YOU ALL KNOW that actions always begin with an idea or impulse and after the doing of it there is the result. The three parts of the things we do are motive, the action itself, and the consequence. If all three are good then what we do is good. But things can get complicated! If the attitude or motive behind the action is bad, even if the act itself is good and the result is good, there is trouble. A good intention and action can have a bad result, as any surgeon knows. And we all know the end does not justify the means. Motive, action, and result each stand at the bar of morality.

In the Sunday gospel two weeks ago we heard the course correction Our Lord Jesus gave Martha of Bethany. Her motive was initially good: to honor the Lord’s visit with a fine meal. And no doubt she prepared a good meal. That was the action. And as a result of her serving it everyone was pleased. But Martha got into trouble when her initial motive was derailed by selfishness. Her sister Mary was not helping with the meal. So Martha built up a head of steam to the point of telling Almighty God what to do. “Make her help me in the kitchen.” It is a classic wrong prayer.

All right. In today’s gospel we have an incident that brings forth the Lord’s parable on covetousness. It all begins with the incident in which a man, like Martha of Bethany, makes a wrong prayer. “Jesus, help me redistribute my father’s inheritance.” This was an absurd request. Jesus probably did not know either this man or his brother, the contents of the inheritance at stake, or why this man wanted more than he apparently received. But again, a wrong request draws from the Lord memorable teaching, and in His parable Jesus gives an example of one kind of covetousness.

We know the Tenth Commandment. “Thou shalt not covet.” And it means we are not to desire what belongs to our neighbor. But the rich farmer in Christ’s parable is not covetous in this sense at all He didn’t want anybody else’s property. He had too much of his own. And he had a bad attitude about it. And this is where the rich farmer begins to sound like Martha of Bethany. Like Martha, he had many good qualities. Give credit where credit is due. The rich farmer had been a good steward of the gifts he had been given. A bumper crop is no accident! It is no small way the result of good planning and good use of the farmer’s resources. Even his decision to pull down his barns and erect larger ones shows creative advance planning, given the anticipated heavy crop to be harvested.

The man’s tragic weakness is that in all of this he was self-centered, not God-centered. He equated the huge harvest with the selfish dream of being able to force increased amounts of food through the thirty feet we call the human digestive system! Here is a man made in the image and likeness of Almighty God, made to reflect that image and likeness in
creation. His destiny is to be higher than the angels. His abundance of things on earth should lead to a fuller life and provide opportunity to extend charity. Yet all he thinks about is his own tummy! In a sense the rich farmer is the same kind of character as the prodigal son in another of the Lord’s famous parables. The critical difference is that the prodigal son finally realized he was in a pigpen and got out of it, while the rich farmer died there.

God Incarnate comes to us confronting people with such limited vision and goals and expectations. Christ recalls us to our birthright: with the reminder of who we are, Whose we are, and where, please God we are going. Saint Paul realized how evil covetousness is, and twice in his writings identified it with idolatry. Paul linked the Tenth Commandment with the First. He saw covetousness as putting material things and self in the place of God. It traps us. The traps can include building barns with larger capacity, or insisting on help in the kitchen preparing a meal.

Remember it is not wrong to have precious earthly attachments. The problem never was with the bumper crop and what to do with it, or with honoring the Lord with hospitality. It becomes a tragic problem when our attitudes divide us from eternal life. The whole weight of the Scriptures is clear. When we do not accept the call of Christ it is our lot to never allow ourselves to be made truly free.

Father Bradford

¶ This sermon was preached on The Tenth Sunday after Trinity, July 31, 2016. The text was Luke 12:13-21.

**ENJOYING GOD IN THIS LIFE AND THE NEXT**

As for you, chosen servant of Christ, I know that you desire Christ; I know that all your strength is directed toward this end—the discovery of the means by which you may meet the eternal King in a close union and embrace. So now, prompt your heart and your soul; lift up your whole mind and consider as intently as you can.

If good things are so pleasant even when enjoyed singly, imagine how delightful beyond delight that Good must be which contains the delightfulness of all goods! If life created is so precious, imagine, how enrapturing must be Life All-creating! If salvation is our best end as an acquired state, how transporting must be Salvation Itself, the Author of all deliverance! ... What will a man have who possesses that Good; and what, will he not have? Assuredly, he will have everything that satisfies him, and nothing that displeases. Eye has not seen nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man what bodily and spiritual goods he will enjoy in heaven. Why, then, servant of God, do you wander so far seeking delights for your body and mind? Love one single Good in which all goods are found, and that will suffice; desire simple Good, which is all good, and that will be enough. ...

