



# THE CARDIFF ORATORY PARISH CHURCH OF ST ALBAN ON THE MOORS



A Parish of the Archdiocese of Cardiff  
(a Registered Charity 1177272)

Website: [www.cardifforatory.co.uk](http://www.cardifforatory.co.uk) Facebook: [www.facebook.com/CardiffOratory](https://www.facebook.com/CardiffOratory)

Contact: [frsebastian@cardifforatory.co.uk](mailto:frsebastian@cardifforatory.co.uk) Parish Priest: Fr. Sebastian M Jones

HOSPITAL CHAPLAIN: (Fr Peter Davies) 029 2074 3230 ST Alban's Oratory House: 029 2046 3219.

In an Emergency 07595 372695

Sat 25	<i>Conversion of St Paul, Apostle</i>	8am Mass: Holy Souls 12.30pm Baptism: Abraham Solomon Plummer 6pm (Vigil) Hilda & Pat May
Sun 26	<b>3rd Sunday of Ordinary Time (A)</b>	10:00am Paul O'Brien, RIP 11:15am: Sadlowski Family, RIP 4pm Vespers & Benediction
Mon 27	<b>St Angela Merici, Virgin</b> <i>St John Chrysostom</i>	7:30am: Holy Souls 9:00am Exposition & Confessions 9:30am: Pattie Wheeler, RIP
Tues 28	<b>St Thomas Aquinas, Doctor of the Church</b> <i>St Peter Nolasco</i>	7:30am: Holy Souls 9:00am Exposition & Confessions 9:30am Mother Damian, Int
Wed 29	<b>6:00-6.50pm Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament</b> <i>St Francis de Sales</i>	7:30am: Holy Souls 5:00pm Reception: Mrs Pat Jennings, RIP 7:00pm Rev. Graham Francis, RIP
Thurs 30	<b>Blessed Sebastian Valfre of the Turin Oratory</b> <i>St Martina</i>	7:30am: Holy Souls 9:00am Exposition & Confessions 9.30am Kitty Flynn & Family
Fri 31	<b>St John Bosco, Priest</b>	7:30am Mass: Holy Souls 9:00am Exposition & Confessions 9:30am: Pat Jennings, RIP
Sat 1st February	<b>Our Lady</b>	8am Mass: Holy Souls 6pm (Vigil) Terry O'Brien, RIP
Sun 2nd	<b>The Feast of The Presentation of Our Lord (Candlemass)</b> <i>Purification of BVM (Candlemass)</i>	10:00am Paul O'Brien, RIP 11:15am: Pro Populo 4pm Vespers & Benediction

**CONFESSION TIMES The Sacrament of Reconciliation and Penance** Monday - Friday 9am -9:30am (Wed. 6pm - 7pm) & Sundays during all Masses A door bell has now been positioned in between the two confessionals in the church so that anyone wishing to go to confession outside of these set times may do so. Please press the bell once. If one of the Fathers is in the Oratory he will come to the confessional box as soon as is possible.



*Please remember them at Adoration, praying the rosary; in personal prayer; at Holy Mass.* Kit Lewis, Fr Martin Delaney, Sheila Donovan, Eileen, Phoebe Paul, Ruth Pinder, Audrey Bodenham, Dennis Caine, Christian Babu, Paul Burns, David Burns, Julie Cale, Irene Casey, Ethan Chichester, Phyllis Clarke, John Cowhey, Justin Domenico, Alun Edwards, Elle Fine, Mary Healy, Nell Horon, James Hogg, Barbara Hurley, Don & Dorothy James, Anthony Jeremy, Jennifer King, Colin, Shirley & Michael Kingston, Alexandra Micallef, Betty Millar, Michael McCauliffe, Betty Murphey, Edna Murray, Beatrice Rajanayagam, Maria Sherry, Fay Simpson, Beatrice O'Brien, Iris Murphy, Elizabeth Sitole, Shelagh O'Donoghue, Gareth & Ethan Woodberry, Pat Xuereb

Vigil Lamps: +**Blessed Sacrament:** Josephine Webber, Int. + **Sacred Heart** Leslie J Jones, RIP + **Our Lady's altar** + Teresa Boyd +**The Our Lady of Sorrow, Pieta** Eileen & Carmen Xiberras.



