



**THE CONFRATERNITY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT
SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER 2020**



FATHER EDWARD MARTIN writes....

The [Corona] Diary of a Country Priest

In the wake of the lockdown and the closure of churches, Priests in the catholic tradition in the Church of England were left wondering how we could continue to care for our people, how (if at all) the Mass could be celebrated and how some semblance of fellowship could be maintained. Here in the countryside of south Lincolnshire there were added worries about social isolation and the future of small, but dedicated, rural congregations. Working out how best to respond was a gradual process (and not a little haphazard). My first venture was to set up a Benefice WhatsApp group using all the relevant mobile numbers I had in my phone contacts to get the ball rolling. Word spread and soon we were up to forty members. Encouraging others to make use of the various Apps available for saying the Office (some for the first time) we quickly established a routine of prayer put in place to order and sanctify the time that was now on most people's hands. Requests for prayer came through regularly and we were able to keep tabs on how everyone was coping.



The next step was to try to make the Office and the Mass available online – a daunting prospect! We were fortunate to have the Regional House Stable Chapel available to us rather than having to set up a makeshift Chapel in my living room (or even in the kitchen). My first attempts at live-streaming Evening Prayer were a bit hit-and-miss! I'd decided that no one needed to see me (that would be distraction) and that a static view of candles lit on the altar while I prayed the Office was by far the

best option. Very soon messages started coming through asking if the picture had frozen or if I'd actually started praying yet. Like it or not I was going to have to step out from behind the iPad. People needed to hear and see their Priests. The change made a huge difference and people started joining us from exotic places including Sweden, Switzerland and Skegness.

Next up was the Mass. I have to admit that I was extremely nervous about live-streaming the Mass. I felt that great care was needed, after all this could be seen by anyone and as people have often said "The internet never forgets". I decided to pre-record a daily Mass, upload it to YouTube and then post links via Facebook in the early afternoon. It sounds so easy to say that now (!) but figuring out how to make it happen was a huge learning curve. I was convinced that being seen and heard properly was essential, and the use of a wireless Bluetooth lapel microphone guaranteed that the sound was good wherever I was in the Chapel (and that you couldn't hear the postman if he knocked on the Chapel door). With windows on three sides of the Chapel there was plenty of light and with my iPad positioned on the top of a step ladder I had everything I needed (this was later replaced by a more convenient iPad stand). Like many Priests I've always enjoyed the challenge and discipline of offering a brief, off-the-cuff homily on weekdays. However, posting my 'of the moment' thoughts on the internet worried me. So, I settled down to a routine of spending about forty minutes with various commentaries each morning, sketching out a brief Homily that I hoped would be of sufficient quality for anyone to stumble across. As with Evening Prayer, my first attempts at recording the Mass varied in terms of quality. With no knowledge of how to edit a video clip, if I dropped a clanger there was no other option than to start again from the beginning (I've now remedied this!). This proved especially testing when it came to pre-recording the Holy Week liturgies. I ended up doing Good Friday three times before I was happy with it (an emotionally exhausting experience) and the Easter Vigil twice. There were some amusing moments too along the way. My all-time favourite has to be the outtake that has me welcoming people to Mass for 'Corpus Crispy'.



It was of great comfort and encouragement to see Facebook and YouTube awash with various liturgical offerings from Society Parishes across the country. I firmly believe that those in the catholic tradition produced some of the

highest quality pre-recorded and live-streamed daily offerings, often on a shoestring budget. It was also interesting to hear how people took in what was being offered. Some folk told me of how they would sit in front of the TV or tablet with their Weekday Missal at the ready, while others would listen to the Mass when out with the dog or sat in the garden. What was certainly true was that making the Mass available kept people in touch with the sacrifice that was being offered on their behalf and it maintained their need and desire to receive Holy Communion as soon as it was safe to do so.



After the go-head was given for Churches to reopen for private prayer and then for worship, we were the first in our Deanery to be open on a Sunday. In spite of the ban on singing we were fortunate to have our organist to accompany the liturgy and the first two Sundays saw 90+ people make their Communion for the first time in months. Although the Mass had to be celebrated with some brevity and necessary restrictions, it was a joy and delight to be together again. Sadly, there were those who never made it back to Church. A number of the funerals that occurred during the lockdown were of pivotal figures within the Church and village communities here. On a number of occasions we were blessed with warm sunshine as we gathered in the Churchyard to say goodbye to those who had been wonderful examples to us of faith, repentance, prayer and service. It was a great privilege to welcome the coffin of one Parishioner into Church for a Requiem Mass the night before her funeral. Although unable to step foot in her house we'd managed to keep in touch via FaceTime and said Compline together most evenings.

