
✠ Contra Mundum ✠

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February 2010

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

THE term **euthanasia** comes from a Greek word and prefix $\epsilon\upsilon$ $\theta\alpha\nu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$ meaning “good death.” Of course, we all want a good death. If we could write our own ticket, we would go to bed healthy and never wake up. But we will all die. To argue that human life would be “better” without death is to argue for something to *replace* human life. It is a blasphemous thought! At the heart of the Gospel, Our Lord Jesus Christ did not do an end run around death, but passed through it to the Resurrection.

In the Great Litany, which we sing before Sunday Mass during Lent and on Advent Sunday, there is a petition that prays we be spared from sudden death. Spared for what? To be spared sudden death means that death is something *worthy of preparation*. It is a reminder that souls (and all souls are precious in God’s eyes) must be spiritually prepared to meet their Maker. *Viaticum* means “food for the journey” of a soul to whatever Almighty God has next in mind for that soul. Saint Thomas Aquinas taught that the focus of our life is that its activity should be ordered to attaining the ultimate end of human life which is friendship with God. Pope Pius XII reiter-



ated that teaching when in 1957 he declared, “Life, health, and all temporal activities are subordinate to spiritual ends.”

At the end of the year the *New York Times* (Sunday, December 27, 2009) ran a front page story titled “Hard Choice for a Comfortable Death: Drug-Induced Sleep.” The article describes in some detail the use of palliative sedation. We are told some physicians admit the term “palliative sedation” is a euphemism for *terminal sedation*. In a follow-up letter to the editor in the same newspaper, an associate professor of nursing at George Mason University says some of her colleagues describe *terminal seda-*

tion as “a one-way ticket.”

Church teaching is that in a case of acute pain that must be relieved, and provided the patient has been prepared by all spiritual helps to die, it is morally right to employ drugs to relieve pain, even if they incidentally take away consciousness. But this is provided the drugs do not shorten life. If the drugs used do nothing to shorten life, this therapy is permissible on moral grounds to relieve suffering and/or produce necessary sleep. If the drugs do shorten life, euthanasia is murder and indefensible.

Nutrition and hydration, on the other hand, even if artificially imposed, (i.e., feeding tubes) is not therapeutic treatment at all but an ordinary and proportionate means of preserving life. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in answer to some questions from the American Bishops’ Conference, affirmed (September 14, 2007) that “this ordinary means of sustaining life is to be provided also to those in a ‘permanent vegetative state,’ since these are persons with fundamental human dignity.”

I will not give a lethal drug to anyone if I am asked,

Nor will I advise such a plan...

I will keep them from harm and injustice.

- Hippocratic Oath, 400 B.C.

The Hippocratic Oath is commonly assumed to be the guide for physician conduct down to our own day. But the long-standing prohibition of euthanasia has been eroded in certain countries in recent years, *e.g.*, The Netherlands in 2001, Belgium in 2002, and Luxembourg in 2009. In Switzerland, assisted suicide is rarely prosecuted. And in the United States, Oregon in 1997 and Washington State in 2008 no longer legally prohibit euthanasia. Already in 2002 the World Medical Association had reaffirmed that euthanasia is contrary to the ethical principles of medicine and that no physician should participate in euthanasia even if permitted to do so by law.

It was clear long since that the therapy of keeping dying patients comfortable had given way to the use of treatments hastening death. And so in 1980, The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith refined the definition of euthanasia for Catholics (and anybody else who would heed its direction) as “an action or an omission which of itself or by intention causes death, in order that all suffering may in this way be eliminated.” A competent patient (some argue that this includes a proxy with a previous written directive of the patient when competent) may forgo life support because useless or excessively burdensome, and thereby allow natural death to occur. But euthanasia is a *willed intention* to cause death.

Those in favor of euthanasia ap-



The Presentation of CHRIST
in the Temple, *or*
THE PURIFICATION OF
SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN
commonly called

CANDLEMAS DAY

7:30 P.M.

Saint Lawrence Church
Chestnut Hill

Tuesday, February 2, 2010
Blessing of Candles, Procession,
Solemn Mass & Sermon

You may bring unused household candles for blessing
A reception follows this service

peal to the principles of beneficence and autonomy, that it is inhumane to refuse a suffering patient's right to die and also that the prohibition is unfair. But from the right of a competent person to refuse treatment it does not follow that this person has a vested “right to die.” At least in the United States, the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution protects the liberty to refuse unwanted treatment. But the Constitution does *not* set forth a point at which life is not worth living. Quite the contrary, the force of law is that when the intention is to cause death, the act is ruled as homicidal.

