
✠Contra Mundum✠

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October 2009

The Congregation of St. Athanasius

A Congregation of the Pastoral Provision of Pope John Paul II for the Anglican Usage of the Roman Rite

<http://www.locutor.net>

WITH LOVE, FROM ME, TO YOU

CONSIDER what you pray: Do you pray words memorized or read from a book, or perhaps even sung or declaimed? Or perhaps you pray thoughts and snippets of thought extempore and from the heart?

Consider further how you pray: Will you clench your hands tightly in desperation and furrow your brow? Will your body bend at the thought of suffered injustices? Will your hands cuff up and down as you bargain with your God? Or will you plead tearfully, helplessly, or stand proud and self-exalted?

And consider why you pray: Traditional teaching speaks of four activities of prayer.

—We adore or praise and worship God in a prayer such as the angelic *Gloria* or even in a simple *Alleluia*.

—We thank God for the innumerable benefits bestowed on us or perhaps for some particular joy granted us from His goodness, as in a prayer of thanksgiving after having received the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, or in customary prayers before and after meals.

—We express sorrow and repentance for ways in which we



have most regrettably allowed a thought or deed or thing to stand between us and our God or perhaps because we have neglected to undertake what might have removed an obstacle and brought us nearer to Him.

—We ask God for something needed in our life and also helpful for the salvation of our souls. We even pray to have our prayer heeded: Hear us, good Lord!

Yet ask yourself how much of our prayer, how much of those many words and long phrases fulfills what even any one of these genres might require in its models of perfection.

We should seek to be perfect, as our Heavenly Father is perfect, and we can best find examples of this in the lives and prayers of the saints, most especially of the holy Mother of God.

We can ask to join our prayers with the heavenly intercession of those who stand already in God's favor, where praise, thanksgiving, petition and even penitence align in a unified and unselfish whole.

And perhaps one might also consider praying to deceased relatives and friends of good repute in the sublime hope that they have attained beatitude or are laboring toward it.

Our Christian tradition seems especially rich in modes of prayer and methods of praying because we, unlike other faiths, own the sublime mystery of the Most Holy Trinity, a mystery which moulds us to seek the complexity of conforming our lives to Christ our Redeemer, in and with the grace of the Holy Spirit, and that to the everlasting glory of God the Father.

Yet as our prayer brings us closer to the divine, and even as we seek with human manner to characterize its nobility in high aesthetic form,

we run the peril of form overtaking content. Paradoxically our Blessed Lord has enjoined us not to pray in many empty words, but still to pray unceasingly. He Who taught us to have little concern for the morrow tells us to knock with urgency. And the King of Kings has shown us the humble tax collector going to his house more justified than the lofty Pharisee. For we find perfection also in simple places.

In the paragon of prayer we address God as our Father in Heaven, whom we must not see as a distanced and patriarchal figure but as the same type of loving and concerned parent who, when his son asks for bread will not give him a stone or a serpent instead of a fish.

This Father to whom we pray calls each of us lovingly by name, and prayer should be our loving answer to that call.

Christian love, *agápē*, encompasses yet transcends the pal-like devotion of friendly *philia*, and it exceeds in energy the embracing fullness of passionate *érōs* because it characterizes not only the aspiration toward perfection in the relationship between God and man but because, as John reminds us again and again in his first epistle, it constitutes His very nature: God is love.

So when we pray, and however we pray, it will fall imperfectly until we pray with a fullness of love, not with fear, not in anguish, nor desperation, not scheming, but giving ourselves in prayer as Christ gave Himself for us and uttering what St Theresa of the Infant Jesus called ‘a cry of recognition and of love’.

Deacon Michael J. Connolly

¶Dr. Connolly is Professor of Slavic and Eastern Languages in Boston College and serves the Church primarily as Archdeacon in Holy Cross Armenian Catholic Church in Belmont. He assists often in the services of the Anglican Use and is a frequent contributor to the *Contra Mundum*.