Like you, I long for a time when we will be able to look back and to know that the threat of COVID is behind us. I'm always slightly hesitant when people start speaking of 'the new normal' as so much has changed so quickly and continues to do so. In the meantime, we can at least take some comfort from knowing that our witness to the catholic faith in the Anglican tradition has continued in new, exciting and challenging ways. We now have the means, the confidence and the know-how to maintain that witness beyond the walls of our Churches and the boundaries of our Parishes. The mission field has broadened! Let us pray that the Lord will encourage and equip us so that the historic faith can reach, renew and revive the hearts and minds of many.

Father Edward

INTERCESSIONS

SEPTEMBER

- 1 Our Lady, Letchworth
- 2 Christ in Glory, Aldwick
- 3 St Gregory the Great – Ecumenical relations
- 4 The Annunciation, Brighton
- 5 S Saviour and S Peter, Eastbourne
- 6 **23rd Sunday / Trinity 13 – Where two or three meet, I will be with them**
- 7 The Transfiguration, Haywards Heath
- 8 Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Society of Mary
- 9 The Precious Blood, Horsham
- 10 S Anne, Hove
- 11 Ss Mary & Nicolas, Lancing College
- 12 Most Holy Name of Mary – Chaplains of Mary Mother of the Church
- 13 **24th Sunday/Trinity 14 – Forgive your brother from your heart**
- 14 Holy Cross Day – Society of the Holy Cross/Community of the Holy Cross
- 15 Our Lady at the Cross – For the bereaved
- 16 Our Lady of Littlehampton
- 17 Anima Christi, St Leonards on Sea
- 18 S Cuthman, Storrington Deanery
- 19 S Gabriel, Worthing
- 20 **25th Sunday/Trinity 15 – Why be envious that I am generous?**
- 21 S Matthew, Apostle – Those who offer Christian hospitality
- 22 Our Lady & Corpus Christi, Cambridge
- 23 S Edmund, King & Martyr, Downham Market
- 24 Our Lady of Walsingham – The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham
- 25 S Mary, Great Yarmouth
- 26 Our Lady, Walsingham
- 27 **26th Sunday / Trinity 16 – Which of the two did the father’s will?**
- 28 Ss Peter and Paul, Uppingham
- 29 Michaelmas – Those whose ordinations have been delayed
- 30 St Jerome – Biblical teachers and scholars

OCTOBER

- 1 S Teresa of the Child Jesus – For Root and vocations to the Religious life
- 2 Holy Guardian Angels – For children and young people in our Churches
- 3 Our Lady, at Saint Mary Steps, Exeter
- 4 **27th Sunday /Trinity 17 – The stone rejected by the builders has become the keystone**
- 5 S Peter Plymouth
- 6 S Margaret-Mary Alacoque, Cheltenham
- 7 Our Lady of the Rosary – For those who offer the Holy Rosary for the needs of others
- 8 The Little Flower, Longton
- 9 Our Lady and S Andrew, Newcastle-under Lyme
- 10 Ss Mary and Dominic, Friar Park
- 11 **28th Sunday / Trinity 18 – Many are called but few are chosen**
- 12 S Wilfrid – Bishops of the Society
- 13 S Edward the Confessor–Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth
- 14 The Holy Grail, Wolverhampton
- 15 S Teresa of Jesus – For those who live the contemplative life
- 16 The Sacred Heart, Lincoln
- 17 S Magnus, City of London
- 18 **29th Sunday / Trinity 19 – Give back to God what belongs to God**
- 19 The Sacred Heart with S Andrew, East Finchley
- 20 Adoremus, Hanworth
- 21 Alexander Mackonochie, Holborn
- 22 Corpus Christi, Kenton
- 23 Our Lady & S George, Winchmore Hill
- 24 S Giles, Reading
- 25 **30th Sunday/Last after Trinity – Love the Lord your God and your neighbour as yourself**
- 26 The Love of Jesus, Wantage
- 27 S Francis, Derby
- 28 Ss Simon & Jude – College of the Resurrection
- 29 S Laurence, Long Eaton
- 30 The Holy Cross Nottingham
- 31 S Martin, Salisbury

