



THE ARCHANGEL

St. Michael's School and Parish • Harts Lane • Burghclere • RG20 9JW

No. 7

April 2018

God's Good Providence

Dear Parishioners,

The third Sunday of this month is "Good Shepherd Sunday." We immediately think of Psalm 22: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." This is actually the Protestant King's James translation, but it is beautiful nevertheless, and conveys the biblical idea of God as both Leader and Father, caring for us with a special Providence.

Belief in Divine Providence is fundamental to our faith. Our Christian vocation requires that we live the life of Christ, practising the same selfless love in order to become perfect, as Our heavenly Father is perfect. The life of Christ involved much persecution and suffering, as the liturgy recently reminded us. So we too will be tried and tested. Christianity has only one symbol: the Cross. Christ had His, and we have ours. Christ, Cross, and Christianity: these make up the earthly Trinity.

In our tempest-tossed lives, trust in God's good Providence is essential, lest we lose heart and sink into despair. As the blacksmith beats the metal, so God will try our faith and trust in His goodness. Thus He makes it firm and strong, right and ready to face perhaps greater trials in order to reap greater glory. "Unless the grain of wheat falling to the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (Jo. 12:24-25) Christianity is not a religion of repose!

Some of us entertain a false understanding of Providence which, if not corrected, can be fatal to the soul. As CS Lewis explains in his book on *The Problem of Pain*, there are those who believe not in God the Father, but rather in God-the-Grandfather, whose job is to provide His creatures with a comfortable and happy life, void of the sufferings and sorrows caused by sin. They complain at the harshness and injustice of life, forgetting that mankind is a family with corporate responsibilities, sharing in blessings and afflictions alike. These are spiritually immature souls who do not understand that God destines His creatures to wonders untold and thus needs to prime and prep them in order that they can appreciate rightly the rewards He won for us at so high a price.

More common are those souls that believe in divine determinism. They envisage Divine Providence as a fixed rule imposed upon them, a divine decree unchangeable, that we must accept as humble creatures to a terrible God. Thus Calvin preached predestination: no matter what we do, our eternity is already decided. Thus Muslims often proclaim in sha Allah in the sense: whatever happens is God's will. And even Catholics can dabble in fatalistic attitudes. Events and consequent fear and sadness can overwhelm weaker souls and their only defence is to offer all up to God with a dejected spirit.

These frames of mind lead to spiritual procrastination and obscurantism. They depict God as a heartless lord, indifferent to the good of His subjects, intent only on their servile obedience. They wait on His Providence, immobile.

Saint Augustine wrote: "Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you." Saint Thomas Aquinas developed further the understanding of God's Providence. It is true that He governs all things to the minutest detail, but He also takes into account the fact that He has endowed man with free will. God thus expects man to work out his salvation, counting on our efforts, ambition, and determination to overcome obstacles and vanquish impediments, while at the same time relying on His grace to bring those efforts to a successful end.

It is, therefore, wrong to simply wait upon Providence for the things we need. Rather, it is Providence who waits upon our initiative and action in order to reward us with blessings. The harder we work, the more He will bless. It is true that nothing happens without His positive will. But we forget that He often wills that we will in order that His will can take effect. The Shepherd leads His flock. He carries the lost or lamed lamb upon His shoulders. The rest of us have to walk!

The priestly and religious community assure you all of our prayers and most sincere Easter wishes of blessings and spiritual abundance.

Father John Brucciani

Christ Victorious

Our faith and our devotion to Christ and His Church, in particular during this period of crisis in the Church are centred on the Holy Sacrifice of the Cross. The Mass effectively summarizes the entire work and salutary mission of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The crucifixes we hang in our homes, the Eucharistic adoration and Holy Hours we make in a spirit of reparation for our sins and those of the world, our reverence and our veneration for the whole mystery of our salvation, all this leads us to focus on the adorable image of God suffering out of love for us. Gratitude fills our hearts and, in response to the ingratitude of men, we act as Saint Veronica during the Via Crucis: we wipe the face of Jesus. Whilst the world continues to persecute Him we seek to relieve some of the sufferings of His most Sacred Heart. Pray God that we keep and celebrate a faithful remembrance of the passion and death of Our Lord Jesus Christ all the days of our life.

But our devotion should not stop there. Christ is arisen! Tears there should be, but are there not more days with alleluias than without?

