

The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr

Waterloo, Ontario
www.stedmund.ca



The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada / The Traditional Anglican Communion

UPDATE

March 6, 2008 - SS. Perpetua and Felicitas, Martyrs, 202

April Schedule

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| April 1 | Tuesday | The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary |
| April 6 | Sunday | The Second Sunday after Easter |
| April 13 | Sunday | The Third Sunday after Easter |
| April 20 | Sunday | The Fourth Sunday after Easter |
| April 25 | Friday | St. Mark the Evangelist |
| April 27 | Sunday | The Fifth Sunday after Easter |

Service Times and Location

- (1) All Services are held in the Chapel at Luther Village on the Park - 139 Father David Bauer Drive in Waterloo.
- (2) On Sundays, **Matins** is sung at **10:00 a.m.** (The **Litany** on the first Sunday of the month), and the **Holy Eucharist** is celebrated (sung) at **10:30 a.m.**
- (3) On weekdays - **Major Holy Days** - the **Holy Eucharist** is *usually* celebrated at **7:00 p.m.**, **10:00 a.m.** on Saturday.

Notes and Comments

- 1) Fr Aidan Nichols OP - *An Address at St. Agatha's, Portsmouth - 9 February 2008* - this page.
- 2) For *Robert's Ramblings - Two People of Spain* - see page 4.
- 3) Euthanasia stopped - *Court Prevents Hospital From Killing* - page 6.
- 4) *Our Beloved Dead* - the fifth of seven parts - page 8.
- 5) The third of four parts on - *Blessed Mary: Ever Virgin* - page 9.
- 6) Barak Obama and the Gospel of Liberalism - *Preacher Man* - see page 9.

An Address at St. Agatha's, Portsmouth - 9 February 2008

By Father Aidan Nichols OP

It is a pleasure to be with you this morning, in this historic church, to say some words in honour of your patron, Agatha.

She is a figure partially obscured by the mists of time. She comes towards us from the age which succeeded the apostles and, on their foundation, was sending out the message of the Gospel in the words of the first Fathers of the Church. After the peace of the Church, when the spasmodic imperial persecutions ceased, Agatha soon became a favourite figure to include when mosaic workers were commissioned to work out a visual equivalent of that message. And so she gazes out at us in, for example, the basilica of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo at Ravenna, from what the poet Yeats, describing such mosaics, called 'sages standing in God's holy fire'.

We know she was Sicilian, that she was an ascetic - someone who had consecrated herself to God in Christ as a virgin - and that, not merely after her vow but because of it, the finger of the persecuting authority pointed to her, and she became a martyr. I don't think the connexion between virginity and martyrdom is just by chance. A hedonistic, fairly decadent, society may be impressed when beautiful young women renounce the use of sex for religious reasons, or,

alternatively, such a society may be infuriated by it. It doesn't surprise me that local government officials in the late Roman empire handed over Agatha to a brothel-keeper, even if the name 'Aphrodisia' given to this madame is fairly obviously *faute de mieux*. What does surprise me, if anything, is the way critical historians are so skeptical of ancient accounts of martyrdom that pile on the agony. When the brothel treatment failed, says the Acts of Agatha's martyrdom, she was tortured by rods, rack and fire, before her breasts were cut off and she died in prison as the result of her sufferings. Many historians consider this narrative excessive, and so assign it the status of a literary device: in plain English, fiction. One wonders where they were living in the twentieth century, century of countless barbarities in war, civil or international, and in terrorism, State or group, not to mention the usual occasional pathological acts of obscene violence committed by private persons against each other.

Last summer, I was lucky enough to be given a ride on the Orient Express, from London to Venice, and obviously that was an opportunity to re-read *Murder on the Orient Express* by another Agatha, Agatha Christie. Christie saw her detective stories - I quote from the authorized biography - as 'morality plays, demonstrating that there was wickedness in the world'. And the author of this biography, Janet Morgan, went on to say that the second lesson of Agatha Christie's morality plays was that such wickedness 'could be found out and sin expiated'. If there is no such thing as wickedness, only moral feebleness, itself the consequence of social or psychological conditioning, then of course we don't need a religion of redemption like Christianity. But just as the same social or psychological conditions can be an invitation to moral evil for some and for others a challenge to embody all the virtues, so not all moral evil is weakness of will. Some of it is sheer open-eyed malice.