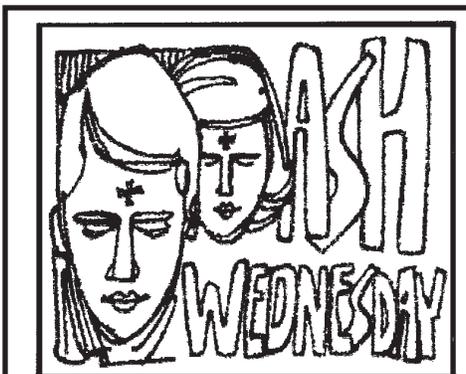
It is also established in American law that the state has powers to prevent suicide. The liberty to refuse medical treatment as protected by the due process clause does not include a right to commit suicide, and it does not include a right to assistance in doing so either. (See Rehnquist, Opinion of the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Washington v. Glucksberg*.) In the courts' rightful duty to protect the most vulnerable among us, those who are near death have never been excluded.

There is also an argument for euthanasia based upon *utility*. Since health

care resources are limited, those individuals who cannot contribute to society ought to relinquish their place to those who can contribute. This sounds a bit chilling to anyone with a recollection of Twentieth Century history! The idea of “maximum utility” led the National Socialists in Germany and Communists in Russia to create societies where the expectation was that things would be “better” if certain people were dead or perhaps were never born.

And what about *fairness*? To euthanize a patient is to deprive him of the rest of his life. Once a patient has been killed, the killing cannot be undone. And what if he changes his mind? Health care professionals (and clergy) see this all the time. In the *New York Times* article, the patient’s wife decided to allow terminal sedation but later changed her mind. A person may have a death wish today and not feel that way tomorrow. A death wish, even consistently expressed, is neither a convincing evidence of patient rationality nor a mandate to execute his orders. By killing a patient, we rob him of the remainder of opportunities God has given him for reconciliation, repentance, and restitution. *No one but God knows the future.* And so physicians and nurses must admit to a “veil of ignorance.”

Should palliative sedation be considered euthanasia? Perhaps we must look into the hearts of the attending physicians and nurses for the answer. The *Times* article tells us that most physicians resist pressure to “deliberately hasten” death. But there is much moral ambiguity surrounding terminal sedation! Dr. J. Andrew Billings, a Harvard professor and



The first day of Lent
commonly called

ASH WEDNESDAY

February 17, 2010

Imposition of Ashes,

Litany of Penitence

Solemn Mass & Sermon

8:00 P.M.

Saint Lawrence Church

Begin Lent in Church on Ash Wednesday

¶ Please note that on Ash Wednesday our Mass will follow a 7:00 P.M. service of Imposition of Ashes and Penitential Rite for the people of Saint Lawrence Church

physician at Massachusetts General Hospital, along with psychiatrist Dr. Susan D. Block, are quoted in the article describing terminal sedation as leading to death but “not too quickly.” The ubiquitous morphine drip “becomes a code word for slow euthanasia” say Billings and Block in the article (which also says neither of them endorses euthanasia).

Now it may be as some have said that pain relievers and sedatives do not normally hasten death. One nurse describes palliative sedation as allowing someone to be awakened after a day or so to see if the symptoms are alleviated. But Dr.

Edward Hallbridge is quoted in the *Times* article as having trouble using patients as a guinea pig. He rejects an approach that says, “Well, the medication worked nicely, now we’ll take it away and see if they bounce back the other way.”

Catholic moral theology sees a distinction between a foreseen effect and an intended effect. When life support is removed because no longer offering hope of benefit or imposing excessive burdens, the cause of death is not the removal of life support. The cause of death is the fatal pathology, which was no longer being successfully treated by the life support. When a decision to use life support has been made, the decision may always be re-evaluated. The teaching of the Church has always allowed for the withdrawal of medical therapy if the hope of benefit or degree of burden changes over time. (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Declaration on Euthanasia IV*, May 5, 1980.)

Christians affirm that medicine is an *arm of Christ*. Euthanasia blurs the time-honored line between healing and harming. Dr. Carolyn Laabs summarizes it. “To euthanize a patient or assist in his suicide is the epitome of patient abandonment.”

