
✠Contra Mundum✠

Volume XI, Issue 12

July 2009

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

Receiving Communion

BECAUSE our congregation is comprised both of converts from the Episcopal Church and ‘cradle’ Catholics, our people come from a variety of customs on the manner of receiving the Blessed Sacrament. Most older Catholics remember when communion on the tongue was made kneeling. Some prefer that practice to this day. Most older Episcopalians remember the altar rail for kneeling, but received in the hand. (It was correctly on the palm of the left hand placed on top of the right hand, and the host was brought to the mouth without further touching it.) A few ‘high church’ Anglicans grew up receiving on the tongue and continue this practice as Catholics.

How communion was received in the early Church is subject to speculation. But the Catholic Church inherited a Jewish reverence for holy things (and the *danger* of holy things—they remembered Uzzah being struck down for attempting to steady the Ark of the Covenant. (2 Sam 6) “that made King David afraid of the holiness of God”). By the Middle Ages, only the priest (or deacon) ever touched the Host after



consecration. And it was customary for only the priest to ever touch his chalice. He washed it and carefully secured it after Mass. All of this was a matter of church discipline and not doctrine. But the customs endured because they reinforced what *was* church doctrine, namely that during the consecration, in everything but appearance, the elements of bread and wine become the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ. The practice of kneeling and receiving on the tongue reinforced the fact that the Host is God. Kneeling and receiving on the tongue guaranteed reverence in practice.

Contrary to widespread misinformation, the Second Vatican Council did *not* call for communion in the hand. In 1969 the Holy See granted an indult (i.e., permission for a particular situation that is not the universal norm) to the French bishops allowing each bishop to decide whether to permit communion in the hand in his own diocese. This indult was later granted widely throughout the church (in the U.S. in 1977). Communion in the hand is permitted. It does not enjoy the general force of law. And as a matter of fact, Pope Benedict XVI insists that when he gives communion it is only on the

tongue to kneeling communicants.

Our congregation made do without an altar rail in its first chapel (which was the All Saints' Church rectory dining room). I believe we had an altar rail in the Dedham convent chapel and certain that we had a lovely one in Saint Aidan's Church in Brookline. Since 2000, we have not had an altar rail. But some of our people prefer to receive the Blessed Sacrament on the tongue and kneeling.

The U.S. conference of bishops decided to *allow* communion in the hand and later mandated receiving standing as the common practice. That means, with the permission of the Holy See, standing is to be regarded as an *option* for receiving communion. And in any event, pastoral sense would forbid putting pressure on anyone who wants to kneel (or stand) contrary to local custom. Refusing to give the Blessed Sacrament because of his or her posture would surely be sinful.

My own preference in my earlier years was for communion in the hand then raised directly to my mouth. Now I prefer to receive on the tongue. After all, as the celebrant at Mass, I receive (from myself) on the tongue. And my preferred posture is kneeling. As celebrant at Mass I am somewhat limited in this posture, and when visiting another parish (while on vacation) I follow local custom. The medieval church probably had it right. Our Blessed Lord in His Sacramental Presence is Someone we receive. (We do not *take* communion. That is a protestant term.) Our Lord comes to us and it is supportive of all we believe and of our relationship to Him to be as passive as possible as the Body and Blood of Christ enters

us body and soul. Remember the teaching of Saint Thomas Aquinas in his great hymn we sing at Benediction: "Faith our outward sense befriending, makes our inward vision clear." Our reverent actions in receiving Holy Communion are part of "our outward sense befriending." That has always been my approach. It works for me still.

Father Bradford



RELIGION IN PUBLIC

FOR when it pleased God to institute a religion here on earth he surely did not intend that it should remain hidden in darkness and sequestered from the eyes of mankind. As it is to serve to glorify him, it cannot be sufficient for it to remain shut up in the secret of men's hearts; it must be visible and by its splendor contribute to raise in us ideas worthy of the greatness of the master to whom it subjects us, and proposes as the object of our worship. For this purpose were ordained the public ceremonies of religion; the solemn celebration of our august mysteries; and in a word all the outward duties which accompany the service of God. If then we purpose merely to confine ourselves to a pretended religion of the heart, without drawing any outward appearances of it, we betray a disposition so severely condemned by Jesus Christ in these remarkable words (Lk 9:26). He that is ashamed

of me, and of my words, of him likewise will the Son of God be ashamed, him will he disavow on the great day of judgment, in the presence of his Father, and the angels, in the face of heaven and earth.

