
✠ 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/>

Benedict XVI's Catechetical Dialogue With Children

The Holy Father is long recognized as a first-class theologian and brilliant academic. But here is the gentle and simple soul of the man revealed in a Saturday afternoon audience with children. The meeting took place on October 15, 2005.

1. Andrea [asked the first question]: “Dear Pope, what are your memories of your First Communion day?”

Benedict XVI: I would first like to say thank you for this celebration of faith that you are offering to me, for your presence and for your joy. I greet you and thank you for the hug I have received from some of you, a hug that, of course, symbolically stands for you all.

As for the question, of course I remember my First Communion day very well. It was a lovely Sunday in March 1936, 69 years ago. It was a sunny day, the church looked very beautiful, there was music. ... There were so many beautiful things that I remember. There were about 30 of us, boys and girls from my little village of no more than 500 inhabitants.

But at the heart of my joyful and beautiful memories is this one



THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Sunday, January 1, 2006

Solemn Mass & Sermon

10:30am

Convent Chapel

— and your spokesperson said the same thing: I understood that Jesus had entered my heart, he had actually visited me. And with Jesus, God himself was with me. And I realized that this is a gift of love that is truly worth more than all the other things that life can give.

So on that day I was really filled with great joy, because Jesus came to me and I realized that a new stage in my life was beginning, I was 9 years old, and that it was henceforth important to stay faithful to that encounter, to that communion. I promised the Lord as best I could: “I always want to stay with you,” and I prayed to him, “but above all, stay with me.” So I went on living my life like that; thanks be to God, the Lord has always taken me by the hand and guided me, even in difficult situations.

Thus, that day of my First Communion was the beginning of a journey made together. I hope that for all of you too, the First Communion you have received in this Year of the Eucharist will be the beginning of a lifelong friendship with Jesus, the beginning of a journey together, because in walking with Jesus we do well and life becomes good.

2. Livia: “Holy Father, before the day of my First Communion I went to confession. I have also been to confession on other occasions. I wanted to ask you: Do I have to go to confession every time I receive Communion, even when I have committed the same sins? Because I realize that they are always the same.”

Benedict XVI: I will tell you two things. The first, of course, is that you do not always have to go to

confession before you receive Communion unless you have committed such serious sins that they need to be confessed. Therefore, it is not necessary to make one's confession before every Eucharistic Communion. This is the first point. It is only necessary when you have committed a really serious sin, when you have deeply offended Jesus, so that your friendship is destroyed and you have to start again. Only in that case, when you are in a state of "mortal" sin, in other words, grave [sin], is it necessary to go to confession before Communion. This is my first point.

My second point: Even if, as I said, it is not necessary to go to confession before each Communion, it is very helpful to confess with a certain regularity. It is true: Our sins are always the same, but we clean our homes, our rooms, at least once a week, even if the dirt is always the same; in order to live in cleanliness, in order to start again. Otherwise, the dirt might not be seen but it builds up.

Something similar can be said about the soul, for me myself: If I never go to confession, my soul is neglected and in the end I am always pleased with myself and no longer understand that I must always work hard to improve, that I must make progress. And this cleansing of the soul which Jesus gives us in the sacrament of confession helps us to make our consciences more alert, more open, and hence, it also helps us to mature spiritually and as human persons. Therefore, two things: Confession is only necessary in the case of a serious sin, but it is very helpful to confess regularly in order to foster the cleanliness and beauty of the soul and to mature day by day in life.

3. Andrea: "In preparing me for my First Communion day, my catechist told me that Jesus is present in the Eucharist. But how? I can't see him!"

Benedict XVI: No, we cannot see him, but there are many things that we do not see but they exist and are essential. For example: we do not see our reason, yet we have reason. We do not see our intelligence and we have it. In a word: we do not see our soul and yet it exists and we see its effects, because we can speak, think and make decisions, etc. Nor do we see an electric current, for example, yet we see that it exists; we see this microphone, that it is working, and we see lights. Therefore, we do not see the very deepest things, those that really sustain life and the world, but we can see and feel their effects. This is also true for electricity; we do not see the electric current but we see the light.

