

**The Catholic Parish
of
Our Lady of the Annunciation
King's Lynn
Norfolk**

Mass Readings for
Wednesday, 15th July 2020

**Feast Day of
St. Bonaventure, Doctor**

Today's Readings
From the Office of Readings

Liturgical Colour: White

Parish of Our Lady of the Annunciation - King's Lynn

Church of Our Lady of the Annunciation
London Road,
King's Lynn. PE30 5HQ

The Catholic Rectory,
North Everard Street,
King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 5HQ
Tel : (01553) 772220 Email : parishpriest763@gmail.com
www.catholicparish-kingslynn.org.uk

Holy Family Church
Field Lane, Gaywood,
King's Lynn. PE30 4AY

Wednesday, 15th July 2020

Mass Readings

Feast Day of St. Bonaventure, Doctor

The Readings for the Memorial

First reading - Ephesians 3:14-19

May Christ live in your hearts through faith

I pray, kneeling before the Father, from whom every family, whether spiritual or natural, takes its name:

Out of his infinite glory, may he give you the power through his Spirit for your hidden self to grow strong, so that Christ may live in your hearts through faith, and then, planted in love and built on love, you will with all the saints have strength to grasp the breadth and the length, the height and the depth; until, knowing the love of Christ, which is beyond all knowledge, you are filled with the utter fullness of God.

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm - Psalm 118(119):9-14

Lord, teach me your statutes.

How shall the young remain sinless?

By obeying your word.

I have sought you with all my heart;

let me not stray from your commands.

Lord, teach me your statutes.

I treasure your promise in my heart

lest I sin against you.

Blessed are you, O Lord;

teach me your statutes.

Lord, teach me your statutes.

With my tongue I have recounted

the decrees of your lips.

I rejoiced to do your will

as though all riches were mine.

Lord, teach me your statutes.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

You have only one Father,
and he is in heaven;
you have only one Teacher,
the Christ.

Alleluia!

Gospel - Matthew 23:8-12

The greatest among you must be your servant

Jesus said to his disciples, 'You must not allow yourselves to be called Rabbi, since you have only one master, and you are all brothers. You must call no one on earth your father, since you have only one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor must you allow yourselves to be called teachers, for you have only one Teacher, the Christ. The greatest among you must be your servant. Anyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and anyone who humbles himself will exalted.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

From the Office of Readings for Wednesday of Week 15 in Ordinary Time

From <https://universalis.com/europe.england.eastanglia/20200715/readings.htm>

First reading - 1 Kings 21:1-21, 27-29

Elijah, defender of justice for the poor

Naboth of Jezreel had a vineyard close by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria, and Ahab said to Naboth, 'Give me your vineyard to be my vegetable garden, since it adjoins my house; I will give you a better vineyard for it or, if you prefer, I will give you its worth in money.' But Naboth answered Ahab, 'The Lord forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my ancestors!'

Ahab went home gloomy and out of temper at the words of Naboth of Jezreel, 'I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers.' He lay down on his bed and turned his face away and refused to eat. His wife Jezebel came to him. 'Why are you so dispirited' she said 'that you will not eat?' He said, 'I have been speaking to Naboth of Jezreel; I said: Give me your vineyard either for money or, if you prefer, for another vineyard in exchange. But he said, "I will not give you my vineyard."' Then his wife Jezebel said, 'You make a fine king of Israel, and no mistake! Get up and eat; cheer up, and you will feel better; I will get you the vineyard of Naboth of Jezreel myself.'

So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal, sending them to the elders and nobles who lived where Naboth lived. In the letters she wrote, 'Proclaim a fast, and put Naboth in the forefront of the people. Confront him with a couple of scoundrels who will

accuse him like this, “You have cursed God and the king.” Then take him outside and stone him to death.’

