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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 IN SEARCH OF CHRISTIAN UNITY

I am grateful to the Little Sisters of the Poor for their kind invitation to be here today. It really is more of a *gift* and *privilege* to join with fellow Christians in a service of prayer for Christian unity. And that is because Christian unity is a goal that is the deep desire of all who know and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am Father Bradford, and I am a priest of the Archdiocese of Boston. I am also a former priest of The Episcopal Church. That fact, in and of itself, does not qualify me to say anything special about Christian unity. But the very fact that I am now a Catholic priest points to something good about the Catholic Church that must not be overlooked in ecumenical dialogue. The Church is often accused of having hard edges in her ecumenical vocabulary. But there is actually a track record of removing unnecessary obstacles in the path to reunion. When in 1982 our late Holy Father Pope John Paul II made it possible for married men

like me to be ordained to the Catholic priesthood, and for accepting much of our seminary training, the then Episcopal Bishop of Massachusetts, Dr. John Coburn, recognized this fact and said that it was the finest example of ecumenism of which he had ever heard.

That pastoral provision of the late Pope was, in its own small way, a step forward in the path to reunion. Recognizing the legitimate gifts of separated Christians is an important ingredient in the recipe for reunion. Speaking for my own Anglican Use congregation, we have nothing but affection for the church where we learned to love the Lord Jesus. As God gave us the light, that love of Jesus led us to Catholicism. If there was ever any desire on the part of my flock to hurt anyone or reject anyone, I hope and pray that unworthy thoughts have been confessed and blotted out. There's no room for any bitterness or rancor in the Kingdom of God. And what I can say is that the overriding desire on our part was to remain faithful to Christ in the place where He wills for us to be. That is all we can ask of any Christian.

The Church was one at the first Pentecost. Scripture says, "and when the Day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one

place." (Acts 2:1) It is the assertion of Holy Scripture that to be one is not simply to be in one place but also to *of one accord*. Ecumenism and the desire for reunion have often hankered after cloudy formulas and indefinite compromises. But that has not been the way forward. The day of vague formulas is over.

Several years back the Catholic Church issued a document called *Dominus Iesus*. It was a position statement that really contained nothing new in Church teaching. But it caused a stir in the media simply by its clear and forthright assertion that Christ and Christ only is the way to salvation. All true Christian believers can build upon that. "No other foundation is laid," said St. Paul. (1 Cor. 3:11) And *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* says in its very first pages that Christ, the Son of God made man, is "the Father's one, perfect, and unsurpassable Word. In Him He has said everything."

If the Catholic Church is hesitant to go after quick solutions that is because the Church knows deeply that Christian community must be defined by what God has said in Christ rather than having a false ecumenism define what is said about Christ in order to accommodate as many people as possible. In the history of man's

relationship with Almighty God, the pattern has always been revelation and response and *in that order*. God reveals and we respond as God gives us the light. That is why doctrine defines community rather than community defining doctrine.

Pentecost is the clue. They were not only under one roof but also *of one accord*. Christ bestowed unity on His Church from the beginning. Unity is therefore one of the characteristics defining the Church. Unity is not the promise of something to be bestowed later, or achieved only in some other part of the Heavenly realm. That unity is something the Catholic Church has and can never lose. The Father did not say “no” to the Son’s prayer. Because of the promise and bestowal of unity on the Church, it is incumbent upon each member to pray and work to maintain, reinforce, and perfect that unity Christ willed for His Church.

It is because of fallen human nature that this unity is not perfect. And when Our Blessed Lord said of His Church “the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it” we take comfort in His assurance when we suffer scandals and apostasy even in our own ranks. We can look at Church history, warts and all, and see it as proof the Church is a *divine institution*. If it were merely human it would never have gotten out of Jerusalem! And so we must all desire to recover the perfect unity of all who believe in Christ, and recognize that this very desire comes from the Lord Jesus Himself and is a call from the Holy Ghost. We have no option! But it must also be our *desire*, because we love the Lord Who desires our unity.

We must work and pray for the end of the sad divisions that are a scandal to the Cross of Christ and hamper more than we can know the spread of the Gospel in a sin-sick world.