We must never forget: the Resurrection was Christ's most glorious work! We often have the tendency to forget that Jesus is living and glorious because of His victory over death. Our love and our tenderness for the Savior make us feel all the ugly ingratitude of men who refuse the love of God and who accumulate sin upon sin. An incomplete comprehension of the message of Paray-le-Monial (town where Our Lord revealed His Sacred Heart to Saint Margaret Mary) would have us believe that Jesus is forever in the throws of sorrow and defeat! Thus the reign of Satan here on earth, especially today, sometimes makes us fear that the victory of the Resurrection belongs to poetry or rhetoric more than anything else.

Let us not be taken in by Satan's apparent monopoly over current world affairs. Napoleon's grand army must have offered a frightening spectacle at the onset of its withdrawal from Russia. To the casual observer, it remained a convincing force. But it was an army conquered, and its Emperor knew it. Satan too is definitely conquered. He is a fugitive. His legions attempt their last offensive but in despair. Hell does not fight to win, for it is conquered. Hell fights to steal the fruits of Christ's victory from as many souls as possible.

It is a victorious Christ that we adore. By His resurrection, He has broken the bonds of death. Men are condemned to death because of their sins. But Christ was condemned not for sin but by sin: our sin is His death. Did He not say that the Good Shepherd gives his life for his sheep? Sin caused God's death. Then, on the third day, God manifested the death of sin by His resurrection.

The resurrection is a victory because it announces the total and complete destruction of sin. Our Lord destroyed sin, not only by forgiving us and making reparation, and by giving us grace upon grace through the seven sacraments, but also by demolishing forever the curse of sin caused by the sin of our first parents.

The resurrection removes the chains by which Satan holds man prisoner. The resurrection of Jesus is the cause of our future resurrection. With regards to its pernicious and once permanent consequences, sin is annihilated. Man can be free because he can be pardoned. Jesus Christ took upon Himself the sins of the world. Thus the breviary of Holy Saturday has Our Lord issuing a mortal threat: O death! I will be your death. O hell! I will be your sting!

We must never forget that Christ is resurrected. In this valley of tears, while sin, death and suffering are so much present, while so many interior and exterior enemies afflict the Church when God is excluded from public life and his Divine Law spawned by diabolical legislation, we must never despair. Satan is powerful. He is present everywhere and always at work. Yet, if we fear, we must never lose heart. Satan was and remains definitively vanquished. His malice and his power of destruction are laughable next to the vastness and the profundity of Christ's victory. The good thief, wrested in extremis from his sinful ways, offers proof of Satan's innate vulnerability. Our Lord's love and the might of his resurrection are more powerful and effectual than the hatred and intrigues of his defeated Enemy.

This is how we should believe in the dogma of Our Lord's historical resurrection. Let us pray therefore that Jesus extends His reign. We should be full of smiles in the face of adversity. For the love of God is stronger than the hatred of Satan. ❖



A Dearth of Distinction

The very first axiom listed in Euclid's *Elements* reads: "Things that are equal to the same thing are equal to each other." The Father of Geometry had articulated a principle foundational to mathematical argument, but the principle itself reaches far beyond numbers: it is sewn into the very fabric of logical thought. Whether a junior student at his intellectual inception or a professional logician at his cerebral pinnacle, both rely alike on this most basic rule of inference.

In her book *The Trivium*, Sr. Miriam Joseph expounds on this reliance. She explains how human beings instinctively reason by means of the syllogism. The syllogism is "the act of reasoning by which the mind perceives that from the relation of two propositions (called premises) having one term in common there necessarily emerges a new, third proposition (called the conclusion) in which the common term, called the middle term (M), does not appear." A close reading of her definition uncovers Euclid's axiom.

To illustrate, let us examine a straightforward textbook syllogism: *All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.* In Euclidean terms, Socrates and mortal are "equal" to each other, for they are "equal" to the same thing, viz., men (the middle term). All deduction works likewise. Logical progress depends on a mutually shared middle term; the subject and predicate's union within the conclusion is otherwise without basis. Sr. Miriam Joseph accordingly lays down the first rule of Logic: "A syllogism must contain three and only three terms. The fallacy that results from violating this rule is four terms."

Let us now test an argument containing four terms: *A hawk has broad wings and curved talons. Tony Blair is a hawk. Therefore, Tony Blair has broad wings and curved talons.* As is obvious, the inference is illogical. The apparent middle term (hawk) does not actually link the conclusion's subject and predicate since "hawk" is employed in two different senses: in the first premise it signifies the animal, but in the second premise it signifies a person who clamours for war. As such, we have two unrelated premises containing four terms, a fallacy incapable of generating a legitimate conclusion. It goes without saying, then, four-termed syllogisms should be disregarded.

If you have read to this point, I praise your stamina. Anticipating the relevance of this preamble undoubtedly required quite the effort. But take heart. Here we arrive at the article's nexus, or—as we might say now—middle term...