Of your charity, pray for the soul of

**Mr Michael Daniel Murphy**

Committal to take place on Monday 27th January 2020 at 11:15 at Briwnant Chapel, Thornhill Crematorium

*Requiescat in pace.*



Of your charity, pray for the soul of

**Mr. Stephen Leonard Simons**

Funeral to take place at St Alban's Church on **Tuesday 4th February, 2020 at 10:15am.**

*Requiescat in pace.*



Of your charity, pray for the soul of

**Mr. Lee Taylor**

Funeral to take place at St Alban's Church on

**Friday 14th February, 2020 at 11:00am.**

*Requiescat in pace.*

your child, the Parish Priest will need to know, so that the Catechetical materials can be organised for your child. **NB:** *If your grandchild is of an age to make their First Holy Communion and doesn't necessarily have the practical support of their parents for whatever reason, grandparents may of course assist their grandchild in their expressed desire to receive this Sacrament.*

**NB: Adults:** If you are a Catholic who hasn't made their First Holy Communion, or are not a Catholic or not Baptised and would like to become a Catholic so as to make their First Holy Communion, please see Fr Sebastian. At present there are four adults meeting weekly with either Fr Sebastian M or Fr Alexander M to become Catholic. This Oratory custom of "one to one" conversations means that everything is at the pace of you the enquirer and questions and discussion moves at your own pace. Growing in the Catholic Faith is not a *fixed date process*, and neither is the journey to becoming a Catholic.



## WHAT'S ON?



### **NEXT: St ALBAN'S COACH TRIP**

Saturday 4th April, 2020

to

### **STRATFORD UPON AVON**

Leaving Church at 09:00am PROMPT: Leaving Stratford at 4:00pm

Price to be announced

### ST ALBAN'S JUNIOR CHOIR

Eleven Children sang in the Junior Choir last Sunday!

Practise Saturdays at 10.00 am in

St Alban's Hall. It is never too late to join. Please support this new venture by your prayers. Music is a great life skill, why not share it with your children and grandchildren.



### ST ALBAN'S SCHOOL NEWS

The Headmistress is organised a training event for those who have or wish to volunteer at our school. This will help you to help the children. if you haven't already volunteered.

please do so, this week. Please contact our Headmistress, Mrs Woodward on Telephone 02920 462915



### "RECALLING MANY A HAPPY ST PATRICK'S DAY"

#### IN CONCERT WITH FRANK HENNESSY

on Wednesday 18th March, 2020

at 7.00pm in ST ALBAN'S HALL

*Live Music & Many a Funny Tale!*

*Tickets sold in aid of St Alban's School*

*Tickets £5.00*

*Fully Licensed Bar*

#### **Friends of St Alban's School: Social Evening**

Thank you to John and Brendan and all who helped organise this very enjoyable social evening. Ticket sales raised **£237.75.**



#### **St Alban's Knights of St Columba**

The first gathering of the Catholic men's group The *Knights of St Columba* met on Monday 20th. Please pray for the flourishing of this Catholic men's society in the Parish.

## **Corpus Christi Sunday 14th June 2020**

### **FIRST HOLY COMMUNION & PREPARATION**

First Holy Communion which takes place on the Solemnity of *Corpus Christi* on Sunday 14th June 2020 at the 10:00am Mass. Catechesis with the catechists begins on Sunday 2nd February at 5.00pm (17.00). It concludes on Sunday 4th April. Ways of preparation at St Alban's: (1) one to one: parent and their own child (*ie.*, home-schooling); (2) as a group in the excellent Parish Catechetical Programme; or (3) as pupils of St Alban's Parish School. Please note that whichever way you choose for

### **Cardiff Oratory Adult Catechism Class 2020:**

Very shortly a fortnightly Wednesday Night series of six, (60 minute) sessions on the Catechism will be announced. Each session will have a pre-announced topic and input by an invited speaker, there will be an opportunity for questions and discussion. The purpose of each session is instruction in the Catholic Faith. All that is required is an enquiring mind. As St Anselm said: "*Fides quaerens intellectum*" (Faith seeks understanding).