The way forward is to be devoted to the Truth. Which is another way of stating our devotion to Jesus Christ Who *is* the Truth. And if we have the Truth, which Christ said he is, then it is certain that nothing which happens to be true or right would ever have to be sacrificed by any of us in the cause of Christian unity. I know this seems almost incredible, but then so is Divine Wisdom, which is the Wisdom of the Eternal God.

Suppose you are attempting to put together a very difficult jigsaw puzzle, which has a thousand oddly shaped pieces. And as you proceed day by day you come across pieces of a puzzle that look as if they will never fit anywhere. You think they have somehow been put back in the wrong box. And then, when the puzzle is finally pieced together, you at last see that not only did these odd pieces fit, but that it was precisely their odd shape and color that were required to complete the picture. Nothing else would have worked. God’s Wisdom may seem to us to be like that odd piece of the puzzle. Yet we must all affirm that God’s Wisdom has a finished plan for His people and which will solve the daunting problems of reunion.

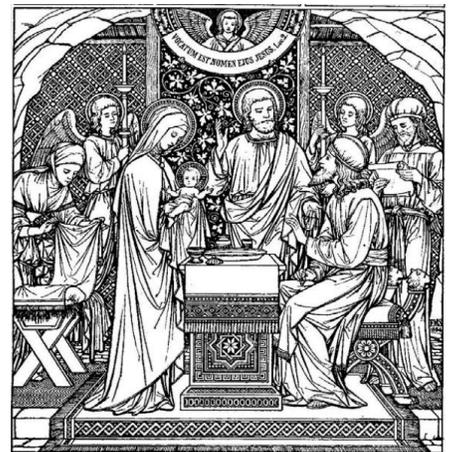
So let us pray for Divine Wisdom! Let us pray that Our Blessed Lord Jesus will fulfill in us His vision, the beautiful vision He had before Him, when He prayed to the Father “that they all may be one, that the world

may believe that Thou hast sent Me.” (John 17:23)

¶*This sermon was preached by Father Bradford in the Jeanne Jugan Residence in Somerville during the 2007 Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity.*

“For our God, Jesus Christ, was conceived by Mary in accord with God’s plan: of the seed of David, it is true, but also of the Holy Spirit. He was born and was baptized so that by his submission He might purify the water.”

—*St. Ignatius of Antioch*



## THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD

Tuesday, January 1, 2008  
Solemn Mass & Sermon  
10:30 A.M.

*Holy Day of Obligation*

CHRIST WITH US

Catholics, above all others, are prone—through their very knowledge of the mysteries of faith, through their very apprehension of Jesus Christ as their God, their high priest, their victim, their prophet, and their king—to forget that his delights are to be with the sons of men more than to rule the seraphim, that while his majesty held him on the throne of his Father, his love brought him down on pilgrimage that he might transform his servants into his friends. For example, devout souls often complain of their loneliness on earth. They pray, they frequent the sacraments, they do their utmost to fulfill the Christian precepts; and, when all is done, they find themselves solitary. There could scarcely be a more evident proof of their failure to understand one at least of the great motives of the Incarnation. They adore Christ as God, they feed on him in Communion, cleanse themselves in his precious blood, look to the time when they shall see him as their judge; yet

of that intimate knowledge of and companionship with him in which the divine friendship consists, they have experienced little or nothing. They long, they say, for one who can stand by their side and upon their own level, who cannot merely remove suffering, but can himself suffer with them, one to whom they can express in silence the thoughts which no speech can utter; and they seem not to understand that this is the very post which Jesus Christ himself desires to win, the supreme longing of his Sacred Heart is that he should be admitted, not merely to the throne of the heart or to the tribunal of conscience, but to that inner secret chamber of the soul where a man is most himself, and therefore most utterly alone.

*Father Robert Hugh Benson*

¶*Father Benson (1871–1914) was the youngest son of Archbishop of Canterbury Edward White Benson. He was received into the Catholic Church in 1903 and wrote a whole series of remarkable novels with vivid characterizations and great affirmations of Catholic faith.*

Our Lord Jesus Christ died and rose again so that we might have new life in Him. Which is something we don't have without Him! The grace that comes from Christ to us is given to supplement our natural capacities and enable us to live on a higher or supernatural level.