So it is with the Risen Lord: We do not see him with our eyes but we see that wherever Jesus is, people change, they improve. A greater capacity for peace, for reconciliation, etc., is created. Therefore, we do not see the Lord himself but we see the effects of the Lord: So we can understand that Jesus is present. And as I said, it is precisely the invisible things that are the most profound, the most important. So let us go to meet this invisible but powerful Lord who helps us to live well.

4. Giulia: "Your Holiness, everyone tells us that it is important to go to Mass on Sunday. We would gladly go to it, but often our parents do not take us because on Sundays they sleep. The parents of a friend of mine work in a shop, and we often go to the country to visit our grand-

parents. Could you say something to them, to make them understand that it is important to go to Mass together on Sundays?"

Benedict XVI: I would think so, of course, with great love and great respect for your parents, because they certainly have a lot to do. However, with a daughter's respect and love, you could say to them: "Dear Mommy, dear Daddy, it is so important for us all, even for you, to meet Jesus. This encounter enriches us. It is an important element in our lives. Let's find a little time together, we can find an opportunity. Perhaps there is also a possibility where Grandma lives."

In brief, I would say, with great love and respect for your parents, I would tell them: "Please understand that this is not only important for me, it is not only catechists who say it; it is important for us all. And it will be the light of Sunday for all our family."

5. Alessandro: "What good does it do for our everyday life to go to holy Mass and receive Communion?"

Benedict XVI: It centers life. We live amid so many things. And the people who do not go to church, do not know that it is precisely Jesus they lack. But they feel that something is missing in their lives. If God is absent from my life, if Jesus is absent from my life, a guide, an essential friend is missing, even an important joy for life, the strength to grow as a man, to overcome my vices and mature as a human being.

Therefore, we cannot immediately see the effects of being with Jesus and of going to Communion. But with the passing of the weeks and

years, we feel more and more keenly the absence of God, the absence of Jesus. It is a fundamental and destructive incompleteness. I could easily speak of countries where atheism has prevailed for years: how souls are destroyed, but also the earth. In this way we can see that it is important, and I would say fundamental, to be nourished by Jesus in Communion. It is he who gives us enlightenment, offers us guidance for our lives, a guidance that we need.

6. Anna: "Dear Pope, can you explain to us what Jesus meant when he said to the people who were following him: 'I am the bread of life?'"

Benedict XVI: First of all, perhaps we should explain clearly what bread is. Today, we have a refined cuisine, rich in very different foods, but in simpler situations bread is the basic source of nourishment; and when Jesus called himself the bread of life, the bread is, shall we say, the initial, an abbreviation that stands for all nourishment.

And as we need to nourish our bodies in order to live, so we also need to nourish our spirits, our souls and our wills. As human persons, we do not only have bodies but also souls; we are thinking beings with minds and wills. We must also nourish our spirits and our souls, so that they can develop and truly attain their fulfillment.

And therefore, if Jesus says: "I am the bread of life," it means that Jesus himself is the nourishment we need for our soul, for our inner self, because the soul also needs food. And technical things do not suffice, although they are so important. We really need God's friendship, which helps us to make the right decisions.



THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

Friday, January 6, 2006

Procession, Solemn Mass & Sermon 7:30pm

Convent Chapel

A reception follows this service.

We need to mature as human beings. In other words: Jesus nourishes us so that we can truly become mature people and our lives become good.

7. Adriano: "Holy Father, they've told us that today we will have Eucharistic adoration. What is it? How is it done? Can you explain it to us? Thank you."

Benedict XVI: We will see straightaway what adoration is and how it is done, because everything has been properly prepared for it: We will say prayers, we will sing, kneel, and in this way we will be in Jesus' presence.

But of course, your question requires a deeper answer: not only how

you do adoration but what adoration is. I would say: Adoration is recognizing that Jesus is my Lord, that Jesus shows me the way to take, and that I will live well only if I know the road that Jesus points out and follow the path he shows me.

Therefore, adoration means saying: "Jesus, I am yours. I will follow you in my life, I never want to lose this friendship, this communion with you." I could also say that adoration is essentially an embrace with Jesus in which I say to him: "I am yours, and I ask you, please stay with me always."

* * *

Address of the Holy Father at the Conclusion of Meeting

Dear boys and girls, brothers and sisters, at the end of this very beautiful meeting I can find one word only: thank you.