But the evil proceeds further by our withholding from God our public and apparent testimony to his holy religion; and we transgress another important obligation, namely, that of the example which every believer owes to the society of which he is a member. For we are all but one body in Christ, and that which strengthens and gives vigor to this mystical body is the common edification mutually given and received, and resulting from the outward functions of religion, which make the greater impression, as we are naturally more encouraged to imitate what we see. But if, on the other hand, this outward worship begins to be neglected, all languishes with it: the idea of religion itself begins to fade away in our minds; impiety avails itself of this neglect and introduces not only a disgust, but even a contempt of all public and every private worship. From hence may be concluded how important the duty is, to which I now exhort you, the duty of honoring your religion.

Archbishop John Carroll
*American Jesuit Spirituality, The
Maryland Tradition, 1634–1900.*

1998. Paulist Press.

At the request of the Continental Congress in 1776, Father John Carroll (1735–1815) accompanied his friend Benjamin Franklin (and his cousin Charles Carroll, a signer of the Declaration of Independence) on a mission to secure the aid or neutrality of French Canada in the Revolutionary War. In 1786 Carroll helped found Georgetown University, and in 1788 he was chosen the first American bishop.

THE WORD OF GOD

LORD, who can comprehend even one of your words? We lose more of it than we grasp, like those who drink from a living spring. For God's word offers different facets according to the capacity of the listener, and the Lord has protracted his message in many colors, so that whoever gazes upon it can see in it what suits him. Within it he has buried manifold treasures, so that each of us might grow rich in seeking them out.

The word of God is a tree of life that offers us blessed fruit from each of its branches. It is like that rock which was struck open in the wilderness, from which all were offered spiritual drink. As the Apostle says: *They ate spiritual food and they drank spiritual drink.*

And so whenever anyone discovers some part of the treasure, he should not think that he has exhausted God's word. Instead he should feel that this is all that he was able to find of the wealth contained in it. Nor should he say that the word is weak and sterile or look down on it simply because this portion was all that he happened to find. But precisely because he could not capture it all he should give thanks for its riches.

Be glad then that you are overwhelmed, and do not be saddened because he has overcome you. A thirsty man is happy when he is drinking, and he is not depressed because he cannot exhaust the spring. So let this spring quench your thirst, and not your thirst the spring. For if you can satisfy your thirst without exhausting the spring, then when you thirst again you can drink from it once more; but if when your thirst is sated the spring

is also dried up, then your victory would turn to your own harm.

Be thankful then for what you have received, and do not be saddened at all that such an abundance remains. What you have received and attained is your present share, while what is left will be your heritage. For what you could not take at one time because of your weakness, you will be able to grasp at another if you only persevere. So do not foolishly try to drain in one draught what cannot be consumed all at once, and do not cease out of faintheartedness from what you will be able to absorb as time goes on.

Saint Ephrem of Syria
excerpt from a commentary on the
Diatessaron

*A *diatessaron* is a gospel harmony, or what we often call a gospel parallel, in which all four gospel accounts are compared side by side for study purposes.

†*Saint Ephrem (c. 306–73) was a native of Mesopotamia and head of the cathedral school at Nisibis. He later became a monk, and is famous for his hymns, some of which were incorporated into the liturgy. St. Gregory of Nyssa wrote in praise of Ephrem, who was also active in works of charity to relieve victims of famine. He was declared Doctor of the Church in 1920.*



St. Thomas the Apostle

MY LORD AND MY GOD

OH, the wonder, the patience, the infinite gentleness! The intangible is handled, is grasped by a slave and, to the servant, the master shows the wounds at the moment at which all creation was shaken. Found worthy of such gifts, Thomas offers up a prayer to him who found him worthy. "Be patient, master," he says, "with my rashness. Spare the grass, deliver me from my burden. Let me be lightened of my unbelief, that I may chant and say, 'You are our Lord and our God.'"

"Stay gentle, that I may take my delight in you, Lord. Satisfy me, who am yours. You were patient with strangers; be patient too with your own and show me your wounds, that, like springs, I may draw from them and drink. Do not burn me up, O Savior, for you are fire by nature, but, by your will, you are the body which you became. Hide yourself, then, just a little, I beg. Accept me, my Savior, like the woman with the issue of blood. It is not the hem of your garment that I grasp, but you I touch, saying, 'You are our Lord and our God.'"