The more we love God here, the more we shall enjoy God there. Therefore, love God much in this life, and you shall enjoy him much the next; let the love of God increase in you now, so that you may have then the fullness of his joy. This is the truth to be pondered in your mind, proclaimed by your tongue, loved in your heart, expressed by your lips; your soul should hunger, your body thirst, your whole substance crave for nothing but this until you enter the joy of your God, until you are clasped in your Lover’s arms, until you are led into the chamber of your beloved Spouse who, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Saint Bonaventura

¶ Saint Bonaventura (1221-1274) was a Franciscan minister general, Bishop, Cardinal, and Doctor of the Church. He was canonized in 1482. His feast day is Saturday, July 15th.

This excerpt is from *Works, Vol. 1*, originally compiled in 1960 and reprinted by Franciscan Press, Quincy, IL in 1997.

**ORDINATIONS**

Five men were ordained to the Sacred Priesthood by Cardinal O’Malley on Saturday, May 20th in The Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Boston. Your prayers are asked for them as they begin their sacerdotal ministry in the Archdiocese of Boston.
THE APOSTLE’S PRECEPT

Finally be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful be courteous (I Peter 3.8)

For courteous some substitute the word humble; the difference may not be considered as great, for pride is a quality that obstructs courtesy.

That a precept of courtesy is by no means unworthy of the gravity and dignity of an apostolical mandate, may be gathered from the pernicious effects which all must have observed to have arisen from harsh strictness and sour virtue: such as refuses to mingle in harmless gaiety, or give countenance to innocent amusements, or which transacts the petty business of the day with a gloomy ferociousness that clouds existence. Goodness of this character, is more formidable than lovely; it may drive away vice from its presence, but will never persuade it to stay to be amended; it may teach, it may remonstrate, but the hearer will seek for more mild instruction. To those, therefore, by whose conversation the heathens were to be drawn away from error and wickedness; it is the Apostle’s precept, that they be courteous, that they accommodate themselves, as far as innocence allows, to the will of others; that they should practise all the established modes of civility, seize all occasions of cultivating kindness, and live with the rest of the world in an amicable reciprocation of cursory civility, that Christianity might not be accused of making men less cheerful as companions, less sociable as neighbours, or less useful as friends.

Samuel Johnson

Dr Johnson (1709-1784) was a poet, playwright, essayist, moralist, literary critic, biographer, editor, and lexicographer. He has been described as “arguably the most distinguished man of letters in English history.” He is buried in Westminster Abbey.

This excerpt is from Sermons, edited by Jean Howard Hagstrum (1913-1995) longtime professor of English in Northwestern University and whose books were published by The University of Chicago Press.

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Tuesday, July 4, 2023

O ETERNAL GOD, through whose mighty power our fathers won their liberties of old; Grant, we beseech thee, that we and all the people of this land may have grace to maintain these liberties in righteousness and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

¶ This prayer was one of fifteen “new” collects written for the 1928 Book of Common Prayer. It was composed by Episcopal Bishop Edward Lambe Parsons of California.

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SHORT NOTES

 dez On Corpus Christi the Archdiocese of Boston lifted the last of the Covid pandemic restrictions: no communion from the chalice. Since June 11th, our communicants again have the option of receiving the Precious Blood at the altar rail.

 dez Saturday month’s mind Masses will be offered for Bruce Rand on July 8th, Helen Smith on July 15th, and Fr George Greenway on July 22nd. May they rest in peace.

 dez We will offer Solemn Evensong and Benediction on Sunday, August 6th at 5 PM, being the Solemnity of the Transfiguration.

 dez Catholic Radio is found at 1060 AM, The Station of the Cross. Our friend Lou Murray is local manager.

 dez Feast Days during July are St Thomas Day, Monday, July 3rd, Saint Mary Magdalene, Saturday, July 22nd, and St. James the Apostle, Tuesday, July 25th.

 dez The Solemnity of the Assumption is Tuesday, August 15th. Mass in the Ordinariate form is offered at 7:30 PM, a Holy Day of Obligation.