WHOSE SERVICE IS PERFECT FREEDOM

WHEN the Lord came to visit Bethany, Martha was immediately aware of the logistics of the matter. His visit was a problem to solve in terms of hospitality. Mary saw none of the problem but all of the opportunity to sit at Jesus’ feet and listen to what He had to say. Truth to tell, we spend our lives doing *both*. As Christian disciples, we are dedicated to solving the problem of hospitality in our souls for when the Lord chooses to visit us, that He may find in us a mansion prepared for Himself, and a throne in our hearts for His residency. But there is not one among us who does not cherish the opportunity to stop everything and sit at the feet of the Master and just listen to Divine Wisdom.

I have told some of you that in the St. Theresa Rectory there is a framed color photo taken at the arrival of Pope John Paul II on his visit to Boston in 1979. Many of you will remember that visit. In the photo, the Holy Father is in the center, smiling at the greeting on the tarmac, with the huge *Aer Lingus* jet in the background as a reminder that the Pope had flown directly from a visit to Ireland.



Jesus at the house of Martha & Mary.

In the photo you can recognize, among others, then-current first lady, Rosalind Carter, and Bishop Marcinkus, head of Vatican security. But in the foreground is Father William Helmick, who was then Cardinal Medeiros’ secretary. In the photo Fr. Helmick is the only one not having a good time! He is trying to open the way for the Holy Father to get to the automobile, or the microphone, or whatever it is that was next. Everyone in the photo, and everyone in Boston, no doubt, wanted to be like Mary of Bethany, and just sit and listen to the Pope. But the visit of the Holy Father brought enormous logistical problems, as a former cardinal’s secretary will remind you to this very day! And so the work of Martha also has a place in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Our discipleship of Christ means receiving that “good portion” of the Presence of Christ in our own lives. It is the “one thing needful.” Christ is the good part Who alone is worth seeking and for whom to live. And we must find Him where we can, whether in the kitchen or in a social gathering, or when we are all alone. And remember that no place, and no loving service, escapes His notice.

¶A sermon preached by Father Bradford in the St. Theresa Convent Chapel on Tuesday, October 9, 2007.



Curé d'Ars

A YEAR FOR PRIESTS

JUNE 19, 2009 – JUNE 11, 2010

To be a priest! A great thing indeed! The priest will never understand fully what he is, except in heaven. If he understood on earth, he would die, not of fear but of love.

The priest is like a mother, like a nursing mother to an infant a few months old: she gives it its nourishment, it has only to open its mouth. The mother says to her infant: "Come, my little one, feed." The priest says: "Take and eat, this is the body of Jesus Christ. May it keep you and bring you to life everlasting." Wonderful words! (St. John Vianney)



THE SANCTITY OF LIFE

All human beings, from their mothers' womb, belong to God who searches them and knows them, who forms them and knits them together with his own hands, who gazes on them when they are tiny shapeless embryos and already sees in them the adults of tomorrow whose days are numbered and whose vocation is even now written in the "book of life."

John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, 61

Respect Life Sunday is observed on October 4, 2009.

ROMAN FEVER

By David Mills

WHAT beauty was once ours, I said to my wife as we drove along the coast north of Boston, years after we'd moved to the midwest. Almost everything I saw made my heart ache: the clapboard houses, the old barns, the slightly rolling fields, the stone walls running through the woods, the old stone library where my wife had worked, the stream where our firstborn had fed the ducks.

This longing to be home is the closest experience I know to that longing for the Catholic Church that Anglicans call "Roman Fever." It was, at least for me, much like malaria. When you have it you feel it is going to take you off, but when you get better you accept it as a chronic illness to be suffered until it goes away.

I suspect high Anglicans or Anglo-Catholics, as such I once was, suffer Roman Fever because in some forms (but not others) modern Anglicanism looks and feels and sounds Catholic and lets you feel Catholic even when you aren't. You have vestments and liturgy and a sacramental life, you have some idea of tradition and some belief in the Anglican Church as a living body going back through its bishops to the Lord himself, you have saintly examples of devotion and theologians of weight. It inoculates you against the real appeal of the Catholic Church, as a dose of



Seton

Save the Date:

Anglican Maps to Rome

The 6th Annual Anglican Use Conference

June 10-12, 2010

hosted by His Excellency, Archbishop John J. Myers
Ecclesiastical Delegate for the Pastoral Provision
at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart
Newark, New Jersey



Wattson



Chesterton



Newman

cowpox keeps you from getting smallpox. It is Catholicism Lite.