### FINANCE MATTERS:

#### LAST SUNDAY'S (19.1.20) GIVING IN THE COLLECTION

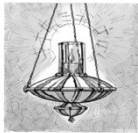
Gift Aid £264.50 Loose £183.82 Direct Debit £65.00

1st Collection	£ 513.32
2nd Collection: Restoration Fund	£ 440.81
Quiz Night: Restoration Fund	£ 216.00

Total £1,170.13

*I wish to acknowledge and to thank most sincerely the Parishioner who gave £500 in memory of their husband who died recently. (This donation will support the development of our Junior Choir). I also thank them for bringing the family's floral tribute to be placed before Our Lady's shrine, the Pieta. It was such a beautiful thought. My own family have asked that we do likewise with the flowers from my father's funeral. It is lovely to see the fresh flowers before Our Lady.*

Thank you most sincerely  
Fr Sebastian



**Vigil Lamps:** The ancient and Catholic tradition of lighting vigil lamps in church is deeply significant and retains its importance for us today. St Alban's church has lamps before the Blessed Sacrament; the

Sacred Heart, Our Lady's altar and for the Holy Soul's at the shrine to Our Lady, Pieta. If you would like to have one of the lamps burn for a loved one's anniversary, or for some special intention or in thanksgiving please use one of the printed envelopes. Tick the box to indicate which lamp and the week. £4 to cover the cost of the candle that burns for a week.

### The Third Marquess of Bute and the Catholic Imagination: *Convent of the Good Shepherd, Pen y Llan*

To appreciate the scale of Bute's revolutionary social interventions upon his estates (and elsewhere), one has merely to read newspaper accounts by his contemporaries and the recipients of his generosity, to begin to appreciate his character. The Victorians understood entitlement as being attached to the privileges of aristocratic birth or mercantile success. The curtailment of ostentatious excess or indifference to those less well-off, was remedied by a gentle attachment to the doctrine of *noblesse oblige*. Bute was a notable Victorian philanthropist. His benefactions drawn from his own personal fortune extended to schools, hospitals, homes and individual bursaries. Bute was among the most generous philanthropists of his day. His giving was not just philanthropy, his was the dynamic dispersal of his 'earthly treasures' in response to his conversion to Catholicism. Bute's conversion and his enthusiastic absorption of the

romanticism and chivalrous assertions of the Victorian-gothic movement found expression in the Convent of the Good Shepherd, Pen y Llan. Bute sought opportunities to re-create what he saw as a Catholic architecture onto his estates, which otherwise he could only boast about on account of his projects of archaeological preservation or the reconstruction of the ruins of ancient monasteries and churches. It was Bute's eagerness to redress what he considered to be the historical rupture of the Protestant Reformation in the religious observance of the nation and at the same time re-introduce a Catholic architecture as memory and repository of an earlier culture, filling the lacunae wrought by the dissolution of the religious houses that fired Bute's imagination. Bute's Catholic architecture was to be a bold statement amidst the skyscape of the new industrial town, beginning on his own estates.<sup>1</sup> The Catholic Victorian imagination had been given much needed impetus by Cardinal Newman's Oscott address 'The Second Spring'.<sup>2</sup> Delivered at Oscott College on 13 July 1852 at the first provincial synod of the Catholic hierarchy since the Protestant Reformation, Newman's address was to contextualise the fortunes of the Catholic Church in England and Wales which in 1847 began to negotiate with Rome for a change in the canonical jurisdiction of the Catholic Bishops of Church in England and Wales from missionary status to an established hierarchy.<sup>3</sup> Wiseman's efforts were to be rewarded on 13 September 1850 when Pope Pius IX, in response to the English bishops' petition, established the Catholic hierarchy and appointed Wiseman to be its head.<sup>4</sup>

Bute like Newman, Manning and Wiseman understood that the Catholic aristocrats and the mercantile classes could no longer content themselves with preserving the ashes of Catholicism in their country estates, town house soirees and embassy private chapels. The challenge for Victorian Catholics was to respond to the call of the newly re-established Catholic hierarchy to create an infrastructure to inspire the rapidly growing Catholic population, to fan Catholicism into a flame.<sup>5</sup> Working class Catholics wouldn't leave their newly formed ghettos until the middle of the next century, but to begin with, these very same strongholds of Catholic religious observance impelled their inhabitants to be a force of change and social mobility both by access to education and social welfare. This was true of Bute's Cardiff. Bute's willing dispersal of his fortune contributed to this inclusion and gives clear testimony of his understanding that the needs of Catholics must be a pressing concern for him and corresponded to the Catholic hierarchy's expectations of Catholic aristocrats such as Bute.