May I stay with this other Agatha for a further moment? At some time in the 1960s Agatha Christie was sent a questionnaire by an Italian magazine. Among other things they asked her what she thought was the cause of the increasingly active role of women in society. The other Agatha replied by attributing that increasingly active social role to 'the foolishness of women in relinquishing the position of privilege obtained after many

centuries of civilization. Primitive women [she went on] toil incessantly. We [i.e. modern women] seemed determined to return to that state voluntarily - or by listening to persuasion'. And in that way, concluded Christie, women 'forfeit the joys of leisure and creative thought and perfecting of home conditions'. There is certainly a price to be paid, in terms of family and household ethos, when both spouses go out to work full-time, and a consecrated woman - an ascetic, a nun - could be considered someone who concentrates on the joys of leisure, for which the Latin word, *otium*, is virtually synonymous with contemplation, and contemplation generates or should do creative thought and helps to make a dwelling - a home - Christian in the fullest sense. It was that way of life as well as life itself of which Agatha the virgin was stripped when she became St Agatha the martyr. Her martyrdom adds sacrilege to injustice, because that basic monastic impulse - for women to develop in a dedicated life the contemplative gifts the Holy Spirit scatters among them - is something highly prized by the Church of Jesus Christ. These are women who, in our Lord's words in St Luke's Gospel, have chosen the better part and it shall not be taken from them.

In the Catholic Revival in the Church of England, many women who had answered that call to contemplative living also generously sacrificed the normal, traditional conditions for living out that call, because they had also heard another call - the cry of the poor in the industrial, commercial or other urban slums of the nineteenth century. The anarchic over-development of industrialism in our green island, and the urban explosion which overwhelmed communities that had grown slowly over the centuries and rendered them dysfunctional, was a nightmare for the poor. But it was an invitation to holiness for the Anglican and Catholic sisterhoods and slum priests like Father Dolling who abandoned the privileges of wealth and status to live out their lives amid ugliness and deprivation, squalor not only physical but moral - and rarely more so than here in Landport with its sweated labour, gin-shops, Rachmanite landlords and possibly nationally unequalled-levels of prostitution. When we consider what priests like Dolling and others achieved just in sheer numerical terms of people housed, fed, educated, and re-trained for useful or honourable work, it brings home to us the

comparative lack of impact which the Church has in Britain today. Of course the State has taken over much of the Church's work and does it more systematically if also, often, without the human touch the Church can bring. But if the materially poor are less in evidence today than in Dolling's day, the spiritually poor are far more in evidence now than then. We have a simply enormous mission to England when we think of it in terms of re-ordering lives and giving people a comprehensive framework in which to live them, an inspiration that can bring out the best in them, for time and for eternity.

In some way all of us, whatever our role in the Church, have to be martyrs in the sense of giving testimony, *martyria*, to the people of our day. When St Gregory the Great, the pope who sent Augustine to Canterbury and so initiated the tradition of which you and I are offshoots in different respects, added to the Roman canon the name of St Agatha, she took her place in a carefully structured list of names, the point of which was, precisely, to show the universal character of that call to witness. In the prayer *Nobis quoque* of the Roman Canon are fourteen names, twice the Scriptural number of perfection, seven. There is one list of seven men, and one list of seven women. The list of seven men moves from bishops to priests to laymen. The list of seven women achieves its own kind of universality by moving West to East - from Africa, through Sicily (here comes Agatha) via Rome to (with Anastasia) the Church in the Byzantine World.