During the summer months we are offering coffee hours after Mass on the second Sunday of the month. On June 11th the hostess was Judie Bradford. On July 9th the hosts will be John and Pam Covert. We hope you will attend.
AFTER THE CONSECRATION of the great pyramid of Tenochtitlan in 1487, the Aztecs boasted that they had ritually sacrificed 80,400 men in the course of four days. Some of those who were killed would have been criminals, but most were completely innocent. In Aztec society, handicapped children were segregated at birth and nurtured in relative luxury, until the next solar eclipse when they were the first to be led up the steps to the altar of sacrifice.

With the coming of Christianity, this religiously-sponsored slaughter came to an end. Luckily for the prospective victims of the Aztec priests, the Christian missionaries who arrived in the wake of the conquistadors brought with them the lifeline of the Gospel, and set about converting the Aztecs to the Catholic Faith.

The Church has always acknowledged that there are elements of truth interwoven through the beliefs and practices of other religions. Inasmuch as the Aztecs recognised the religious value of sacrifice, we have to admit that they were on to something. But the torrents of human blood cascading down the slopes of those Mexican temples illustrate what grotesque consequences an incomplete, or lopsided, interpretation of religious truth can lead to.

We Catholics, like the Aztecs, have the bloody sacrifice of a person at the foundation of our religious cult. But there is quite a significant difference. Those pagans knew that no amount of mere human blood would ever satisfy the appetites of their capricious and gluttonous deities. If the sun were to continue rising every morning, and if the crops were to survive until harvest, then the slaughter would just have to go on forever.

On the Cross, however, we find a Sacrifice that need not—could not, in fact—ever be repeated; because on Calvary it is God the Son—the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity—Who offers Himself to the Father in a single sacrificial act which is once and for all. He offers Himself in love for us. Because He is a Divine Person, the infinite value of that Sacrifice is capable of atoning for the sins of the whole human race. Just one drop of His Blood would have been more than enough to redeem every human being ever created. The water that eventually gushed from His pierced side on the Cross was a sign that there was no blood left in His Body. He had given every last drop of it, for us.

July is traditionally the month of the Precious Blood. The Feast of the Precious Blood was appointed for the first Sunday after June 30th by Pope Pius IX, the last day of June being the date on which the insurgents of the Roman Republic were expelled from Rome in 1849. Pope John XXIII raised this feast to the level of First Class, shortly before it was abolished altogether by his successor in 1969.

The greatest English apostle of devotion to the Precious Blood was the London Oratory’s own Father Faber. He established the Confraternity of the Precious Blood in London in 1850, with rich indulgences granted personally by Bl Pio Nono. Within ten years more than thirty eight thousand members had enrolled all over the world. Members of the Confraternity would be encouraged to offer their own sacrifices and penances in union with the Our Lord’s Precious Blood to gain blessings for the Church and the world.

We might be forgiven for assuming that Father Faber’s first encounter with devotion to the Blood of Our Lord must have occurred during his travels on the Continent as a young man. In truth, however, he would have already been familiar with the idea from the literature of our home-grown evangelical preachers and poets. It was William Cowper
(1731-1800), whose poetry and hymns were a formative influence on Faber, who wrote the lines:

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Emanuel’s veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

This Protestant poem helps us to understand the symbolism of the Catholic Rite of Baptism, when the new Christian, fresh from the waters of regeneration, is clothed with a white shawl. He has been made pure and spotless—washed clean in the Blood of the Lamb. The priest says to Him: “See that you carry this white garment without stain before the judgement seat of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that you may have eternal life;” and we only realise the gravitas of this vocation when we remember that the price of this white garment was Our Lord’s Blood, poured out for us on Calvary.

Likewise, whenever we are washed clean of our sins in the Sacrament of Penance, we should remind ourselves that the price of this ablution is the Precious Blood that flowed from Our Lord’s wounds. Let us give thanks for this from the bottom of our hearts. Where the Church parts company with the Protestants is in Her teaching that, while the Sacrifice of Calvary is once and for all, that very same Sacrifice is presented anew to God every day on the Altar. Just as God did not intend to restrict the Redemption that He worked on Calvary to those who happened to be witnesses, so has He ordained that all people, throughout all ages and in all places, may present themselves at this same Sacrifice by attending Holy Mass.

Invocation of the Precious Blood has the power to banish temptation and to send Satan fleeing. Through the merits of the Precious Blood, our prayers of petition take on great power before the Throne of Grace when they are accompanied by sacrifice and penance. Not long ago the Confraternity of the Precious Blood was revived at the London Oratory, and gathers in Our Lady of Dolours Chapel at 6.45 pm on Saturdays.

