
✠Contra Mundum✠

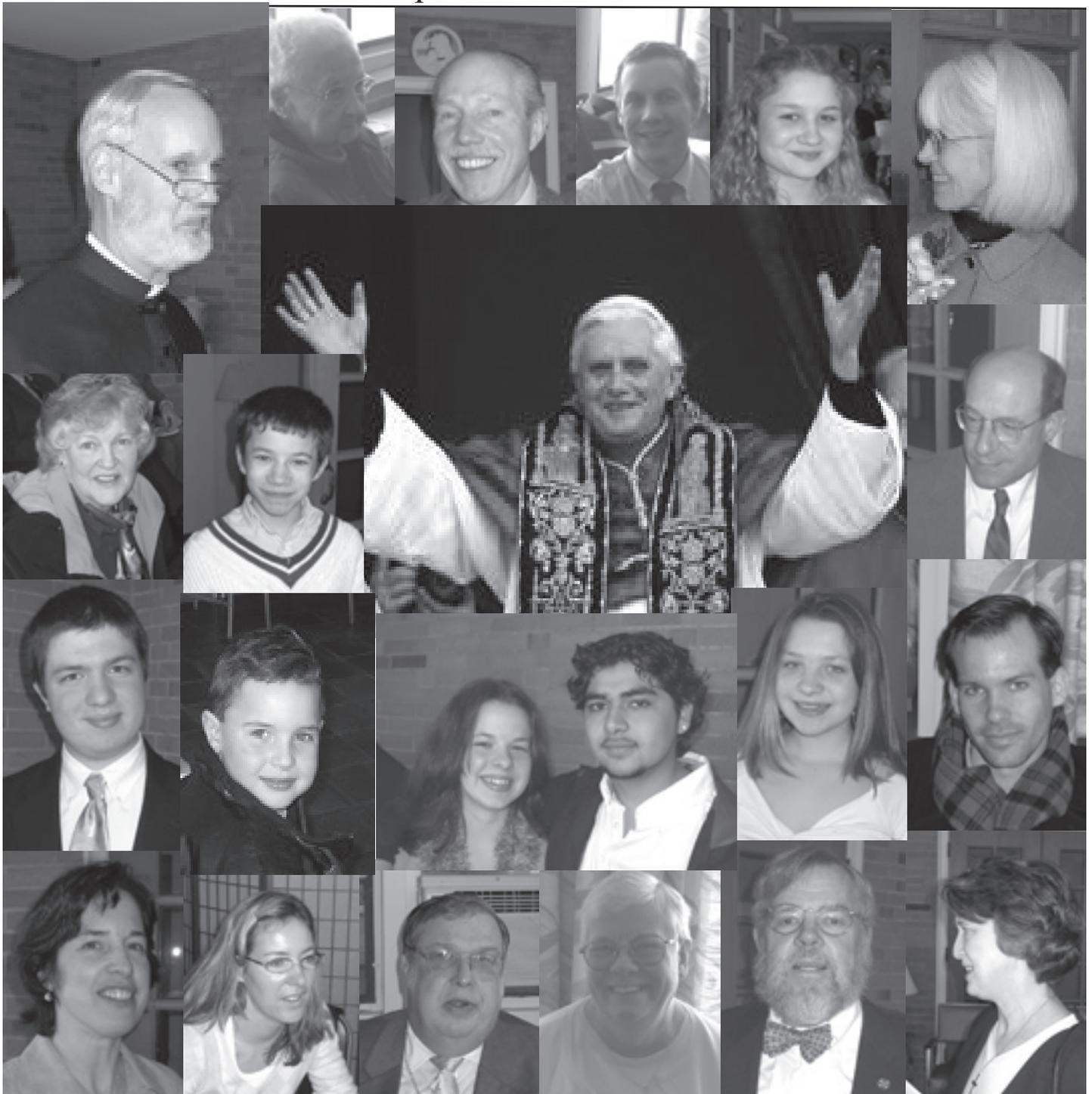
Volume VII, Issue 10

May 2005

The Congregation of St. Athanasius

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

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



NOTES FROM THE CHAPLAIN

Fr. Peter M. J. Stravinskias preached the following sermon at Solemn Evensong in the Congregation of Saint Athanasius in April, 1998. He refers to a previous visit made to us when most of us were still Episcopalians, on St. Matthias' Day, May 13th, three years earlier. Fr. Stravinskias is editor of Catholic Response magazine, has written many books, and was our parish retreat conductor in 2001.

