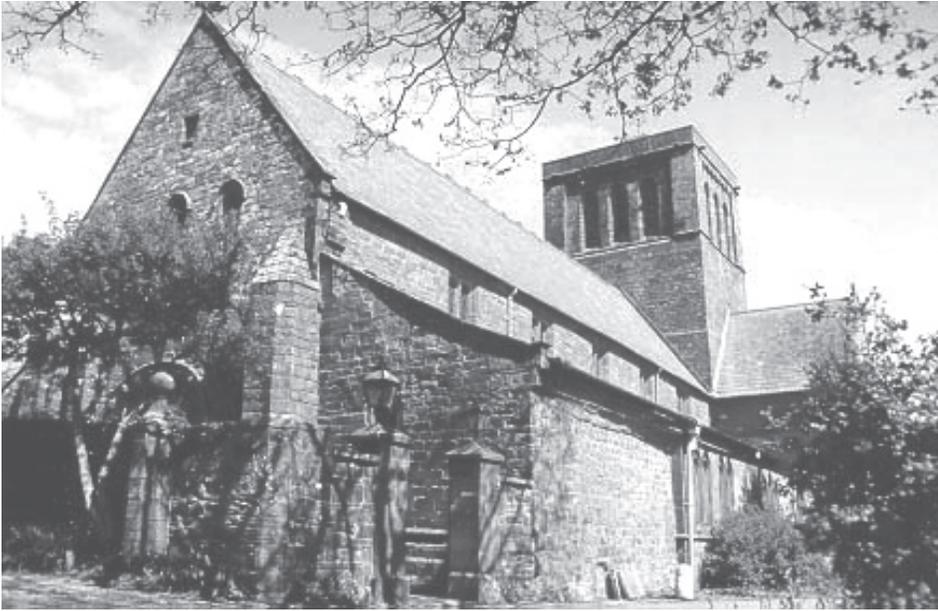
Saint of the Month

September 6

SAINT BEGA *Prioress of Copeland*

(Died AD 681)

THE legend is that St. Bega, commonly called St. Bee of Egremont, was the daughter of an Irish king and was the most beautiful woman in her country. She was to be married to the King of Norway, but she had, from her infancy, vowed herself to a religious ascetic life and, in token of her betrothal to Christ, had received, from an angel, a bracelet marked with the sign of the cross. The night before her wedding-day, while the guards and attendants were reveling or sleeping, she fled, taking the bracelet with her. Finding no ship



Main St, St. Bees. Grid Ref 89: NX 968121

St. Bees is named after St. Bega, said to be an Irish princess who landed here, about 900 AD after sailing across the Irish Sea to avoid an enforced marriage to a Viking chieftan. On the site of an earlier church now stands the splendid 12th Century Priory Church of St Mary and St. Bega. The church was a Benedictine Priory until its dissolution by Henry VIII in 1539.

The architect William Butterfield was responsible for the restoration, which included a new roof (1855), reconstructed aisles and chancel (1867-99), and the iron screen (1886). ‘Father’ Henry Willis built the organ in 1899, his last major commission, and one of the best examples of the work of the famous Victorian organ-builder. In the North Transept are some sculptures by Josefina de Vasconcellos of the figures of St Bega and St Mary (1955)

to speed her escape, she cut a turf from the ground and, on it, crossed the Irish Sea to the English Coast opposite. She landed on a promontory – thenceforth called St. Bee’s Head – in Cumberland, then part of the Kingdom of Northumbria. She lived there, in prayer and charity, as a hermit, fed by the wild birds, but with an increase in piratical raids, she was advised by King Oswald to enter the safety of a nunnery. She received the veil from St. Aidan, Bishop of Northumbria and travelled

the district, preaching at places such as Kilbees in Scotland, before founding the nunnery of Copeland Priory, near Carlisle, as well as “St. Bee’s” around her old hermitage. She is said to have cooked, washed and mended for the workmen who erected its buildings.

In the Middle Ages, she was especially appealed to against oppressors of the poor, to whom she had been devoted in her lifetime, and against Scottish border raiders. She was Patroness of the north-west of

England and also of Norway. In the 12th century, her bracelet was kept at St. Bees as a holy relic on which persons were called upon to swear, as it was believed that a false oath made on that relic would be immediately exposed and incur a dreadful vengeance.