We claimed to be fully Catholic without what we tactfully called “the Roman additions.” Ours was the faith of the primitive Church, Roman Catholicism the faith of the late medieval Church (a sort of code for “corrupt”), to which had been added a few unfortunate modern developments like the declaration of papal infallibility. The Anglo-Catholic’s was a cleaner, sparer, truer Catholicism.

I look back at my life as an Anglo-Catholic and marvel at the degree of self-deception it required. You called yourself a Catholic, but you made up your Catholicism, taking what bits and pieces you thought genuine and rejecting the rest. (Most Anglo-Catholics I knew thought contraception a good thing.) You might believe in the Assumption, or you might not, but the matter was left to you. If you believed it, you would probably call it “a matter of personal devotion” and be perfectly happy with a fellow Anglo-Catholic who rejected it because he did not find it taught explicitly in Scripture or the early Church.

And further, you asserted your Catholicism as a personal choice, against the body in which you lived. Your church was founded as a Protestant church, and all its documents were Protestant documents, and the great majority of its members were Protestants by conviction, but you would claim to be as Catholic a Christian as your Roman neighbor solely be-

cause you believed something you called the Catholic Faith.

When away from home, you would happily take communion from an Anglican pastor who believed that the bread he was holding was only bread, but in your own parish you would believe that your priest, who was ordained in the same church as that pastor, who had been given the same authority as he (and perhaps by the same bishop), was holding the Body of Christ.

It was a world with many godly people doing godly work, who were as far as I know as sincere in their devotion as any Christian, but it was not the Catholic Church. I always knew this, I think, though I would repress the obvious questions when they came to mind. Perhaps having a bad conscience about your claim to being a Catholic leaves you vulnerable to Roman Fever.

My Roman Fever was of course a good thing, in reminding me that I was not where I ought to be, but it was also a bad thing in that I knew I had only to wait it out and then I could go back to my life without having to change anything. And in a perverse sort of way, the fact that I felt it made me feel that I didn’t have to do anything else, and made me feel slightly superior to my poor Protestant friends who never felt it at all.

Saints and sanctity

But the Church continued to draw me, because I saw in her what I did not see elsewhere. My Evangelical friends thought that because important Catholics had lied or murdered or slandered or cheated, had

hated black people or women or the poor, had preached celibacy while having mistresses, or had committed some horrifying crime in the name of the Church, the Church was a sham. I thought the stories yet more evidence that God works in mysterious ways. Once you admit that God has given his authority to fallen men, as the Evangelicals did, you had to expect the scandals.

What moved me, however, was finding that among all the horrors sinful Catholics had committed, sign after sign of sanctity, which could not be explained except as the special work of grace. There were Catholic Nazis, of course, but there were also Edith Stein and Franz Jagerstaetter. Rapacious Catholic businessmen cheated the poor, but Mother Theresa and Dorothy Day lived in poverty to serve them. Catholics in central Europe shot their neighbors, but the Holy Father forgave the man who shot him.

Even in high school, I always looked for these inexplicable signs of God’s grace — the saints, the ordinary godly people, the Pope, the counter-cultural teaching, the wisdom, etc., etc. — rising above the general indifference and turpitude, like peaks above the smog, and these I found in the Catholic Church in abundance. The fact that the fall does not have the last word, when every human consideration says that it should, reassured me.

Converting insights

In the end, two insights brought

me over the line I had been unwilling to cross. The first was the simple realization that I had to say a final yes or no, lest I harden my heart one too many times and never get Roman Fever again. I became a Catholic in part because one day I realized that God might stop giving me such times when my heart and mind were so well allied that I could more easily overcome the inertia that kept me where I was. This insight was, as far as I can tell, the work of the Spirit.

If the first insight pulled me into the church, the second insight pushed me in. About a year before we began instruction, I sat for several days in a conversation about divorce and remarriage with twelve Evangelicals, all learned, all biblically conservative, all holding more or less the same hermeneutic, who came to (I think) nine different and to some extent deeply opposed positions.