The men of Naboth’s town, the elders and nobles who lived in his town, did what Jezebel ordered, what was written in the letters she had sent them. They proclaimed a fast and put Naboth in the forefront of the people. Then the two scoundrels came and stood in front of him and made their accusation, ‘Naboth has cursed God and the king.’ They led him outside the town and stoned him to death. They then sent word to Jezebel, ‘Naboth has been stoned to death.’ When Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, ‘Get up! Take possession of the vineyard which Naboth of Jezreel would not give you for money, for Naboth is no longer alive, he is dead.’ When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth of Jezreel and take possession of it.

Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, ‘Up! Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, in Samaria. You will find him in Naboth’s vineyard; he has gone down to take possession of it. You are to say this to him, “The Lord says this: You have committed murder; now you usurp as well. For this – and the Lord says this – in the place where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth, the dogs will lick your blood too.”’ Ahab said to Elijah, ‘So you have found me out, O my enemy!’ Elijah answered, ‘I have found you out. For your double dealing, and since you have done what is displeasing to the Lord, I will now bring disaster down on you; I will sweep away your descendants, and wipe out every male belonging to the family of Ahab, fettered or free in Israel.’

When Ahab heard these words, he tore his garments and put sackcloth next his skin and fasted; he slept in the sackcloth; he walked with slow steps. Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, ‘Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Since he has humbled himself before me, I will not bring the disaster in his days; I will bring the disaster down on his House in the days of his son.’

Responsory - James 4:8,10 ; 5:6

- R.** Wash your hands, you sinners! Cleanse your hearts, you hypocrites! * Weep and mourn, and humble yourselves before the Lord.
- V.** You have condemned and murdered the innocent man, while he offered no resistance. * Weep and mourn, and humble yourselves before the Lord.

Second reading - From the Journey of the Mind to God by St Bonaventure

Mystical wisdom is revealed by the Holy Spirit

Christ is both the way and the door. Christ is the staircase and the vehicle, like the *throne of mercy over the Ark of the Covenant*, and *the mystery hidden from the ages*. A man should turn his full attention to this throne of mercy, and should gaze at him hanging on the cross, full of faith, hope and charity, devoted, full of wonder and joy, marked by gratitude, and open to praise and jubilation. Then such a man will make with Christ a *pasch*, that is, a passing-over. Through the branches of the cross he will pass over the Red Sea, leaving Egypt and entering the desert. There he will taste the hidden manna, and rest with Christ in the sepulchre, as if he were dead to things outside. He will experience, as much as is possible for one who is still living, what was promised to the thief who hung beside Christ: *Today you will be with me in*

paradise.

For this passover to be perfect, we must suspend all the operations of the mind and we must transform the peak of our affections, directing them to God alone. This is a sacred mystical experience. It cannot be comprehended by anyone unless he surrenders himself to it; nor can he surrender himself to it unless he longs for it; nor can he long for it unless the Holy Spirit, whom Christ sent into the world, should come and inflame his innermost soul. Hence the Apostle says that this mystical wisdom is revealed by the Holy Spirit.

If you ask how such things can occur, seek the answer in God's grace, not in doctrine; in the longing of the will, not in the understanding; in the sighs of prayer, not in research; seek the bridegroom not the teacher; God and not man; darkness not daylight; and look not to the light but rather to the raging fire that carries the soul to God with intense fervour and glowing love. The fire is God, and the furnace is in Jerusalem, fired by Christ in the ardour of his loving passion. Only he understood this who said: *My soul chose hanging and my bones death.* Anyone who cherishes this kind of death can see God, for it is certainly true that: *No man can look upon me and live.*

Let us die, then, and enter into the darkness, silencing our anxieties, our passions and all the fantasies of our imagination. Let us pass over with the crucified Christ *from this world to the Father*, so that, when the Father has shown himself to us, we can say with Philip: *It is enough.* We may hear with Paul: *My grace is sufficient for you;* and we can rejoice with David, saying: *My flesh and my heart fail me, but God is the strength of my heart and my heritage for ever. Blessed be the Lord for ever, and let all the people say: Amen. Amen!*

Responsory

- R.** All who keep the commandments of God dwell in him, and he in them: * the gift of his Spirit is our proof that he dwells within us.
- V.** It is God who created wisdom in the Holy Spirit and poured her out on all mankind, and has given her to those who love him: * the gift of his Spirit is our proof that he dwells within us.

