



THE ARCHANGEL

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Liturgy & Faith

Dear Parishioners,

In a wonderful essay entitled *The Doctrinal Power of the Liturgy of the Catholic Church**, Dom Anscar Vonier, abbot of Buckfast, notes that the Catholic Church has always managed to present to all generations of Christians the mysteries of her Faith, not only with the greatest fidelity to the very text and meaning of the mystery, but also in a way that speaks to both the educated and uneducated. « How is it, he asks, that in spite of its baffling abstruseness that doctrine of the Trinity has remained, even for the simple Catholic, a vivid and life-giving familiarity with God, without any intermingling of base anthropomorphism? »

The answer lies in the Church's genius in presenting and explaining the mysteries of Divine Revelation by way of illustration and celebration that makes the invisible, visible and the intangible, tangible. It is by making her doctrines *Feasts* for her people that the Church teaches her children.

After Pentecost, the great truths that the Apostles were tasked to preach to the world naturally gave rise to reflection, celebration, solemnity and sanctification. The Christian calendar gradually formed and became the principal means for both Church and people of perpetuating, expounding and celebrating the mysteries of Divine Revelation. The Church believes and enacts her belief through remembrance, ceremony and symbol according to an annual cycle. Such regularity served to entrench Catholic dogma in the minds and hearts of generations of her children.

The Liturgy forms the sum of ceremony and symbol whereby the Church expresses and celebrates the *depositum fidei*. Don Vonier writes: « In the Liturgy, the faithful of all ages have found it possible to utter their faith nobly, purely, and amply... Our acting and solemnising the hidden verities of God is the power of the Spirit Himself, of the Holy Ghost, who is the Unction of the Church, teaching her not only how to think but also how to sing. »

The strength and vibrance of medieval religion bear testimony to the teaching power of the liturgical calendar and ceremony. The invisible realities of the supernatural were made manifest by way of gesture and sym-

bol which served as a proclamation of the Gospel truths and a means of entering into the spirit of the Feast and attuning the souls to the Christian concept and vision of reality. Our medieval forefathers loved the liturgy and took great pains, by way of bequests and wills significant or small, to increase the splendour and majesty of the Church's great liturgical prayer and their own continued participation in it even after death.

Archbishop Cranmer, architect of the Protestant Reformation in England, understood well the inherent power of the liturgy to entrench and safeguard the Gospel truths in the souls of the people. Having ordered the destruction of every shrine, altar, chalice, missal, rood, cross, candle, vestment, sacred image and statue of the realm, he proscribed the ancient liturgical rites and gave to England his new 'Godly order': the Book of Common Prayer, complete with monotonous Scripture reading, white-washed walls, wooden tables, drab preaching and a poor box. Within two generations and with the help of brut force to encourage conformity, England was no longer the Isle of Saints it used to be.

Lent is one of the most hallowed seasons in the liturgical calendar. The liturgy has us practise the biblical custom of penance by way of fasting and ashes. Each Lenten day has its own set of readings and prayers, all of which prepare us for the great and elaborate ceremonies of Holy Week. Don Vonier tells us: « Through our Feasts we have truly a most marvellous power of spiritual propaganda. It is to be admitted quite simply that nowhere, not even in our best schools, can we teach religion as we teach it in our churches when we keep the Feasts of the year to the best of our ability. »

The most fruitful Lenten resolution that we can make is to follow and to participate in the Church's liturgical prayer during Lent, all the way to Easter. It is, quite simply, the best way to deepen our faith and unite ourselves to God. We learn more and we love more when we participate in the intricate, musical beauty of the Church's liturgical prayer.

Fr John Brucciani, Prior

* Vonier, Dom Anscar. *Sketches and Studies in Theology*, Assumption Press.

When people flocked to Padre Pio (+1968), the famous Capuchin monk who bore the holy stigmata in his hands, feet and side, they came to see a man who experienced heavenly and demonic visions, worked miracles, prophesied and read the secrets of the heart. Padre Pio was famous for the graces that theologians call *charismata* (*gifts freely bestowed*) which God sometimes grants to holy souls for the better accomplishment of their Providential mission.