INTERCESSIONS

NOVEMBER

- 1 **All Saints – Rejoice and be glad,
for your reward will be great in heaven**
- 2 All Souls – For the faithful departed
- 3 S Michael, Croydon
- 4 S Charles Borromeo – Those
involved in theological education
- 5 S Agnes, Kennington
- 6 Corpus et Sanguis Christi, Plumstead
- 7 S Peter, Streatham
- 8 **32nd Sunday/3 before Advent
Remembrance– he bridegroom is here!**
- 9 Dedication of the Lateran Basilica –
This is the gate of heaven!
- 10 S Leo the Great – For our Bishops
and their Diocesan Reps
- 11 St Martin of Tours – Those who
provide for the hungry and needy
- 12 The Sacred Heart, Bude
- 13 S Mary Star of the Sea, Penzance
- 14 Holy Trinity and S Cadoc, Llandaff
- 15 **33rd Sunday 2 before Advent – You
have been faithful in small things;
come & join in your master’s happiness**
- 16 S Margaret of Scotland – Forward in
Faith in Scotland
- 17 The Sacred Heart, Lincoln
- 18 The Good Shepherd, Guildford
- 19 Corpus Christi, Portsmouth
- 20 The Stigmata, Bournemouth
- 21 Presentation of the BVM -
- 22 **Christ the King – As far as you did this
to the least of my brothers, you did it
to me**
- 23 S Michel due Valle, Guernsey
- 24 Blessed Mary McKillop &
St Benedict, Melbourne
- 25 S Thomas Aquinas, Calgary
- 26 S Margaret, Montreal
- 27 S Michael & All Angels, Winnipeg
- 28 S Brigid, Sweden
- 29 **Advent Sunday – Stay awake!**
- 30 St Andrew – For mission

R.I.P.

We commend to God the souls of all
Departed Associates of the
Confraternity, especially the following who
have died recently:

Priests-Associates

Father Beau Brandie

Lay Associates

Geoffrey Giles

Pamela White

Please also pray for our new members

New Priest Associates

Father Mikael Lowegren

New Lay Associates

Andrew Bright

Byron Hadley

**Would you like to contribute to the
Quarterly, passing on
your news to others, & sharing
events?**

**Then please forward any
contributions to
edward.martin@lincoln.anglican.org
Material for the next edition must be
received by 1st November 2020**

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COUNCIL-GENERAL
Monday 5th October 2020 at 10.30 am

Regrettably, we are not able to gather in London as planned for this annual event. This will not surprise any of you, of course, given the continuing restrictions and uncertainties with COVID-19. But, in order to comply with necessary legalities as a charity, we shall hold our meeting by Zoom. I am sorry if this will limit participation, but it is the best we can manage. All District-Superiors and Lay representatives are invited to participate and the details are below:

Topic: CBS Council General Zoom Meeting
Time: Oct 5, 2020 10:30 AM London

Join Zoom Meeting
[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85934840231?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85934840231?pwd=NHl3RVNlUW9FWEp4UUFMORU5DNnBjQT09)
[pwd=NHl3RVNlUW9FWEp4UUFMORU5DNnBjQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85934840231?pwd=NHl3RVNlUW9FWEp4UUFMORU5DNnBjQT09)

It will be necessary to send out the papers. So, if you are intending to join the meeting, please be in touch with Mary Bashford (mary@additionalcurates.co.uk) signalling your intention so that we can record your name and make sure you have sight of the papers in time for the meeting and the passcode. It would help if you could tell us that you would be happy to have these by email. Please do this now!

Thank you.

+Roger

ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI AND THE EUCHARIST - BR JOSEPH EMMANUEL SSF



***St Francis in meditation* (Francisco Zurbarán c.1635)**

In the National Gallery one may find a number of paintings by the Spanish Artist Francisco de Zurbarán (1598 – 1664). Although Zurbarán's work encompasses many different subjects, there can be little doubt that his overtly religious paintings - often commissioned by Religious Orders in his native Seville - are particularly arresting and couple great technical expertise with deep spiritual insight. An outstanding example of one such work is Zurbarán's *St Francis in meditation* painted between 1635 and 1639 at the height of the Counter-Reformation. In this remarkable portrait Zurbarán depicts an unambiguous contrast between the saint (who appears to be bathed in light) and the darkness which surrounds him, an idea which has prompted at least one commentator to remark that, in this work, Zurbarán presents a stark choice: kneel with St Francis in the light of Christ or be subsumed into the surrounding darkness. In the painting St Francis kneels in a patched and worn Capuchin habit clutching a skull (a *memento mori*), his face barely discernible under the shadow of his capuce (his hood), the marks of the stigmata nearly hidden by the sleeve of his habit.