Let us pray.

Almighty God and Father,
on this feast of Saint Bonaventure,
enlighten our minds with the splendour of his teaching,
and help us to imitate his ardent love of you.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Let us praise the Lord.

- *Thanks be to God.*

St. Bonaventure

Born **Giovanni di Fidanza**, was an Italian medieval Franciscan, scholastic theologian and philosopher. The seventh Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor, he was also Cardinal Bishop of Albano. He was canonised on 14 April 1482 by Pope Sixtus IV and declared a Doctor of the Church in the year 1588 by Pope Sixtus V. He is known as the "Seraphic Doctor" (Latin: *Doctor Seraphicus*). Many writings believed in the Middle Ages to be his are now collected under the name Pseudo-Bonaventure.

He was born at Bagnoregio in Umbria, not far from Viterbo, then part of the Papal States. Almost nothing is known of his childhood, other than the names of his parents, Giovanni di Fidanza and Maria di Ritella. Bonaventure appears to have had something of a near-death experience as a child, since he reports that in his youth he was saved from an untimely death by the prayers of Francis of Assisi, which is the primary motivation for Bonaventure's writing the *vita*.

He entered the Franciscan Order in 1243 and studied at the University of Paris, possibly under Alexander of Hales, and certainly under Alexander's successor, John of Rochelle. In 1253 he held the Franciscan chair at Paris. A dispute between seculars and mendicants delayed his reception as Master until 1257, where his degree was taken in company with Thomas Aquinas. Three years earlier his fame had earned him the position of lecturer on *The Four Books of Sentences*—a book of theology written by Peter Lombard in the twelfth century—and in 1255 he received the degree of master, the medieval equivalent of doctor.

After having successfully defended his order against the reproaches of the anti-mendicant party, he was elected Minister General of the Franciscan Order. On 24 November 1265, he was selected for the post of Archbishop of York; however, he was never consecrated and resigned the appointment in October 1266.

During his tenure, the General Chapter of Narbonne, held in 1260, promulgated a decree prohibiting the publication of any work out of the order without permission from the higher superiors. This prohibition has induced modern writers to pass severe judgment upon Roger Bacon's superiors being envious of Bacon's abilities. However, the prohibition enjoined on Bacon was a general one, which extended to the whole order. Its promulgation was not directed against him, but rather against Gerard of Borgo San Donnino. Gerard had published in 1254 without permission a heretical work, *Introductorius in Evangelium æternum* (*An Introduction to the Eternal Gospel*). Thereupon the General Chapter of Narbonne promulgated the above-mentioned decree, identical with the "constitutio gravis in contrarium" Bacon speaks of. The above-mentioned prohibition was rescinded in Roger's favour unexpectedly in 1266.

Bonaventure was instrumental in procuring the election of Pope Gregory X, who rewarded him with the title of Cardinal Bishop of Albano, and insisted on his presence at the great Second Council of Lyon in 1274. There, after his significant contributions led to a union of the Greek and Latin churches, Bonaventure died suddenly and in suspicious circumstances. The 1913 edition of the *Catholic Encyclopedia* has citations that suggest he was poisoned, but no mention is made of this in the 2003 second edition of the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. The only extant relic of Bonaventure is the arm and hand with which he wrote his *Commentary on the Sentences*, which is now conserved at Bagnoregio, in the parish church of St. Nicholas.

He steered the Franciscans on a moderate and intellectual course that made them the most prominent order in the Catholic Church until the coming of the Jesuits. His theology was

marked by an attempt completely to integrate faith and reason. He thought of Christ as the "one true master" who offers humans knowledge that begins in faith, is developed through rational understanding, and is perfected by mystical union with God.