Saint Romanos
On the Life of Christ (1995)

†*Saint Romanos was a deacon in Constantinople. He composed several chants and was called "the Melodist." He went to God c. 565 A.D.*

The Feast of Saint Thomas the Apostle is Friday, July 3rd.

Donald Charles Lacy
3400 West Riggin Road Unit 3
Muncie, IN 43704

April 5, 2009

Father John I. Jenkins, President
University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, Indiana 46556

Dear Father Jenkins:

I have been a United Methodist clergyman in several churches across the State of Indiana for 50 years. During that time I have also been actively involved in writing and ecumenism. The central figure in my ecumenical commitment is the Blessed Virgin Mary. She has been a spiritual presence in my life for many years and I have often sought to honor her by building bridges between Roman Catholics and Protestants.

The invitation of President Obama to give the commencement address must surely dismay and hurt the majority of Roman Catholics. In fact, it causes me to hang my head in sorrow. I believe Our Lady, the Blessed Mother of all Christians, has begun to weep at the prospect of this event. Surely there must be some other way for Notre Dame to find a basis for dialogue and positive engagement.

Please read the enclosure.

Respectfully and Sincerely,

The Rev. Donald Charles Lacy, D.Min.

Copies: Bishops and Archbishop in the State of Indiana

Dr. Lacy's Institute for Ecumenism numbers Fr. Bradford and Fr. Peter Stravinskis among its members. He was a guest preacher in Fr. Bradford's Episcopal parishes in Indiana and Boston.



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

“Notice, too, that in Nazareth Jesus was rejected because they knew His origins, while in Judaea they rejected Jesus saying, ‘we know not from whence He is.’ (John 9:29) Obstinate unbelief will always find an excuse!”

From a sermon by Father Bradford on July 9, 2006.

Mark 6:1-6 is the Gospel for Sunday, July 5, 2009.

SHORT NOTES

✠ Congratulations to Virginia Pierce who was received into the full communion of the Catholic Church on the Solemnity of Pentecost. A special reception in her honor followed the Mass.

✠ Thanks to those who read the Acts 2:1-11 lesson in foreign languages on Pentecost: David Burt (Greek), Philip Crotty (Latin), Steve Cavanaugh (Spanish), Wilfrid Veldkamp

(Dutch), Jessica Bradford (German) and Joseph Majak (Dinka).

✠ Congratulations to Catherine Cecelia Whitlock who received her First Holy Communion on the Feast of Corpus Christi.

✠ There are still many choices for you to sign up for Sunday altar flowers. You may bring flowers from your garden, or your own florist. The congregation trades with two florists: Flowers by Sal in Cambridge (617-354-7992)

and Jack Davis in West Roxbury (617-323-4237). Both can deliver on Saturday to the convent chapel. The flower sign-up list is available each week at coffee hour.

✠ Low Mass & Sermon every Saturday in the convent chapel at 9:00 A.M. Join us when you are in the neighborhood.

✠ IN AUGUST there is Solemn Mass on the Feast of the Transfiguration, Thursday, August 6th at 7:30 P.M. in the chapel of St. Theresa Church, and on the Solemnity of the Assumption, Saturday, August 15th at 9:00 A.M. in the convent chapel.

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 INGRAM
Priest and Martyr (1565–1594)

AFTER studying for the priesthood in France, John Ingram, of Stoke Edith, England, completed his studies in Rome, where he was ordained in 1589 at the age of twenty-four. Three years later, he arrived in Scotland, where he served for a year and a half before being captured by the Elizabethan authorities late in 1593. Thereafter he was transferred from one prison to another, finally being sent to the Tower of London, where he was ruthlessly tortured by command of the murderous government agent Richard Topcliffe. It was at this time that the suffering priest managed to compose twenty Latin epigrams. In one, he tenderly addresses his mother, recalling when he last heard her voice, while assuring her that they will be able to “exchange words again” in heaven, “whither I hasten yet a youth, whither you will follow in old age.” In another epigram, he speaks of being imprisoned for having publicly praised the Blessed Virgin Mary. After stays in three more prisons, Father Ingram was condemned to death by drawing and quartering for being a priest. He was executed on July 26, 1594.