Your own church, the Traditional Anglican Communion, also encompasses this kind of global outreach, with congregations in (if I have my facts right) the Americas and Africa, Asia, Australasia and Europe. Catholicity of outreach, implantation in many nations, is of course one of the marks of the Church. The Church should, yes, be deeply rooted in each nation, have a local habitation and a name. That is a consequence of the Incarnation, of the Flesh-taking of the divine Word in one place, among one people. Anglicanism has succeeded so well in that task that for many people Anglicanism is virtually the same thing as Englishness, despite the way that since the sixteenth century English Christianity has broken up into three, with recusants and Protestant Nonconformists alongside the Church of England, and, in the same period, Anglicanism has itself ventured far afield with colonization abroad. But the

Church cannot afford to be too identified with any one nation, lest the particular features of that nation, or its changing moods or trends over time, lead the Christian people astray. The Church is meant to be the mother of all nations, and that too is a consequence of the Incarnation because when the Incarnate One who suffered for us was lifted up into his Easter victory he became the world's Lord, the nations' universal King. All authority in heaven and on earth was given him and in the Great Commission he told his disciples to teach all nations, baptizing them in the threefold Name and passing on all he had commanded them.

In the transmission of revelation in tradition, the saints play their part, and St Agatha among them. In her native Italy, I gather, it is customary in various places for loaves of bread to be blessed on her feast. Art historians, who sometimes seem blessed with either too much imagination or too little, suggest this is a misunderstanding of the iconography which shows her holding her severed breasts in a dish. Surely the loaves of bread - whether in art or in life - portray, rather, the understanding that the lives of the martyrs, the lives of the saints, are nourishing for us. After all, the saints are living icons of the Holy Spirit of whom we say in the Creed that we believe he is 'the Giver of life'.

Some comments about Father Nichols by +Robert Mercer CR:

Fr Aidan Nichols belongs to the Order of Preachers or Dominicans. Resident at Blackfriars in Cambridge, he teaches theology at Oxford and Cambridge Universities. He is one of the better known among English-speaking theologians. He has published many books, among them one on the Eastern Orthodox, one on the Bible, and one on Anglicans called "The Panther and the Hind", which is as critical as it is sympathetic. He has written a guide to the thought of Pope Benedict and biographical studies of his confreres, "A Dominican Gallery". His most recent work "The Realm" is causing a stir among Roman Catholics.

He is a friend of Forward in Faith and contributed a chapter "The Bishop as Bridegroom of His Church" to the collection of essays about bishopesses, "Consecrated Women". He is also a friend of the Continuum, in favour of our corporate rapprochement with

Rome, and published an essay "Anglican Uniatism". He has submitted an opinion in our favour to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome.

Robert's Ramblings

Two People of Spain

"Come see a man which told me all things that ever I did" (*John 4,29*)

At the alleged cave of Elijah on Mount Carmel in Israel we came across a Carmelite friar (*II Kings 4,25*). He was South African, a doctor of medicine, a convert from Judaism. We were a party of pilgrims from Zimbabwe, Anglican, Dutch Reformed, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic, with two chaplains, an English Jesuit and myself of CR. Perhaps our chatter drove the friar out of the cave, perhaps he was leaving anyway, but there was a genial exchange of pleasantries.

He said, and I at once concurred, that one was drawn either to St John of the Cross or to St Teresa Avila. As for him, and I at once concurred, the attraction was to St John.

Later in Zimbabwe I reported this conversation to a retired commander from the Royal Navy, a Roman Catholic decorated for his bravery as a bomb disposal expert during the Second World War. He said that feminine personalities were drawn to St John, that masculine personalities were drawn to St Teresa. As for him, the attraction was to St Teresa. When I told Dr Trueman Dicken all this, the Anglican authority on the two great Carmelite teachers, he dismissed such ideas. Had he not written "*The Crucible of Love*" in 1963 to harmonize the teaching of these saints? One could be drawn to both, could benefit from both.

