
✠Contra Mundum✠

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January 2012

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>

MARY MOTHER OF GOD

FUNDAMENTALISTS are sometimes horrified when the Virgin Mary is referred to as the Mother of God. However, their reaction often rests upon a misapprehension of not only what this particular title of Mary signifies but also who Jesus was, and what their own theological forebears, the Protestant Reformers, had to say regarding this doctrine. A woman is a man's mother either if she carried him in her womb or if she was the woman contributing half of his genetic matter or both. Mary was the mother of Jesus in both of these senses; because she not only carried Jesus in her womb but also supplied all of the genetic matter for his human body, since it was through her—not Joseph—that Jesus “was descended from David according to the flesh” (Rom. 1:3). Since Mary is Jesus' mother, it must be concluded that she is also the Mother of God: If Mary is the mother of Jesus, and if Jesus is God, then Mary is the Mother of God. There is no way out of this logical syllogism, the valid form of which has been recognized by



Albrecht Durer's woodcut “Christ Taking Leave of His Mother” from the *Small Passion*, 1509–1511.

classical logicians since before the time of Christ. Although Mary is the Mother of God, she is not his mother in the sense that she is older than God or the source of her Son's divinity, for she is neither. Rather, we say that she is the Mother of God in the sense that she carried in her womb a divine person—Jesus Christ, God “in the flesh” (2 John 7, cf. John 1:14)—and in the sense that she contributed the genetic matter to the human form God

took in Jesus Christ.

To avoid this conclusion, Fundamentalists often assert that Mary did not carry God in her womb, but only carried Christ's *human* nature. This assertion reinvents a heresy from the fifth century known as Nestorianism, which runs aground on the fact that a mother does not merely carry the *human nature* of her child in her womb. Rather, she carries the *person* of her child. Women do not give birth to human natures; they give birth to *persons*. Mary thus carried and gave birth to the *person* of Jesus Christ, and the *person* she gave birth to was God.

The Nestorian claim that Mary did not give birth to the unified person of Jesus Christ attempts to separate Christ's human nature from his divine nature, creating two *separate and distinct* persons—one divine and one human—united in a loose affiliation. It is therefore a Christological heresy, which even the Protestant Reformers recognized. Both Martin Luther and John Calvin insisted on Mary's divine maternity. In fact, it even appears that Nestorius himself may not have believed the heresy named after him. Further,

the “Nestorian” church has now signed a joint declaration on Christology with the Catholic Church and recognizes Mary’s divine maternity, just as other Christians do.

Since denying that Mary is God’s mother implies doubt about Jesus’ divinity, it is clear why Christians (until recent times) have been unanimous in proclaiming Mary as Mother of God. The Church Fathers, of course, agreed, and the following passages witness to their lively recognition of the sacred truth and great gift of divine maternity that was bestowed upon Mary, the humble handmaid of the Lord.

St Irenaeus “The Virgin Mary, being obedient to his word, received from an angel the glad tidings that she would bear God” (*Against Heresies*, 5:19:1 [A.D. 189]).

St Hippolytus “[T]o all generations they [the prophets] have pictured forth the grandest subjects for contemplation and for action. Thus, too, they preached of the advent of God in the flesh to the world, his advent by the spotless and God-bearing (*theotokos*) Mary in the way of birth and growth, and the manner of his life and conversation with men, and his manifestation by baptism, and the new birth that was to be to all men, and the regeneration by the laver [of baptism]” (*Discourse on the End of the World* 1 [A.D. 217]).

St Gregory the Wonderworker “For Luke, in the inspired Gospel narratives, delivers a testimony not to Joseph only, but also to Mary, the Mother of God, and gives this account with reference to the very family and house of David” (*Four Homilies* 1 [A.D. 262]).

“It is our duty to present to God, like sacrifices, all the festivals and hymnal celebrations; and first of all, [the feast of] the Annunciation to the holy Mother of God, to wit, the salutation made to her by the angel, ‘Hail, full of grace!’” (ibid., 2).

St Cyril of Alexandria (in *Letters to Nestorius*) “I have been amazed that some are utterly in doubt as to whether or not the holy Virgin is able to be called the Mother of God. For if our Lord Jesus Christ is God, how should the holy Virgin who bore him not be the Mother of God?”