If you give a small boy two apples and tell him to give one to his friend, it is natural for him to give away the smaller apple and keep the big one for himself. It is supernatural for him to keep the smaller apple and give the big one away. Supernatural is superior to what is naturally expected of the natural person. Left to ourselves, we naturally think only of ourselves.

It is natural for us to act in terms of our own comfort and pleasure, CVS's false theologians notwithstanding! It is supernatural to put someone else's comfort and pleasure first. Jesus Christ is the One Who shows us the higher way, and those who follow Him must enter the supernatural life.



**FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY**

Sunday, January 6, 2008  
 Procession, Solemn Mass  
 & Sermon  
 Epiphany Proclamation  
 10:30 A.M.

WHAT IS IN YOUR NATURE?

Recently we saw as part of an advertisement for the CVS Pharmacy chain the statement "It's in your nature to care for others."

Many people are tempted to believe that the Christian values which are the foundation of our society are rather the product of common sense. It is the contention that good people will act in this way.

That is not the Catholic faith. At the heart of our religion is the fact that



**THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**

Sunday, January 13, 2008  
*Asperges me*  
 Solemn Mass & Sermon  
 10:30 A.M.

He said the way to enter was through baptism.

The grace and strength of God and the indwelling of His Holy Ghost does not in any way contradict or conflict with human nature. What God's grace does is elevate and perfect nature. Grace does not turn us into something other than human. Nor does it make us superhuman. Grace perfects our humanity, and we begin to understand that life without Christ was not natural at all but subnatural.

Grace is God Himself, living and active in the human soul. It is a power whose source is God Himself, and you can't have it except as God provides for us to have it.

*Father Bradford*

## SHORT NOTES

¶ Many thanks to those who donated monies towards the cost of Advent and Christmas greens and flowers. Departed loved ones were remembered at Mass and memorials were listed in the Christmas service leaflet.

¶ And thank you to those who read the lessons at the two special services during Advent and Christmas seasons, and to Steve Cavanaugh especially for organizing receptions following the services.

¶ Inquirers' classes are ongoing and meet with the chaplain usually every other Thursday in the St. Theresa Rectory at 7:00 P.M. A syllabus is available. Call for exact dates.



### CANDLEMAS

The Presentation of Christ in the Temple  
Blessing of Candles, Procession  
Solemn Mass & Sermon  
Friday, February 1, 2008, 7:30 P.M.  
Saint Theresa of Avila Church

¶ The Boston Boy Choir and Men's Schola of St. Paul's Church Cambridge will sing at Lessons and Carols for Epiphany and the Baptism of the Lord on January 13, 2008 at 3:00 P.M. at St. Paul's Church, in Harvard Square, Cambridge. Admission is free of charge.

¶ For those who plan ahead, Sunday Evensong and Benediction is scheduled for February 10, March 30, April 20, May 25, and June 29. Services are at 5:00 P.M. in the chapel of St. Theresa of Avila Church. These are Anglican Use services with sermons given by the chaplain and guest preachers. You might invite someone to attend with you as an introduction to the Anglican Use.

### ASH WEDNESDAY



**ASH WEDNESDAY**  
The First Day of Lent  
February 6, 2008, 7:30 P.M.  
Imposition of Ashes  
& Solemn Mass  
Convent Chapel

**Ecumenism and Evangelization**

It is illusory to expect mass conversion on the one hand, and on the other deprecate individual efforts to bring converts into the fold. Conversion is always a personal experience shared by no one else.

Instruction classed and information centers must be multiplied for the self-evident reason that a favorable climate is now being created by the Holy Spirit speaking through the voices of Popes John and Paul, and of the Vatican Council.

Cardinal Suenens placed the whole point in focus when he said that the Church must walk with two legs—one ecumenism and the other evangelization.

The Cardinal pointed out: “The ecumenical approach is one-sided—an attempt to know each other better without the intention of conversion. We cannot, however, say conversion is no longer the duty of the Church. On the contrary, we must bring Christ to the whole world...

“Ecumenism might give rise to the idea that now the Church should leave everyone to follow his own conscience. Christ did not say this. He said to bring the Gospel to every creature—but with kindness.

“The priority of evangelism must be stressed, since this is what Christ wishes impatiently since love is impatient to communicate itself.”