However, it's hard to believe that St John was ever the confessor and spiritual director of St Teresa. It's hard to believe they were friends and co workers. She gives the impression of having taken not the slightest notice of his convictions. Dr Henry Chadwick writes of her "narrative of illnesses and ecstasies, a farrago of the childlike and mature mind" - a comment which distressed our Geoffrey Curtis CR, who was kind enough to say a prayer for me at the tomb of St John, as did former student Mark Nicholls. Perhaps the relationship of the two saints was a case of

opposites attracting. Perhaps he admired her moral courage and administrative skills, her diplomatic talents. (They were fortunate to have escaped the thought police and sadists of their day, the religious gestapo of the Spanish Inquisition.) Perhaps she made him laugh. Modern readers who prefer to admire her from a safe distance, concede her sense of humour. Bossy, born to rule, yet full of fun. The fact that apocryphal stories about her are told, suggests that people enjoyed her personality. St John's earnest character may have needed the wholesome medicine of her laughter. The story of her conversation with our Lord when the driver of her cart tipped her into a river, is well known, "This on top of everything else!" "That is how I treat My friends". "That is why You have so few of them".

Dom Louismet in "*Divine Contemplation for All*" quotes from an alleged letter of hers, about her distractions when at prayer: "She tried to compose her thoughts and apply them to our Lord - her sharp eye caught sight of plaster stains upon the floor - all her irritation came back - she began to speculate about how long the masons were taking - the mass had begun and was under way - even as she was bending low at the consecration she caught herself saying almost aloud, "Oh those masons! The prices they charge for almost nothing" - when she returned from the altar she found herself interested in the sandals of the nun in front of her - to escape this distraction she closed her eyes but the thought of the masons returned more than ever - in desperation she opened a book but saw the picture of a saint - "What hideous features, what a long nose!" - "Who ever made such a thanksgiving after communion?"

Dom John Chapman, one of the lucid of modern interpreters of St John, has written in his *Spiritual Letters*, published after his death: "I get more and more to the view that St Teresa and St John are absolute opposites. Are they therefore irreconcilable? Of course I always follow the latter and discard St Teresa as dangerous. I want to find a Hegelian synthesis of opposites. For fifteen years I hated St John and called him a Buddhist. I loved St Teresa and read her over and over again. Then I found I had wasted fifteen years as far as prayer was concerned. Naturally I had a revulsion against St Teresa. I was delighted to discover in an old Italian book - written by a Carmelite and almost contemporary with St Teresa and St John

that, "Our Mother Teresa wrote for the advanced and Friar John for beginners". This is the very early Carmelite tradition. John seems to me to be two thirds for beginners and one third for saints with nothing much for people between the two".

St John gets a bad press for grim negativity, but the fact is that, like the proverbial half full whisky bottle, he is to be understood positively. "In order to arrive at pleasure in everything, you must seek pleasure in nothing." He loved praying in places of natural beauty. He took his novices into the countryside to do the same. His most admired poem, *On a Dark Night*, about the union of a Christian with the will of God, uses imagery of sex in a garden. His pop song, *Far Away in the Beginning**, about the consummation of the universe in Christ, uses the image of sex in marriage. As to the status of Christians, St John of the Cross concurs with Martin Luther and with St Paul.

St John: "Mine are the heavens and mine is the earth. The mother of God is mine. God Himself is mine and all for me because Christ is mine and all for me."

Luther: "Mary is the mother of Jesus and the mother of us all. All that He has is ours. It is God's overflowing goodness that man should be honoured with such treasure. Mary is his mother. Christ is his brother. And God is his Father".

St Paul: "All things are yours; whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's (*I Corinthians 3,21-23*)

St John is aware of the dangers of religious experience. Ecstasies, levitations, visions, voices, may lead us to think that because we receive such visitations we are spiritually mature, even holy. "Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light" (*II Corinthians 11,14*). Even St Teresa, for whom such experiences were commonplace, had to ask herself, had to check with her confessor, whether they came from God or whether they came from Satan, her psyche or her metabolism. St John counsels us to adhere to Christ in faith rather than in excitements.

Indeed, if we need an analysis of our self love, which we mistake for love of God, there is no more devastating diagnostician than St John.

He lays bare our pride, spiritual avarice, spiritual luxury, wrath, spiritual gluttony, spiritual envy and sloth, in short, our lust for spiritual kicks. His book *The Dark Night of the Soul* is a devastating exposé, "Come see a man which told me all things that ever I did".