The decision they came to was a now familiar appeal to a shared ideal (lifelong marriage) with a range of views on the acceptable ways to fail to reach the ideal. Most of them would have said the Bible is on the question of divorce not clear or can be read in different ways, at which point one has to ask quite what use is it, if it fails to teach clearly on this matter?

This diversity bothered me, but what bothered me more was that no one but me found it a problem. Here were learned and godly men who read the Bible the same way, who could not agree on what it said about a matter crucial to the Church's life and to human happiness, but thought

God had left the issue open, the sole evidence of which was that they did not agree with each other.

I thought that God could not have meant us to live in such confusion and with such an effectively minimalistic doctrine — which had already grown and would grow ever more minimal as the self-identified Evangelical party broadened in theology. But this minimalism, I suddenly realized, was one of the principles of the church to which I belonged, as held by its finest servants. This, I realized, was not the Catholic Church. I had known this for years, but only with the earnest discussion of my friends, showing that those with the highest view of the authority of Scripture could not tell you authoritatively what it said, did the insight become a reason to move.

The deeper reason

I do not want to give the wrong impression, in explaining the seductions of Roman Fever. If it kept me from becoming a Catholic when I should have done, I had it in the first place because I began to love the Catholic Church. I began to love her saints, and great men like John Paul II and then-Cardinal Ratzinger; and saw that she alone fought for the things I was fighting for, like the lives of the unborn; and saw that she alone spoke the politically incorrect truths I had come to see, like the wrong of contraception; and found in her leading minds a commitment to reason found nowhere else; and found in her also a pastoral wisdom which understood human frailty without giving up the call to sanctity; and so on, and so on.

But in the end, I began to love the Catholic Church for the Mass, because in her my Lord and God came to me. My Roman Fever finally broke when I could no longer stay outside the place where God could be touched and tasted.

Published in Surprised by Truth III and the Coming Home Network newsletter; abridged for Father Richard Bradford and Contra Mundum, and mailed in August 2009.

¶ David Mills is former editor of *Touchstone* magazine, and the author of *Discovering Mary* (2009) and *Discovering the Church: Answers to Practical Questions About the Catholic Life*, which will be published later this year. Formerly the director of publications at the Episcopal Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania, Mr. Mills and his family were received into full communion in 2001.



SAINT TERESA



SAINT THERESA
of Lisieux

SEPTEMBER holds the feast days of the two Carmelite Doctors of the Church, St. Therese of Lisieux, whose feast day is October 1st and St. Teresa of Avila, whose feast day is October 15th. Teresa of Avila, the elder of these sister saints, lived in 16th century Spain, and helped reform the Carmelite order, bringing it back to its original simplicity and purity. Therese of Lisieux entered the Carmelite convent in her home town at the age of 16, and died in her early 20s, at the end of 19th century. The writings of both these Carmelite saints are held up as of the greatest value to a life of prayer and charity.

SHORT NOTES

✠ Many thanks to Fr. James J. O'Driscoll for being our celebrant and preacher in early September on two Sundays when Fr. Bradford was away from Boston. Fr. O'Driscoll is parochial vicar in Holy Family Parish, Rockland, and a long-time friend of the Anglican Use. During October he is enjoying a first visit to Paris. Happy and safe travels!

✠ Also thanks to Deacon Michael J. Connolly for being officiant/celebrant and preacher at Evensong & Benediction on Sunday, September 13th, in observance of Holy Cross Day. Dr. Connolly, who teaches Slavic and Eastern languages in Boston College, serves primarily as Archdeacon in the Holy Cross Armenian Catholic Church in Belmont.

✠ Thanks again to Fr. Joseph Mauritzen, pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Woods Hole, for hosting our service of Evensong & Benediction in the lovely church there on August 30th, and to David Burt for making the local arrangements and providing an early afternoon luncheon at his home prior to the service.

✠ Confirmation classes are offered by the chaplain in the St. Theresa Rectory on either Wednesday or Thursday evenings during the school year. Classes are based on *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* and may be used for continuing education as well as preparation for entering into full communion of the Church. A syllabus is available.