Canonisation

Bonaventure's feast day was included in the General Roman Calendar immediately upon his canonisation in 1482. It was at first celebrated on the second Sunday in July, but was moved in 1568 to 14 July, since 15 July, the anniversary of his death, was at that time taken up with the feast of Saint Henry. It remained on that date, with the rank of "double", until 1960, when it was reclassified as a feast of the third class. In 1969 it was classified as an obligatory memorial and assigned to the date of his death, 15 July.

He is the patron saint of bowel disorders.

Theology and works

Writings

Bonaventure was formally canonised in 1484 by the Franciscan Pope Sixtus IV, and ranked along with Thomas Aquinas as the greatest of the Doctors of the Church by another Franciscan, Pope Sixtus V, in 1587. Bonaventure was regarded as one of the greatest philosophers of the Middle Ages. His works, as arranged in the most recent Critical Edition by the Quaracchi Fathers (Collegio S. Bonaventura), consist of a *Commentary on the Sentences of Lombard*, in four volumes, and eight other volumes, including a *Commentary on the Gospel of St Luke* and a number of smaller works; the most famous of which are *The Mind's Road to God* (*Itinerarium mentis in Deum*), an outline of his theology or *Brief Reading* (*Breviloquium*), *Reduction of the Arts to Theology* (*De reductione artium ad theologiam*), and *Soliloquy on the Four Spiritual Exercises* (*Soliloquium de quatuor mentalibus exercitiis*), *The Tree of Life* (*Lignum vitae*), and *The Triple Way* (*De Triplici via*), the latter three written for the spiritual direction of his fellow Franciscans.

The German philosopher Dieter Hattrup denies that *Reduction of the Arts to Theology* was written by Bonaventure, claiming that the style of thinking does not match Bonaventure's original style. His position is no longer tenable given recent research: the text remains "indubitably authentic". A work that for many years was falsely attributed to Bonaventure, *De septem itineribus aeternitatis*, was actually written by Rudolf von Biberach (c. 1270 – 1329).

For Isabelle of France, the sister of King Louis IX of France, and her monastery of Poor Clares at Longchamps, Bonaventure wrote the treatise, *Concerning the Perfection of Life*.

The *Commentary on the Sentences*, written at the command of his superiors when he was twenty-seven, is Bonaventure's major work and most of his other theological and philosophical writings are in some way dependent on it. However, some of Bonaventure's later works, such as the *Lectures on the Six Days of Creation*, show substantial developments beyond the *Sentences*.

Philosophy

Bonaventure wrote on almost every subject treated by the Schoolmen, and his writings are substantial. A great number of them deal with faith in Christ, God and theology. No work of Bonaventure's is exclusively philosophical, a striking illustration of the mutual interpenetration

of philosophy and theology that is a distinguishing mark of the Scholastic period.

Much of Bonaventure's philosophical thought shows a considerable influence by Augustine of Hippo. So much so that De Wulf considers him the best medieval representative of Augustinianism. Bonaventure adds Aristotelian principles to the Augustinian doctrine, especially in connection with the illumination of the intellect and the composition of human beings and other living creatures in terms of matter and form. Augustine, who had introduced into the west many of the doctrines that would define scholastic philosophy, was an incredibly important source of Bonaventure's Platonism. The mystic Dionysius the Areopagite was another notable influence.

In philosophy Bonaventure presents a marked contrast to his contemporaries, Roger Bacon, Albert the Great, and Thomas Aquinas. While these may be taken as representing, respectively, physical science yet in its infancy, and Aristotelian scholasticism in its most perfect form, he presents the mystical and Platonizing mode of speculation that had already, to some extent, found expression in Hugo and Richard of St. Victor, Alexander of Hales, and in Bernard of Clairvaux. To him, the purely intellectual element, though never absent, is of inferior interest when compared with the living power of the affections or the heart.

Like Thomas Aquinas, with whom he shared numerous profound agreements in matters theological and philosophical, he combated the Aristotelian notion of the eternity of the world vigorously (though he disagreed with Aquinas about the abstract possibility of an eternal universe). Bonaventure accepts the neo-Platonic doctrine that "forms" do not exist as subsistent entities, but as ideals or archetypes in the mind of God, according to which actual things were formed; and this conception has no slight influence upon his philosophy. Due to this philosophy, physicist and philosopher Max Bernhard Weinstein contended that Bonaventure showed strong pandeistic inclinations.