<sup>1</sup> Robert Pope, *Religion and Identity: Wales and Scotland c. 1700-2000* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001), p. 274; Prys Morgan and David Thomas, *Wales: The Shaping of a Nation*. (London: David and Charles, 1984), p. 220; David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 577.

<sup>2</sup> John Henry Cardinal Newman, *Address: Provincial Synod of Catholic Bishops at Oscott College on 13 July 1852*.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Kennedy, *The Catholic Church in England and Wales 1500-2000*. (Yorkshire: PBK Publishing Ltd., 2000), pp. 194-195.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p. 198.

<sup>5</sup> David Mathew *Catholicism in England 1535-1935 portrait of a minority: its culture and tradition* (London: The Catholic Book Club, 1938), p. 210.

Bute and his co-religionists were not content merely to be emancipated, they wanted the profound humanism that they believed underpinned the Catholic religious orders they encountered on their European grand tours. They wanted the towns and cities of England and Wales to become familiar again with the sight of consecrated men and women who had devoted their lives to the education of the poor; the compassionate care of the elderly and supporting the creation of a new class of Catholics for whom there was no glass ceiling to Parliament, the army, the law and universities. Into this period of change for Victorian Catholics, Bute's own Catholicism and historical biases contributed furthermore to a collision of deep seated enthusiasms in his own life. William Burgess understood and feverishly promoted the designs which emanated from the inventive imagination of his patron, the third Marquess of Bute, and likewise augmented this imagined world, with his own exquisite and unique palette. The Butes' Cardiff developments transformed it from another Welsh backwater with a dock into a major port of the Industrial Revolution.<sup>6</sup> The names of Bute and Cardiff will be forever intertwined.

somewhat handsomer manner by my architect."<sup>8</sup> In that same year Bute was also responsible for another very significant architectural development in the town. Bute would transform both the interior architecture of St. Peter's Catholic church, Roath, when he had a stone rood screen constructed and also re-introduced a pre-Reformation religious practice for the town's Catholic people whereby requiring the Fathers of Charity to daily open St Peter's church for visitors and worshippers outside of Mass times.



Figure 1. The former barn that became the Convent of The Good Shepherd, Pen y Llan, Cardiff. Exterior view of the Chapel; Nun's choir (foreground); sacristy (left) Burgess bell tower visible (right) (Photograph: J. Osborne Long).

The design and construction of the Convent of the Good Shepherd, Pen y Llan was of considerable importance to Bute.<sup>7</sup> It brought together Catholic piety by the arrival of the Religious of the Good Shepherd Order to Cardiff; it introduced Catholic architecture by the employment of Burgess for the convent chapel and supplemented the social welfare provision of the town by the practical assistance of unmarried mothers. The central building was a farm barn which Bute transformed into a convent chapel by engaging William Burgess as his architect. In September 1870, Bute wrote to the Superior that he would personally oversee the work on the chapel which was "to be fitted up in a very simple but



Figure 2. The third Marquess's Great Screen and Rood at St Peter's, Cardiff, (circa 1950). (Archive: St Peter's Roath, Cardiff).

Bute in a letter dated Cardiff Castle, 15 September 1870, relates: 'I have set up a great screen and rood in the Fathers of Charity church, and got it opened daily from 2 to, 8pm which enables me sometimes to pay a visit to the Santissimo. The change seems appreciated, and many people come to pray. I hope Our Lord will sanctify them out of His holy Tabernacle.' The letter goes on: 'I am about starting a convent of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd about a mile from this town, in a beautiful spot.' This normalizing of popular piety and the 'opening up' of the church was unheard of since the promulgation of the Penal Laws. Bute's own 'in-laws' were very much of a mind that Catholics should be extremely discreet to the point of anonymity. Bute's imagination was fired by the desire to establish Cardiff's growing Catholic community with its own churches, schools and convents. He imagined the migrant mission as a visible and useful element of Cardiff society. Bute was encouraged by Bishop Brown of Newport, to support a creation of a permanent and stable community which whilst in previous decades was impoverished, shunned and excluded would now be given every encouragement to organise themselves, their guilds and societies so as to contribute to the town's mainstream life and also aspire to enjoy the benefits of access to the nation's

<sup>6</sup> Rosemary Hannah, *The Grand Designer: Third Marquess of Bute* (Edinburgh: Birlinn Ltd., 2013), p. 232.