✠ An Every Member Canvass of the parish will be conducted this month in support of the financial end of our

operation during the coming year. Please be generous, as our numbers are very small, even as our costs never seem to go down!

✠ ADVANCE NOTICE that we return to Eastern Standard Time on Sunday, November 1st. Time is turned BACK one hour at 2 A.M.



ST SIMON & ST JUDE

IT may be that these two saints were both considered among the brethren of Our Lord. We know very little about them from the Gospels and we have no real reason to account for the fact that they are always referred to jointly in the ecclesiastical calendar. Both were numbered among the twelve Apostles and Simon is called the Canaanite by Matthew and Mark and the Zealot or Zealotes by Luke. The first is a translation of the second which itself suggest that Simon may have been a member of the extreme nationalists—the Zealots—who were later to inspire the disastrous revolt against the Romans in AD 70 which

culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem.

Jude is called Lebbeaus, Thaddeus and Judas, not Iscariot. His only recorded act is in asking Jesus in the Upper Room when He would manifest Himself to them and not to the world. St. Luke does call him 'Judas of James' which would suggest that he was the son of James, but he has more generally been identified with Jude 'brother of the Lord and the author of the Epistle of Jude.

¶ *The Feast of SS Simon & Jude is Wednesday, October 28th. Masses in St. Theresa Church are at 6:45 A.M. and 4:00 P.M.*



¶ All Souls' Day is Monday, November 2nd. A Solemn Requiem Mass will be offered in the convent chapel at 7:30 P.M. Names of departed souls may be submitted for remembrance at the Requiem Mass. Send by mail, place in the alms basin, or use the forms now available in the rear of the chapel.

BRITISH MARTYRS

OVER the years 200 men and women have been beatified for their heroic witness to the Catholic Faith in the British Isles during and after the Protestant Reformation. Here we continue brief mention of some of these individual martyrs.

BLESSED THOMAS HOLFORD
Priest and Martyr (†1588)

THOMAS Holford, of Aston, England, the son of a Protestant minister, was working as a tutor in the county of Hereford when he was converted to the Catholic faith by a priest he met there. Afterward Thomas journeyed to the continent to become a priest himself. Following his ordination in Reims, France, he returned to England to minister to the country's persecuted Catholics. Father Holford's priestly labors were fraught with the high adventure of narrow escapes from the Elizabethan authorities. When one day he was spotted exiting the home of a Catholic layman (Saint Swithun Wells) after celebrating Mass there, he was followed and arrested. Father Holford suffered execution by hanging.

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BLESSED JOHN ROBINSON
Priest and Martyr (†1588)

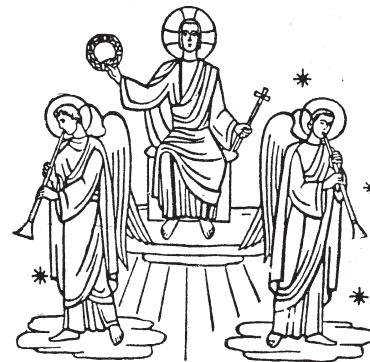
FOLLOWING the death of his wife, John Robinson, of Ferenby, England, resolved to devote the rest of his life to God. Journeying to France, he studied for the priesthood and was ordained in 1585. That same year, he returned to England, where he was immediately arrested

by the Elizabethan authorities. Several months later, he was condemned to death, but the executions was delayed for over two years. The government ultimately decided to execute condemned priests at multiple locations all over England in order to terrorize Catholics throughout the country. When told that he was being sent to Ipswich for execution, Father Robinson, described as "a humble and virtuous old man," expressed joy at the news, giving his best tunic to the messenger in gratitude. As the jailers sought a horse to transport him, he told them, "I need no horse; I will go on foot with as good will as you ride." At his arraignment, Father Robinson had replied so unhesitatingly that the judge observed, "I think this fellow intends to be hanged." The priest answered, "For what else did I come hither?" Father Robinson was executed by hanging, drawing, and quartering on October 1, 1588.