St John interprets how, after our initial conversion with its attendant happiness, God may work within us by the dark night of the soul, which has two parts; the night of the senses, in which God deprives us of all emotional and sensible pleasure in the faith; the night of the spirit, in which God denudes the memory, understanding and will. We think we are losing our love for God and our faith in Him. Instead, God is teaching us to love Him for His sake, not for ours. As sanctification proceeds, we learn to love all things, even ourselves, for God's sake. God is teaching us to trust Him fully despite our dryness and our intellectual confusion. We think we are slipping backwards. Instead, God is helping us grow up. We are likely to remain in this night for the rest of our lives. Holiness consists of unity with the will of God, "With Thee to will one will, to do and to endure". Further, God is leading us out of idolatry into faith. We confused our words, our understanding, our images of God, with the true and living God. Prayer consists mostly of a simple holding on to God.

Puberty, the ageing process, the grieving process, and so on, happen to us anyway. But we are grateful to the counsellor who explains such processes to us, so that we are less bewildered, better able to live with them. St John was anticipated by other counsellors such as the unknown author of *The Cloud of Unknowing* and Walter Hilton in *The Ladder of Perfection*, but St John is for many the counsellor above all others for helping them co operate with the working of God's grace within them. "Come see *the man*".

The dark night is not confined to Roman and Anglo Catholics. I have myself enquired among evangelicals and pentecostals if they knew anything of it. They said yes. One of the former spoke of, "the heavens becoming brass". Professor H A Hodges, I think a former Methodist, wrote in *The Pattern of Atonement*: "The treatment of this state among protestants might have been more wisely handled if the experience of the saints had been better understood among them". Mother Theresa of Calcutta knew it intently. Orthodox know it too even though

they may not use the term. A monk on Mount Athos counselled, "Keep your mind in hell and despair not". The darkness is caused not by increasing separation from God but by increasing proximity to God. Light blinds!

Finding God by an apparent loss of God: what could be more positive than that? And who writes more lyrically about the Beatific Vision than St John?

"I shall see Thee in Thy beauty and Thou wilt see me in Thy beauty. I shall see myself in Thee in Thy beauty. Thou shalt see Thyself in me in Thy beauty. Thy beauty itself shall be my beauty. Thus shall we see each other in Thy beauty".

* We once sang part of this as a hymn in the Community church. Fr Hubert Northcott much approved. Fr Simon Holden found a suitable tune.

+Robert Mercer CR

The retired, Third Bishop of The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada

Court Prevents Hospital From Killing

The family of Samuel Golubchuck won a victory on Wednesday [February 13, 2008] when a court issued an injunction preventing Grace General Hospital in Winnipeg from removing Samuel Golubchuk's life support and killing him. His family has been arguing with hospital officials who claim he is too far gone to receive proper medical care.

Grace Hospital will not be allowed to remove the respirator, dehydrate, or starve Golubchuck while the family presents more evidence at a trial.

Samuel Golubchuk is an elderly Jewish man who is on life support. His children are strongly opposed to removing him from a ventilator and feeding tube and have cited Jewish law which forbids such actions depriving people of their right to life.

The children also say that their father would oppose the stopping of lifesaving medical care if he could express his treatment wishes.

Alex Schadenberg of the Euthanasia

Prevention Coalition* told *LifeNews.com* he's delighted by the news.

"We need to demand that Grace General Hospital not take this case further and agree to leave Samuel Golubchuk and his family alone, as they spend time with their father as he experiences the final part of his life," he said.

Schadenberg also challenged the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba on a statement the group issued giving doctors the sole power to end life-sustaining treatment even when a person may regain consciousness and the family opposes the decision.

He told *LifeNews.com* the statement will "lead to cases, such as Terri Schiavo, where the person is not dying but is intentionally withheld fluids and food in order to cause their death. This would amount to euthanasia by omission on demand."

