
✠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>

LITTLE TIME ENGINES

THE story of the Passion is the story of wrong choices. The chief priests had to choose between their stagnant formalism and the life of God. Judas had to choose between His Lord and thirty pieces of silver. The other disciples had to choose between loyalty and desertion. Peter had to choose between confessing Christ and blaspheming Him. The mob had to choose between Christ and Barabbas. Pilate had to choose between justice and injustice. Every one of them chose evil rather than good.

But there was one happy exception, and for 2000 years he has been praised for his choice. Except that he didn't make the choice; it was made for him. You know the story. As Our Lord's strength failed, we are told "they compelled one Simon, a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear His Cross."

This Simon is called a Cyrenian to make it clear he is some one else than St Peter, who is also called Simon.



Simon is a common name in the gospel story, as is John and James and Mary. If you were making up a religion you would conveniently arrange for every prominent personage to have a different name! Truth can be less convenient. And Cyrene? It is the place in modern Libya near which a great battle was fought, at Benghazi, in 1942.

Simon of Cyrene is praised because He was chosen to bear the Cross. However

unwilling he may have been at the time, Simon is the one man who ministered to Our Lord on His Way of Sorrows. And, as long as the Bible is read, Simon's name will be remembered.

The Stations of the Cross are little time engines. Catholic Christians recognize that these incidents are revelatory events. Their meaning to us is not easy or immediate but has to be waited for. But our repeated rehearsal of these stations can yield this message in a character of permanent presence allied to our own experience of life.

We do not first find this contact with our own lives as a reason for our participation. Rather we submit to the devotional life of the Catholic Church, where our souls may be opened to grace as God in His mercy is pleased to allow. And we come to realize that there are no accidents in the Passion story. Simon of Cyrene thinks he is a most unlucky man. He was simply about his own business on the day before the Passover, when by chance his way into the city was blocked by a tragic procession of the condemned. You know how busy you can be

prior to a holiday weekend! That was Simon. But before he knew it he was pressed into service, to help carry the load of a man he supposed to be a criminal on his way to the execution he deserved.

Was it just bad luck for Simon? Not so. God had planned this very thing from all eternity. The *way* of Christ's love is that no one is meant to suffer alone. God in the flesh lives the life of all ordinary men and women. So it was not even that He chose this reluctant help from a stranger. That decision belonged to the soldiers of the execution squad. Christ did not get to choose because we do not always get to choose. With life closing in on Him, Our Lord Jesus was not able to choose even the help to be given by someone who showed little interest. It is a situation that plays out daily in sick rooms at home, in hospitals, and nursing homes, where the patient may be cared for by an impatient and annoyed relative or a care-giver only looking for a paycheck. And where, when loving care is given, its motivation goes back in some way to the conviction that we are here on earth to help carry the Cross of Christ.

We are to help Christ blindly. That is because we know Him by faith, not by vision. Not that vision helped Simon of Cyrene! He saw only three criminals on the way to a death they deserved. Jesus did not seem worth helping. And Simon was probably even ashamed to be pressed into this sordid work.

Which means we must help Christ not only in those who seem Christ-like but in those in whom Christ

is hidden. For Our Blessed Lord hid His beauty under the ugliness of sin so that we might be given the chance to help those whom the world condemns. And the Lord turned to sinners as much as to saints for help.

There were few saints present on the Way of the Cross. And Simon of Cyrene was not one of them. We too must not wait to be saints or even to be good by any worldly standard, to help Christ carry His Cross. Our gentle Savior accepts what assistance anyone would give Him: the repentant thief on the cross, the soldier with the sponge and hyssop. Even in death the Lord accepted the ministrations of those two reluctant Jewish officials, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea. It is not for the good alone to help Christ. It is most of all for sinners, for the weak, the hesitant, the selfish, to take up the Cross. We can say all that because of this little incident, not an accident or coincidence, but a God-incident, with Simon of Cyrene. For Simon could not know, or even in his wildest imagination ever guess, until he had taken up that stranger's Cross, that in it was the secret of his own salvation.

Father Bradford

¶ A sermon preached by Father Bradford at a service of Stations of the Cross and Benediction in the chapel of St. Theresa of Avila Church, West Roxbury, 31 March, 2006.

SIN, FASTING, AND CONFESSION

IN the coming season of Lent, the Church will ask us to reflect upon our sins and to do penance for

them. While we are so engaged, we may also spare a thought for the dry rot that afflicts us collectively as the church in this country.