It is safe to say that this is a St Francis rarely seen in modern depictions of the saint where, regrettably, St Francis is less likely to be portrayed as a symbol of mystical encounter and punishing asceticism – as Zurbarán depicts him – and more likely to be portrayed as some sort of be-habited ‘Doctor Dolittle’ surrounded by numerous furry creatures (what our late Brother Reginald termed “the usual blooming menagerie”). If one reads the earliest sources of St Francis’ life (and there are many), it becomes clear almost immediately that it is Zurbarán’s understanding of St Francis rather than the modern, sentimental St Francis which is more consonant with historical record. It goes without saying that St Francis, along with many other saints of the Church, loved Creation and that he loved animals as part of that Creation, but he loved Creation not as an end in itself (as a modern ecologist might do) but, instead, as a near sacramental sign of the overflowing generosity of God. Having acknowledged this, one must concede that an analysis of St Francis’ own writings (of which there are few) suggest that the created world was not, in fact, St Francis’ primary focus; he wrote only one extended poem about Creation (*The Canticle of the Sun* also known as the *Laudes Creaturarum*) in which he ecstatically praises the Creator rather than Creation itself. So if, as modern commentators seem to suggest, the created world was not St Francis’ primary focus, what was? What occupied him most if not Creation? Lepers? Certainly St Francis was profoundly committed to finding and ministering to the “*poor naked Christ*” in the leper (who St Francis referred to as his “Christian Brothers”) but, however worthy, this was not St Francis’ primary focus. Poverty? Again, we know from the sources and his own writings that St Francis wanted his Brothers to be radically poor (and thus totally reliant on God) but, having acknowledged that, one must also say that the pursuit of true ‘Evangelical’ poverty occupies rather less of St Francis’ writings than one might expect from some modern histories. The answer to the question is clear, I would suggest, for even a cursory examination of the Primary Sources indicates that more than half of St Francis’ extant writings are directly concerned with the Blessed Sacrament.

Many Sources tell us that, in May 1217, following a Chapter in Assisi at which the majority of Brothers were dispatched to encourage the Faithful of the Catholic heartlands in preaching and mission, St Francis (accompanied by a Priest Brother named Silvester) set off on his own chosen journey to France. *The Assisi Compilation* (a 14th century source based on highly reliable 13th century material) makes it abundantly clear that this was not simply because St Francis was a francophile and could speak elementary French (unlike many of his Brothers) but because, as St Francis said “...[the French people] show great reverence to the Body of Christ, which pleases me very much. Because of this, I will gladly live with them...” St Francis’ hope of living in France was ultimately thwarted when, on encountering Cardinal Hugolino (later Pope Gregory IX) in Florence, he was ordered – under obedience – to return to Assisi in order to look after the remaining Brothers (the responsibilities of leadership were not pleasing to St Francis). However, despite this

disappointment, the Saint's passionate love of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament (and his contingent belief that the Blessed Sacrament should be both properly revered and reverently reserved) remained undiminished and, within a year, St Francis wrote the first of his *"Exhortations to the Clergy"* in which he clearly articulates his intense devotion to the Body and Blood of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar and his distress that, in some quarters at least, it is not shown due reverence. The *Exhortation* begins with this stern injunction: *"Let all of us... consider the great sin and the ignorance some have toward the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ..."* before noting *"...Let all those who administer such holy mysteries....consider how very dirty are the chalices, corporals and altar-linens upon which HIS Body and Blood are sacrificed. [The most holy Body and Blood are] placed and left in many dirty places, carried about unbecomingly, received unworthily, and administered...without discernment... Wherever the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ has been illicitly placed and left, let It be moved from there, placed in a precious place and locked up... All the clergy are forever bound to observe all these things above everything else..."* If clerics fail to ensure that the Blessed Sacrament is treated with due reverence (and reserved in a seemly fashion) St Francis makes clear, at the end of the *Exhortation*, that they will be expected to answer for their indifference before Christ himself *"... [whoever does not do this], let him know he must render an accounting on the day of judgement before our Lord Jesus Christ..."* Although we cannot be certain that St Francis' heartfelt Exhortation bore much fruit with the diocesan clergy to whom it was addressed, we can be certain that it registered elsewhere within the Church and it is striking that, less than a year after St Francis wrote his *Exhortation*, Pope Honorius III (1150 –1227) echoed many of St Francis' concerns in his own letter on the Blessed Sacrament entitled *Expectavimus hactenus* (November 1219).

St Francis of Assisi was passionately in love with Christ; he loved Christ in the leper; he loved Christ in the Church; he loved Creation because it was a wonderful sign of God's overwhelming generosity. Above all, however, it is clear that St Francis loved Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. Whatever modern, sentimental depictions of St Francis suggest, it is clear from St Francis' own writings and the early sources of St Francis' life that the Blessed Sacrament was for him – as for our Confraternity – the most eloquent sign of God's love and His promise – through the Saviour – to be with us now and *"until the end of the age"* (Matthew 28.20).

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