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# ✠ 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

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

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## NOTES FROM THE CHAPLAIN

WHAT is the Christian attitude to suffering? Everybody, with faith or not, recognizes that there is a problem. In Stephen Sondheim's *West Side Story*, Doc, the drug-store owner, says to the gang members "you make this world lousy." To which one of the Jets replies, "That's the way we found it, Doc."

If there is no God, then of course there is no problem of evil. But because we affirm that the world was created by God Whose power and goodness are infinite, how then do we square this belief with the presence of evil in the world? "Whence hath it tares?" (Mt. 13:27)

The problem for Christians can be simply stated. If God is omnipotent, nothing can happen unless He wills it. If God is love, whatever He wills must be good. But because much of what happens is plainly evil, does this mean that God is not omnipotent after all, or that there is some flaw in His love or in His goodness? You can get out of the difficulty by abandoning one of these three truths, i.e. that God is omnipotent, or that He is good, or that evil exists. But



### THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

Saturday, August 6, 2005  
Sung Mass & Sermon at 9:00am  
Convent Chapel

to abandon truth is to embrace what is false. Concerning the denial of evil, you may remember the old limerick:

*There was a faith-healer of Deal  
Who said, "Although pain isn't real,  
When I sit on a pin  
And it punctures my skin,  
I dislike what I fancy I feel."*

In point of fact, the problem of evil bothers us so profoundly because goodness, order, and beauty, are the norm throughout the Universe. None other than Charles Darwin, towards the end of his long life, wrote "according to my judgment happiness decidedly prevails." The manic depressive finds in every experience the confirmation of his own pathological despair, but that is not the experience

of most of us. We are oppressed by evil, and recoil from it, because instinctively we know it is not part of God's design.

Having said that, it does not follow that there is a neat solution to the problem of evil. There is so much that God knows that we don't, and we must take our hint from Our Lord's words to Peter "what I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt understand hereafter." (John 13:7) For the present, we walk by faith, not by sight.

The clue to the Christian view of evil and suffering lies in the power to make free and responsible choices Almighty God has given to some of His creatures. God could have made a universe to run like a robot. If nothing in it had any will of its own, there would be no possibility of evil. It would have been a marvelous creation. But it would have had no love in it. And that is not the Christian view. Christians believe God dared to create beings to whom He has given a share of His Own authority and freedom. Creating beings capable of resisting their own creator is the most astounding miracle we attribute to divine omnipotence. And of course Almighty God foresaw all the evil which would result from this. But He also foresaw the remedy and the greater good that would come. Man was created to love, and love must

be free. But free to love also means free to reject and rebel. It is only in a world where cruelty and injustice can happen that love, friendship, and self-sacrifice will happen. Freedom is our greatest glory... and our greatest burden.

Almighty God is ultimately responsible for everything that happens, including all the evil in the world. (But it is crucial if we will know the truth, to distinguish between what God wills and what He permits.) It is the affirmation of the Gospel that in the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ we see how God accepts the responsibility, and in the Passion of Christ, how He discharges that responsibility. For the Good News is that the greatest and most complete success ever won by evil has become evil's decisive defeat. In Christ evil came face to face with goodness and love, and God made evil serve His Own purpose.

One of the things we mean when we call the Church the mystical Body of Christ is that the pattern of Christ's life will be reproduced in the life of the Church as well as in each individual disciple who is faithful enough to allow the Lord to do so. If good can come out of the sufferings of Christ, it can also come out of your suffering and mine. Simone Weil wrote, "The extreme greatness of Christianity lies in the fact that it does not seek a supernatural remedy for suffering, but a supernatural use for it." (*Gravity and Grace*, 1952)

And we see the difference in the lives around us. The same suffering which makes one person self-centered, bitter, and resentful, in another soul produces courage, compassion, and a serene joy which often surprises those who witness it. This latter

person is confident that God can and will use suffering, as He did at Calvary, to bring good both for himself and others. That is the miracle. It is not only Christ Jesus, but His followers who are being made "perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:10). "Ye shall be sorrowful," says the Lord. "But your sorrow shall be turned into joy." (John 16:20). Christ does not say our sorrow will be succeeded by joy or even rewarded by joy but that it will be transformed into joy. All our sufferings are being shot through with the triumph of Good Friday and the Resurrection.