We may notice, for instance, that Lenten exhortations to do penance for our sins are not widely heeded among Catholics, because the sense of sin has faded among us, as it has among so many other people in the modern world. We may even be struck by the absence of Lenten exhortations, since the clergy are reluctant to upset us, or themselves for that matter.

In St. Mark's gospel (2:18-20), people asked Our Lord, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" He replied, "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?... The day will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day."

That day has come, and has gone. Fasting in Lent was once a common Catholic practice, but no longer. Why, after all, should those who are not conscious of sin feel the need for penance? Even in some religious houses, no provision is made in the menu for those who might want to keep the Lenten fast. In the clerical circles in which I move, it is customary to joke about the ridiculous preoccupation we used to have with precisely how many ounces of food one could eat in a fast-day meal. We have got rid of that kind of scrupulosity, but we have done it by dropping fasting and the very idea of physical penance.

This shift of consciousness among Catholics helps to explain the phenomenon of whole congregations

receiving Communion at Mass, even though most of them have not bothered to confess their sins or felt the need to do so. It also explains the demand for general absolution without the bothersome need for individual confession to a priest who might not agree with one's personal moral code. It throws light, too, on the outrage felt by liberal clerics when reactionary pastors announce from the pulpit that only Catholics should come forward for Communion. For many Catholics, it is apparent, the Eucharist has become a mere ritual, not a sacrament to be taken with utmost reverence.

The fading sense of sin also shows up in the growing Catholic acceptance of contraception, abortion, and divorce, and in our more tolerant attitude toward pornography, pre- and extra-marital sex, and homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle. The Catholic Church has always been keenly aware that ours is a fallen human nature. To the point where it sometimes scandalized pious Protestants by its readiness to forgive sins. The post-Christian world, however, is not only aware of fallen human nature but takes it as normative. Today, doing what comes naturally is not only what people do but what they have a right to do, and it is considered arrogant and unfeeling to ask them to do more than keep their quest for self-gratification within the bounds of moderation. That so many Catholics now take the same view of human nature reveals the dry rot that is eating away at the life of the Church.

For Christianity means nothing if it does not mean salvation from sin and from the disordered passions that lead to it. In the Christian view of man, all is not right with us, our nature is deeply wounded, and we need the constant help of divine grace through the Mass, the sacraments, prayer, and the practice of a Christian spirituality to live in a manner pleasing to God, and so to save our souls.

Catholics by and large once knew all that, even when they did not try to live it. But Christendom, the society in which Christianity could be taken for granted, has ended, has been coming to an end, in fact, for at least 300 years. With its final disappearance, we shall soon also see no more merely nominal or post-Christian Catholics. The gap between Catholicism and the general culture will be so wide and so inescapably visible that we shall all have to take our stand on one or the other side of it.

Critics may say that the only moral decline I can point to (if it is a decline) is in sexual morals, and that today's Catholics are in fact better in other areas of life than earlier generations were—less racist, for example. But the sexually liberated Catholic who is a model of self-sacrificing Christian charity is a pipe dream. Conforming to the sexual mores of the post-Christian culture may make us more easy-going, tolerant liberal democrats, but it won't make us better Christians or even better citizens.

The end of Christendom will also manifest itself, as it is already doing, in the decay from within of

Catholic institutions. In the larger Catholic colleges and universities, Catholicism will fade away like the Cheshire cat, leaving behind only a bland, reassuring, administrative smile. A similar process will take place in Catholic hospitals and social-welfare agencies, as both their personnel and the norms by which they are forced to operate become more and more secularized.

A magazine recently asked a number of prominent people, "What's Your Best Hope for the 1990s?" Walker Percy's answer was, "There will occur the spread of democratic societies, but of a certain sort: deeply informed by the values of the visual media, violence, pornography, standard network Brokaw-Rather ideology, Hollywood morality, and 10,000 Japanese car commercials. My hope is that we might do better." This Lent, let us hope the same for the American Catholic Church.

Father Francis Canavan, S.J.