Within Catholic circles today, there is a proliferation of pet theories that, when examined closely, defy the rudimentary law of Logic under discussion. Drastic theological conclusions are proceeding from four-termed syllogisms! Despite their fluent presentation at times, these arguments are, fundamentally speaking, just as fallacious as the absurdity involving Tony Blair. Still, the sophisms are effective and mislead many well-meaning faithful.

For your benefit, then, below is a sampling of these specious arguments. To facilitate matters, I have reduced them to simple formulations. I have also taken the liberty of underlining the word that engenders a fourth term within its respective argument:

- A heretic automatically loses membership in the Catholic Church. Pope Francis is a heretic. Therefore, Pope Francis is not a member of the Catholic Church.
- A deficient form of consecration invalidates the Mass. The Novus Ordo Mass has a deficient form of consecration. Therefore, the Novus Ordo Mass is invalid.
- Outside the Church there is no salvation. Non-Catholics are outside the Church. Therefore, non-Catholics cannot be saved.

The Euclidean axiom is relatively easy to apply to numbers, inasmuch as they are fixed. Yet a mathematical approach to human language is often counterproductive. The binary mindset is structurally insensitive to the pliability of expression. It is frequently duped by an imposter middle term, i.e., it mistakes two of the four terms, owing to a superficial likeness, for an authentic middle term.

Consider the first argument, for example: the canonically established *crime* of heresy is mistaken for the supposed *sin* of heresy—gratuitously imputed, of course—in Pope Francis; and, for that reason, "heretic" is no middle term. There is also a subtle shift of meaning in the key words of the second and third arguments: are we speaking of a deficiency in the sacramental formula itself that undermines validity, or of a reprehensible inadequacy of expression that, notwithstanding, still ensures validity (see *ST*, III, q.78, a.3)? And by "outside" are we referring to an absence of visible membership in the Catholic Church, or an absence of the supernatural life of grace obtainable through baptism of desire? Diverse meanings undermine the very possibility of a proper middle term.

Semantics transcends mere computation. The pursuit of truth demands attention to detail, a greater reverence for reality's richness. If there be any ambition in my writing this article, it is only to encourage this habit of mind: an awareness of nuance and a readiness to distinguish. Distinguishing lays bare hidden terms; it begets a clarity of thought firmly committed to Euclid's axiom. Unfortunately, it is a lost discipline. But its rekindling is sorely needed to prepare the mind for Logic, and Logic, in turn, for the attainment of the Truth in this valley of errors.

My commentary may be cut down to size as follows: *Four-termed syllogisms should be disregarded. The above-mentioned contentions are four-termed syllogisms. Therefore, the above-mentioned contentions should be disregarded.*

(For anyone interested in such polemics, I refer you to John Salza and Robert Siscoe's superlative book *True or False Pope?* While exhaustively detailing the fallacies of sedevacantism, the authors address many other modern misconceptions as well. It is a truly comprehensive book, chock-full of vital distinctions. Angelus Press is in the process of printing the second edition.) ❖

Fun & Games

Gospel of St. Mark Chapter 15 and 16 Word Search

1. Joseph, who asked for the body of Jesus, was from what city? (*Mark 15:43*)
2. What was the day before Sabbath called? (*Mark 15:42*)
3. While on the cross who did some of the bystanders think Jesus was calling out to? (*Mark 15:35*)
4. Who said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!?" (*Mark 15:39*)
5. A stone was rolled against what part of the tomb? (*Mark 15:46*)
6. What did they call the place Jesus was crucified? (*Mark 15:22*)
7. What did the angel in the tomb say Jesus had done? (*Mark 16:6*)
8. Who did Jesus appear to first after his resurrection? (*Mark 16:9*)
9. The written notice of the charge against Jesus said he was king of who? (*Mark 15:26*)
10. Who was the man from Cyrene who was forced to carry the cross for Jesus? (*Mark 15:21*)
11. Who appeared to two walking in the country, then to the eleven while they were eating? (*Mark 16:12 & 14*)

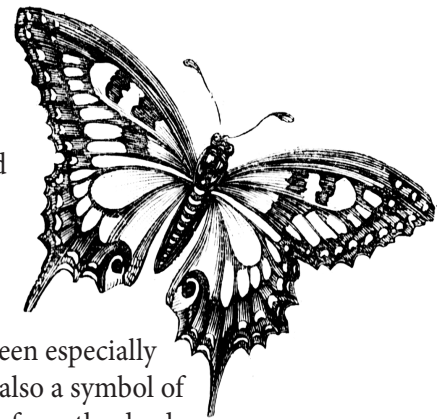
C P U E R G S C P
 A R I M A T H E A
 W E L I J A H N T
 H P Y B K R X T Q
 O A N M J E S U S
 K R I S E N F R Y
 M A R Y W D J I I
 S T A T S I M O N
 R I Z U V S C N D
 G O L G O T H A B
 E N T R A N C E L



Did You Know?