By **Steven Ertelt** - *LifeNews.com* Editor

* <http://www.euthanasiaprevention.on.ca>

From here and there

1) Those who can make you believe absurdities can make you commit atrocities.
Voltaire

2) Confronting the '**Dictatorship of relativism**'

At the Conclave that elected him Pope, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger openly denounced the 'Dictatorship of Relativism' that is confronting the world. He also affirmed that Catholics cannot remain immature in the faith, as they run the risk of being tossed away here and there by any doctrinal wind. He highlighted the pressing need of a clear Faith, based upon the Creed of the Church.

In so doing he repeated and emphasized an earlier exhortation from his predecessor, John Paul II. Addressing the Spanish youth, he said:

"Learn to think, speak and act in accordance with evangelical simplicity and clarity: yes, yes; no, no. Learn to call good, good; and evil, evil. To call black, black; and white, white. To call sin, sin; and not to call it 'liberation' or 'progress', even if fashion and

propaganda are opposed to this teaching".

3) I'm thankful that the sun and moon
Are both hung up so high
That no pretentious hand can stretch
And pull them from the sky.
If they were not, I have no doubt
But some reforming ass
Would recommend to take them down
And light the world with gas.

4) *Cowardice* asks the question, 'Is it safe?'
Expediency asks the question, 'Is it politic?'
Vanity asks the question, 'Is it popular?' But,
conscience asks the question, 'Is it right?'
And there comes a time when one must take
a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor
popular but one must take it because one's
conscience tells one that it is right. **Martin
Luther King, Jr.**

5) **Law and Moral Purpose**

What is centrally and decisively true about human embryos and fetuses is that they are living individuals of the species *Homo sapiens* - members of the human family - at early stages of their natural development. Each of us was once an embryo, just as each of us was once an adolescent, a child, an infant, and a fetus. Each of us developed from the embryonic into and through the fetal, infant, child, and adolescent stages of our lives, and into adulthood, with his or her distinctness, unity, and identity fully intact. As modern embryology confirms beyond any possibility of doubt, we were never mere parts of our mothers; we were, from the beginning, complete, self-integrating organisms that developed to maturity by a gradual, gapless, and self-directed process.

Our foundational principle of the profound, inherent, and equal dignity of every human being demands that all members of the human family be respected and protected irrespective not only of race, sex, and ethnicity but also of age, size, location, stage of development, and condition of dependency. To exclude anyone from the law's protection is to treat him unjustly.

By **Robert P. George** - an excerpt from the article in the January, 2008 issue of *First Things*

6) A little girl was watching her parents dress for a party. When she saw her dad donning his tuxedo, she warned, "Daddy, you

shouldn't wear that suit." "And why not, darling?" "You know that it always gives you a headache the next morning."

Our Beloved Dead - 5 of 7

9) The Church teaches that it is both the privilege and the duty of Christians to pray for the Blessed Dead.

There would seem to be no doubt that our Lord and His Apostles habitually prayed for the dead. The Jews regularly used such prayers in their public services and our Lord who attended those services must often have joined in them. If the practice had been wrong it is certain that He would have rebuked it. So far from rebuking it, He expressly commanded His disciples to submit themselves to the teaching of the synagogue. "The scribes and Pharisees," He said, "sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do" (St. Matt. 23:3). Among these observances were prayers for the dead. There seems therefore to be no escape from the conclusion that our Lord commanded His disciples to use prayer for the departed.

But whether or not we are justified in making so strong a statement as that our Lord commanded prayers for the dead, there can be no question that his disciples pursued this practice. They took part in such prayers in the Temple and synagogue worship. St. Paul prayed for his dear friend Onesiphorus. "The Lord grant unto him that he find mercy of the Lord in that day," he says. The context would seem to make it clear that Onesiphorus was dead at the time St. Paul wrote. This opinion is approved by such weighty authorities as Bishop Jeremy Taylor, Dr. Pusey, Vernon Staley, Bishop Forbes, Bishop Gore and a multitude of others.

"The early Liturgies of the Church which traced back to the Apostolic time, bear witness to the public teaching of the most remote antiquity, are unanimous in this respect" - that is, regarding prayers for the dead. (Bishop Forbes, Articles, p. 312).

Tertullian, who was born about fifty years after the death of St. John, and who is our chief authority for the customs of the Church in the first century after the Apostles, speaks of prayers for the Dead as the ordinary practice of Christians.