Thank you for this feast of faith.

Thank you for this meeting with each other and with Jesus.

And thank you, it goes without saying, to all those who made this celebration possible: to the catechists, the priests, the Sisters; to you all.

I repeat at the end the words of the beginning of every liturgy and I say to you: "Peace be with you"; that is, may the Lord be with you, may joy be with you, and thus, may life be good.

Have a good Sunday, good night and goodbye all together with the Lord. Thank you very much!

ZENIT NEWS ORGANIZATION

*Translated by the Holy See
And adapted for transcription*

Signs of the Second Coming

WE have to go through the strengthening times, which are the times of winter. We have to discover gradually the anguish at the heart of the universe, to discover the role of sacrifice, the role of suffering, the role of the offering.

I think of a woman in Montreal who has been immobile for fifteen years and is pretty well in constant pain. Yet it is she who carries, in great part, any retreats and meetings I might have. She never leaves the presence of Jesus; she cares, in her crucified body, and she knows how to sustain people. She has transformed her suffering, by a gift of the Spirit, into a gift of Love.

Some people enter into the paths of sacrifice, love, and offering not just for their own fulfillment and growth, but for the giving of life. They are offering up the wounds of their being so that they may be close to the wounded ones of the universe, so that the love which flowed from the crucified Jesus might not be wasted but bear the fruit that it should.

There are people in our world so wounded, so hurt, with defenses so great, that it is impossible to speak with them. They reject immediately and violently any gesture which speaks of love; they cannot even be approached.

Who will meet them? It is not those followers of Jesus who are themselves deeply wounded, or close to despair. It is those who live in agony, but live this agony in the quiet light of God, praying for



+ indeed I baptize you with water, but one is coming who is mightier than I, he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit & with fire

THE FIRST SUNDAY
AFTER THE EPIPHANY,
THE BAPTISM
OF OUR LORD JESUS
CHRIST

Sunday, January 8, 2006

Asperges, me

Solemn Mass & Sermon

10:30am, Convent Chapel

those who are in agony outside this light, for those who are in despair and committing various forms of suicide. It is those who offer themselves in sacrifice who can be close to the suffering ones of the universe.

When we are in anguish, when we are close to despair, we realize how much we need the presence of Mary, for she gives us a deeper understanding of the Cross, she helps us to live crucifixion and death. With her, bringing us nearer to Jesus, a new hope is born.

We will pass through the winter of suffering to the kingdom of God and rebirth. We can begin to sense them already, as the peace of the

Spirit comes into our hearts, quelling bitterness and recreating hope. We sense the light which is a tiny sign of what we are called to live in the glory of the wedding feast of eternity.

As yet, we have to walk the paths of life. As yet, we are pilgrims walking towards the kingdom and the promised land with our brothers and sisters, through our wounds and those of humanity.

But we can say with hope, with confidence, with trust, "Come, come Lord Jesus."

And he will answer, "Yes, I am coming soon. Yes, I am coming for you who are yearning for love. Be not afraid to love."

Come, Lord Jesus, come.

JEAN VANIER
Be Not Afraid

The author is founder of an international network of communities called l'Arche, dedicated to the mentally disabled.

SHORT NOTES

Many thanks to all those who contributed to the cost of flowers and greens for the chapel during the Christmas season.

And many thanks also to the readers at lessons & carols during Christmastide, and to those who helped with the reception after the service.

Congratulations to Fr. James Parker, who has retired after 23 years as a Catholic priest. Fr. Parker was the first married Episcopalian priest to be ordained under the terms of the Pastoral Provision of Pope John Paul

II. Although he spent time in Boston, Fr. Parker became pastor of Holy Spirit Church, John's Island, South Carolina, and under his leadership a beautiful new church was built, the largest building on the island. *Ad multos annos!*

Inquirers' classes are underway, but may be joined at any time. These sessions with the chaplain meet most Thursdays at 7:00pm for one hour in the St. Theresa Rectory. A syllabus is available.

If you have not done so already, please send in your pledge of support for our parish program this year. Pledge cards were mailed to members and readers in November. Many thanks.

The next service of Evensong & Benediction is Sunday, February 19th, at 5:00pm in the St. Theresa of Ávila Chapel.