JUST a few weeks shy of three years ago, on the Feast of St. Matthias, I had the joy of being with you for the first time, when I encouraged you to “swim the Tiber.” After some serious intellectual engagement of issues, I then enlisted the help of Monsignor Ronald Knox through his moving sermon which decades earlier had sought to bring other Anglicans into the communion of the Church of Rome. The predominant image, you will recall, came from Acts 12, with Peter knocking on the door, awaiting a response from the Christians inside the house of John Mark.

You answered the door; you recognized the one knocking as Peter; you let him in. With what results? Let me put it more pragmatically. Ronald Reagan, we are told, won the election of 1980 by asking the American people one very simple but telling question: “Are you any better off today than you were four years ago?” We can modify that question for our purposes this evening: “Are you any better off today than you

were three years ago?” Put another way, is the Risen Christ more real to you this Easter Octave than in previous times?

You opened the door for Peter and discovered him to be the great fisher of men [cf. Lk 5; Jn 21], hauling you into and in the net of the Catholic Church, along with one billion other believers from “every tribe and tongue, people and nation” [Rev 5:9]. St. Jerome tells us that the 153 fish caught in that net on Easter morning represent the full complement of every kind of fish known at the time. In other words, from the very beginning, Christ’s Church boasted of diversity—not a “one-size fits all” approach to ecclesial life; rather, 153 different species of fish, of different sizes, shapes, colors and tastes. Your entrance into Catholic unity has added something new to the Catholic net; your presence has been appreciated and encouraged. And just as St. Peter didn’t try to make a salmon into a trout, his successor hasn’t attempted to make you forego your Anglo-Catholic spirituality for a homogenized substitute.

You opened the door for Peter and discovered him to be the one who would confirm you in your faith, just as the Lord had promised would happen [cf. Lk 22:31]. Like Cardinal Newman, like Mother Seton—and so many others—you did not learn a new faith when you entered the Catholic fold. Through the grace and mercies of Almighty God’s Holy Spirit, you had already been introduced to Catholic doctrine and had indeed been living it long before. In the latter days of your Anglican sojourn, however, those truths were becoming more and more obscured, forcing you to wonder if that was not

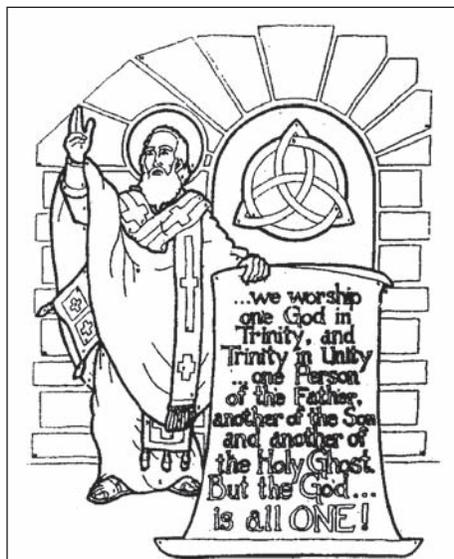
the inevitable conclusion to an ecclesiological syllogism that was flawed from the outset. Since then, Peter’s successor has confirmed you in the Catholic Faith personally and through his universal magisterium exercised as the confessor of the true Faith [cf. Mt 16:17-18] and its guardian [cf. 2 Pt 12-19]. Just as the Fathers of Chalcedon exclaimed fifteen centuries ago, “Peter has spoken through Leo,” you find yourselves hearing the faith of the Church enunciated boldly and proudly, leading you to echo that ancient formula, “Peter has spoken through John Paul.” And the Holy Scriptures inform us that Peter will continue to speak through John Paul’s successor and his, and the one after him—until the end of time [cf. Mt 28:20].

You opened the door for Peter and discovered him to be the one who precedes you into the empty tomb and invites you to enter, so as to see and to believe [Jn 20]. The beloved disciple may well have excelled Peter in love and perhaps even in faith but, through the plan of God, he had to wait humbly outside while the Prince of the Apostles went in to examine the evidence. Peter’s discernment was critical. We see the same pattern with the women at the tomb and the disciples on the road to Emmaus; their personal religious experience had to be submitted to Peter for validation. When it was deemed to be in consonance with his understanding, we hear the joyful acclamation: “The Lord has risen indeed and has appeared to Simon!” [Lk 24:34]. Hasn’t it been exhilarating to have your long pilgrimage of faith and discernment validated by Peter’s successor?