<sup>7</sup> Cardiff Parish Magazine of St Peter's Cardiff, November 1922, p. i.

<sup>8</sup> Cardiff Parish Magazine of St Peter's Cardiff, November 1922, p. ii.

institutions.<sup>9</sup> This desire for a new status and purpose for Cardiff Catholics by the town's most distinguished first citizen corresponded with so much else in Bute's appetite for change.<sup>10</sup> Bute's social welfare plans throughout his estates were not only for the orphans, the elderly poor and unmarried mothers, but also for universities, better educated clergy, the education of women and against animal cruelty.<sup>11</sup> These expansive interests were not uncommon among the Victorian upper classes, but rarely were they all to be found in one and the same person! On the 17 November 1871 Bute wrote again to the Superior of the Good Shepherd Sisters, 'Mr Burges is coming here next week, and as I want to give him some directions about preparing a little stained glass for your chapel, will you kindly let me know who your holy patrons are? Or what persons or subjects you would particularly like represented? The windows are so narrow that I think hardly anything but a single figure can be inserted.'<sup>12</sup> The interior of the chapel was a handsome and worthy transformation of a barn as had been promised by Bute to the Superior of The Good Shepherd Convent. The wall stencils are a straightforward repeat with the cross at the centre of the design. The altar, baldachino and rood appear to be of varnished pitch pine which Bute much favoured, as in the chapel at Nazareth House, Cardiff. The three lancet and rose windows were supplemented for natural light in the chapel by roof windows. The rest of the building of the Convent of the Good Shepherd was entrusted to Barnett in June 1870. The Sisters of the Good Shepherd arrived on the 24 October 1872, the first Mass being offered by Fr Signini, IC., on 1 November 1872. The Good Shepherd Convent was officially opened with the blessing by the Lord Bishop of Newport, Right Reverend Dr Thomas Joseph Brown (1796-1880) in the presence of the third Marquess on 24 September, 1874.<sup>13</sup>



Fig. 3. Interior: Convent of The Good Shepherd, (circa 1950) Burges's ornately decorated altar incorporating Bute's 'baldequin'. Burges's original wall stencilling has been painted over except for the frieze.

It is to be much regretted that the chapel of the Good Shepherd Convent was subsequently twice 're-ordered' and the majority of

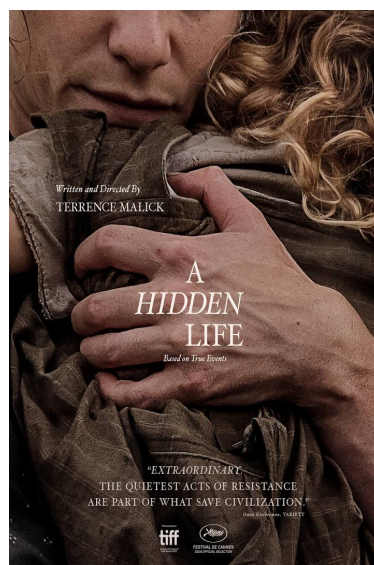
the Burges interior obliterated, firstly by repainting and subsequently by marble. The rose and lancet windows survived until the convent's demolition. The final indignity was the building's abandonment in the 1960's and demolition. The Burgess windows were lost, most likely smashed. This great work of the Third Marquess' imagination is now forgotten; the only faint memory being, today it is the site of St David's Sixth Form College.

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## FILM REVIEW: "A Hidden Life"

This film is based on real events. A HIDDEN LIFE is the story of an unsung hero, devout Catholic Franz Jägerstätter, who refused to fight for the Nazis in World War II. When the Austrian peasant farmer is faced with the threat of execution for treason, it is his unwavering Faith and his love for his wife Fanni and children that keeps his spirit alive.