It is important, however, to remember that holiness is not dependent on or tied to the extraordinary graces that saints sometimes receive. Padre Pio certainly gave no value or importance to the gifts bestowed on him. He wished they would pass to another. They burdened and frightened him and made him fear God's wrath for having used them so ill.

The gifts of prophecy, miracles, tongues, healing, etc., are, in fact, of little value to the saint's soul. They do not bring him closer to God. They are given only as a means of manifesting God's presence and the authenticity and urgency of His Gospel message.

In the first decades of Christianity, God lavished the *charismata* on the nascent Church. The gifts of the Holy Ghost, as they were called, were so abundant that St Paul was impelled to give some very clear instruction on their value and use.

The value of the *charismata* is relative to the use one makes of them. They are not a sign of personal holiness, neither are some of greater value than others. All are manifestations of the God at work among His newly chosen people: « Now there are diversities of graces, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but the same God, who worketh all in all. » (1Cor. 12:4-6)

St Paul tells the Corinthians not to covet certain gifts of the Holy Spirit above others: « Be zealous for the better gifts. Meanwhile, I can shew unto you yet a more excellent way. » (1Cor. 12:31) What is this more excellent way to holiness and salvation?

Above all *charismata*, more useful and efficient in the edification of Christ's Mystical Body which is the Church, more noble, precious and holy to God and to the soul are the three theological virtues. Like the *charismata*, they are gifts given to us but they are of a very different sort. The theological virtues are spiritual powers that accompany the effusion of sanctifying grace in the soul. They allow the soul to live and act in symbiosis with the supernatural status to which it has been raised. Faith allows us to believe God as He

speaks to us through Divine Revelation; hope allows us to trust God by assuring us of the veracity of God's promises contained in Divine Revelation; charity allows us to love God for His own sake, i.e., worthily.


The possession of these three particular virtues has always been synonymous with sanctity. The saints are those whose lives are shaped and conditioned by the three virtues so that they become the salt of the earth and the light of the world. It is thanks to the three virtues that we can overcome the poverty and precarity of existence and settle our minds and hearts on the vision, sureness and possession of God. The three virtues make life worthwhile and complete.

We sometimes appraise ourselves and others for things that are not constitutive of holiness. Some find solitary mental prayer easy, while others prefer going to mass to watch the priest « do the praying ». Some are kindly disposed to their neighbour, others hold back out of timidity. Some aren't much good at anything (so they say), while others combine generosity with real expertise. They are able to do so much to build up God's kingdom.

Or so they may think. God's kingdom does not rely on talent or aptitude for external works. It relies on souls living according to the dictates of divine grace via the three theological virtues. These form the soul's Christian *character*, which is the ultimate testimony to the extension of God's triumphant kingdom.

The prayers of innocent, distracted children do as much for the edification of God's kingdom as the talent and service of their parents. It is by deploying the powers of faith, hope and charity that we move the heavens and irrigate the world with the invisible dew of divine grace: *Rorate Coeli desuper ... Ye heavens, send dew from above, ye skies, pour down upon us the rain we long for, him, the Just One. (Is.45:8).*

Padre Pio's holiness, which continues to obtain countless conversions and graces for so many, derived not from his *charismata* but from his indomitable faith (despite an interior darkness that lasted most of his life), his boundless hope (« Pray, hope and do not worry. Worry is useless. ») and, above all, the charity that was etched into his flesh. His *charismata* were merely to remind the world of these three theological virtues.

Padre Pio loved with the tools of God's love: suffering for others. His body bore His Saviour's wounds, but they were only the external sign of something we can all possess if only we believe and hope enough: divine charity, the greatest of the three virtues. 

“Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Lk 12:34)

Our Lord's principle is an unspoken rule of life: We love and treasure what we consider important. Protecting the sacredness and dignity of the sacraments and religious ceremonies has always been foremost in the Church's mind. For this reason, She has established guidelines for her priests and faithful to follow, both in the administration and reception of such treasures, proving Her love and appreciation for them.

One of the greatest of the Church's treasures is the Holy Eucharist. Baptism grants us the privilege of receiving the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. The use of this privilege, however, requires the recipient to fulfil certain conditions Church Law states in no uncertain terms: “Those upon whom the penalty of excommunication or interdict has been imposed or declared, and others who obstinately persist in manifest grave sin, are not to be admitted to Holy Communion” (1983 Code of Canon Law #915). In short, public sinners forfeit the privileges and graces of Catholicism

This makes sense. We cannot imagine - or can we... - a civil society in which criminals enjoy the same rights as law-abiding citizens. We would rightfully cry out at such an injustice.

Another ecclesiastical privilege is the Catholic rite of burial. Most people agree that the unbaptised have no right to be buried in blessed ground. However, even baptised Catholics can, in certain circumstances, lose the right to a Catholic burial as explicitly stated in the Code of Canon Law in articles 1184 and 1185. Again, nothing is surprising here. No pertinaciously disobedient child should expect the same treatment as one who respects his parents and reverences their authority. Otherwise, the parents would condone vice rather than encourage virtue. For this reason, the State punishes a criminal, not because it wishes undue harm upon him, but because he has forfeited his civil rights by choosing to commit a crime. The State, in response, to that choice, merely levies a sentence as a natural consequence.

How much more, then, is it the mandate of Holy Mother Church to ensure that She guards and protects the souls in Her care, guiding them toward virtue and correcting them when they stray! Truth be told, to open to all the floodgates of that tired word “mercy” is injustice to all - to those who are Her true children, in giving equal opportunities to

the unfaithful as to the faithful, and to Her lost sheep, in sparing the rod when it is the most salutary measure of correction.

What devastation results from unbridled “mercy” can be seen only too plainly if we open our eyes. The treasures of Church and State are lost, sometimes irrevocably, and for what, for fear of offending an individual who has already cast them aside voluntarily? Ought we not, rather, fear offending the One Who offers those treasures, often spurned so ungratefully? Where is our treasure after all? For this reason, the Church jealously guards Her most precious treasures and privileges. We would do well to do the same and to consider whether we do not take for granted, at times and to the detriment of our souls, the extraordinary graces and privileges from which we benefit as faithful children of our Holy Mother the Church.

LENTEN REMINDERS

- **Fasting + abstinence:** *Ash Wed & Good Friday, under pain of mortal sin.*
- **Abstinence every Friday,** *under pain of mortal sin. (As per Episcopal Conf. 2011).*
- **Fasting** = *one meal and two collations*
- **Abstinence** = *no meat, but small quantities of condiments, broth, etc. allowed.*
- *Fasting binds from 18-60 excluded. Abstinence from 14 onwards*

The mentally/physically sick, pregnant women, nursing mothers are dispensed from these obligations.

‘1592 Vespers’ - NEW COLLEGE CHAPEL Concert to celebrate the quincentenary of Palestrina

Dir. Thomas Neal

- *The Choir of St. Michael the Archangel, Burghclere*
- *New College School Chamber Choir and Choral Society*
- *Ensemble Res Sacra*
- *His Majestys Sagbutts and Cornetts*
- *Saturday, March 29, 6pm*
- *Under 18's Free*



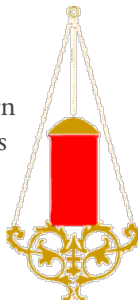
Ash Wednesday is a fast day for all persons aged 18-59.
One meal and 2 snacks allowed. No meat.

The Ash Wednesday fast is of grave obligation.

Tertiaries of the SSPX should fast on Ember Days and every Friday in Lent.