On the Feast of Corpus Christi, we rejoiced in Our Lord’s gift of Himself in the Blessed Sacrament. During this month of the Precious Blood, we meditate on the cost of that gift. The white robe of our Baptism is the sign that we have been washed clean in the Blood of the Lamb. May we carry that priceless robe unspotted before the judgement Seat of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Provost

\* This article is reprinted from THE ORATORY PARISH MAGAZINE (July, 2017, Vol 94, No. 1154) the parish paper of the Brompton (London) Oratory.

### 25TH ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY

**CONGRATULATIONS FATHER RICHARD BRADFORD!!**

On May 30th, Father Richard Bradford will celebrate his 25th Anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood. We express our congratulations and our thanks for his ministry to the parishioners of Saint Theresa of Ávila and the Congregation of Saint Athanasius during the past twenty-five years. We also thank his family for their unfailing support of his vocation. Please keep Father Bradford and his family in your prayers this week.

The above notice appeared in the May 28, 2023 parish paper of St Theresa of Ávila Church, West Roxbury. During the previous week Cardinal O’Malley concelebrated Mass with diocesan priests ordained in the spring of 1998. The Mass was followed by a lovely luncheon in the Pastoral Center.

A celebration of Father Bradford’s time at St Theresa’s Church will be scheduled in the fall and all of us are invited to attend.

### SUMMER ALTAR FLOWERS

Our sign up for summer altar flowers is available for your choice of Sundays in June through September. You may bring arrangements from your garden or florist. We require two larger arrangements for the high altar, or one or two smaller vases for the Marian altar (or both), whichever you prefer. In the sacristy we have vases of various sizes for cut flowers. You may take your arrangement home with you after Mass. But be sure to sign up for a summer Sunday.
TO ACQUIRE CHRISTIAN righteousness and salvation two things are necessary, to believe with the heart and outwardly to profess our beliefs. For with the heart, says the Apostle, we believe unto justice; but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation: (Rom 10:10). It is therefore the essential duty of every Christian to honor his religion by subjecting his understanding to its doctrines and confessing them openly when the interests of truth require it. It was by complying with this twofold duty that the first Christians contributed so much not only to the honor but the propagation of our holy religion. When, after the Passion of our Savior and the first spreading of his Gospel, all the powers of earth combined to persecute it and exert the utmost rage of cruelty and torment against its followers, what arms did they oppose to the violence of its enemies? No others, dear Christians, but the arms of an inward steady faith, and a generous open profession of their belief. These, joined to the efficacy of a virtuous life, brought at length their persecutors themselves to respect and then to embrace doctrines, which could raise men to such invincible fortitude. These were the effects of the glorious testimony they bore to the truth of their religion.

The times of persecution are now no more. Through God’s mercy, you are not now liable to be carried before pagan tribunals to be punished for the profession of Christianity. But if you have not an opportunity of giving this testimony to your religion, there are still remaining many occasions of honoring it, less splendid but perhaps not much less difficult and meritorious than those of the primitive martyrs of God’s Church.

Archbishop John Carroll

¶ John Carroll (1735-1815) was the first bishop (and archbishop) in the United States (Baltimore) and was founder of Georgetown University. The Carroll family contained signers of the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the Constitution of the United States, and the first United States Senator (1789) from Maryland.

This excerpt is from Magnificat magazine, July 2022, Volume 24, No. 5 and used by permission.

I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman ... Ye are the branches.’
– S. John xv. 1 and 5.

1. I am the Vine. Our Lord identifies Himself with the image He uses, and then shows how that image is fulfilled in Himself. The life of the Vine is something greater than the Vine, and yet the same life that is in the strong stem of the Vine is present in the tiniest tendril which is farthest away from the stem. Branches may be cut off from the Vine and the life of the Vine does not suffer, but the branches are wholly dependent on the life of the Vine. Our Lord’s life is above and independent of our life and greater than our life, yet He identifies Himself with our life.

2. My Father is the Husbandman. Our Lord so identifies Himself with humanity that He speaks of the Father as standing apart from the Vine. The world is represented as a vineyard out of which the Father looks to get the fruit of the character of Christ; that fruit will only appear where the sap of the

MUSIC NOTES

DURING THE SUMMER months at Sunday Mass we are singing the Fifth Communion Service (1940 Hymnal #747-749) composed by Leo Sowerby. With it we sing the “Old Scottish Chant” Gloria (#739).