“This expression, however, ‘the Word was made flesh’ (John 1:14), can mean nothing else but that he partook of flesh and blood like to us; he made our body his own, and came forth man from a woman, not casting off his existence as God, or his generation of God the Father, but even in taking to himself flesh remaining what he was. This the declaration of the correct faith proclaims everywhere. This was the sentiment of the holy Fathers; therefore they ventured to call the holy Virgin ‘the Mother of God,’ not as if the nature of the Word or his divinity had its beginning from the holy Virgin, but because of her was born that holy body with a rational soul, to which the Word, being personally united, is said to be born according to the flesh”

“And since the holy Virgin corporally brought forth God made one with flesh according to nature, for this reason we also call her Mother of God, not as if the nature of the Word had the beginning of its existence from the flesh”

“If anyone will not confess that

the Emmanuel is very God, and that therefore the holy Virgin is the Mother of God, inasmuch as in the flesh she bore the Word of God made flesh [John 1:14]: let him be anathema” (ibid.).

¶This article appeared in the May, 2010 issue of *The Oratory Magazine*, (Vol. 87, No. 1068) a publication of the Brompton (London) Oratory.

The Solemnity of Mary Mother of God is January 1, 2012, a Sunday this year.



OUTSIDE LOOKING IN

MY sister dear, how happy would we be if we believed what these dear souls believe, that they possess God in the Sacrament and that he remains in their churches and is carried to them when they are sick, oh my—when they carry the Blessed Sacrament under my window while I face the full loneliness and sadness of my case I cannot stop the tears at the thought, “My God how happy would I be, even so far away from all so dear, if I could find you in the church as they do. How many things I would say to you of the sorrows of my heart and

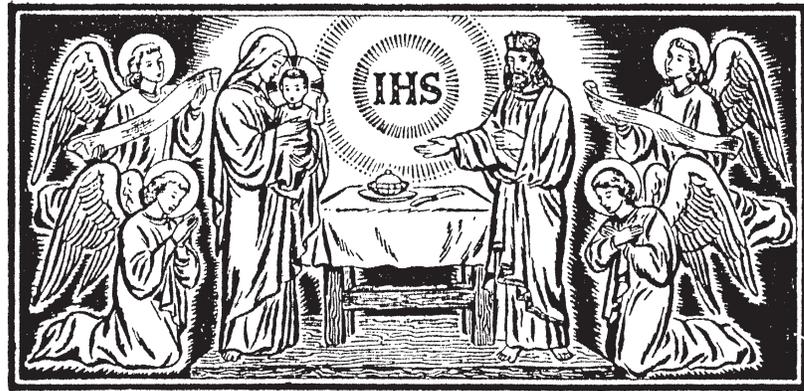
the sins of my life” —

The other day in a moment of excessive distress I fell on my knees without thinking when the Blessed Sacrament passed by, and cried in an agony to God to *bless me* if he was *there*, that my whole soul desired only him—a little prayer book of Mrs. F’s was on the table and I opened a little prayer of Saint Bernard to the Blessed Virgin begging her to be *our Mother*, and I said it to her with such a certainty that God would surely refuse nothing to *his Mother*, and that she could not help loving and pitying the poor souls he died for, that I felt really I had a Mother which you know my foolish heart so often laments to have lost in early days—from the first remembrance of infancy I have looked in all the plays of childhood and wildness of youth to the clouds for my Mother, and at that moment it seemed as if I had found more than her, even in tenderness and pity of a Mother—so I cried myself to sleep on her heart.

Saint Elizabeth Seton
Selected Writings

¶ Elizabeth Seton (1774—1821) was a faithful adherent of the Episcopal Church until her conversion to Catholicism. This letter expresses her longing for the Blessed Sacrament and her prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The memorial of St Elizabeth Ann Seton is Wednesday, January 4th.



“His name was called Jesus.”

THE NAME OF JESUS

If a king were to paint a picture of his son, he could claim it as his own on two counts: because it is his son’s picture, and because he himself made it. In the same way, the Father declares that the name of Jesus Christ, which is glorified in the Church throughout the world, is his own, because it is his Son’s name and because he wrote it to save mankind.

¶ From the treatise *Against Heresies* by Saint Irenaeus (c.130–200)

¶ *The Most Holy Name of Jesus is an optional memorial observed on January 3rd, a Tuesday this year.*

**THE BAPTISM OF
OUR LORD**

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER
EPIPHANY

January 8, 2012

Asperges, Me

Solemn Mass & Sermon

11:30 A.M.