FATHER BRADFORD

## THE SONG OF THE CHURCH

THE collection of psalms found in Scripture, composed as it was under divine inspiration, has, from the very beginnings of the Church, shown a wonderful power of fostering devotion among Christians as they offer to God a continuous sacrifice of praise, the harvest of lips blessing his name. Following a custom already established in the Old Law, the psalms have played a conspicuous part in the sacred liturgy itself, and in the divine office. Thus was born what Basil calls *the voice of the Church*, that singing of psalms, which is *the daughter of that hymn of praise* (to use the words of our predecessor, Urban VIII) *which goes up unceasingly before the throne of God and of the Lamb*, and which teaches those especially charged with the duty of divine worship, as Athanasius says, *the way to praise God, and the fitting words in which to bless him*. Augustine expresses this well when he says: *God praised*

*himself so that man might give him fitting praise; because God chose to praise himself man found the way in which to bless God.*

The psalms have also a wonderful power to awaken in our hearts the desire for every virtue. Athanasius says: *Though all Scripture, both old and new, is divinely inspired and has its use in teaching, as we read in Scripture itself, yet the Book of Psalms, like a garden enclosing the fruits of all the other books, produces their fruits in song, and in the process of singing brings forth its own special fruits to take their place beside them*. In the same place Athanasius rightly adds: *The psalms seem to me to be like a mirror, in which the person using them can see himself, and the stirrings of his own heart; he can recite them against the background of his own emotions*. Augustine says in his Confessions: *How I wept when I heard your hymns and canticles, being deeply moved by the sweet singing of your Church. Those voices flowed into my ears, truth filtered into my heart, and from my heart surged waves of devotion. Tears ran down, and I was happy in my tears.*

Indeed, who could fail to be moved by those many passages in the psalms which set forth so profoundly the infinite majesty of God, his omnipotence, his justice and goodness and clemency, too deep for words, and all the other infinite qualities of his that deserve our praise? Who could fail to be roused to the same emotions by the prayers of thanksgiving to God for blessings received, by the petitions, so humble and confident, for blessings still awaited, by the cries of a soul in sorrow for sin committed? Who would not be fired with love as he looks on the likeness

of Christ, the redeemer, here so lovingly foretold? His was the voice Augustine *heard in every psalm, the voice of praise, of suffering, of joyful expectation, of present distress.*

¶ *From the apostolic constitution Divino afflatu of Pope Saint Pius X (1893-1914). He was venerated as a saint even during his lifetime, and many miracles have been attributed to his intercession. He was beatified in 1951 and canonized in 1954. His commemoration falls on Sunday, August 21 this year.*

## THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY



Solemn Evensong & Benediction  
Sunday, August 14, 2005 at 5:00pm

Saint Theresa of Avila Chapel  
Procession, Solemn Mass & Sermon  
Monday, August 15, 2005 at 7:30pm  
Convent Chapel

*The Assumption is not of obligation in the United States when it falls on a Monday. The faithful are encouraged to the observance of the holy day at the times listed.*

## 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 ALFIELD Priest and Martyr (†1585)

An alumnus of the Eton boys' school and Cambridge University, Thomas Alfield, of Gloucestershire, England, converted to the Catholic faith and journeyed to the continent to study for the priesthood. Following his ordination in 1581, he returned to England and ministered in the north of the country for about a year before being captured by the Elizabethan regime. Tortured for his faith, Father Alfield at first remained steadfast, but later apostatized. Yet as soon as he had gained his freedom, he repented of his fall. Journeying to Reims, France, he returned to the Catholic faith. After meeting with the renowned English Catholic apologist, Cardinal William Allen, Father Alfield returned to England to resume his priestly labors there. He undertook the dangerous mission of distributing to English Catholics over five hundred copies of Cardinal Allen's book, *A True, Sincere, and Modest Defense of English Catholics*, a work refuting the accusation that Catholics were traitors to their country. Father Alfield was soon arrested and condemned to death together with the layman, Thomas Webley for distributing this book.

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### BLESSEDS THOMAS WHITBREAD AND JOHN FENWICK Priests, Religious, and Martyrs († 1679)

Thomas Whitbread, of Essex, England, entered the Jesuit novitiate in Watten, Belgium, at the age of seventeen. Twelve years later he returned to England as an ordained priest and spent three decades serving the country's persecuted Catholics. In 1677 he became the provincial of the English Jesuits. John Fenwick (alias Caldwell), an Anglican youth of Durham, upon examining the religious conflicts within his country, converted to the Catholic faith. Leaving for Belgium, he likewise entered the Jesuit novitiate in Watten, and was ordained. In 1675 Father Fenwick came to London. Titus Oates, an ex-Anglican minister who had converted to Catholicism but had been expelled as disreputable by several Jesuit colleges, took vengeance upon the Jesuits by falsely accusing them of plotting against England's King Charles II. On the basis of his accusations, Fathers Whitbread and Fenwick, along with three other Jesuits, were tried and convicted of high treason. At their execution, the two priests forgave their persecutors.

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## SAINT OF THE MONTH



Saint Rose of Lima, virgin

Memorial: August 23

THE first canonized saint of the Americas (the New World at that time) was born in Lima, Peru on April 20, 1586. She was baptized on May 25th, the Feast of Pentecost. Her beauty as an infant led to her being called “como una rosa,” and at her confirmation in 1597 (or 1600?) she formally adopted the name Rose and later the name Rosa de Santa Maria.