On the first two Sundays in July our cantor at Mass is Br Anthony K. Cavet, CFC, who is known to you all. And on July 16th and 23rd our organist is Mr Daniel Lamoureaux, who was also with us for several Sundays during Easter-tide. Please welcome both.

In July, Dr Hunt will be attending sacred music workshops in Great Britain.
Christ-life has entered in; wherever that fruit does appear, there it is certain the Christ-life has entered in, for without Him we can do nothing.

The providence of God over life is not first of all to prevent pain, but to produce the Christ-character. Everything is removed from the branch that tends to divert the vital power to produce fruit. The pruning is never wanton: the use and end of the pruning is the production of fruitfulness. Our Father’s hand is sure, and we can trust Him. The providence and pruning operating on our Lord’s earthly life were unerring from the point of view of fruitfulness, and He Himself recognized this with His human mind when He said: ‘I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself.’

3. Ye are the branches. It is our Lord’s will that we should claim identification with Him as He sought identification with us. The consequences of union and loss of union with Him are set out in sharpest contrast. Because we are united to Him sacramentally we are capable of giving Him highest glory and bringing about the kingdom of God upon earth. The saints had not more grace than we have, but they made better use of the same grace. We, no less than they, are meant to be the grapes of God.

In nature, the wood of the vine is worthless; it is but the channel for the life that will give the grapes. As soon as a branch is cut off it is judged as dead; as soon as vital union with Christ ceases in us, then—and so long as that state continues—we may be judged as dead as those prunings of the vineyards that were, even as our Lord was speaking, illuminating the night in the fires on the hill-sides. If we are united with Him our life reveals Him and our prayers are echoes of His own; we ask what we will and it is done unto us because we will what He wills. If we separate ourselves from Him we reveal ourselves, and our prayers become the echoes of our own self-love.

Father Andrew

† This meditation is found in The Melody of Life, by Father Andrew, and published in 1929 by A. R. Mowbray & Co., Ltd., London and Oxford. Father Andrew (Henry Ernest Hardy 1869-1946) was an Anglican priest and friar and well-known writer and spiritual guide.

A MIND THAT BELIEVES READILY

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that what our Saviour says to Thomas so clearly and impressively, he has implied, in one way or other, all through his ministry; the blessedness of a mind that believes readily. His demand and trial of faith in the case of those who came for his miraculous aid, his praise of it where found, his sorrow where it was wanting, his warnings against hardness of heart—all are evidence of this.

St John Henry Newman

† John Henry Newman (1801-1890) was an Anglican clergyman until 1843; became a Catholic in 1845, named Cardinal in 1879, and canonized in 2019.

The Feast of St Thomas the Apostle is Monday, July 3rd.

THE CONGREGATION OF SAINT ATHANASIUS

The Revd Richard Sterling Bradford, Chaplain
Saint Lawrence Church
774 Boylston Ave.
Chestnut Hill, Mass.
(Parking lot behind the church)
Sundays 11:30 AM
Fellowship and Coffee in the Undercroft after Mass
Rectory:
767 West Roxbury Pkwy.
Boston, MA 02132-2121
Tel/Fax: (617) 325-5232
congregationstathanasius.com

SATURDAY MASS IN THE ORDINARIATE FORM

Celebrated each week at 8:00 AM at the Marian altar in St Theresa of Ávila Church, 2078 Centre St, West Roxbury. Enter the main church via the pavilion or the St Theresa Avenue side doors.

CONTRA MUNDUM

The name of our parish paper comes from the Latin phrase, “Athanasius contra mundum,” meaning “Athanasius against the world.” Our patron saint stood firmly for the fullness of the faith. Fr Bradford and the Congregation of Saint Athanasius have published this paper monthly since 1998. To receive it by mail, send your address to the editor, Susan Russo, at sjrusso@icloud.com or write to Fr Bradford at the rectory. All issues are on our website under Parish Paper.
St. Lawrence Church
774 Boylston Street (Route 9)
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

Parking is in the church parking lot behind the Church. Use 30 Reservoir Road, Chestnut Hill 02467 for your GPS.

Directions by Car from the North or South:
Route 128(95) to Route 9 east. At the signal for Reservoir Road, take the right; the Church parking lot is a short distance on the left.

Directions by Car 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. The 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.

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