

# May 2006 Newsletter

## S. CLEMENT'S CHURCH

2013 Appletree Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

Telephone: (215) 563-1876 [www.s-clements.org](http://www.s-clements.org)

The Rev'd Canon W. Gordon Reid, *Rector*

The Rev'd Richard Wall, *Curate*

The Rev'd Lawrence R. Sipe, *Honorary Assisting Priest*

Peter Richard Conte, Organist & Choirmaster

Bernard Kunkel, *Associate Organist*

## From the Rector

My dear People,

After Easter, I had a short break in San Antonio, Texas, where I stayed with an old friend who has retired there. It was the time of the San Antonio Spring Fiesta; so the place was alive with floats and fireworks and processions. It was also in the nineties much of the time, but I did not have to wear clerical black and so survived quite well.

When I got back I took part in a conference between Roman Catholics and Anglicans on the subject of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the latest agreed document, issued by ARCIC (the Anglican and Roman Catholic International Commission). We were six from each Communion, nominated by Cardinal Rigali and Bishop Bennison, and met at Cathedral Village for a day.

We found a very great deal in common although recognizing that there is often a big difference between the official teaching of the Churches and popular practice and devotion. What was very encouraging was that everyone rejoiced to see our two Churches being able to produce such a document. It is called: "Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ."

Here is a short summary of the ARCIC document from the English Roman Catholic periodical *The Tablet*:

### A. The Scriptures

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, men and women are prepared by God to perform important tasks. God gives them the grace that is needed for the task, and the person called responds in fulfillment of God's will. Mary likewise was prepared by God's grace to be the mother of the Saviour, and was obedient to his message.

There is a foundation for Marian devotion in the New Testament.

### B. Christian Tradition

According to the early Christian authors, the virginal conception of Christ indicates that he was really human (since he had a human mother) and also points to his divinity (since the conception was miraculous).

Mary is the *Theotokos*, or mother of God incarnate.

The main lines of Marian doctrine, devotion and liturgy were established during the first seven centuries of the Christian era.

During the Middle Ages, there was a flourishing of Marian devotion. This focused on such things as the true humanity of Christ and the virtues of Mary.

However, in popular devotion, Mary came to be seen as an intermediary between God and humanity, sometimes even

replacing Christ in this role. This position was subsequently also defended by theologians.

At the Reformation, many reformers reacted against both "real and perceived abuses" in Marian devotion.

In England, the Reformers remained faithful to an emphasis on Mary's role in the Incarnation, and continued other ancient practices in the Virgin's honour.

After the Counter-Reformation, Catholic identity became increasingly associated with devotion to Mary. In 1854, the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was made an article of faith for Catholics, and in 1950, the dogma of the Assumption also.

Criticism within the Catholic Church led to the appeal of the Second Vatican Council to "resist exaggerations" in regard to the Virgin Mary. Marian doctrine and devotion were to be placed in their proper Christological and ecclesiological context.

Since that time, Mary has gained a new prominence in Anglican worship. There has been a "re-reception of teaching about Mary" in both communions in recent decades.

### C. Grace and Hope

Mary received the grace that enabled her to respond to God's call. Through her faith, she bore Christ in her womb, and she embodies "elect Israel." She is now fully present with God in Christ, and thus is a sign of hope for all humanity.

Anglicans cannot accept that the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and Assumption should be required, since they cannot be strictly proved from Scripture.

### D. Mary in the Life of the Church

Anglicans see Mary as an inspiration and model for discipleship, while Catholics recognize the "ongoing ministry of Mary in the economy of grace and the communion of saints."

Many people experience empathy and solidarity with Mary, especially in her sufferings. She provides inspiration to work for justice, especially for women and those who are oppressed.

\*\*\*\*\*

Every evening in S Clement's, at Shrine Prayers which follow Evensong, we begin the prayers to Our Lady of Clemency by saying: "Let us pray for a greater devotion to S Mary and for a wider practice of her invocation. Let us give thanks for the privilege of these evening devotions at this Shrine of her Clemency."

It is always a pleasure when members of the congregation join the clergy in the recitation of the Office and Shrine Prayers. Feel free to come any evening. If we get Mary's position right in our worship and theology, I suspect that many of the troubles now afflicting the Church would be healed.

As one of our over-the-top hymns begins:  
“The happy birds Te Deum sing,  
‘Tis Mary’s month of May”

Enjoy May with our Holy Mother, and give thanks to God  
for her love and faithfulness.

Your friend and Rector,  
Gordon Reid

## News & Notes

**Preacher:** Our preacher on Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> May will be Canon John Beckwith from London. Canon Beckwith has long connections with the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe, of which he was Vicar-General for some years.