You opened the door for Peter and discovered him to have the

solicitude of the Good Shepherd Himself. When the Risen Christ conferred the primacy on Peter, it is significant that He did so, precisely by using images of feeding and tending His little flock. Peter was to continue throughout his own life and ministry and throughout the ages by means of his successors the tender shepherding of the Lord Jesus. You have known this in a most powerful way as the Universal Pastor of the Church has been so kind, so gracious, so welcoming, so concerned. And those same sentiments have been demonstrated by the shepherd of this local Church of Boston, His Eminence, Cardinal Law, and through his representative, Father Lennon. So much of your reticence, so many of your fears, have proved unfounded because Peter has been such a kindly shepherd.

You opened the door for Peter and discovered him to be a martyr. When Jesus made Peter that substitute shepherd for His tiny flock, He likewise warned him that it would constitute a martyrdom. From the inside, you have seen Peter's successor suffer physically and emotionally, to maintain the unity of the Church. But the truth of the matter is that every believer must have a share in the Lord's suffering, if he truly wishes to experience the Paschal Mystery in its fullness: "No crown without a cross." "No Easter Sunday without a Good Friday." "*Post crucem, lucem*" [After the cross, the light]. And that has been the case for all of you as well. Of course, you will remember that I did not engage in deceptive advertising when I made my "pitch" to you; I clearly promised you both great joys and great sufferings. Having to leave your ancestral



Monday, May 2, 2005

PATRONAL FEAST

SAINT ATHANASIUS,

Bishop and Doctor

Solemn Mass & Sermon at 7:30pm

Preacher: Fr. Philip E. Merdinger,

BH

Chapel of St. Theresa of Ávila

Parish, West Roxbury

religious family; losing friends; being misunderstood, perhaps even alienating family members—these have been some of your crosses from one side. However, even within the Catholic community, you have not always been completely appreciated; the time has seemed long; the hoops through which to jump may have appeared excessive. But today we see all in the full light of Easter. The cross *has* brought the crown.

A few minutes ago, I spoke of St. John as the "beloved disciple." What made him so? I would suggest three things: He rested on the bosom of the Lord during that first Eucharist; he made room in his life for the Mother of Jesus; he had a deep respect and an undying loyalty to St. Peter. Aren't those the very characteristics that have made you

Catholics, which is to say, "beloved disciples"? Love for the Eucharist, devotion to Our Lady, and fidelity to the successor of Peter have been the hallmarks of Catholic discipleship throughout the ages. They must continue to be the identifying marks for this congregation, both individually and collectively.

So, are you any better off than you were three years ago? I trust the answer is "yes"; I hope it is a resounding "yes". When I assist at the renewal of the marriage vows of couples on their wedding anniversaries, I always ask them, "Do you have any regrets? Would you do it all over again?" The exhortation to the couple in the old marriage ritual had a lovely line: "Sacrifice is usually difficult and irksome; love can make it easy; perfect love can make it a joy." Do *you* have any regrets? Would *you* do it all over again? Have the sacrifices been worth it? Have they been made easy by the knowledge and experience of belonging to the historical embodiment of the Church of the Apostles and Martyrs? Have they been made into a joy by living "*sub umbra Petri*" [under the shadow of Peter]?

One of the most evocative images in the New Testament is that of the crowds trying to make contact with Peter, as they had with our Blessed Lord, for no other reason than to be cured by him or, St. Luke tells us, even by his shadow [cf. Acts 5:15]. Cardinal Newman, however, was not content with shadows, as the motto on his memorial stone makes clear: "*Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem*" [From shadows and types into the truth]. May your living "under the shadow of Peter", in the Church on earth lead you to the full truth,

which is the joy of the Church in heaven, there to reign with Our Risen Lord, His holy Mother, St. Peter and all the saints.

Amen.



ASCENSION DAY

Thursday, May 5, 2005
Holy Day of Obligation
Procession, Solemn Mass &
Sermon
Convent Chapel, 7:30pm

GOD WORKING IN US

Well indeed is the Visitation counted among the joyful mysteries. And the cause of joy is the unseen, yet present, Lord Jesus. Lying hidden in Mary's womb, Jesus is the author of the happiness in these souls, John included. It is Jesus Who makes all the difference in their lives. That is the good news.