Some say that St. Bega moved even further inland and finally settled on the opposite coast of Northumbria, where Northern Christianity was centered and protected. On this supposition, she is identified, by some authorities – amongst them the Aberdeen Breviary – with St. Begu of Hackness and St. Heiu of Hartlepool. This is unlikely as all three appear to be distinct personages. In fact, St. Bega’s name is so close to the Anglo-Saxon word for a bracelet – beag – that it seems likely that she was conjured up from the reverence afforded to her holiest relic. Her feast day is usually given as 31st October, but this appears to be due to confusion with St. Begu of Hackness.

¶ *Partly edited from Agnes Dunbar’s “A Dictionary of Saintly Women” (1904).*

SHORT NOTES

Confirmation Classes for adults preparing to enter into the full communion of the Catholic Church will begin in mid September. Classes usually are arranged to meet with Father Bradford in the St. Theresa Rectory on a weeknight, but other times and days are possible. A syllabus is available.

Father James H. Coffey went to God on August 4th. He was a retired

priest (ordained in 1945) living in the St. Aidan Rectory in Brookline when many of us got to know him. The funeral Mass was celebrated in St Mary's Church in Wrentham. May he rest in peace!

The parish will conduct an Every Member Canvass during the month of October.

The next in a series of services of Evensong & Benediction will be Sunday, November 21, being the Feast of Christ the King. The 5:00pm service will be held in the chapel of St Theresa of Avila Church.

Fr. John Grennon, O.C.D. has been a special guest at several summer services. He is stationed at the friary of the Discalced Carmelites on Foster Street in Brighton (two doors from Fr Bradford's rectory!). The Carmelites invited the Bradford family to a special dinner in honor of our reception into the Church in 1997. We are blessed to have good friends.

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 TERENCE ALBERT O'BRIEN
Bishop and Martyr (1600-1651)

A native of Cappamore, Ireland, Terence O'Brien entered the Dominican Order, taking the religious name Albert. He was sent to the Dominican

priory in Toledo, Spain, to complete his studies for the priesthood. Following his ordination about the age of twenty-eight, Father Albert returned to his native country. In 1643 he was elected Dominican provincial for Ireland. In 1648, he became bishop of Emly. Bishop O'Brien championed the cause of Ireland's Catholics defending themselves against English Protestant domination. He was visiting Limerick when the city came under attack from English Puritan forces. The bishop was captured as he was ministering to the dying victims of a plague in the city. With his hands bound and his feet chained, he was sentenced to death by hanging. On the scaffold, Bishop O'Brien admonished his flock for the final time: "Preserve the faith, keep the commandments, be resigned to the will of God, for thus will you preserve your souls." Before dying, he took from his neck his pectoral cross and gave it to his mother. This relic has been preserved to the present day.

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BLESSED JOHN PLESSINGTON
Priest and Martyr (c. 1637-1679)

A native of Lancashire, England, John Plessington was ordained to the priesthood in Segovia, Spain. Having returned to England he was captured after seven years of priestly ministry. Indicted on the charge of being a Catholic priest, he was sentenced to death but spent over two months in prison before his execution was carried out. Before dying he told the onlookers: "I profess that I undoubtedly believe and firmly hold

all the articles of the Roman Catholic Faith, and for the truth of any of them, by the assistance of God, I am willing to die."

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BOSTON COLLEGE!

"Personnel is policy" said Father Harvey Egan, professor of systemic and mystical theology. "There is no desire to see the mandatum implemented here. If you look at our theology department, there are a number who are not Catholic ... there are some who don't even believe in God. That isn't going to change."

Former theology chair Stephen Pope said he's glad professors' mandatum status is secret at Boston College.

"The less public pressure that comes in, the better," Pope told the student newspaper *Crossroads*.

¶ *As reported in the National Catholic Register Volume 80, No. 28 (July 11-17, 2004)*

The Richness of the Anglo-Catholic Liturgical Tradition

ONE could easily dismiss the Anglo-Catholic liturgical tradition as simply aping Rome, and there would be much truth in that. However Anglo-Catholics have done an exceeding great amount of work in researching the Western liturgy, and have published many fine works

and compilations based on liturgical sources.

When Anglo-Catholics began to feel the need to affirm and claim the catholicity of the English Church under the influence of John Henry Newman and the other tractarians, they began to experiment with using Roman Catholic liturgical books to supplement the Book of Common Prayer.

Newman used the Breviary and formed a celibate community at Littlemore. Following his departure to Rome, the tractarians who remained in the Church of England continued to experiment with Roman Catholic forms. Today there must be at least ten or more versions of the Breviary intended for Anglican use.