**May Festival:** S Clement’s Festival in honour of Our Lady in her month of May will be Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> May. By a happy coincidence this is also Mother’s Day.

**The Clergy** thank the parishioners and friends of S Clement’s for their Easter cards and gifts. The ceremonies of Holy Week and Easter were very well attended, and the servers, organists and choir are to be commended for dedicated work and some very moving and splendid worship.

## Kalendar

May 2006 – *The Month of Mary, Mother of God.*

- 1 M **SS Philip & James, AppMm** [The Bishop & Diocese of Pennsylvania]
- 2 Tu S Athanasius, BCD. [Faithful witness to Catholic Doctrine]
- 3 W **Solemnity of S Joseph, Spouse BVM.** *S Alexander I, P. & his Companions, Mm* [S Joseph's intercession for the whole Church]
- 4 Th Invention of the Holy Cross, tfd. *Ss Martyrs of England & Wales, S Monica, W.* [Unity of the Churches according to the mind of Christ]
- 5 F S Pius V, PC. *Abs.* [Catholic renewal of public worship]
- 6 Sa **S John before the Latin Gate.** [Society of S. John the Evangelist]
- 7 Su **Dedication of the Church.** Easter III. *Of the Octave.* S Stanislas, BM [Parish]
- 8 M Apparition of the Archangel Michael. [Increase of devotion to the Holy Angels]
- 9 Tu S Gregory Nazianzen, BCD. *Of the Octave.* Of the Octave. [Those who teach & study theology]
- 10 W Octave Day of S Joseph. *S Antoninus, BC.* Ss Gordian & Epimachus, Mm. *Of the Octave.* [Living Rosary of Our Lady & S. Dominic]
- 11 Th Of the Octave. [Community of S. Mary]
- 12 F Of the Octave. *Ss Nereus & Comp, Mm. Abs.* [Ecumenical Society of Our Lady]
- 13 Sa S Robert Bellarmine, BCD *Of the Octave.* [The Servers' Guild]
- 14 Su **Easter IV.** Octave Day of the Dedication. *S Richard Reynolds, M.* S Boniface, M. [Parish]
- 15 M S John Baptist de La Salle, C. [Renewal of Christian Education of young people]
- 16 Tu S Simon Stock, C. *S Ubald, BC.* [The Carmelite Family]
- 17 W S Paschal Baylon, C. [The Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament]
- 18 Th S Venatius, M. [Increase of vocations to the Religious Life]
- 19 F S Dunstan, BC. *S Peter Celestine, PC.* S Pudentiana, V. *Abs.* [Rowan, Archbishop of Canterbury]
- 20 Sa S Bernadine of Siena, C. [Increase of devotion to the Name of Jesus]
- 21 Su **Easter V.** [Parish]
- 22 M Feria. *Lesser Litanies.* [For a blessing on spring planting]
- 23 Tu Feria. *Lesser Litanies.* [For justice for farm workers]
- 24 W Feria. *Lesser Litanies.* [For a right use of God's gift of nature]
- 25 Th **Ascension of Our Lord** *Holy Day of Obligation.* [Parish]
- 26 F S AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY, BC. *S Philip Neri, C.* S Eleutherius, PM. *Of the Octave. Abs.* [The Church of England]
- 27 Sa S Bede the Venerable, CD. *S John I, PM.* Of the Octave. [Renewal of Catholic use of the Bible]
- 28 Su **Within the Octave of the Ascension.** Bl Margaret Pole, M. *Of the Octave.* [Parish]
- 29 M Of the Octave. *S Mary Magdalen dei Pazzi, V.* [Increase in devotion to the Holy Ghost]
- 30 Tu Of the Octave. *S Felix, PM.*[Pope Benedict XVI]
- 31 W OUR LADY, Queen. *S Angela Merici, V.* S Petronilla, V. Of the Octave. [Society of Mary]

**Agenda:**

- 6 May Low Mass, 10.00 a.m. followed by Marian Devotions & Benediction.
- 7 May **Dedication of the Church.** Regular Sunday schedule with a Procession & High Mass at 11.00 a.m. Canon John Beckwith, guest preacher.
- 13 May Low Mass, 10.00 a.m. followed by Marian Devotions & Benediction.
- 14 May **Easter IV.** Regular Sunday schedule with May Procession & Crowning of Our Lady following the High Mass at 11.00 a.m.
- 20 May Low Mass, 10.00 a.m. followed by Marian Devotions & Benediction.
- 21 May **Easter V.** Rogation Procession following the High Mass at 11.00 am.
- 23 May Monthly meeting of Vestry, 7.00 p.m. [Anchor Room]
- 25 May **Ascension of Our Lord.** Holy Day of Obligation. Low Mass, 12.10 p.m.; Procession & High Mass, 7.00 p.m.
- 27 May Low Mass, 10.00 a.m. followed by Marian Devotions & Benediction.
- 29 May Memorial Day Holiday. Low Mass: 10.00 a.m. The parish office will be closed & Evensong will not be said publicly.