Father Bradford

¶ Resources for this article included the *New York Times* article mentioned above and subsequent Letters to the Editor in the same newspaper, relevant documents published by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and articles by Fr. Kevin D. O’Rourke, OP, “When to Withdraw Life Support”, *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly*, Winter 2008, Vol. 8, No. 4, and Carolyn A. Laabs, “What Does Justice Say about Euthanasia?”, *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly*, Summer 2009, Vol. 9, No. 2.

A YEAR FOR PRIESTS

JUNE 19, 2009–JUNE 11, 2010

WHEN a priest, groaning within himself at the thought of his unworthiness and the sublimity of his functions, has put his consecrated hands on our heads; when, humiliated to find himself the dispenser of the Blood of the Covenant, amazed on each occasion to utter the words which give life when, a sinner himself, he has absolved a sinner, we ourselves, rising from before his feet, realise that we have suffered no indignity. We have been at the feet of a man who represented Jesus Christ... We have been there to gain the characteristics of free men and God's children.

Alessandro Manzoni

¶Alessandro Manzoni (1785–1873) was an Italian novelist and poet. His *The Betrothed* is Italy's most widely read novel. Manzoni's death prompted the composition of Verdi's Requiem.

GIVING HONOR TO GOD

AGATHA said, "As long as I live I shall invoke Christ with heart and lips!" Quintianus replied: "Now we'll see if Christ will cure you!" He ordered Agatha to be rolled naked over potsherds and live coals strewn on the ground. While this was going on, a tremendous earthquake shook the city and caused the palace to collapse, crushing two of Quintianus' counselors. At this, the whole populace came running and shouting that such things were



FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

February 21, 2010

Litany in Procession, Exhortation

Solemn Mass & Sermon

Fourth Communion Service

11:30 A.M.

Solemn Evensong & Benediction

5:00 P.M.

all services in Saint Lawrence Church, Chestnut Hill

being visited on them because of the unjust treatment meted out to Agatha. So Quintianus, caught between the earthquake and the popular uprising, ordered Agatha back to prison. There she prayed, saying: "Lord Jesus Christ, you created me, you have watched over me from infancy, kept my body from defilement, preserved me from love of the world, made me able to withstand torture, and granted me the virtue of patience in the midst of torments. Now receive my spirit and command me to come to your mercy." And, having finished her prayer, she called out in a loud voice and gave up her spirit, about the year of the Lord 253, in the reign of the emperor Dacian.

Faithful Christians came, anointed her body with spices, and laid it in a sarcophagus. Then a young man clothed in silken garments and accompanied by over a hundred handsome youths wearing rich white vestments, none

of whom had ever been seen in that region, approached the saint's body and placed at the head a marble tablet, after which he and his companions vanished from the sight of all. In the tablet was inscribed: *MENTEM SANCTAM, SPONTANEAM, HONOREM DEO ET PATRIAE LIBERATIONEM*, which may be understood as meaning: "She had a holy and generous soul, gave honor to God, and accomplished the liberation of her country." When this miracle was noised abroad, even pagans and Jews began to venerate the tomb in great numbers.

Blessed Jacobus de Voragine
The Golden Legend

¶Saint Agatha's Day is February 5th. It falls on a Friday this year. She is named in the Roman Canon of the Mass. Fr. Bradford is usually the celebrant at the 6:45 A.M. Mass in St. Theresa of Avila Church on Fridays.

THE BEGINNING OF LENT

LENT begins on Wednesday 25th February [February 17th in 2010-*ed*], Ash Wednesday. At the start of Lent, we set our faces once again to the events of Holy Week, the passion, death and resurrection of Christ. These are the sacred mysteries at the centre of our religion. We need to prepare carefully if we are to celebrate them worthily and fruitfully.