*¶ an excerpt from GUIDE magazine, circa 1965*

**CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH**

*RESPONSES TO SOME QUESTIONS REGARDING CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE DOCTRINE ON THE CHURCH*

**INTRODUCTION**

The Second Vatican Council, with its Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium*, and its Decrees on Ecumenism ( *Unitatis redintegratio* ) and the Oriental Churches ( *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* ), has contributed in a decisive way to the renewal of Catholic ecclesiology. The Supreme Pontiffs have also contributed to this renewal by offering their own insights and orientations for praxis: Paul VI in his Encyclical Letter *Ecclesiam suam* (1964) and John Paul II in his Encyclical Letter *Ut unum sint* (1995).

The consequent duty of theologians to expound with greater clarity the diverse aspects of ecclesiology has resulted in a flowering of writing in this field. In fact it has become evident that this theme is a most fruitful one which, however, has also at times required clarification by way of precise definition and correction, for instance in the declaration *Mysterium Ecclesiae* (1973), the Letter addressed to the Bishops of the Catholic Church *Communio in notio* (1992), and the declaration *Dominus Iesus* (2000), all published by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The vastness of the subject matter and the novelty of many of the themes involved continue to provoke theological reflection. Among the many new contributions to the field, some are not immune from erroneous interpretation which in turn give rise to confusion and doubt. A number of these interpretations have been referred to the attention of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Given the universality of Catholic

doctrine on the Church, the Congregation wishes to respond to these questions by clarifying the authentic meaning of some ecclesiological expressions used by the magisterium which are open to misunderstanding in the theological debate.

**RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS**

**FIRST QUESTION**

Did the Second Vatican Council change the Catholic doctrine on the Church?

**RESPONSE**

The Second Vatican Council neither changed nor intended to change this doctrine, rather it developed, deepened and more fully explained it.

This was exactly what John XXIII said at the beginning of the Council. Paul VI affirmed it and commented in the act of promulgating the Constitution *Lumen gentium*: “There is no better comment to make than to say that this promulgation really changes nothing of the traditional doctrine. What Christ willed, we also will. What was, still is. What the Church has taught down through the centuries, we also teach. In simple terms that which was assumed, is now explicit; that which was uncertain, is now clarified; that which was meditated upon, discussed and sometimes argued over, is now put together in one clear formulation”. The Bishops repeatedly expressed and fulfilled this intention.

**SECOND QUESTION**

What is the meaning of the affirmation that the Church of Christ subsists in the Catholic Church?

**RESPONSE**

Christ “established here on earth” only one Church and instituted it as a “visible

and spiritual community”, that from its beginning and throughout the centuries has always existed and will always exist, and in which alone are found all the elements that Christ himself instituted. “This one Church of Christ, which we confess in the Creed as one, holy, catholic and apostolic [...]. This Church, constituted and organised in this world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the successor of Peter and the Bishops in communion with him”.

In number 8 of the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium* ‘subsistence’ means this perduring, historical continuity and the permanence of all the elements instituted by Christ in the Catholic Church, in which the Church of Christ is concretely found on this earth.

It is possible, according to Catholic doctrine, to affirm correctly that the Church of Christ is present and operative in the churches and ecclesial Communities not yet fully in communion with the Catholic Church, on account of the elements of sanctification and truth that are present in them. Nevertheless, the word “subsists” can only be attributed to the Catholic Church alone precisely because it refers to the mark of unity that we profess in the symbols of the faith (I believe... in the “one” Church); and this “one” Church subsists in the Catholic Church.

### THIRD QUESTION

Why was the expression “*subsists in*” adopted instead of the simple word “*is*”?

### RESPONSE

The use of this expression, which indicates the full identity of the Church of Christ with the Catholic Church, does not change the doctrine on the Church. Rather, it comes from and brings out

more clearly the fact that there are “numerous elements of sanctification and of truth” which are found outside her structure, but which “as gifts properly belonging to the Church of Christ, impel towards Catholic Unity”.

“It follows that these separated churches and Communities, though we believe they suffer from defects, are deprived neither of significance nor importance in the mystery of salvation. In fact the Spirit of Christ has not refrained from using them as instruments of salvation, whose value derives from that fullness of grace and of truth which has been entrusted to the Catholic Church”.