¶ *The late Fr. Francis Canavan was professor of political science in Fordham University. This article was first published in Catholic Eye February 20, 1990, and was included in a book of Fr. Canavan's essays titled Pins in the Liberal Balloon. It is reprinted with permission.*

REMEMBRANCE OF TRESPASSES

NO matter how much the sinner is blinded by the devil's deceits, some spark yet remains in the soul that cannot easily be extinguished and quenched, that is, the superior portion of the soul, which always strives against sin and as much as possible, if we are disposed to hear it and act accordingly, entices the



STATIONS OF THE CROSS & BENEDICTION

Fridays in Lent at 7:30 P.M.
(except as noted)

Preachers:

March 2nd, Deacon Michael J. Connolly

March 9th, Father Bradford

March 16th, to be announced

March 23rd: St. Lawrence Church 7 P.M. Family Stations

March 30th, The Most. Revd. Emilio S. Allué

We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

Because by thy holy Cross thou hast redeemed the world.

body to do good. But there are many persons who give more attention to other vain things with which they are busily occupied and so forget themselves. Such people are rather present with those transitory things than with themselves. Saint Augustine says the mind and thought of a man is more where he loves than with himself. Would God the people disposed in this way would return at last, hear, see, and make due search of what is done in their consciences, as the prodigal child did, who after his offense came again to himself and knew all his misery. Would God every one of us willingly remembered the trouble of his own soul, what the inward conscience suffers, so that we might all say with the prophet what follows, *anxiatus est super me spiritus meus*, I know indeed by the search made in my conscience how grievously I have trespassed against my Lord God, and with this my soul

is deeply grieved.

This remembrance doubtless is the beginning of the sinner's true conversion to almighty God. For the truth is, when he calls to mind (as we have declared) his miserable errors in which he has been wrapped by his continuance in them for a long time, and when he keeps that remembrance continually in mind, he cannot but greatly repent his own foolishness, particularly if he remembers whom he has forsaken and into whose clutches he has fallen, also if he calls to mind how great his loss is and how unprofitable his winning is.

Saint John Fisher

Exposition of the Seven Penitential Psalms

¶ *Saint John Fisher was Chancellor of Cambridge University, Bishop of Rochester, a Prince of the Church, and a martyr for the faith in 1535.*

SHORT NOTES

✠ On Sundays in Lent either the Litany will be sung in procession or the Decalogue will be sung at the beginning of Mass. The Mass music during Lent is The Fourth Communion Service, Hymnal 719–723.

✠ The condolences of the congregation go to Winifred Payne and her family on the death of her son Roland Lloyd. Formerly of Antigua, he died in Revere on February 9th. Father Bradford presided at the funeral service on February 17th. Mr. Lloyd was 56 years old. May he rest in peace.

✠ Daylight Savings Time returns March 11th. Set your clocks AHEAD one hour Saturday night.

✠ Saint Patrick's Day is Saturday, March 17th. He is the Patron Saint of the Archdiocese of Boston. Please remember Cardinal O'Malley, the bishops and clergy and people of the archdiocese in your prayers. Anglican Use Saturday mass is at 9 A.M. in the St. Theresa Convent Chapel.

✠ For use during Lent we have Lenten Coin folders available for your use. Proceeds benefit Catholic Charities in the Archdiocese of Boston.

✠ Copies of the *Magnificat* Lenten Companion may still be available for purchase (\$4.00) on the leaflet stand. It contains meditations and prayers for every day of Lent.

✠ Many thanks to Fr. James J. O'Driscoll who was deacon of the Mass at Candlemas, February 2nd. He is parochial vicar in Holy Family Parish, Rockland, and a long-time

friend of our congregation. Deacon Michael J. Connolly also served as one of the sacred ministers at Mass.

✠ Thanks to Bishop Robert F. Hennessey, Auxiliary Bishop of Boston, who was our preacher at Stations and Benediction on Friday, February 24th. His last visit to us was in December 2008.

✠ Please return Easter Flower Envelopes by Sunday, April 1st so that memorials and thanksgivings may be listed in the Easter leaflet. Your contributions help with the cost of decorating the church for the Queen of Feasts.

✠ Confessions are heard in St. Lawrence Church heard Wednesday, April 4th, 6:30–8:00 P.M. and on Saturdays, 11 A.M. – Noon by priests of Opus Dei.

Confessions are heard in St. Theresa of Avila Church, West Roxbury every Saturday 3:00–4:00 P.M. and in Lent every Wednesday 6:30–8:00 P.M. Also on Thursday, March 1st after the 4:00 P.M. Mass. Weekday Masses in Lent are in the church, but confessions are heard in the chapel.