The even better news for us is that this is the way God works as a result of the Incarnation. It is the way He works now. Ever since Mary said



THE DAY OF PENTECOST: WHITSUNDAY

Sunday, May 15, 2005
Procession, Solemn Mass &
Sermon
Lessons read in foreign
languages
Convent Chapel 10:30am
**wear RED to Mass on
Pentecost!**

yes, God is Incarnate. And we who partake of the Holy Food of His Body and Blood carry Jesus into our daily lives where He also makes no sign of His presence but for the examples of the faith that is in us.

The way God worked in the Visitation is the way He works still. If we are conscious that God is in us, if our spirit rejoices, like Mary's, if in humility we give thanks for His loving kindness to us, then Jesus unseen will continue to make His presence felt, and hearts will rejoice wherever we go.

Coming as we do from the Lord's table, we cannot help bearing Jesus with us. Remember that His nature

is always to communicate that joy and peace felt long ago by Blessed Mary, her cousin Elizabeth, and John the Baptist.

¶ *from a sermon by Father Bradford. The Feast of the Visitation is Tuesday, May 31st.*

ASCENSION

No one has ever ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven

TODAY our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven; let our hearts ascend with him. Listen to the words of the Apostle: *If you have risen with Christ, set your hearts on the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God; seek the things that are above, not the things that are on earth.* For just as he remained with us even after his ascension, so we too are already in heaven with him, even though what is promised us has not yet been fulfilled in our bodies.

Christ is now exalted above the heavens, but he still suffers on earth all the pain that we, the members of his body, have to bear. He showed this when he cried out from above: *Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?* and when he said: *I was hungry and you gave me food.*

Why do we on earth not strive to find rest with him in heaven even now, through the faith, hope and love that unites us to him? While in heaven he is also with us; and we while on earth are with him. He is here with us by his divinity, his power and his love. We cannot be in heaven, as he is on earth, by divinity, but in him, we can be there by love.

He did not leave heaven when he

came down to us, nor did he withdraw from us when he went up again into heaven. The fact that he was in heaven even while he was on earth is borne out by his own statement: *No one has ever ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man, who is in heaven.*

These words are explained by our oneness with Christ, for he is our head and we are his body. No one ascended into heaven except Christ because we also are Christ: he is the Son of Man by his union with us, and we by our union with him are sons of God. So the Apostle says: *Just as the human body, which has many members, is a unity, because all the different members make one body, so is it also with Christ.* He too has many members, but one body.

Out of compassion for us he descended from heaven, and although he ascended alone, we also ascend, because we are in him by grace. Thus, no one but Christ descended and no one but Christ ascended; not because there is no distinction between the head and the body, but because the body as a unity cannot be separated from the head.

From a sermon by Saint Augustine, bishop

¶ *One of the four Latin Doctors of the Church, St Augustine was bishop of Hippo Regius in Numidia, North Africa from 396-430. He is considered by some to be the greatest man who ever wrote Latin.*

TRINITY SUNDAY

Sunday, May 22, 2005

Procession, Solemn Mass & Sermon

ATHANASIAN CREED

Convent Chapel, 10:30am



THANKSGIVING FOR THE IN-STITUTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR COMMONLY CALLED

Corpus Christi

Sunday, May 29, 2005
Solemn Mass & Sermon
Convent Chapel 10:30am

SOLEMN EVENSONG
& BENEDICTION
6:00PM

Preacher: Fr. Timothy Gallagher,
OMV

Chapel of St. Theresa of Ávila
Parish

West Roxbury

SHORT NOTES

Many thanks to those whose contributions made possible the decoration of the chapel for Easter. Several people commented on how especially lovely it looked this year. Memorial gifts were listed in the Easter service leaflet.

Miss Eva Murphy was received into the full communion of the Catholic Church and confirmed at Mass on Sunday, April 24th. Her sponsor

was Anne Johannsen. A reception after Mass honored this happy occasion. Congratulations from us all to Eva.

There are a few extra memorial cards for Pope John Paul II in the tract case at the rear of the chapel. Also to be found there are a few copies of the sermons Fr. Bradford preached on April 3 and 10. These sermons (and the card) were mailed to Boston area parishioners but not to the general mailing list. If you would like copies of these please write or call us. (But also see the next item.)