### FOURTH QUESTION

Why does the Second Vatican Council use the term “Church” in reference to the oriental Churches separated from full communion with the Catholic Church?

### RESPONSE

The Council wanted to adopt the traditional use of the term. “Because these Churches, although separated, have true sacraments and above all—because of the apostolic succession—the priesthood and the Eucharist, by means of which they remain linked to us by very close bonds”, they merit the title of “particular or local Churches”, and are called sister Churches of the particular Catholic Churches.

“It is through the celebration of the Eucharist of the Lord in each of these Churches that the Church of God is built up and grows in stature”. However, since communion with the Catholic Church, the visible head of which is the Bishop of Rome and the Successor of Peter, is not some external complement to a particular Church but rather one of its internal constitutive principles, these venerable Christian communities lack something in their condition as particular churches.

On the other hand, because of the division between Christians, the fullness of universality, which is proper to the Church governed by the Successor of Peter and the Bishops in communion with him, is not fully realised in history.

### FIFTH QUESTION

Why do the texts of the Council and those of the Magisterium since the Council not use the title of “Church” with regard to those Christian Communities born out of the Reformation of the sixteenth century?

### RESPONSE

According to Catholic doctrine, these Communities do not enjoy apostolic succession in the sacrament of Orders, and are, therefore, deprived of a constitutive element of the Church. These ecclesial Communities which, specifically because of the absence of the sacramental priesthood, have not preserved the genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic Mystery cannot, according to Catholic doctrine, be called “Churches” in the proper sense.

*The Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI, at the Audience granted to the undersigned Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, ratified and confirmed these Responses, adopted in the Plenary Session of the Congregation, and ordered their publication .*

*Rome, from the Offices of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, June 29, 2007, the Solemnity of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul.*

**William Cardinal Levada**  
Prefect

**Angelo Amato, S.D.B.**  
Titular Archbishop of Sila  
Secretary

## 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 GEORGE DOUGLAS  
*Priest and Martyr († 1587)*

In his earliest years, George Douglas, of Edinburgh, Scotland, worked as a schoolmaster in the English county of Rutland. He subsequently journeyed overseas to Paris, where he studied for the priesthood and was ordained. There are uncertainties in the biographical details of his life, including the specific year of his ordination. He may have been a member of a religious congregation, perhaps the Franciscan Order, but this cannot be established. Father Douglas returned to England about ten years after his ordination to serve the country's Catholics persecuted under Queen Elizabeth I. It was while laboring thus that he was arrested a first time, but was thereafter released. He was arrested a second time in Ripton in the northern county of Yorkshire. Father Douglas was sentenced to death for "persuading to popery," that is, for winning converts to the Catholic faith. In York he was executed by drawing and quartering, manifesting great fortitude during his torments.

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BLESSED PATRICK O'LOUGHRAN  
*Priest and Martyr († 1612)*

A native of County Tyrone, Ireland, Father Patrick O'Loughran administered the sacraments to exiled Irish noblemen living in Belgium. When in June of 1611 he returned to Ireland, he was arrested by agents of the Protestant English regime occupying the country. Under questioning, Father O'Loughran admitted that he had given the sacraments to the exiled noblemen, and that he had assisted the Irish bishop, (Blessed) Conor O'Devany. Father O'Loughran was thereupon consigned to a dungeon. In January of 1612, he and Bishop O'Devany were condemned to death. When on February 1 the

two had reached the place of execution, the bishop asked to die last so he could give Father O'Loughran moral support in his death agony, but this request was refused. Father O'Loughran reassured him: "Aid me by your prayers with God, by whose help I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor anything else, will separate me from the love of Christ or from my companionship with you." Bishop O'Devany then knelt to pray for his fellow martyr. Both were drawn and quartered.

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### The Congregation of Saint Athanasius

The Revd. Richard Sterling Bradford, Chaplain

Saint Theresa Convent Chapel

10 St. Theresa Ave.

West Roxbury, Mass.

*(Enter through the side door.)*

Sundays 10:30 A.M. Sung Mass  
Fellowship and Coffee in the Lounge 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 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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The Congregation of St. Athanasius  
10 St. Theresa Avenue  
West Roxbury, MA 02132