### AT CHAPTER ARTS CENTRE



(Market Rd, Canton, Cardiff CF5 1QE)

#### Showing Dates

~ 31st January - 6th February ~

*Austria, 1939. Catholic Peasant farmer Franz Jägerstätter, born and bred in the small village of St. Radegund, is working his land when war breaks out.*

Married to Franziska, the couple are important members of the tight-knit rural community. They live a simple life with the passing years marked by the arrival of the couple's three girls. Franz is called up to basic training and is away from his beloved wife and children for months. Eventually, when France surrenders and it seems the war might end soon, he is sent back from training. With his mother and sister-in-law Resie, he and his wife farm the land and raise their children amid the mountains and valleys of upper Austria. Many scenes depict cutting and gathering hay, as well as the broad Inn River. As the war goes on, Jägerstätter and the

<sup>9</sup> Philip Jenkins, *A History of Modern Wales 1536-1990* (London: Longman, 1992), p. 296.

<sup>10</sup> Geraint H Jenkins and J. Beverley Smith, *Politics and Society in Wales 1840-1922* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1988), p. 38.

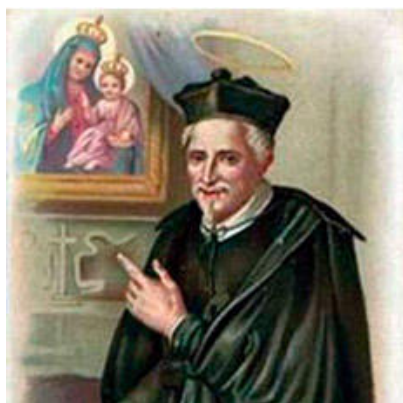
<sup>11</sup> David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 575.

<sup>12</sup> Archive of the Good Shepherd Convent, Manchester: Letter of the Third Marquess of Bute, 17 November, 1871.

<sup>13</sup> Archive, Maison-Mère de Notre-Dame de Charité du Bon Pasteur, Angers, France. Mss. *Foundation of Cardiff Principality of Wales (England)* 1 November 1872.

other able-bodied men in the village are called up to fight. Their first requirement is to swear an oath of allegiance to Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich. Despite pressure from the Mayor and his farm neighbours, who increasingly ostracize him and his family, and from the Bishop of Salzburg, Jägerstätter refuses. Wrestling with the knowledge that his decision will mean arrest and even death, Jägerstätter finds strength in Fani's love and support. Jägerstätter is taken to prison, first in Enns, then in Berlin and waits months for his trial. During his time in prison, he and Fani write letters to one another and give each other strength. Fani and their daughters are victims of growing hostility in the village over her husband's decision not to fight. Fani is eventually able to visit her husband in Berlin. After months of brutal incarceration, his case goes to trial. He is found guilty and sentenced to death. Despite many opportunities to sign the oath of allegiance, and the promise of non-combatant work, Jägerstätter continues to stand up for his beliefs and is executed by the Third Reich in August 1943, while his wife and three daughters survive.

**Oratorian Feast** Blessed Sebastian Valfrè was born on 9th March 1629 at Verduno in the southern Alps. His



background was humble: his mother and father were poor farmers, and the dull routine of work in the fields with his parents and seven siblings took up much of his childhood. He felt a call to the priesthood at an early age, but ran into difficulties with

his family, who demanded his assistance with the farm work; however, he persevered and eventually won them over. He left Verduno to begin his studies in 1641 at the age of twelve, and again these were not easy for him: at one stage he had to stay up most nights copying out books to pay for his education, which took him in its later stages to Turin for studies with the Jesuits. Also at Turin was the Oratory, which had in earlier years been influential, particularly on the youth of the city, but by 1650 was rather down-at-heel: only one priest, Fr Cambiani, remained, and he is described as 'ragged and eccentric'. It can hardly have been an enticing prospect in human terms, but Sebastian nonetheless joined it on St Philip's Day, 26th May 1651, ordained deacon only a week later. By the end of the year, the community had been bolstered by the arrival of three new priests, so by the time Bl Sebastian was ordained priest in February 1652, the Oratory showed signs of life once more. Turin soon began to benefit from his presence as a priest. In common with many cities of that and other ages, it had its share of poverty, which Bl Sebastian did much to