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BLESS THE LORD,
ALL YE WORKS OF THE LORD!



THE FEAST OF ALL SAINTS

Sunday, November 1, 2009
Procession, Solemn Mass &
Sermon
10:30 A.M.
Convent Chapel

Solemn Evensong & Benediction
5:00 P.M.
Chapel of
St. Theresa of Avila Church

The Congregation of Saint Athanasius

The Revd. Richard Sterling Bradford,
Chaplain

Saint Theresa Convent
Chapel

10 St. Theresa Ave.
West Roxbury, Mass.

(Enter through the side door.)

Sundays 10:30 A.M.

Sung Mass

Fellowship and Coffee in the
Lounge after Mass

Rectory:

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

St. Theresa Church and Convent Chapel,
West Roxbury, MA 02132 Pine Lodge
Road (off St. Theresa Avenue)

Park either in the church parking lot or on Pine Lodge Road. The side door of the convent is open during the time of our services.

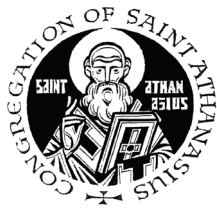
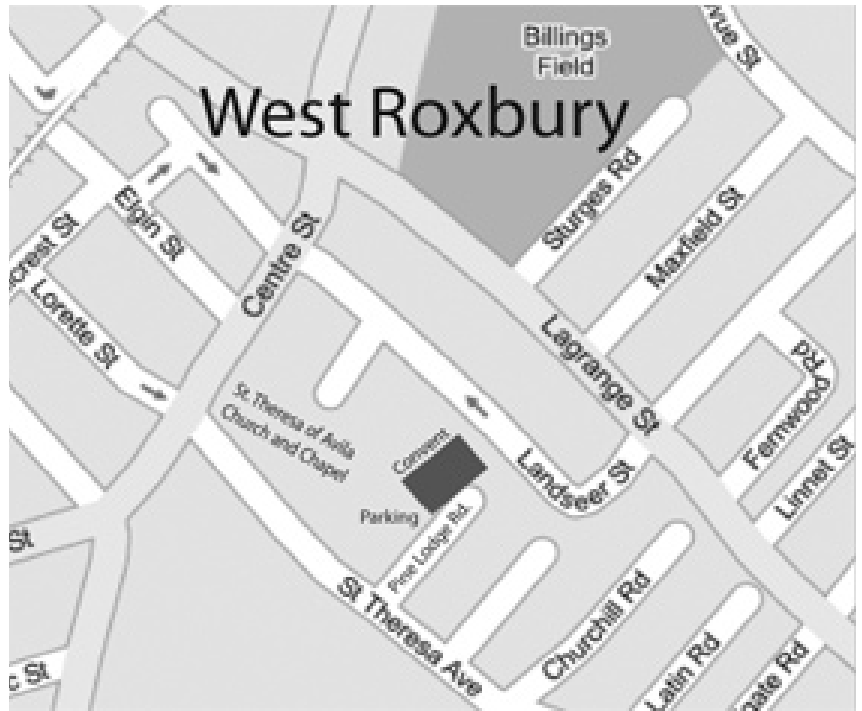
Directions by Car: From the North: Route 128 to Route 109, which becomes Spring Street in West Roxbury. Spring Street ends at a traffic light at Centre Street in sight of the church. At this light bear left onto Centre St. and immediately turn right at the next light onto St. Theresa Ave.

From the South: Route 1 north through Dedham to Spring Street. Turn right onto Spring Street then follow the directions above.

From Dorchester and Mattapan: Cummins Highway to Belgrade Avenue to Centre Street left on St. Theresa Ave.

From Boston: VFW Parkway to LaGrange Street. Turn left onto LaGrange Street, crossing Centre Street and turn right onto Landseer Street. Turn left into the church parking lot.

Directions by Public Transportation: Orange line to Forest Hills terminal. Bus to West Roxbury. #35 bus to Dedham Mall. #36, #37, and #38 also stop at St. Theresa's. Commuter train to West Roxbury Station is a short walk to St. Theresa's. Departs from South Station, but no Sunday service is available.



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