As Lent approaches, we are bidden to call to mind our sins. To do this we have to use our understanding, our consciences, in the light of the Holy Spirit, to review our lives, to see if we really are trying to follow in the Lord's footsteps. Are we doing our best to live by the Ten Commandments? Are we trying hard to live in the spirit of the Beatitudes? Examining the moral quality of our daily lives is the start of Lent but not the end. We also need to practice the three traditional disciplines of Lent: prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

The gospel tells us to pursue these disciplines in secret, i.e., privately and discretely. Almsgiving which trumpets its own generosity is little more than self-righteousness. Almsgiving should never be patronizing or belittling to those whom it benefits. It should be an expression of love for our neighbour without any visible acclaim or appreciable reward. Likewise, our prayer should be in secret. This does not mean absenting ourselves from the Church's public worship. It means spending additional time completely alone, with God. Think how much time we so easily spend on things that don't really matter: television, the internet, meaningless empty chatter. It's also worth remembering that the

essence of prayer in private is not that we ourselves act, but that we let God act within us. It may be that his action, His touch upon our soul, also remains hidden, in the sense that it does not produce any immediately discernible *frisson* or emotionally satisfying 'high'. God's genuine touch is most often and most characteristically tranquil, delicate and sober. The more emotional upheaval there is in our private prayer, the less likely it is to be of God. We should always desire the still, small voice far more than earthquake, wind and fire.

The Church defines fasting as having only one main meal in the day, with a small amount of necessary sustenance permitted in addition—a small snack. For many people, modern eating habits often only include one meal per day anyway. Not much effort needed there. And so, for fasting purposes, we could also give up something else each day, maybe some time-consuming form of recreation; again television and the internet are obvious candidates. Make the effort—switch them off. It won't kill you. It may even reduce exposure to various occasions of sin. It will help to make more room in our lives for God and for others.

Although we should pursue our Lenten disciplines in secret, it is often the case that they will in fact be noticed. If, for example, we give up alcohol or some other addiction, our family and friends will probably notice, if we are consistent about it. Family and friends should, of course, support and encourage our efforts. Others may not. Why on earth are you bothering with that? Here is a good opportunity for a modest effort at evangelization. We can say simply and straightforwardly, "I'm a Catholic, this is

the season of Lent, so I'm trying to go without." If we're fortunate, we may then be asked to explain what Lent is, and why it involves self-sacrifice. We may even be fortunate enough to be asked what Easter is. Never underestimate the value of apparently chance encounters or seemingly chance conversations that divine Providence puts in our path. It might just be the opportunity that God is offering us to play some part in changing the course of someone's life. A priest I knew (now gone to his reward) once had such a chance encounter with a stranger in a sweet shop. A brief and seemingly trivial conversation about giving-up sugar led on to the stranger saying, "You're a priest. I'm a Catholic, but I never go [*sic*]." The good priest seized his opportunity. Briefly and kindly he catechized her, ending with, "I'm so glad I caught you!" She laughed, but also promised him she would go to Mass the following Sunday.

During Lent, in private and in charity, let us pray for the lapsed, the lukewarm, the un-Churched and the godless. They are legion.

The Provost

¶ from *The Oratory Magazine*, February 2009, Vol. 86, No. 1053, published by the *Brompton (London) Oratory*.

Coin Folder

Lenten self-denial coin folders will be made available to parish members. You may use these as part of your rule for Lent. Please return your filled coin folder during early Eastertide. All proceeds benefit the work of Catholic Charities.

SHORT NOTES

✠ Many thanks to members of the Hunt family who performed trio sonatas by Bach and Handel at our Christmas Lessons and Carols service. Jennifer and Leslie Hunt are accomplished flautists and Dr. Janet Hunt is music director at Saint John's Seminary. The musical offering was appreciated by all.

✠ Confessions are heard every Saturday from 10:45–11:30 A.M. in Saint Lawrence Church by Opus Dei priests.

✠ Dr. Jessica Bradford may be reached by mail at P.O. Box 2663, Mbeya, Tanzania. But be warned: mail service is erratic.

✠ Thanks to Deacon Michael J. Connolly who assisted at Mass on the Solemnity of the Epiphany and also sang the traditional proclamation announcing the dates of moveable feasts in the new year.

✠ With Lent beginning on February 17th, you may bring last year's blessed palms to church on Sundays February 7th and 14th. The palms are burned for use on Ash Wednesday.

✠ Word has come of the death of Monsignor Graham Leonard in early January (although the passing escaped notice in the major American press). Dr. Leonard was the highest ranking Anglican to convert to Catholicism. Some of our parishioners may remember that when Bishop of London he visited All Saints' Church, Ashmont. May he rest in peace.