Thanks are due to Dr. Micheline Mathews-Roth for her talk on stem cell research December 4th. The audio recording of her talk can be downloaded from David Burt's file sharing site, <http://homepage.mac.com/cdburt/FileSharing.html>

CHRIST'S HOUSE OF PRAYER

YOU remember that on first sight of Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, Our Lord Jesus wept. It was because the city, quite ready to acclaim Him its King, did not have a heart of prayer. The Temple should have been His house of prayer, but it was a den of thieves, and therefore doomed to defeat by the assaults of the devil.

Our souls must be Christ's house of prayer. In that way only will we be safe from our spiritual enemies. When St. Anthony became a hermit, even in the desert he was assaulted by evil spirits. And the neighboring peasants remembered hearing a terrible sound, and then above it the clear voice of Anthony singing Psalm 68: "let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered." As he sang the psalm, the demons were silenced and driven away. If our souls are the house of prayer, those who hate Christ will flee away from us.

Prayer brings us the power to resist. So the psalmist, in another place, attributes the victory over evil. He writes "in that day I called, and Thou answerdst me; Thou didst embolden my heart and strength."

May Christ never gaze upon us and weep or be angry. The temple which is our soul must rightly be His house of prayer.

A sermon preached by Father Bradford at Mass in St. Theresa of Avila Church on November 18, 2005

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.

BLESSEDS RICHARD LEIGH,
RICHARD FLOWER,
EDWARD SHELLEY,
and RICHARD MARTIN,
Martyrs (1588)

Richard Leigh, of Cambridgeshire, England, was ordained to the priesthood in Rome. Soon after returning to England to minister to the country's persecuted Catholics, he was captured and exiled. Undeterred, Father Leigh re-entered England, but in June of 1588 he was recaptured, and was later sentenced to death for being a priest. Richard Flower, of Anglesey, Wales, a young layman about twenty-one years old and the brother of a priest, was arrested in London by the Elizabethan authorities for assisting a priest. Edward Shelley, of Warminighurst, England, was likewise charged with assisting a priest. Richard Martin, an Oxford scholar from Shropshire, was charged with paying for a meal for the Blessed Father Robert Morton. Father Leigh and the three laymen were condemned to death by drawing and quartering, suffering together with Saint Margaret Ward and Blessed John Roche. At the London scaffold of Tyburn, all six martyrs were forbidden to say anything to the onlookers to prevent their winning the sympathy of the people.

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SAINT JOHN ALMOND, Priest and Martyr 1612)

The son of a Catholic family of Lancaster, England, John Almond spent his early years in Ireland. He then went to Rheims (France) and Rome to study for the priesthood. Ordained in 1598, he returned to England in 1602. After ten years of ministry in his native land, he was arrested and sentenced to death for being a priest. At the place of execution, he emptied the contents of his pockets, giving everything away to the onlookers. Before dying, he told the crowd, "Death is the gate of life unto us whereby we enter into everlasting blessedness"

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FOR THE NEW YEAR

ALmighty God, by whose Mercy my life has been yet prolonged to another year, grant that thy mercy may not be vain. Let not my years be multiplied to increase my guilt, but as age advances, let me become more pure in my thoughts, more regular in my desires, & more obedient to thy laws. Let not the cares of the world distract me, nor the evils of age overwhelm me. But continue and increase thy loving kindness towards me, and when thou shalt call

me hence, receive me to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Almost every year from 1745 Dr. Samuel Johnson, English author and the leading literary scholar and critic of his time, composed a prayer for himself on New Year's Day. He did it in the small hours of the night and seems to have taken great care to craft these little prayers. This is the one for 1773.

SAINT OF THE MONTH



St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
(1774-1821)

On January 4th the Catholic Church in the U.S. remembers Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton, the first American-born saint and foundress of a religious order, the American Sisters of Charity, also known as the Daughters of Charity of St. Joseph (www.sisters-of-charity.org).

She is considered a founder also of the Catholic parochial school system in this country as teaching was among her prime vocation as a religious. Also her life demonstrates

the possibility of the sanctified life despite wealth and prosperity.