1. *Triduum* comes from two Latin words, *tre* meaning "three," and *dies*, meaning "day." A triduum is a period of three days. The Easter Triduum includes the three holy days that celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus. We measure the three days of the Triduum in the same way that Jews measure their days, that is, from sunset to sunset.

2. The butterfly has long been a Christian symbol of resurrection, for it disappears into a cocoon and appears dead, but emerges later far more beautiful and powerful than before. As a symbol of Christ's Resurrection after three days in the grave, the butterfly is seen especially around Easter, but the butterfly is also a symbol of the Catholic's hope of resurrection from the dead.



Playing with Words...

1. What word begins and ends with an 'e' but only has one letter?
2. What begins with T, ends with T and has T in it?
3. What five-letter word becomes shorter when you add two letters to it?

1. Envelope 2. A teapot 3. Short

3. The most likely origin of the Paschal candle is that it is derived from the *Lucernarium*, the evening office with which early Christians began the vigil for Sunday, starting no later than the second half of the fourth century. From around the 12th century the custom began of inscribing the current year on the candle as well as the dates of the principal movable feasts. The candle hence grew in size so as to be called a "pillar", as mentioned in the Exultet. There are cases of candles weighing up to 300 pounds!

Removing the blindfold.

Prayer or meditation is too much neglected in our modern way of life. Saint Theresa of Avila said that heaven was guaranteed to souls who meditated ten minutes a day. Ten minutes is not much. One can take a book and read it slowly. This is a form of meditation. A governor once complained to a priest that he was so occupied with worldly affairs that he feared he might lose his soul. The priest advised him to set aside a little time each day to meditate on the mysteries of the Faith. The governor answered that he was too busy. To this, the priest replied: "You reminded me of a man walking in a forest and too occupied to take off his blindfold." When the governor protested that he could not find the time to meditate, the priest answered: "You are wrong to think that a little meditation is impossible for want of time. The real problem is that your mind is preoccupied with other things. Nourish the mind a little with things that count, and you will find time to meditate on the things that count."

Children in Church

One Sunday, a young child was "acting up" during the morning worship hour. The parents did their best to maintain some sense of order in the pew but were losing the battle. Finally, the father picked the little fellow up and walked sternly up the aisle on his way out. Just before reaching the safety of the foyer, the little one called loudly to the congregation, "Pray for me! Pray for me!"

A little boy was heard praying: "Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am."

Six-year-old Angie, and her four-year-old brother, Joel, were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had had enough. "You're not supposed to talk out loud in church." "Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel asked. Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, "See those two men standing by the door? They're hushers."

On Humility and the problem of evil

The Abbot Antony, being at a loss in his meditation on the depth of the judgments of God, prayed, "Lord, how comes it is that some die in so short a space of life, and some live to the further side of decrepit old age: and wherefore are some in want, and others rich with various means of wealth, and how are the unrighteous rich and the righteous oppressed by poverty?" And a voice came to him saying, "*Antony, turn thine eyes upon thyself: for these are the judgments of God, and the knowledge of them is not for thee.*"

Forgiveness

A brother who was insulted by another brother came to Abba Sisoës, and said to him: "I was hurt by my brother, and I want to avenge myself." Abba tried to console him and said: "Don't do that, my child. Rather leave vengeance to God." But he said: "I will not quit until I avenge myself." Then Abba said: "Let us pray, brother;" and standing up, he said: "*Our Father... forgive us our trespasses as we forgive NOT those who trespass against us...*" Hearing these words, the brother fell at the feet of the Abba and said: "I am not going to fight with my brother anymore. Forgive me, Abba."

Origins of the Easter Egg

The Easter egg is a Christian symbol, specially decorated for this feast day and remaining most of the time edible. Traditionally it was a colourful hard-boiled chicken egg, today it is often a sugared egg or a chocolate egg. From the simple hard-boiled egg to the most prestigious eggs of Fabergé, the Easter egg has remained a tradition all over the world. In Italy, still today, the Easter eggs are blessed and placed in the centre of the table. The Russian and Ukrainian Easter eggs are true works of art. In the West, in the countryside or the gardens, a mysterious egg hunt is organized on Easter morning. According to tradition, coming back from Rome, the bells that went silent from the evening of Maundy Thursday, scattered eggs, bells and shells.