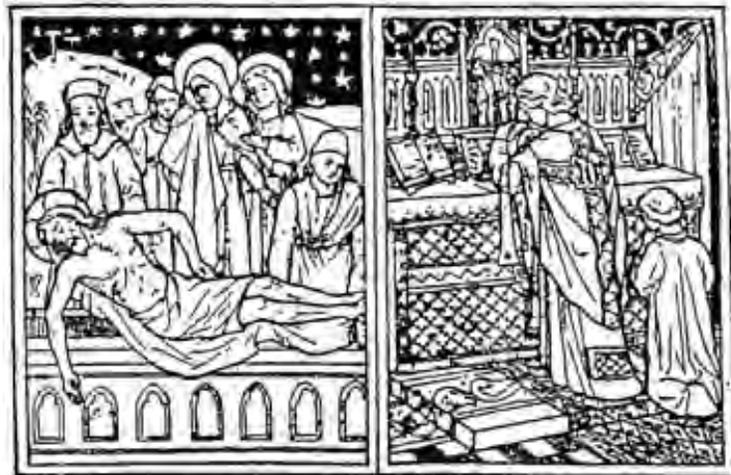
ANGLICAN USE MASS
ON SATURDAYS
9:00 A.M.
St. Theresa Convent Chapel
West Roxbury

ASSISTANCE AT MASS



At the elevation of the Host the priest represents before God the Father the lifting up of Jesus on the Cross. That is a moment to meditate on Christ nailed to the Cross by His hands and feet, set forth as a spectacle to the whole world. And at the elevation of the Chalice remember how freely Christ poured forth His blood from His most sacred wounds for the washing away of our sins.

O loving Jesus, Who died for me upon the Cross, and Who art now really present on the Altar, I adore Thee and I love Thee. O Jesus, by Thy death upon the Cross forgive me all my sins.



At the Communion, meditate on Christ taken down from the Cross and laid in the grave. Blessed Jesus asks you and me for our hearts as His sepulchre.

O loving Jesus, take up Thy abode in my heart; purify and sanctify it. That my soul may be a fit resting place for Thy Body, which I hope soon to receive in this Holy Sacrament.
‘O God, my heart is ready, my heart is ready.’

PATRON OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH



THERE are special reasons why the blessed Joseph should be explicitly named Patron of the Church and why the Church should in turn expect much from his patronage and guardianship. For he, indeed, was the husband of Mary and the father, as was supposed, of Jesus Christ. From these arise all his dignity, grace, holiness, and glory.

The dignity of the Mother of God is certainly so sublime that nothing can surpass it; but nonetheless, since the bond of marriage existed between Joseph and the Blessed Virgin, there can be no doubt that more than any other person he approached that supereminent dignity by which the Mother of God is raised far above all created natures. For marriage is the closest possible union and relationship whereby each spouse mutually participates in the goods of the other. Consequently, if God gave Joseph as husband to the Virgin, he assuredly gave him not only as a companion in life, a guarantor of her virginity, and the guardian of her honor, but also as a sharer in her exalted dignity by reason of the conjugal tie itself.

Likewise, Joseph alone stands out in august dignity because he was the guardian of the Son of God by the divine appointment, and in the opinion of others was his father. As a consequence the Word of God was modestly obedient to Joseph, was attentive to his commands, and paid him every honor that children should render their parents.

Pope Leo XIII

*Pope Leo XIII reigned from
1878 to 1903.*

¶ *Saint Joseph's Day is Monday, March 19th. There is Anglican Use Mass in the St. Theresa Convent Chapel at 11:00 A.M. Daily Masses in St. Theresa's Church are at 6:45 A.M. and 4:00 P.M.*



HOLY WEEK IS APRIL 1-8
Attend the King in His Passion

"Few Catholics believe that a candidate is disqualified by being a Mormon. The reason is obvious: Catholics are accustomed to having heretics in the White House. Jews likewise are not offended that the president is not one of their own."

The late
Father Richard John Neuhaus



THE SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Sunday, March 25, 2012

Solemn Evensong & Benediction

5:30 P.M.

Madrigal Singers of Boston College

¶ *note later than usual starting time*

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.

PRAYER WITHOUT CEASING

The Ven. Montford Scott
Secular priest

BORN in Norfolk, he arrived on the English mission from Douay in 1577. "He was a man," we are told, "of wonderful meekness and of so great abstinence that his diet on common days was bread and water, and but little more on Sundays and holidays." So given was he to prayer that he often spent whole days and nights in it, so that his knees were grown hard with kneeling. One of the bystanders, noticing this when the martyr's body was being quartered, said aloud, "Is this treason? I came to see traitors, and have seen saints"; for speaking thus he was jailed. So general was the veneration this priest had acquired that Topcliffe, the noted persecutor, said he thought no ten priests in England did so much harm as he. "Thank God I never did hurt in all my life," replied Mr. Scott. With another priest, the Ven. George Beesley, he was executed in Fleet Street on 1 or 2 July 1591, both bearing themselves with a quiet confidence.