There has never been any question that from the second century until some time after the Reformation they were used everywhere and by everyone. Subsequent to the Reformation great pressure from protestant quarters was brought to bear upon the authorities to eliminate them altogether from our Anglican formularies, but without success. In our revised American Prayer Book direct prayers for the dead occur in five places, in the Prayer for the Church in the Communion Office, in the Collect for the Eucharist at a burial, in the Office for the Visitation of the Sick, and twice in the funeral Office.

The American Church has also inserted definite prayers for the dead in her official hymnal. In The Hymnal occurs the ancient prayer, "Grant them Thine eternal rest." This was adopted by the General Convention in place of the former garbled version, "Grant us Thine eternal rest."

10) The Church teaches that definite benefits accrue to the Blessed Dead as the result of our prayers for them.

We have seen how souls must be purified through some kind of suffering. Our prayers bring soothing relief from these inevitable pains, and hasten the time when the soul, perfectly restored in Christ, will cease to suffer the disciplinary process of conformity to Him.

The particular ways in which this comes to pass are known from the language of the prayers for the Departed which the Church recommends to us. St. Paul prayed that St. Onesiphorus might "find mercy." So, we are taught that our prayers secure the mercy of God for them. Mercy is a quality that is exercised only in cases of misery. This misery is that which a soul in union with God, loving Him with all its energy, must feel at being kept back from the perfect vision of Him by its imperfections and "unheavenly tastes." The exercise of this mercy for which we pray, will bring that cleansing and purification which will enable the Blessed Dead to see God.

Many of the ancient Liturgies prayed that the souls of the Departed might be "refreshed," or that they might have "rest." It is this last expression that was used in the prayer found in the hymn the Church appoints for our use in Advent - "Grant them Thine eternal rest."

The ancient *Requiem Aeternam* prays, "Grant them, O Lord, eternal rest and let perpetual light shine upon them." Another form asks, "May the souls of the Faithful through the mercy of God rest in peace."

These, then, are the blessings which the practice of the Church, expressed either formally or by a generally approved custom, recommends us to ask for the Blessed Dead, - cleansing, rest, refreshment, light and peace.

From *Our Beloved Dead*, a booklet by **The Rev. S.C. Hughson, O.H.C.** - published for *The Guild of All Souls* in 1950

Blessed Mary: Ever Virgin - III

Athanasius

"Let those, therefore, who deny that the Son is by nature from the Father and proper to his essence deny also that he took true human flesh from the ever-virgin Mary" (*Discourses Against the Arians* 2:70 [A.D. 360]).

Epiphanius of Salamis

"We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of all things, both visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God . . . who for us men and for our salvation came down and took flesh, that is, was born perfectly of the holy ever-virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit" (*The Man Well-Anchored* 120 [A.D. 374]).

"And to holy Mary, [the title] 'Virgin' is invariably added, for that holy woman remains undefiled" (*Medicine Chest Against All Heresies* 78:6 [A.D. 375]).

Jerome

"[Helvidius] produces Tertullian as a witness [to his view] and quotes Victorinus, bishop of Petavium. Of Tertullian, I say no more than that he did not belong to the Church. But as regards Victorinus, I assert what has already been proven from the gospel - that he [Victorinus] spoke of the brethren of the Lord not as being sons of Mary but brethren in the sense I have explained, that is to say, brethren in point of kinship, not by nature. [By discussing such things we] are . . . following the tiny streams of opinion. Might I

not array against you the whole series of ancient writers? Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, and many other apostolic and eloquent men, who against [the heretics] Ebion, Theodotus of Byzantium, and Valentinus, held these same views and wrote volumes replete with wisdom. If you had ever read what they wrote, you would be a wiser man" (*Against Helvidius: The Perpetual Virginity of Mary* 19 [A.D. 383]).

"We believe that God was born of a virgin because we read it. We do not believe that Mary was married after she brought forth her Son, because we do not read it . . . You [Helvidius] say that Mary did not remain a virgin. As for myself, I claim that Joseph himself was a virgin, through Mary, so that a virgin Son might be born of a virginal wedlock" (*ibid.*, 21).