Like all the great scholastic doctors, Bonaventura starts with the discussion of the relations between reason and faith. All the sciences are but the handmaids of theology; reason can discover some of the moral truths that form the groundwork of the Christian system, but others it can only receive and apprehend through divine illumination. To obtain this illumination, the soul must employ the proper means, which are prayer, the exercise of the virtues, whereby it is rendered fit to accept the divine light, and meditation that may rise even to ecstatic union with God. The supreme end of life is such union, union in contemplation or intellect and in intense absorbing love; but it cannot be entirely reached in this life, and remains as a hope for the future.

Like Aquinas and other notable thirteenth-century philosophers and theologians, Bonaventure believed that it is possible to prove the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. He offers several arguments for the existence of God, including versions of Anselm of Canterbury's ontological argument and Augustine's argument from eternal truths. His main argument for the immortality of the soul appeals to humans' natural desire for perfect happiness, and is reminiscent of C. S. Lewis's argument from desire. Contrary to Aquinas, Bonaventure did not believe that philosophy was an autonomous discipline that could be pursued successfully independently of theology. Any philosopher is bound to fall into serious error, he believed, who lacks the light of faith.

A master of the memorable phrase, Bonaventure held that philosophy opens the mind to at least three different routes humans can take on their journey to God. Non-intellectual material creatures he conceived as shadows and vestiges (literally, footprints) of God, understood as the ultimate cause of a world philosophical reason can prove was created at a first moment in

time. Intellectual creatures he conceived of as images and likenesses of God, the workings of the human mind and will leading us to God understood as illuminator of knowledge and donor of grace and virtue. The final route to God is the route of being, in which Bonaventure brought Anselm's argument together with Aristotelian and Neoplatonic metaphysics to view God as the absolutely perfect being whose essence entails its existence, an absolutely simple being that causes all other, composite beings to exist.

Bonaventure, however, is not only a meditative thinker, whose works may form good manuals of devotion; he is a dogmatic theologian of high rank, and on all the disputed questions of scholastic thought, such as universals, matter, seminal reasons, the principle of individuation, or the intellectus agens, he gives weighty and well-reasoned decisions. He agrees with Albert the Great in regarding theology as a practical science; its truths, according to his view, are peculiarly adapted to influence the affections. He discusses very carefully the nature and meaning of the divine attributes; considers universals to be the ideal forms pre-existing in the divine mind according to which things were shaped; holds matter to be pure potentiality that receives individual being and determinateness from the formative power of God, acting according to the ideas; and finally maintains that the agent intellect has no separate existence. On these and on many other points of scholastic philosophy the "Seraphic Doctor" exhibits a combination of subtlety and moderation, which makes his works particularly valuable.

In form and intent the work of St. Bonaventure is always the work of a theologian; he writes as one for whom the only angle of vision and the proximate criterion of truth is the Christian faith. This fact influences his importance for the history of philosophy; when coupled with his style, it makes Bonaventure perhaps the least accessible of the major figures of the thirteenth century. This is true, not because he is a theologian, but because philosophy interests him largely as a *praeparatio evangelica*, as something to be interpreted as a foreshadow of or deviation from what God has revealed.

In a way that is not true of Aquinas or Albert or Scotus, Bonaventure does not survive well the transition from his time to ours. It is difficult to imagine a contemporary philosopher, Christian or not, citing a passage from Bonaventure to make a specifically philosophical point. One must know philosophers to read Bonaventure, but the study of Bonaventure is seldom helpful for understanding philosophers and their characteristic problems. Bonaventure as a theologian is something different again, as is Bonaventure the edifying author. It is in those areas, rather than in philosophy proper, that his continuing importance must be sought.

Wednesday, 15th July

St. Bonaventure

Mass at 7.00pm

Church of Our Lady of the Annunciation

Intentions :

Doreen Makowski