AT the Jordan, Jesus received John’s baptism of repentance, not that He needed to repent. John recognized this and said, “I need to be baptized by You.” On the bank of the river that day, the Immaculate Son of God queued up amid sinners desiring a better way. Do not sentimentalize the scene to think Christ stood among unrepentant or ignorant sinners. Souls in that condition would not have found their way to the Jordan and to John the Baptist! Christ was and is God’s

merciful token of love for *penitents*. On the banks of the river Isaiah’s lovely prediction has its first fulfillment, “that He was numbered among the transgressors.”

Father Bradford

¶ *This is an excerpt from a sermon preached on January 11, 2009.*





Albrecht Durer, "The Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles"

THE EPIPHANY

or

The Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles

Friday, January 6, 2012

Epiphany Proclamation

Procession

Solemn Mass & Sermon

7:30 P.M.

A reception follows this service

SHORT NOTES

✠ Many thanks to those who read lessons at either or both the Advent and Christmas Lessons and Carols services, always a special highlight of the season. Thanks also to Leslie and Jennifer Hunt and Dr Janet E. Hunt for providing instrumental music for Christmas Lessons, and to Steve Cavanaugh for organizing the various after-service receptions.

✠ There is Saturday Anglican Use Mass at 9 A.M. in the St Theresa Convent Chapel. Enter by the side entrance nearest the school.

✠ An Every Member Canvass of support for the financial operation of the congregation is underway. We still need to hear from some of our regular members about their projected level of giving for the new year. This is a very great help in planning our program.

✠ For those who plan ahead, Ash Wednesday, the First Day of Lent, is February 22nd. Friday evening services of Stations & Benediction begin February 24th. The next Sunday Evensong & Benediction is February 26th. Holy Week is April 1—8.

✠ To date no one is enrolled in Inquirers' Classes for this year. This is somewhat surprising with all the interest and publicity regarding the accomodation for Anglicans (Episcopalians) provided by the establishment of an Ordinariate for the United States. When there is interest in classes, they meet with the Chaplain on a weeknight in St Theresa Rectory. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* is the basic text used.

✠ Thanks to those who contributed

towards the cost of greening Saint Lawrence Church for the Christmas Season. Memorials and thanksgivings were listed in the service leaflets.

✠ We are always appreciative of the support and presence of Deacon Michael J. Connolly at our services. He is almost always assisting at our non-Sunday morning services. Dr Connolly, who is Professor of Slavic and Eastern Languages in Boston College, serves the church primarily as Archdeacon in Holy Cross Armenian Catholic Church, Belmont. He is a frequent contributor to *Contra Mundum*.

✠ The Bradford Family thanks all who remembered them with cards and gifts during the Christmas season. Your kindness is much appreciated.

JANUARY 23rd

A Day of Penance

ONE of the many reasons why I became a Catholic at age 52 was the uncompromising social teaching of the Church upon the horrendous reality and violence of the culture of death. Catholics call upon a rich history of social doctrine as a moral compass for exposing and restoring all of the injustices afflicting mankind. None is greater in our lifetimes than abortion. No need for humanity is greater than for us to give testimony to the truth about the dignity of the human person, which is non-negotiable, and the horrors directed against innocent persons by this death culture obscenity.

Much of this culture cloaks itself in a pronounced, antiseptic,

medicalese, which is designed by the father of lies to distract us from what is actually happening. Nearly thirty years ago the title of a Planned Parenthood paper promoted killing as healing. The title was “Abortion as a Treatment for Unwanted Pregnancy: The Number Two Sexually Transmitted Disease.” Dr Kevorkian came along later. Kevorkian used such terms as “medical procedure” and “medical services”, having forgotten the Hippocratic Oath’s intrinsic ethical dimension that causing death can never be considered a form of medical treatment.

Fast forward to Worcester, Massachusetts in November, 2001, and the biotech firm Advanced Cell Technology, which claimed to have successfully cloned human embryos. You could read ACT’s spin in *The Boston Globe* with your morning tea and toast. They tried to structure the debate and reactions by calling the cloned matter an “activated egg,” a “cellular thing” and a “construct.” Once again, the devil is the father of lies. In reality what we were facing in this inhuman tampering with natural law was new life possessing the same dignity as that of every human being brought into existence. But by calling it other things, ACT wanted to *do* other things with these human embryos. A plague on all their houses!