## Music for the Month – May 2006

7<sup>th</sup> May, Dedication of the Church::

Ordinary: *Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina*, Missa 'Tu es Petrus'

Motet: *William Harris*, Behold, the Tabernacle of God

Antiphon: *Giovanni Croce*, Regina Coeli

Organ: *Percy Whitlock*, Salix; *Alexandre Guilmant*, Sortie (Fete de la Dédicase des églises)

14<sup>th</sup> May, Easter IV (May Festival):

Ordinary: *Hans Leo Hassler*, Missa 'Octo Vocum'

Motet: *Healey Willan*, Rise up, my love, my fair one

Antiphon: *Orlandus Lassus*: Regina Cœli (for 7 voices)

Organ: *Maurice Duruflé*, Scherzo; *Robert Schumann*, Fugue on the name BACH (No. 2)

21<sup>st</sup> May, Easter V (Rogation Procession):

Ordinary: *Orlandus Lassus*, Missa 'Osculetur Me'

Motet: *Joao Rebelo*, Panis Angelicus

Antiphon: *Francisco Guerrero*, Regina Cœli

Organ: *Alfred Hollins*, A Song of Sunshine; *César Franck*, Final

25<sup>th</sup> May, Ascension of Our Lord:

Ordinary: *Tomás Luis de Victoria*, Missa 'Ascendens Christus in altum'

Motet: *Victoria*, Ascendens Christus in altum

Organ: *Olivier Messiaen*, Prière du Christ montant vers son Père; *Messiaen*, Transports de joie

28<sup>th</sup> May, Sunday in the Octave of the Ascension::

Ordinary: *Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina*, Missa 'Ascendo ad Patrem'

Motet: *Palestrina*, Ascendo ad Patrem

Organ: *Edward Elgar*, Allegro (from Sonata in G); *Norman Crocker*, Tuba Tune

# The Glorious Virgin Mary

A Sermon by the Rector

*Revelation 12.1* There appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.

This text comes from that great vision given to S John near the end of his life, a vision of God's glory, the purpose he has for this world, and the means he will use to achieve that purpose. Chapter twelve of that vision tells how John saw this great and wonderful figure of a woman, who was ready to give birth to a child. It talks too about a great red dragon which was waiting to seize the child the minute he was born. But John tells us that when the child was born the woman was carried off into a safe place prepared for her by God, and the dragon was defeated.

This vision is a bit like some of the parables of our Lord where figures in the story stand for other figures, and where there is a deeper meaning behind what is actually told. The red dragon is, of course, Satan, the power of evil; and the woman and her child are Mary and Jesus. What the vision shows in colourful language is that though the devil knew that the birth of our Lord was the beginning of the end for him, and though he tried his utmost to destroy Jesus, yet God triumphed and saved his Son.

The vision talks only about the birth of Jesus and then as though he was immediately safe, but we know how much happened between these two events. Those who first read the Revelation of S John knew well of the attack of Herod, the temptations in the wilderness, the sufferings and crucifixion of Jesus. But they also knew that our Lord held out against all temptations to sin right to the bitter end, and in the triumph of the Resurrection demonstrated his victory over Satan.

S John's vision is, however, concerned with our Lady. It testifies that this woman clothed in glory, with the brightness of the sun like a halo round her entire body, and a crown on her head made up of the stars of the universe, this wonderful figure is none other than the humble girl who said to God: "Be it unto me according to thy word." Of course, it is possible that God could have saved mankind in all sort of ways, but the way he chose (and still chooses) is by using men and doing nothing without our free consent. So we may indeed say that Mary's action began our salvation. And she continued to help God in his work of salvation right to the end of his incarnate life. At the last moment, when he hung on the cross, there she was, full of sorrow at what men can do to sheer goodness, but at the same time praying for them with her Son "for they know not what they do." And as at Bethlehem she had received the naked body of her Son from her womb, so on Calvary she received that same body and buried it in the tomb.

After the Resurrection, the only thing we hear about our Lady in scripture is that at Pentecost she was sitting in the

middle of the apostles when the Holy Spirit came down on them. She was there at the birth of the Church as she had been there at the birth of the master of the Church. As she is the mother of Christ by nature, so she is the mother of the Church by her relation to him who is the head of the Church. On the Cross, Jesus said to John: "Son, behold your Mother" and that was addressed to all Christians for all time: she is our mother because she is the mother of him who is our brother.