Didymus the Blind

"It helps us to understand the terms 'firstborn' and 'only-begotten' when the Evangelist tells that Mary remained a virgin 'until she brought forth her first-born son' [Matt. 1:25]; for neither did Mary, who is to be honored and praised above all others, marry anyone else, nor did she ever become the Mother of anyone else, but even after childbirth she remained always and forever an immaculate virgin" (*The Trinity* 3:4 [A.D. 386]).

Ambrose of Milan

"Imitate her [Mary], holy mothers, who in her only dearly beloved Son set forth so great an example of material virtue; for neither have you sweeter children [than Jesus], nor did the Virgin seek the consolation of being able to bear another son" (Letters 63:111 [A.D. 388]).

From www.catholic.com - the third of four parts

Preacher Man

Barak Obama and the Gospel of Liberalism

Pro-life activist John Jakubczyk writes about Barack Obama, "He is an attractive, articulate voice for secular liberalism." Yes, the message is secular liberalism, but the voice is that of a preacher. Senator Obama sounds more like a minister than the real

minister in the race, Governor Mike Huckabee.

When you listen to the phrasing and cadence of Obama's sentences, the effect is unmistakable - it's the sound of an African-American Evangelical preacher. The irony is obvious: The message is secular liberalism, but the mode of rhetorical delivery is Christian, Southern, African-American, and Evangelical. It's a sound that can make it seem like the message connects with social conservatism when, in fact, Obama is the candidate least in tune with traditional voters.

Brian Saint-Paul, of *InsideCatholic.com*, has documented Obama's "gruesome abortion record." Obama opposed Illinois' Born Alive Infant Protection Act, which made it unlawful to kill a child once it was already out of the womb.

As Saint-Paul comments, "What's most upsetting is the fact that the bill actually contains language specifically stating that it does not infringe on abortion law," leaving even the most stalwart abortion defenders virtually no reason to oppose it.

The vote represented the true Barack Obama, not the stirring tones of his Evangelical altar call to hope. His rhetoric accounts for the religious fervor that has attached itself to the Obama campaign: He's preaching, and the number of converts is rising.

Already, there are reports of his converts swooning, slain by the power of the Holy Spirit, when he reaches across the rope to shake their hands. Such is much of the spiritual tradition he represents. Obama didn't sound like this a year ago. It is a messianic style he has been developing throughout his campaign: The closer he gets to embodying the Evangelical style, the more successful he becomes. Don't expect him to tone it down.

Obama will be the nominee, and his opponent will be John McCain. Liberal pundits will decry the Evangelicals in the GOP and hope they stay home, while the Democratic campaign will resemble a tent revival, complete with Reverend Obama holding his arms up in prayer.

Maybe the pseudo-religious tone of Obama's speech is what lured Doug Kmiec, former

dean of the Catholic University Law School, to describe Obama as a "natural for the Catholic vote." Kmiec, known as a pro-life conservative, shocked the pro-life Catholic community with his shilling for Obama.

They shouldn't have been so surprised. Professor Kmiec is just one more law professor hoping for a Supreme Court nomination. Why not get on board the Obama Express early and jump to the front of the line of potential candidates?

Take a look at this statement from Kmiec: "Beyond life issues, an audaciously hope-filled Democrat like Obama is a Catholic natural." Beyond "life issues"? Since when is a Catholic voter supposed to ignore the life issues? That's not the teaching Catholics have received either from the U.S. bishops or from the Vatican.

That a Catholic jurist as prominent as Kmiec would be shilling for Obama, and urging Catholic voters to get beyond the life issues, is both sad and outrageous.

It's particularly unfortunate because Doug Kmiec knows better. At this point, it looks like his motivation is the hope for an appointment should Obama get elected. And of course, left-wing Catholic organizations will use Kmiec's words to justify what many Cafeteria Catholic voters have been doing for years: voting for a pro-abortion politician.

As the election gets closer, there will be more converts to the Obama revival. There will also be those who think they see a winner and want to hop on board.

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