A MAKER OF REFUGES

Bd Nicholas Owen
Jesuit brother

NOTHING is known of the early life and background of Nicholas Owen; but he was a craftsman of great skill in a little body, who saved the lives of unnumbered priests by his ingenuity in constructing hiding-places for them. For eighteen years he was in the service of the Jesuits Henry Garnet and John

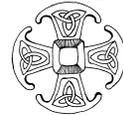
Gerard; Father Garnet admitted him secretly into the Society of Jesus as a lay helper, and he was with Father Gerard when he was betrayed on St George's day in 1594. After being fiercely tortured in a vain attempt to make him implicate others, Owen was released; and it was almost certainly he who planned Father Gerard's famous escape from the Tower of London. Later Owen was again arrested, giving himself up in order to distract attention from concealed priests. He was again subjected to torture, torture so hideous that he died under it, on 2 March 1606. Father Gerard wrote of Brother Owen: "I verily think no man can be said to have done more good of all those who laboured in the English vineyard ...He was the immediate occasion of saving the lives of many hundreds of persons, both ecclesiastical and secular, ... in all shires and in the chiefest Catholic houses of England."

These accounts are 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.

ANGLICAN USE & ORDINARIATE INFO DAY

MEMBERS of our congregation will give a conference on history of the Anglican Use and

its provisions and rationale, and the recent erection of the Ordinariate of the Chair of St Peter, on Saturday, March 10th, in the Church of the Holy Name of Jesus in Providence, Rhode Island. The conference begins at 1:30 P.M. and the day will end with Anglican Use Mass at 4:00, being the regular Vigil Mass for Sunday in the parish. Several members of our congregation will make presentations at the conference and members of the schola will assist at Mass, which will be celebrated by Father Bradford. We are very grateful to Fr. Joseph D. Santos, Jr., pastor of the parish, for his invitation and interest in Anglican Use.



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
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<http://www.locutor.net>

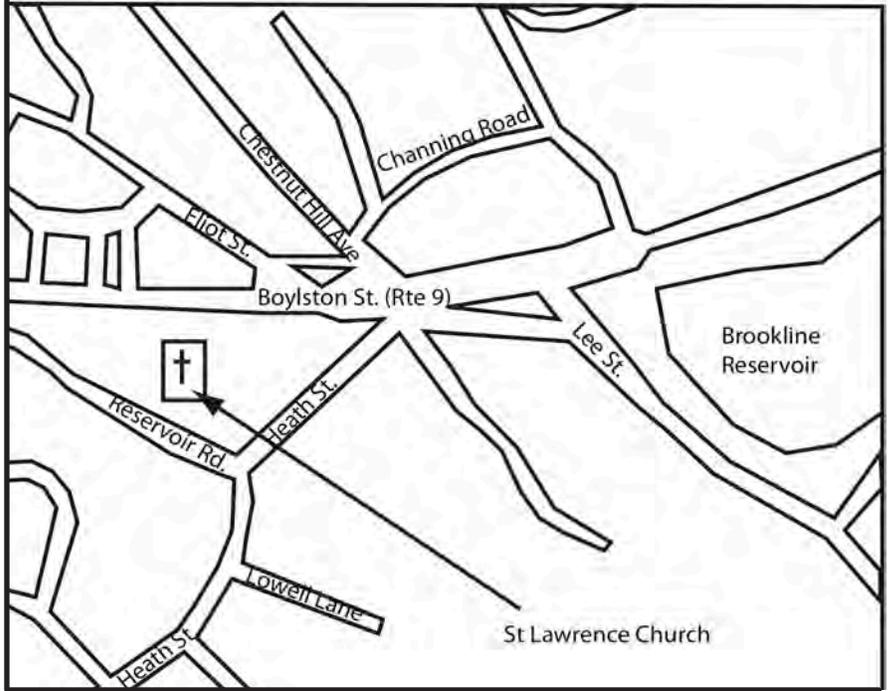
St. Lawrence Church, 774 Boylston Street (Route 9).

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: From Kenmore Square station board Bus #60, which stops in front of the Church. Alternatively, the Church is a 15-minute walk from the Cleveland Circle station on the Green Line C-branch.



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 10 St. Theresa Avenue
 West Roxbury, MA 02132