All we know of the end of her life is contained in early Christian documents which are not included in the Canon of Scripture. There we read that at her death she was again surrounded by the apostles and at the moment of her death was carried in the sight of them all into heaven. The parallels with our Lord's ascension from the mountain into the clouds are obvious. His sinless body could not corrupt as does any normal human body, and so he returned to heaven with it complete. And so did our Lady. Her sinless body had already reached that state of perfection which fitted it for life in the heavenly places; so it too was not able to remain and corrupt.

What the doctrine of the Assumption of Mary teaches us is this: we are all of us preparing within us a spiritual body fit to live with God. The seed for this body was planted in our baptism and it has been growing ever since, fed by our prayers and the holy sacrament. As bread and wine feed our natural bodies, so this interior spiritual body is nourished and strengthened every time we receive the Blessed Sacrament. And so all of us, when we come to die, have prepared some sort of spiritual body ready for the next life. But with many of us, that body will not be very far on. It may be stunted at certain periods when we stopped praying or neglected the sacraments. Even after death there will be a good deal for us to do to develop fully our spiritual bodies to their full-grown stature.

But with our Lady this was not the case. Her life on earth was one of perfect obedience to God's will, and by the time she came to die she lived only for the love of God and loved all men for his sake. So for her the natural body and the spiritual body were almost the same thing. The story of the Assumption signifies that Mary in her perfection was entering immediately into heaven.

And she is there now, a perfect human being who has reached the goal we are all striving for. It is because of this that we should never hesitate to ask her for help in this journey of ours. Those who think that prayer to our Lady somehow takes away something from our devotion to our Lord are quite wrong. Mary's entire life was spent helping her Son, and all that she did was for him and his Father. And can we believe that it is any

different today? All she does for us now is done in the name of her Son. And all the honour and devotion we give her is given straight to her Son. She keeps nothing for herself but purifies all that we have asked and gives it to our Lord.

Remember what happened in Cana of Galilee. The servants confided in Mary that they had run out of wine, and Mary at once turned to Jesus and told him what was wrong. And Jesus, although it would seem that he had no intention of beginning his miracles like this, tells them what to do. They draw some water and find that it has been transformed into the best wine they had ever tasted.

Well, so it is today. We are not being foolish and credulous when we go to Mary and ask her in all simplicity for our needs and those of our loved ones. We are rather being like those little children who alone will inherit the kingdom of heaven. And what happened at Cana will happen in our case. Mary will share our prayer with our Lord and he will provide us with what we need, and often with something much more wonderful than the thing we asked for.

God gave Jesus to the world through Mary in Bethlehem. God still gives Jesus and his grace to the world through Mary when we, in the silence of our hearts, pray to her. Our prayer is received by Mary our Mother in the perfect state of heaven, and what we ask is purified by her and passed on to her Son.

In the Divine Praises at Benediction, when we say “Blessed be her glorious Assumption” we are praising God for the knowledge and assurance that at least one perfect human person has reached the goal of heaven and is living the life of love with the three divine Persons, that same life which we begin to live here whenever we reach out in love for other persons and give ourselves for them. The lives of our Lord and of our Lady on earth were entwined in relationships of love and service, and the doctrine of the Assumption is a surety to us that these values are not cut off by death, but that they grow and deepen and reach their fulfillment in the life to come.

## Some Marian Quotations

We do not say that every pink and blue doll from an Art Repository is a satisfactory symbol of the Mother of God. But we do say that it is less of a contradiction than exists in a person who says there is no Original Sin in anybody, and then calls it Mariolatory to say that there was no Original Sin in Mary.

--G.K. Chesterton

God the Father made an assemblage of all waters and He called it the sea; He made an assemblage of all His graces and He called it Mary.

--S Louis Marie de Montfort

So Mary went home with John,  
With John—not Jesus, but John.  
See her stumbling along,  
Distraught—without feeling,  
Not knowing or heeding,  
Just stumbling along,  
Supported by John,  
Alone with John.

Once and only once twining her head,  
Three crosses afar dimly seen in the red  
Agony lowering sky;  
Blindly she stumbles along,  
(He had told her to go with John)  
But, O God, did her cry arise to the sky\  
For Jesus. . . Jesus . . . not John.

--E.M. Fison

Poor indeed was the making of the wine in the earthen pots of stone, compared with its making in the lovely growth of the vine with its clusters of swelling grapes—the live roots gathering from the earth the water that had to be borne in pitchers and poured into the great vases; but it is precious as the interpreter of the same, even in its being the outcome of our Lord's sympathy with ordinary human rejoicing. There is however an element in its origin that makes it yet more precious to me—the regard of our Lord to a wish of his mother.

--George MacDonald