She is of particular interest to Catholics of the Anglican Use because she was raised as an Episcopalian. Her mother was Catherine Charlton, daughter of one of the rectors of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church on Staten Island. Her father was Dr. Richard Bayley, physician and professor of anatomy at King's College (now Columbia University). When Elizabeth was only three years of age, her mother died. Her father married again and had children with his second wife, but he saw to the education of his first two daughters, Elizabeth and Mary. Elizabeth married at age 19 to William Magee Seton, a wealthy merchant. They had five children, only two of whom survived into mature adulthood.

William's business in trade suffered during the Napoleonic Wars, and his financial losses adversely affected his health. In November 1803 they traveled to Leghorn, Italy, accepting the hospitality of business friends of his, the Filicchi family. Unfortunately William died in Pisa in December 1803 and was buried in Leghorn. Elizabeth and her daughter Anna Maria remained in Italy with this family for awhile and developed a great appreciation for the Catholic liturgy. Upon her return to New York in the spring of 1804, she was ready to pursue becoming a Catholic. However she met with strong opposition from friends (including her rector Dr. Henry Hobart) and family. She persevered and was received in March 1805 at St. Peter's Church (NYC).

In seeking the means of supporting herself (because of the ostracism), she eventually accepted an invitation to establish a girls' school in Balti-

more and went there in 1808. Other women joined her school as teachers. The following year a bequest of \$10,000 was offered to found a new school for poor children, and she purchased a farm near Emmitsburg, MD for this purpose. Meanwhile she had been seeking her full vocation, took her vows before Archbishop John Carroll, and became Mother Seton. She was named the superior of the Daughters of Charity of St. Joseph in January 1812.

She died of pulmonary disease (probably tuberculosis) on January 4, 1821, and her remains are now in the basilica at Emmitsburg, the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Seton (www.emmitsburg.net/setonshrine/index.htm).

Even in her early childhood Elizabeth showed a marked concern for the poor and sick. Early in her marriage she and her sister-in-law Rebecca Seton acquired the reputation as "Protestant Sisters of Charity" for all of their good works among the destitute. In 1797 she established the Society for the Relief of Poor Widows with Children, little knowing that she would come to experience something of that state before her children were very old. Among her writings is this statement: "The virtues of the infirm are meekness, humility, patience, resignation and gratitude for help received."

In her capacity as superior of her order, she continued to write discourses and letters. Of many excerpts from her collected writings, here are few examples that show the depth of her spiritual life:

"This union of my soul with God is my wealth in poverty and joy in deepest afflictions." "Penance is the



The Presentation of the Lord (Candlemas)

Thursday, February 2, 2006
Blessing of Candles
Procession, Solemn Mass
& Sermon
Saint Theresa of Ávila
Church 7:30pm

purifier of the soul." "Afflictions are the steps to Heaven." "Oh, my Jesus! ... let me mount to Thee on the steps of humility, on which Thou camest down to me."

On the website of her shrine is the encouragement to pray " ... literally without ceasing, I mean that prayer of the heart which is independent of time and place, which is rather a habit of lifting up the heart to God, as in constant communication with Him."

The beginning of her procession to sainthood occurred in December 1959 when she was declared "venerable." She was beatified on March 17, 1963 by Pope John XXIII and

canonized by Pope Paul VI on September 14, 1975.

Sources used for this sketch:

"The encyclopedia of saints" (2001) by Rosemary Ellen Guiley. "Lives of the saints" (2001) by Richard P. McBrien. The new Catholic encyclopedia," vol.13 (1967) "The quotable saint" (2002) by Rosemary Ellen Guiley.

UPCOMING SPECIAL SERVICES

Ash Wednesday, March 1st,
7:30pm in convent chapel
Stations & Benediction, Friday,
March 3rd at 7pm in St. Theresa
Chapel

Evensong & Benediction, Sunday,
March 12 at 5pm in St. Theresa
Chapel

Stations & Benediction, Friday,
March 17th at 7pm in St. Theresa
Chapel

The Congregation of Saint Athanasius,

The Revd. Richard Sterling Bradford,
Chaplain

Sunday Mass 10:30am
St. Theresa Convent Chapel
10 St. Theresa Ave.
West Roxbury, Mass.

Fellowship and Coffee in
the Solarium after Mass

Rectory:
767 West Roxbury Pkwy.
Boston, MA 02132-2121

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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 Station, but no Sunday service is available.



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