Reprinted from *Magnificat*, July 2007, Vol. 9,

No. 5, p. 365. With permission of Magnificat® USA, LLC, Dunwoodie - 201 Seminary Avenue, Yonkers, New York 10704 or Web site: www.magnificat.net. All rights reserved.

BLESSED MONTFORD SCOTT
Priest and Martyr (c. 1550–1591)

MONTFORD Scott, of Hawkestead, England, had received the minor order of the subdiaconate in preparation for priestly ordination on the continent when he was sent back to England to assist in the Catholic missions there. He was soon captured by the Elizabethan regime, but when the authorities succeeded in garnering information from a Catholic arrested with him, they set both men free. Montford used his liberty to receive priestly ordination abroad. In 1577, following his ordination, he returned to England to labor for the faith. In 1584, Father Scott was again arrested shortly after several Catholics were indicted for having received blessed rosaries from him. He spent seven years in prison before being ransomed. When, however, Father Scott went to visit some Catholic prisoners, he was arrested for the third and final time. The priest was summarily condemned to death, suffering execution by drawing and quartering on July 1, 1591. The government agent Richard Topcliffe bragged that in executing Father Scott he had ridden England of “such a praying and fasting papist as had not his peer in Europe.”

Reprinted from *Magnificat*, July 2008, Vol. 10, No. 5, p. 48. With permission of Magnificat® USA, LLC, Dunwoodie - 201 Seminary Avenue, Yonkers, New York 10704 or Web site: www.magnificat.net. All rights reserved.



RECTORY COOKOUT

Sunday, July 26th after Mass
767 West Roxbury Parkway

Please sign up for a dish to pass. The parish provides hamburgers and hot dogs. Items needed include relishes and condiments, salads and side dishes, hamburger and hot dog buns, soft drinks, desserts.

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
Tel/Fax: (617) 325-5232
<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.

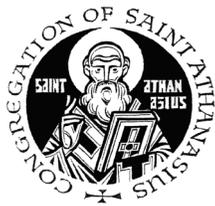
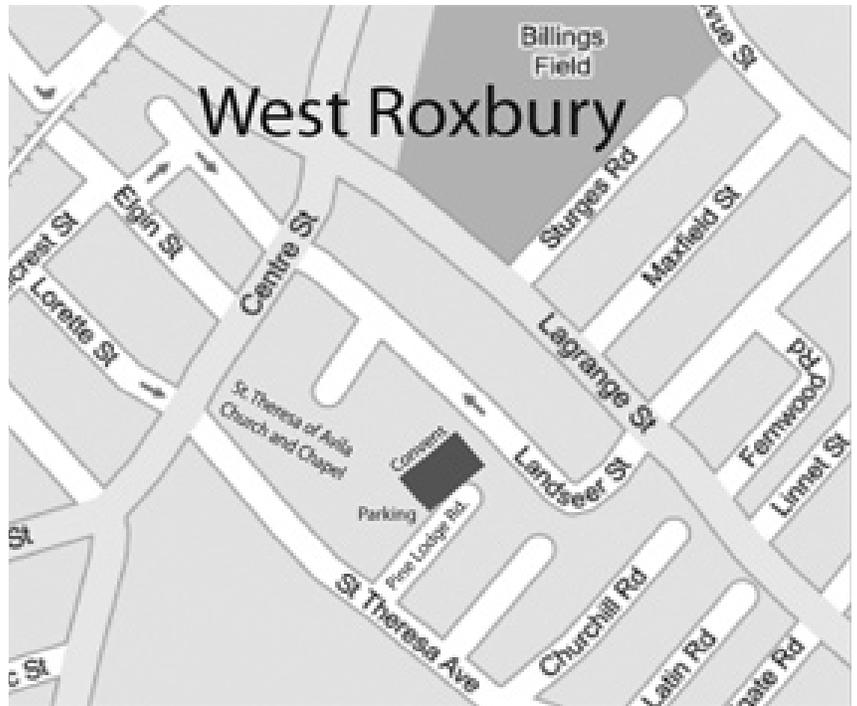
Directions by Car: From the North: Route 128 to Route 109, which becomes Spring Street in West Roxbury. Spring Street ends at a traffic light at Centre Street in sight of the church. At this light bear left onto Centre St. and immediately turn right at the next light onto St. Theresa Ave.

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.



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