Early in her life she began experiencing mystical visions, which continued throughout her short life. In one she discerned a calling from the infant Jesus Christ to consecrate her life to him, and so she did. Her model was St. Catherine of Siena, and in a similar way she too lived at home as a tertiary, of the Order of St. Dominic. She spent much of her time in a little hermitage behind her family’s home, in prayer, fasting, and penitence and in caring for the sick.

To submit herself to mortification of the flesh, she cut her hair short, rubbed harsh substances on her face and hands, wore a hair shirt, slept on a bed of bricks or a board or broken tiles, and wore an iron chain around her waist and a crown of thorns (adorned by roses).

Her more public ministry was to care for destitute children and elderly persons in her family’s home or in her own little infirmary. She also had excelled in the domestic arts of sewing and gardening, which skills were to help her family when the father’s business fell on hard times.

In one of her visionary moments, she expressed a desire to die on a St. Bartholomew Day, and indeed she did die on August 24, 1617. Her love for Christ was so great that in one of her last illnesses she was known to have prayed, “Lord, increase my sufferings, and with them increase Thy love in my heart.”

She was buried first in the Dominican convent; later her body was moved to the crypt of the large church on the property. It was reported that so many mourners attended her funeral procession that it had to be delayed.

She was beatified in 1668 by Clement IX and canonized on April 2, 1671 by Clement X. She is patron saint of the Americas, the West Indies, and the Philippines.

### ON HOMOSEXUALITY

“Although the particular inclination of the homosexual person is not a sin, it is a more or less strong tendency ordered to an intrinsic moral evil, and thus the inclination itself must

be seen as an objective disorder.

It is deplorable that homosexual persons have been and are the object of violent malice in speech or in action. Such treatment deserves condemnation from the Church’s pastors wherever it occurs. ... The intrinsic dignity of each person must always be respected in work, in action and in law.

Above all, we must have great respect for these people who also suffer and who want to find their own way of correct living. On the other hand, to create a legal form of a kind of homosexual marriage, in reality, does not help these people.”

POPE BENEDICT XVI

*Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons, Oct. 1, 1986*

### PUTTING ON THE GLORY OF CREATION

We do not want merely to see beauty. We want something else which can hardly be put into words – to be united with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it. That is why we have peopled air and earth and water with gods and goddesses and nymphs and elves – that, though we cannot, yet these projections can, enjoy themselves that beauty, grace and power of which Nature is the image. For if we take the imagery of Scripture seriously, if we believe that God will one day give us the morning star and cause us to put on the splendour of the sun, then we may surmise that both the ancient myths and the modern poetry, so false as history, may be very near the truth as prophecy. At present we are on the

outside of the world, the wrong side of the door. We discern the freshness and purity of morning, but they do not make us fresh and pure. We cannot mingle with the splendours we see. But all the leaves of the New Testament are rustling with the rumour that it will not always be so. Someday, God willing, we shall get in. When human souls have become perfect in voluntary obedience as the inanimate creation is in its lifeless obedience, they will put on its glory, or, rather, that greater glory of which Nature is only the first sketch. We are summoned to pass in through Nature, beyond her, into that splendour which she fitfully reflects.

C. S. LEWIS

¶ *The Weight of Glory* (1949). *Clive Staples Lewis (1898-1963) was an Anglican, and a professor of English literature.*

## SHORT NOTES

The condolences of the parish go to Brenda Bubeck on the occasion of the death of her father. His funeral was Monday, July 18th. May he rest in peace.

Longtime parishioner Arthur Swanberg is visiting from his home in Florida in early August and hopes to join us at Mass. Arthur (and his late wife Marysia) were original members of our congregation and Arthur is a former senior warden of All Saints' Ashmont, Fr. Bradford's last parish in the Episcopal Church.

Eric Bergman and his parish treasurer visited us for Mass on Sunday July 10th. Mr. Bergman, who is a former Episcopal priest, is leading a flock of some of his



Christian marriage is a holy union blessed by God, between one man and one woman. It is an indissoluble and pure relation, like the union between Christ and His Church.

As the priest says to the man at the end of the Toledano marriage ritual, "I give you a companion, not a servant; love her as Christ loves His Church." The union is for life for better or worse.

former parishioners into full communion with the Catholic Church (in Scranton, Penn.) and with his bishop's permission, will found an Anglican Use congregation there. We wish and pray them well.

Parishioner Jessica Bradford has a new address; Dr. Jessica D. Bradford, 156 Edgemont Dr., Rochester, NY 14620. She is a resident at Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester. She attends St. Anne's Church there, which has hosted many Anglican Use services in recent years.

There is a collection of sermons by Father Bradford and visiting preachers on the web site of the parish. Go to <http://www.locutor.net> and click on *Audio Files*.

A group of people have started remaining in the Chapel for a few minutes after Sunday Mass to pray for the Anglican Use, for our priest

and for our congregation. You are welcome to join in. A simple prayer card is used. The cards are kept in the Sacristy for use at any time.

### 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.

Fellowship and Coffee in  
the Solarium after 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 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.



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10 St. Theresa Avenue  
West Roxbury, MA 02132