Peter Singer, that very bad man ethicist at Princeton, attempts in his book *Rethinking Life and Death: The Collapse of Our Traditional Ethics* to encourage the rethinking in his title because he actually wants to undermine the whole Judeo-Christian sanctity-of-life ethic.

What are we to do? Catholics must reject the spin, and we must remind the world of the great and noble vision of humanity revealed in the Incarnation of Christ. We must remind people that souls, *their* souls, come from God and go to Him, and that therefore every life is a priceless resource. It is an unrepeatable gift from the Giver of Life.

It is too early to say we are winning the battle. But we can give thanks for modern medical research and especially the spectacular developments in fetal surgery. Who can ever forget that stunning photograph in *Life* magazine some years back? It showed the hand of Sarah Marie Switzer reaching out of the womb at 24 weeks and grasping the finger of the surgeon doing corrective surgery for spina bifida. After surgery Sarah Marie was sewn back into her mother and subsequently born two months later. Peter Singer and our Worcester neighbor Michael West need to meet that surgeon, and they need to repent of the error of their ways.

On this anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, you and I are bidden to acts of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion, and of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right of life. Like Moses of old, we must pray for our erring people.

Father Bradford

¶ This sermon was preached in St Theresa of Avila Church on January 22, 2004. This is the anniversary of the 1973 Supreme Court decision *Roe vs Wade*. In 2012 the observance is transferred to Monday. All Catholics are bidden to observe a Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children.

AGNES WAS AMONG THEM

WITH her story of virginity and martyrdom, Saint Agnes aroused...a wave of emotion and admiration in the world... In her we are struck by her mature judgment in spite of her youth, the firmness of her decision notwithstanding her woman's impressionability, her fearless courage, notwithstanding the judges' threats and the harshness of the torments.

Agnes gave the supreme testimony to Christ through the bloody holocaust of her young life. The image of that heroic maiden takes us back in mind to the words spoken by Jesus, "Father, Lord of heaven and earth, to you I offer praise; for what you have hidden from the learned and the clever, you have revealed to the merest children" (Mt 11:25-26).

We feel almost a quiver of exultation pass through these solemn words. Jesus saw far. He saw the innumerable ranks of men and women over the centuries, of all ages and circumstances, who would adhere joyously to his message. And Agnes was among them.

A characteristic links them in common. They are little, that is, simple, humble...They are people who know that they do not know anything and are not worth anything; they know they need help and forgiveness. Therefore [he] finds in them hearts open to understand him.

Not so the "learned and the clever"...Christ does not ask man to give up his reason. Only he who



accepts his intellectual and moral limits and recognizes that he needs salvation can attain to faith and in faith meet, in Christ, his Redeemer.

Pope John Paul II
Prayers and Devotions

¶ *Blessed John Paul II reigned as pope from 1978 until 2005.*

The Memorial of Saint Agnes is Saturday, January 21st. On this day the wool from two lambs is blessed and will be used to make the pallia the Holy Father confers on newly named metropolitans on June 29th.

CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL, APOSTLE AND MARTYR

SAUL being born at Tarsus, was a Roman citizen, to whom great privileges were given. He was brought up as a strict Pharisee and was very zealous in persecuting the

Christians. On his way to arrest all Christians who were in Damascus, Christ manifested Himself to the zealot who on the spot, was converted to a loyal servant of the Lord. In baptism he took the name of " Paul." After many sufferings, he was beheaded at Rome, where his body is enshrined in St. Peter's and his head in St. John Lateran. He is the Patron of the City of London.

¶ *The Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle is observed on January 25th, a Wednesday this year. Masses in St. Theresa of Avila Parish are at 6:45 A.M. and 4:00 P.M.*



BRITISH MARTYRS & CONFESSORS

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 ROBERT LUDLAM (LUDHAM)
Priest and Martyr (c. 1551–1588)

For six years, Father Robert Ludlam, of Radbourne, England, served his fellow English Catholics persecuted under Queen Elizabeth I. Father Ludlam's willingness to travel far and wide to administer the sacraments won him the esteem of many. Father Ludlam and a fellow priest, (Blessed) Nicholas Garlick, were being sheltered at the home of a Catholic layman when on an early summer day in 1588 one of the two priests, while praying in the garden, spotted officers of the Elizabethan regime approaching. A son of the home's owner had betrayed the two priests and his own father to the authorities. The priests and their host were subsequently condemned to death. While in prison, Father Ludlam and Father Garlick gave courage to a third priest, (Blessed) Richard Simpson, who had hitherto wavered in his profession of the faith. All three priests suffered execution by drawing and quartering on July 24, 1588. Before dying, Father Ludlam addressed the onlookers, speaking to them of the teachings of the Catholic Church and concluding with a prayer for England, for the spectators, for his enemies, and for his own soul.