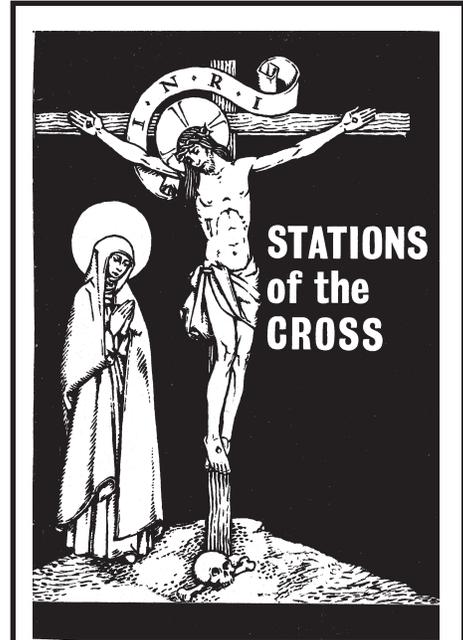
✠ Fr. Ernie Davis, Administrator of St. Therese Little Flower Parish in Kansas City, Missouri, is leading an Anglican Use Pilgrimage: St. Paul,

St. John the Divine, and the Early Church in Turkey, from November 2–15, 2010. Visit Istanbul (Hagia Sophia), Cappadocia, Tarsus, Antioch, Ephesus, Smyrna, Myra, and Troy. Mass daily. Airfare from New York, hotels, breakfast and dinner, guide and entrance fees: \$2,496. Fr. Davis was ordained a Catholic priest in 2002 after fifteen years of ministry in the Episcopal Church. The Anglican Use Mass is celebrated at his parish each Sunday. Previous pilgrimages include four to the Holy Land and one to Rome and Assisi. For a brochure with full itinerary and details email Fr. Ernie Davis: edavis@sttheresekc.org or call 816-444-5406.

✠ Dr. John T. Maltzberger is now recovering from surgery and convalescing in his residence in Waltham. Please remember him in your prayers.

ANGLICANS BECOMING CATHOLIC

REMEMBER that John Paul II, speaking of the Anglican converts, said, "Be generous with these men"—a command that was not obeyed by the English bishops. Of the converts of his day, Cardinal Wiseman said: "And except for having the fullness of the faith, I honestly believe that they are better men than we are in every way." Manning was ordained priest four weeks after becoming a Catholic and within twelve years was Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster. Cardinal Hume on the radio said of the converts who came in when the Anglicans declared for women



STATIONS OF THE CROSS & BENEDICTION

Fridays in Lent at 7:30 P.M.
Saint Lawrence Church
February 19
February 26
March 5
March 12

¶ on March 19th we will have Solemn Mass in honor of Saint Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church

¶ on March 26th, Saint Lawrence Church offers Stations of the Cross for families at 7:00 P.M.

priests: "This could be the conversion of England for which we have long prayed." The thought police of Westminster sent out a denial, but it was the wish of his heart. Let us not be pusillanimous.

Fr. Allan R.G. Hawkins

¶Fr. Hawkins is pastor of St. Mary the Virgin Church (Anglican Use) in Arlington, Texas. This comment appeared in *Salve!*, October 10, 2009 issue.

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 WILLIAM LAMPLEY
Martyr († 1588)

A RESIDENT of Gloucester, England, the Catholic layman William Lampley worked as a glover. Arrested for his faith by agents of England's Elizabethan regime, Lampley was charged with having attempted to convert his relatives to "popery," that is, Catholicism. His one accuser at his trial was a man who had betrayed his own wife to the authorities for being a Catholic. After sentencing Lampley to death, the judge, evidently wanting to spare the prisoner's life, offered him clemency if he would apostatize. Lampley refused. Repeated attempts were made by relatives, ministers, and officials to change Lampley's mind, but he remained steadfast in adhering to his Catholic profession of faith. In a final effort to terrify him into submission, the "passing-bell" was rung, a bell for announcing a person's death, but Lampley remained undaunted. He was subjected to a brutal execution by drawing and quartering, dying probably on February 12, 1588, although the date is uncertain.

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BLESSED JAMES FENN
Priest and Martyr (c. 1540–1584)

JAMES Fenn, of Montacute, England, was expelled from Oxford's Corpus Christi College for having refused to take the Elizabethan regime's anti-papal oath of supremacy. He subsequently became a schoolteacher, married and had two children. But after the death of his wife, James resolved to consecrate the remainder of his life to God in the priesthood. Following his ordination in Reims, France, Father Fenn returned to England in 1580. After having persuaded many to return to the Catholic faith, he was captured by the Elizabethan authorities. During his two-year-long imprisonment, Father Fenn spiritually ministered to those incarcerated with him, especially pirates and other criminals sentenced to death. The conversions he wrought included a notorious felon. On February 7, 1584, Father Fenn was condemned to death by drawing and quartering for being a priest. Five days later, as he was about to be dragged on a hurdle to his execution, his young daughter ran to him. The martyr gave the weeping child his paternal and priestly blessing before parting from her.