David Burt has been recording sermons for our internet site. He has sermons by Father Bradford, Deacon Michael Connolly, and Fr. John Farren, OP. You might check the site or contact David for more information.

Our good friend Father George Greenway is preparing to move to Georgia. He has bought a place in the Sea Islands area where he has spent recent winters and is marketing his house in the Springfield area. Fr. Greenway has been a great supporter of our work and a much appreciated guest celebrant on many occasions. We wish him a long and healthy continued retirement.

Another, and more recent, visitor to us is Fr. John Grennon, OCD, who is assigned to the Order of Discalced Carmelites in Brighton. Fr John was most recently con-celebrant at Mass on Lady Day.

May is Mary's month and a book that would make great reading, (or a great gift) is *The Catholic Answer Book of Mary*. It contains two hundred pages of the best articles and sermons to appear in *The Catholic Answer* while Fr. Peter Stravinskias

was editor. Contributors include Fr. Romanus Cessario, OP, Fr. Stravinskis, Dr. Donald Lacy, and Fr. Bradford.

Fr. Bradford appeared on ABC Television World News Tonight on Saturday, April 16th in a discussion about married priests.

Please remember to wear RED clothing to Mass on Pentecost, May 15th. This is the great Feast of the Holy Ghost. And we need parishioners to read the Acts 2:1-11 lesson in a foreign language that day. David Burt is coordinating this project and even has copies of the lesson in many foreign languages. No grades will be given out, but we all do appreciate observing Pentecost as the very special day that it is.

The Bradford family thanks all those parishioners who remembered them with cards and gifts at Easter. Your kindness is much appreciated!

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 JOHN SHERT

Priest and Martyr († 1582)

Having served as a respected London schoolteacher, John Shert, of Cheshire, England, converted to the Catholic faith and journeyed to Douai, France, to study for the priesthood. Ordained in Rome, Father

Shert returned to England in August of 1578 to minister to his fellow Catholics persecuted under Queen Elizabeth I. In July of 1581 he was captured by the Elizabethan authorities and in November was sentenced to death. The execution was deferred until May of 1582. Father Shert and two other priests (Blesseds Thomas Ford and Robert Johnson) were dragged to London's scaffold at Tyburn on May 28. Forced to watch the drawing and quartering of Father Ford before his own execution, Father Shert cried out to his now dead companion, "O blessed soul, pray for me," and added, "O blessed Lady, Mother of God, pray for me, and all the saints of heaven, pray for me." Questioned one final time, Father Shert refused to profess Queen Elizabeth's supremacy over the Church in England. Before dying, he prayed aloud, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, place your passion, cross, and death between your justice and my soul."

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SAINT JOHN KEMBLE

Priest and Martyr (1599-1679)

A native of Herefordshire, England, John Kemble was ordained a priest in 1625 at the English College of Douai, France. He spent the next fifty-three years serving the persecuted English Catholics of his native Herefordshire. When he was nearly eighty, he was captured and dragged to prison by the Protestant captain, John Scudamore, whose own wife and children were Catholics. While awaiting his trial, Father Kemble was frequently visited in prison by the

children of the captain who had arrested him. He in turn entertained the Scudamore children by giving them as presents various items that the Catholic faithful had sent him. Father Kemble was condemned to death for being a priest. At his execution, he told the onlookers, "I die only for professing the old Roman Catholic religion, which was the religion that first made this kingdom Christian." After Father Kemble's death, a daughter of Captain Scudamore (one of the children who had visited him in prison) was miraculously healed of a throat ailment after the rope used in the priest's hanging was applied to the girl's throat.

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The May Magnificat

May is Mary's month, and I
Muse at that and wonder why:
Her feasts follow reason,
Dated due to season—

Candlemas, Lady Day;
But the Lady Month, May,
Why fasten that upon her,
With a feasting in her honour?

Is it only its being brighter
Than the most are must delight
her?
Is it opportunist
And flowers finds soonest?

Ask of her, the mighty mother:
Her reply puts this other
Question: What is Spring?
Growth in every thing—

Flesh and fleece, fur and feather,
Grass and greenworld all together;
Star-eyed strawberry-breasted
Throstle above her nested

Cluster of bugle blue eggs thin
Forms and warms the life within;
And bird and blossom swell
In sod or sheath or shell.