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BALAAAM'S ASS

BLESSED EDWARD WATERSON
Secular priest

He was born in London and brought up in the Protestant religion. As a young man he travelled to Turkey, and there a rich Turk, taking a fancy to him, offered him his daughter in marriage if he would renounce Christianity. Waterson, however, refused the proposal with indignation and, taking in Rome on his way homewards, he was there instructed and reconciled with the Church. He was then admitted as a student at Rheims, and though he had but little learning, his zeal mastered all difficulties, and he was ordained priest in 1592 and sent to England. Shortly after his arrival he was apprehended and condemned on account of his priesthood. Eye-witnesses related that, as he was being drawn to his execution, the hurdle suddenly stopped, and the officers in vain flogged the horses to move it. Fresh animals were secured, but they broke the traces. Waterson had therefore to be led on foot to the gallows; and there the ladder shook violently of itself; till the martyr by the sign of the cross made it still, and ascending won his crown. He suffered on 8 January 1593.

This account is taken from *Mementoes of the Martyrs and Confessors of England & Wales for Every Day of the Year*. The author is Henry Sebastian Bowden of the Oratory. Edited and revised by David Attwater, and published by Anthony Clarke Books, Wheathampstead, Hertfordshire, n.d.



THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE

commonly called *Candlemas*
THURSDAY, February 2, 2012

Blessing of Candles
Solemn Procession

Solemn Mass & Sermon

7:30 P.M.

You may bring unused household candles for blessing.

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>

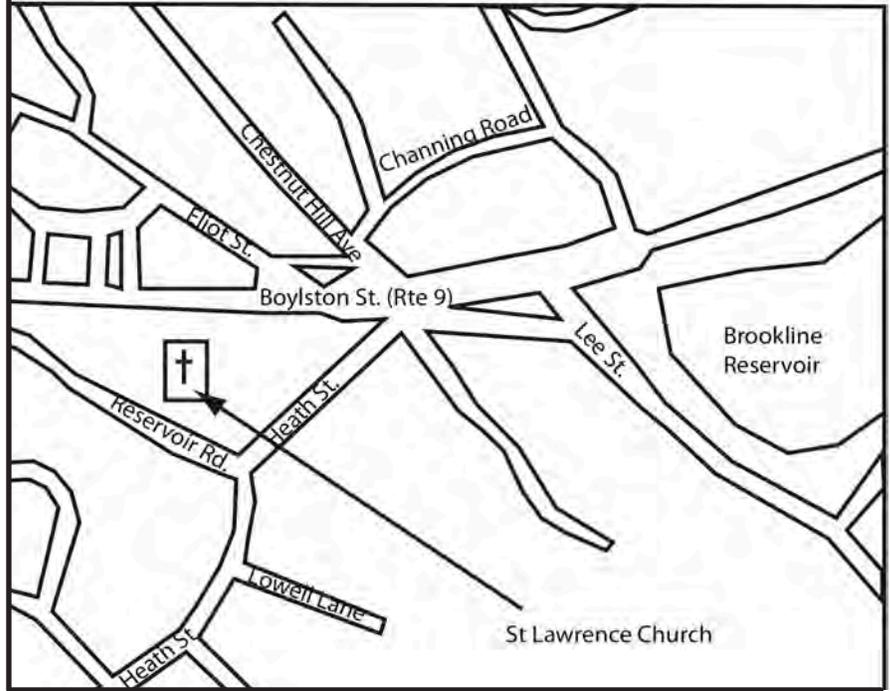
St. Lawrence Church, 774 Boylston Street (Route 9).

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. On weekdays and Saturdays only the #51 bus route which runs from Cleveland Circle to Forest Hills via Hancock Village is a 3-minute bus trip from Chestnut Hill/Reservoir, which stops at Lee St.



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 10 St. Theresa Avenue
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