alleviate. He was not afraid to ask the rich for alms to give to the poor, but he took care to be as discreet as possible, doing much of the distribution at night when it was easier to remain anonymous. These activities took on heightened importance from 1678 to 1680, when famine struck Piedmont, and again during the war between Piedmont and Louis XIV, which culminated for Turin in a seventeen-week siege which caused great hardship as well as anxiety — and which Sebastian's prayers are said to have been efficacious in bringing to a successful end for the inhabitants. If Sebastian was esteemed by the less well-off, he was also on good terms with those who were more fortunate. In particular, he maintained good relations with the Dukes of Savoy, one of whom, Victor Amadeus II, he had helped to form from the age of nine into the just ruler he later became. Sebastian was the spiritual director to the entire court of the Duke, and such was the esteem in which he was held that at one stage the Duke did his best to procure the bishopric of Turin for Sebastian. His cause was furthered by the good reputation which he had in the Vatican, but Sebastian's humility led him to dread this ecclesiastical dignity, and was profoundly grateful to be able to avoid accepting it. Sebastian's corporal works of mercy went hand in hand with the spiritual. He was very reluctant at first to start taking on the special responsibility for souls involved in hearing confessions — again, his humility is evident — but, once he did, his reputation spread throughout the city. He also searched out penitents far and wide — hospitals, schools, convents, barracks, prisons, galleys all benefited from his concern for spiritual well-being. His success in this field, as well as in his approach to life in the Oratory in general, was probably due above all else to his blending of careful attention to detail with a genuine compassion, and his penances reflected this. His penitents told of his ability to read souls. Sebastian's work in the confessional was at the very least instrumental in sparking something of a revival of religious observance in Turin: like St Philip, it was said that he had the gift of discernment of spirits. The life of Bl Sebastian was not one of extravagant and heroic deeds done for God, but of the sanctification of an existence of regular routine, year in, year out, and of service to God in the circumstances of ordinary life. His cheerful and attractive manner were an example, and he also had his fair share of difficulties which he had to work hard to overcome. He was, for example, rather petulant and sensitive by nature, being easily offended: he remedied this by trying to be unfailingly polite even to those who hurt him. He also knew what it was to suffer from spiritual darkness, finding prayer a real struggle at times, and study even more unattractive. But his perseverance, which manifested itself from his earliest years, stood him in good stead.

Bl Sebastian died early in the morning of January 30th 1710; miracles began even before he could be buried, and he was beatified by Pope Gregory XVI in 1834.

## NEXT SUNDAY IS CANDLEMAS



Candlemas Day is another name for the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. Forty days after His birth, Our Lady and St Joseph brought baby Jesus to the Temple for the Hebrew rites of purification and dedication as prescribed by the Torah. According to the Book of Leviticus (12:1-4), when a woman bore a male child, she was considered “unclean” for seven days. On the eighth day, the boy was circumcised. The mother continued to stay at home for 33 days for her blood to be purified. After the 40 days, the mother and the father came to the Temple for the rite of purification, which included the offering of a sacrifice – a lamb for a holocaust (burnt offering) and a pigeon or turtledove for a sin offering, or for a poor couple who could not afford a lamb, two pigeons or two turtledoves. Note the Holy family made the offering of the poor (Lk 2:24).

Also, the Holy Family were obliged by the Torah to “redeem” the new born son: “The Lord spoke to Moses and said, ‘Consecrate to me every first-born that opens the womb among the Israelites, both of man and beast, for it belongs to me’” (Ex 13:1). The price for such a redemption was five shekels, which the parents paid to the priest. This “redemption” was a kind of payment for the Passover sacrifice, by which the Jews had been freed from slavery. However, St. Luke in the Gospel does not mention this redemption, but rather the presentation of Our Lord: “When the day came to purify them according to the law of Moses, the couple brought Him up to Jerusalem, so that He could be presented to the Lord, for it is written in the law of the Lord, ‘Every first-born male shall be consecrated to the Lord’” (Lk 2:22-23). So the focus is on Christ’s consecration to God. The verb “to present” (paristanai) also means to “offer,” which evokes Jesus being presented as the priest who will offer Himself as the perfect sacrifice to free us from the slavery of sin, seal the new and eternal covenant with His blood, and open the gates to the true promised land of heaven.