Sanctuary Lamp in Memory

It is now possible to request that a sanctuary lamp burn in memory of loved one or in thanksgiving for graces received. **Each 1st. Wed. of the month, Holy Mass will be celebrated for those remembered and their donors.** The memorial will be published in this newsletter.



- £10 for one 7 day lamp (Sunday-Saturday)
- Cheques to the order of SSPX, Burghclere Priory.
- Proceeds go towards church embellishment (vestments, statues, furnishings).

Sanctuary Lamp - High altar - In memory of, praying for:

- Mar. 02 - Stephen Patrick & Agnes Mary Keating, RIP
- Mar. 09 - Deceased family and friends
- Mar. 16 - Alfred Williams & Ralph Blatchford, RIP
- Mar. 23 - Dr Juan Matias Santos, RIP
- Mar. 30 - Enockson Family

Sanctuary Lamp - Lady altar - In memory of, praying for:

- Mar. 02 - A private intention
- Mar. 09 - Stephen Patrick & Agnes Mary Keating, RIP
- Mar. 16 - For a private intention (BL, KH)
- Mar. 23 - Deceased family and friends
- Mar. 30 - A private intention

Sanctuary Lamp - Sacred Heart In memory of:

- Mar. 02 - Basil Fernandes RIP
- Mar. 09 - Stephen Patrick & Agnes Mary Keating, RIP
- Mar. 16 - Holy Souls
- Mar. 23 - Joseph Kamau, RIP
- Mar. 30 - A private intention



Monday 24th May 2025

Sacrament of Confirmation

His Lordship, Bishop Bernard Fellay will confer the Sacrament of Confirmation here at St Michael's. Email stmichaels@fsspx.uk to request information and an application form.

Application deadline: 4th May.



*On the 1st Sunday of the month, after each mass, fathers are invited to pray the **Fathers' Prayer for Vocations** at the communion rail.*

**Liturgical Calendar - March 2025
Confessions before Saturday and Sunday
Masses & during 1st Friday Holy Hour.**

1	Saturday of Our Lady	1st Sat.	7:30/12:00
2	Quinquagesima Sunday		7:30, 9:00
	<i>2nd Coll for Vocations 40 Hours</i>		<u>17:00</u> Vespers
3	Feria	(40 Hours Adoration)	05:00, 7:15, 19:00
4	St. Casimir, Confessor		05:00, 7:00 (sung)
5	Ash Wednesday, Fasting & Abstinence (grave obligation)		7:30 / 19:00
6	Feria in Lent		7:15
7	Feria - 1st Fri Holy H 18h		7:15 / 19:00
8	Feria in Lent		7:30/12:00
9	First Sunday of Lent		7:30, 9:00
			18:00 Benediction
10	Feria of Lent		7:15
11	Feria of Lent		7:15
12	Ember Wednesday		7:15
13	Feria of Lent		7:15
14	Ember Friday		7:15
15	Ember Saturday		7:30/12:00
16	Second Sunday of Lent		7:30, 9:00
			18:00 Benediction
17	Feria of Lent		7:15
18	Feria of Lent		7:15
19	St. Joseph, Spouse of the BVM		7:15, 19:00 (sung)
20	Feria of Lent		7:15
21	Feria of Lent		7:15
22	Feria of Lent		7:30/12:00
23	Third Sunday of Lent		7:30, 9:00
			18:00 Benediction
24	Feria of Lent		7:15
25	Annunciation of the BVM		7:15, 19:00 (sung)
26	Feria of Lent		7:15
27	Feria of Lent		7:15
28	Feria of Lent		7:15
29	Feria of Lent		7:30/12:00
30	Fourth Sunday of Lent (Lætare)		7:30, 9:00
			18:00 Benediction
31	Feria of Lent		7:15
1	Feria of Lent		7:15

SUNDAY COLLECTION - Set up your standing order Ref. « Sunday coll. »

Account name:
BURGHCLERE PRIORY
Society of St Pius X
Sort Code: 16-26-18
Account number: 10191331



Remember: **GIFT AID!**