It is the ban itself, made by the Church, up until the seventeenth century, to consume eggs during Lent, which introduced the tradition of Easter eggs. As they could not prevent hens from laying eggs, eggs were carefully kept until the Easter season, during which it was necessary to sell the immense supply!

King Louis XIV of France made a tradition out of the decorated Easter eggs. On the one hand, his people had to bring him the biggest laid egg in his kingdom during Holy Week and in return, the king distributed eggs decorated with gold leaf to his people during a ceremony. But above all, they symbolize the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ and his exit from the tomb, just as the chick leaves the egg.

*Don't forget your **Easter duties:**
Confession and communion before Trinity Sunday.*

	Liturgical Calendar April 2018	SMS
1	Easter Sunday	9:00 Low 10:30 Sung
2	Easter Monday	8:00 am
3	Easter Tuesday	8:00 am
4	Easter Wednesday	8:00 am
5	Easter Thursday	8:00 am
6	Easter Friday 1st Fri. - Holy Hour 18:00	8:00 / 19:00
7	Easter Saturday 1st. Sat.	7:30 / 12:00
8	Sunday in Albis	7:30 Low 9:00 Sung 18:00 Benediction
9	The Annunciation of the BVM	8:00 / 19:00 (sung)
10	Feria	8:00 am
11	St. Leo the Great, Pope, Confessor & Doctor	8:00 am
12	Feria	7:15 am
13	St. Hermenegild, Martyr	7:15 am
14	St. Justin, Martyr	7:30 / 12:00
15	Second Sunday after Easter	7:30 Low 9:00 Low 17:30 Vespers/Benediction
16	Feria	8:00 am
17	Feria	7:15 am
18	Feria	7:15 am
19	Feria	7:15 am
20	Feria	7:15 am
21	St. Anselm, Bishop, Confessor & Doctor	7:30 / 12:00
22	Third Sunday after Easter	7:30 Low 9:00 Sung 17:30 Vespers/Benediction
23	St. George, patron of England	7:15 / 19:00
24	St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen, Martyr	7:15 am
25	St. Mark, Evangelist (Rogations)	7:15 am
26	Ss Cletus & Marcellinus, Popes & Martyrs	7:15 am
27	St. Peter Canisius, Confessor & Doctor	7:15 am
28	St. Paul of the Cross, Confessor	7:30 / 12:00
29	Fouth Sunday after Easter	7:30 Low 9:00 Low 17:30 Vespers/Benediction
30	St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin	7:15 am

WEEKLY CONFESSIONS

- Saturday: 11:00
- 1st Friday during Holy Hour
- Sunday before Masses

BENEDICTION & ROSARY

Sunday 18:00

EUCCHARISTIC CRUSADE

April intention:

For Catholic Families

CHAPEL CLEANING

Contact WhatsApp group at 07443 657280.

Holy Hour every **1st Friday**



Rosa Mystica, the SSPX Filipino Medical Mission, sent news of recent interventions made possible by funds raised by the Junior School. Several patients in desperate need of medical intervention were able to receive life-saving treatment that they would not have been able to pay for. Little Ric underwent an operation to repair what is commonly known as "hair lip". Without Rosa Mystica, he would have carried his deformity all his life. He is one of nine children, whose mother works overseas as a domestic helper to support her family back home.

There is no NHS in the Philippines. Thumbs up to the Junior School for their cake sale in aid of Rosa Mystica Mission. Total funds raised at the March cake sale:

£430.30

May God bless your generosity!

ROSARY ON THE COAST

For Faith, Life and Peace in the British Isles

<https://www.rosaryonthecoast.co.uk/>

<https://facebook.com/rosaryonthecoast/>

Sunday, 29th April 2018, 3:00pm

This is a day of Pilgrimage and Prayer for the re-flourishing of our Faith, for the grace to build a culture of Life and for true Peace to reign in the hearts of all peoples & Nations. The Inspiration Recently the faithful of Poland and Ireland have responded to what they sense as a movement of the Holy Spirit to gather around the coasts of their nations and pray to Jesus, the Divine Mercy, for a renewal of faith and respect for human life through the powerful intercession of Our Lady of the Rosary.

A group from St. Michael's will be praying the rosary at a yet-to-be found location. Information forthcoming via noticeboard and pulpit announcement. We hope that you will be able to join us.



CHAPEL REPAINT

Saturday, 12th May

9:00 - 18:00

6 adult volunteers needed with a generous heart and minimum painting skills.

Requesting donations for materials

Contact: pbrucciani@yahoo.co.uk