Simeon, a just and pious man, who awaited the Messiah and looked for the consolation of Israel, was inspired to come to the temple. He held baby Jesus in his arms and blessed God, saying, “Now, Master, you can dismiss your servant in peace; you have fulfilled your word. For my eyes have witnessed your saving deed, displayed for all the peoples to see: A revealing light to the Gentiles, the glory of your people Israel” (Lk 2:29-32). Simeon, thereby, announced that the Messiah has come not just for the Jew but the gentile; not just the righteous, but the sinner. He then blessed the Holy Family, and said in turn to Mary: “This child is destined to be the downfall and the rise of many in Israel, a sign that will be opposed – and you yourself shall be pierced with a sword – so that the thoughts of many hearts may be laid bare” (Lk 2:34-35). So the Presentation is a proclamation of Christ – Messiah and Priest, Lord and Saviour. He is the light who came into this world to dispel sin and darkness.

For this reason, traditionally at least since the seventh century, candles have been blessed at Mass this day that will be used throughout the year, hence coining the term “Candlemas.” As we consider the feast of the Presentation, we remember that our parents presented us at church for our baptism. We were dedicated to God, and given the name, “Christian.” We, too, received a lit candle from the paschal candle, at which the priest said, “You have been enlightened by Christ. Walk always as a child of the light and keep the flame of faith alive in your heart. When the Lord comes, may you go out to meet Him with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom” (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults). Therefore, as a light, each of us must bear witness to Our Lord. We must be the beacon that guides others to Christ. Also, we must realize that we, too, will be “a sign that will be opposed,” especially on issues of the sanctity of human life, marriage and the family. (In many Eastern European countries, the feast of the Presentation officially closes the celebration of Christmas. For this reason, Pope St John Paul II began the custom of keeping the Nativity scene in St. Peter’s square until Feb. 2. Second, Candlemas Day also was important in the lives of farmers. An old English song went as follows: “If Candlemas be fair and bright, / Come, Winter, have another flight. / If Candlemas brings clouds and rain, / Go, Winter, and come not again.”

**MASS for the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes  
Sunday 16th February at 3.30pm at Our Lady  
of Margam Port Talbot.**

# KEEP THE OLD 'GREY CELLS' TICKING OVER.....

## Holy Eucharist

HFH  
 CKPRSSMTD  
 SMUIROBICQESQ  
 KSYVCXOQTIYDAPSB  
 OVAMFJVPCRTICQRSSCN  
 LYBNOITCIDENEBGINHNKP  
 MDRTDOLVTZARXEUEOOEUS  
 UECEENQJKIFDELHYSILSSTQ  
 BGGAKTENVAOTCRVATTYENOP  
 GAPNDLUSMFTLAIKBAHACRIFSA  
 WVVPOSVRYAONTIWINOROPSZEN  
 DKHCFW GALMRXHATIKOOMLAATG  
 NRWGYZUPREYCNRHNDDMACXS IQ  
 PUONSIOOABYZCANTOWEAUERPWL  
 JARFJFWYAYLNTVSI LHTQNRIZHJY  
 ISTGKGTGCASMETDYXARISFTSJ  
 VHSRLSMGRBIIAWZEHICOZIAGN  
 TIHIQAUTUARRUSKUSKONACCJM  
 PRVOWSSXPCCORSCDSAFREHD  
 VKLINNTCEBEKSUHVIEEPDNE  
 OSOAWSSHUDDLSSADIDLLOOK  
 QMRBTNMURGKQMROHBQBLP  
 TQHOIESPIZSDIOYKASG  
 OCVDCIPPSKHSLMAKE  
 YYYUAZETTTBCX  
 HJMHRWVQ  
 DNC

Adoration	Holy Communion	Sacerdotal Power
Altar	Holy Eucharist	Sacred Host
Benediction	Host	Sacrifice
Blessed Sacrament	Jesus Christ	Sin
Blood	Last Supper	Tabernacle
Body	Mass	Transubstantiation
Bread	Monstrance	Viaticum
Bread of Life	Mystery	Victim
Calvary	Passion	Wine
Ciborium	Priest	Worship
Consecration	Priesthood	
Faith	Propitiatory	
Grace	Real Presence	