All things rising, all things sizing
Mary sees, sympathizing
With that world of good,
Nature's motherhood.

Their magnifying of each its kind
With delight calls to mind
How she did in her stored
Magnify the Lord.

Well but there was more than this:
Spring's universal bliss
Much, had much to say
To offering Mary May.

When drop-of-blood-and-foam-
dapple
Bloom lights the orchard-apple
And thicket and thorp are merry
With silver-surféd cherry.

And azuring-over greybell makes
Wood banks and brakes wash wet
like lakes
And magic cuckoo call
Caps, clears, and clinches all—

This ecstasy all through mothering
earth
Tells Mary her mirth till Christ's
birth
To remember and exultation

in God who was her salvation.

¶ *Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-89) was an English poet, convert, and Jesuit priest. His poetry was published posthumously after 1918.*

Saint of the Month



St. Isidro of Madrid

Feast Day 15 May

The festival of *San Isidro*, Saint Isidore, one of Madrid's patron saints, takes place during the month of May. The San Isidro festival is the most important bullfighting festival in the world, but offers other celebrations as well that include fairs, concerts, dances and the *romeria*, a kind of pilgrimage, to the *ermita de San Isidro*. The *ermita de San Isidro* is an early eighteenth-century chapel, where, out of tradition or belief, the faithful partake of the miraculous water looking for health or purifi-

cation.

Although this saint would seem to have primarily a local interest confined to Madrid, Spain, is included in the Calendar in the United States as Saint Isidore the Farmer.

The Madrileños have taken the somewhat saintly story of San Isidro and turned it into giant fiesta. Legend has it that the saint was an impoverished farm worker who, along with his wife Santa Maria de la Cabeza, became famous for giving food to the poor. On another occasion during a drought he broke the earth with a scythe which brought forth a spring of water which gave sufficient water to supply all of Madrid. The pious couple, who first made their appearance in the Middle Ages, also became associated with various miraculous works which led to their joint beatification.

These days San Isidro stands for fun, with the official festival - which dates from 1947 - running from about May 8-15, but with events often spilling over for much longer.

The Congregation of Saint Athanasius,

The Revd. Richard Sterling Bradford,
Chaplain

Sunday Mass 10:30am
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>

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.

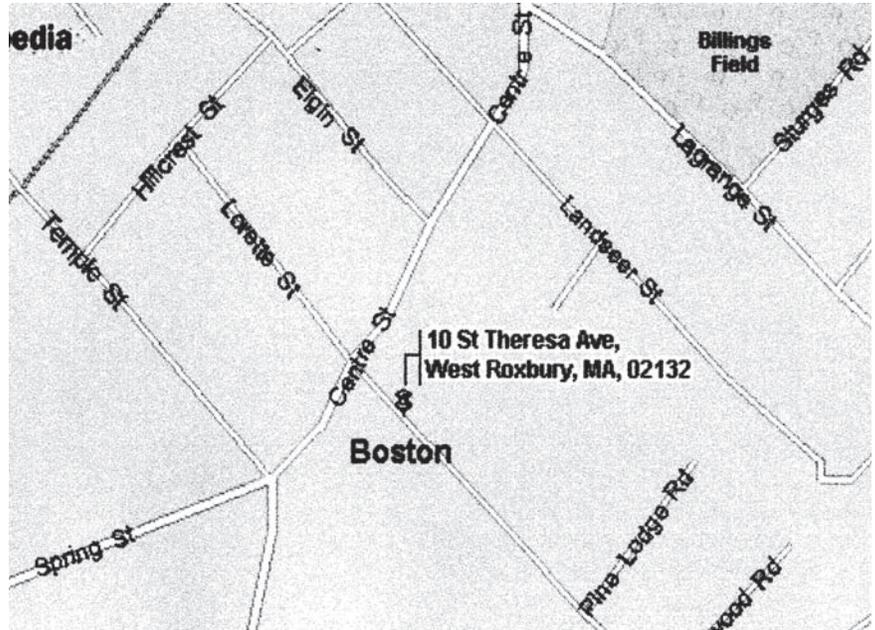
Directions by Car: From the North: Route 128 to
Route 109, which becomes Spring Street in West
Roxbury. Spring Street ends at a traffic light at
Centre Street in sight of the church. At this light
bear left onto Centre St.. and immediately turn
right at the next light onto St.. Theresa Ave.

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