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SATURDAY MASSES AT ST. LAWRENCE

9:00 A.M.

February 6 – Stephen Molloy
year's mind Mass
February 27 – Janet Ray year's
mind Mass

The Congregation of Saint Athanasius

The Revd. Richard Sterling Bradford,
Chaplain

Saint Lawrence Church
774 Boylston Ave.
Chestnut Hill, Mass.
(Parking lot behind church.)

Sundays 11:30 A.M.
Sung Mass
Fellowship and Coffee in the
Undercroft after Mass

Rectory:
767 West Roxbury Pkwy.
Boston, MA 02132-2121
Tel/Fax: (617) 325-5232
<http://www.locutor.net>

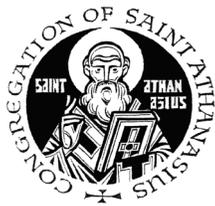
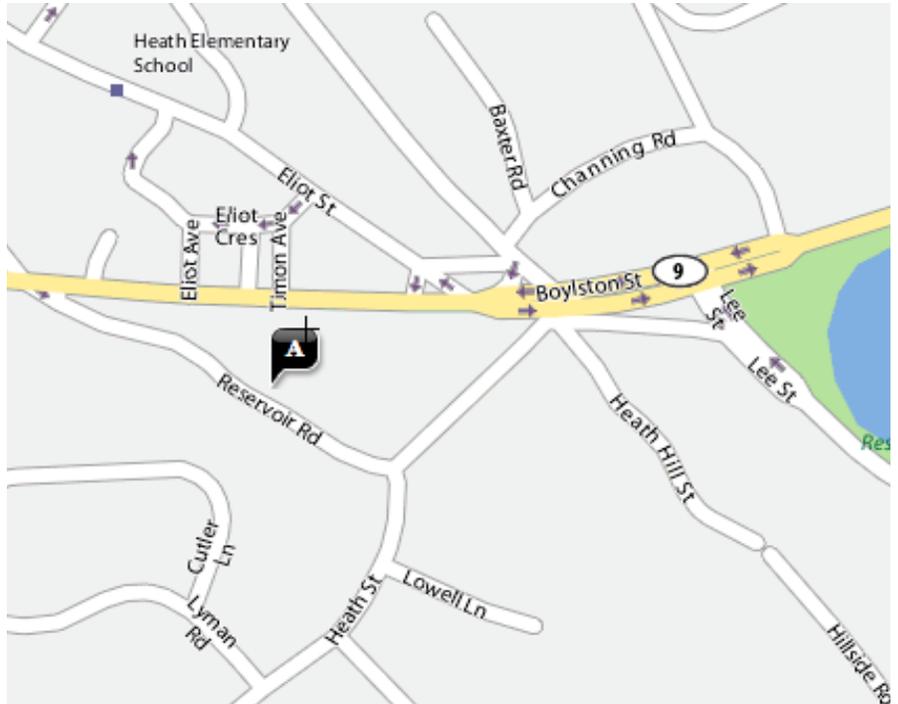
St. Lawrence Church, 774 Boylston Street (Route 9).

Park in the church parking lot behind the Church, off of Reservoir Rd.

Directions by Car: From the North or South: Route 128 to Route 9. At signal for Reservoir Road, take right; Church parking lot is a short distance on left.

From Boston: From Stuart/Kneeland St., turn left onto Park Plaza. Drive for 0.2 miles. Park Plaza becomes St James Avenue. Drive for 0.3 miles. Turn slight left onto ramp. Drive for 0.1 miles. Go straight on Route-9. Drive for 3.5 miles. Turn left onto Heath Street. Drive for 0.1 miles. Go straight on Reservoir Road. Drive for 0.1 miles. Parking lot is on your right.

Directions by Public Transportation: Green line to Kenmore Square terminal. Bus #60, has a stop in front of the Church. The Church is a 15-minute walk from the Cleveland Circle Green Line station.



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