As I have been working on the *Book of Divine Worship* and the *Anglican Use Gradual*, I am drawing on the work of the descendents of these people. I have in my library a copy of *The Anglican Missal* published in London by the Society of St. Peter and St. Paul in 1921. In addition to the complete 1662 rite, it has the minor propers, propers for many saints days, and prefaces with musical notation. The Canon which we use at Mass is based on the translation of the Roman Canon which is to be found in "The Knott Missal" published in 1958 as a smaller sized version of the same book. I also have a copy of the *Anglican Missal* published by the Frank Gavin Liturgical Foundation in 1961. Father Bradford owns a copy of the *American Missal*, published by the Cowley Fathers.

The sisters at Wantage published the enormous work of Francis Burgess and G.H. Palmer which sets the English texts to plainsong, based on Sarum and other English sources.

Winfred Douglas also did a tremendous amount of work in the same vein, and the Sisters of St. Mary's, Peekskill, NY published his *Kyrial*, and the famous *Monastic Diurnal Noted*. I recently received a copy of this book on loan from Bishop Peter Wilkinson of the Anglican Catholic Church in Canada.

Almost all of these books are now out of print, and out of favor in the Episcopal Church. Bruce Ford has recently published his *American Gradual*, published by the St. James Music Press in 2001. It is really quite good, but the text is based on the 1979 Prayerbook Psalter.

My work continues on the *Anglican Use Gradual*. It is available on line, and a number of churches are using it. This is based on the work of Palmer and Burgess and I hope to publish it some day.

C. DAVID BURT



SAINT MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

[SEPTEMBER 29]

THE COLLECT

OVERLASTING God, who hast ordained and constituted the services of angels and men in a wonderful order: Mercifully grant, that as thy holy angels always do thee service in heaven, so by thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Wednesday, September 29,
2004

Seventh Anniversary

The Anglican Use in Boston

Solemn Mass & Sermon

7:30pm

Chapel of St. Theresa of Ávila
Church

The Congregation of Saint Athanasius,

The Revd.. Richard Sterling Bradford,
Chaplain

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 fellow-
ship in the convent solarium.

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.

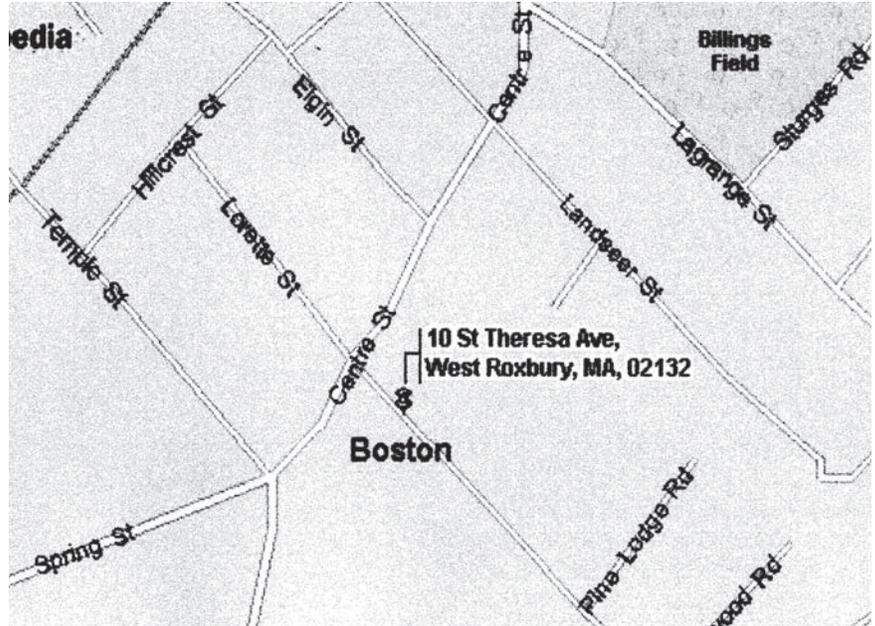
Directions by Car: From the North: Route 128 to
Route 109, which becomes Spring Street in West
Roxbury. Spring Street ends at a traffic light at
Centre Street in sight of the church. At this light
bear left onto Centre St.. and immediately turn
right at the next light onto St.. Theresa Ave.

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 High-
way 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 Sta-
tion, but no Sunday service is available.



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

