



Vox Clamantis

Bulletin of the Society of Saint Pius X in Scotland

April 2019

"The will to do, the soul to dare"

Dear Faithful,

In our November edition, last year, we touched briefly on the influence of St. Margaret in the court of Malcolm Canmore with regard to various religious practices. Certainly, we can see her hand in the keeping of Lent and the "Easter duty". Since April this year is the time when we can follow her good example, I wanted to quote a little more extensively from her dealings with the Culdees who, probably



through Manichean scruples, were not fulfilling the reception of Holy Communion part of their Easter duty because of some perceived 'unworthiness'.

"Shall no one that is a sinner taste that holy mystery? If so, then it follows that no one at all should receive it, for no one is pure from sin. And if no one ought to receive it, why did the Lord make this proclamation in the Gospel? —*Except ye shall eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, ye shall not have life in you.* But if you would understand the passage which you have quoted from the Apostle according to the interpretation of the Fathers, then you must give it quite a different meaning. The Apostle does not hold that all sinners are unworthy of the sacraments of salvation for after saying 'He that eateth and drinketh judgment to himself,' he adds, 'Not discerning the Body of



the Lord'; that is, not distinguishing it by faith from bodily food. It is the man who, without confession and penance, and carrying with him the defilements of his sins presumes to approach the sacred mysteries, such a one, I say it is, who eats and drinks judgment to himself. Whereas we who many days previously have made confession of our sins and have been cleansed from their stains by chastening penance, by trying fasts, by almsgiving and tears—approaching in the Catholic faith to the Lord's Table on the day of His Resurrection, receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, the immaculate Lamb, not to judgment but to the remission of our sins, and as a health-giving preparation for eternal happiness".

This shows very clearly the importance of receiving Our Lord at Easter (it binds under pain of mortal sin), but also the preparation beforehand, which is precisely why our Lord's forty day fast in the wilderness is commemorated just before Easter. This is not simply giving up chocolate but 'chastening penance, trying fasts, almsgiving and tears'. If our Lenten penance thus far has been a little trivial, there are still three weeks left to ramp up our efforts at the start of this month.



With every good wish and blessing,

Rev. Sebastian Wall (Prior)



St. Magnus, Martyr of Orkney



Last November we looked at the life of St. Margaret and this month I would like to look at the life of a distant relative of hers, St. Magnus. It is often difficult to describe accurately the lives of Catholic saints who were also political figures, since many of the sources which we have are secular, which may lead to a distortion of the facts, sometimes deliberately, but sometimes quite unwittingly. It is also important in the case of St. Magnus to consider his age and circumstances to realise why he was a martyr and a saint.

In today's modern world many think of Orkney as being on the periphery of Europe but in the 11th and 12th centuries it was on the central trading routes between Scandinavia and Western lands, and this made it extremely important. Caithness, the neighbouring region on the Scottish mainland was also ruled from Orkney, though as a fiefdom to the Scottish King, but the Orkneys and Shetland isles only came under the Scottish crown in 1468.



Cathedral of St. Magnus in Kirkwall

Magnus was the younger son of Erlend Thorfinnsson who jointly ruled Orkney with his twin brother, Paul, as *Jarls* under the young Norwegian king, Magnus Barelegs (he wore the kilt, in Celtic fashion). Paul was actually related to this latter through his wife and both *Jarls* to the saint King Olaf through their mother. Their joint rule was successful and a welcome peace had been established and lasted until the sons of the two approached manhood. Paul's only son, Haakon, who was marginally older than his two male cousins, was ambitious for the sole rule of Orkney and an impulsive character. Erling, Magnus' older brother, was similarly a fiery character and conflict arose between the two. The leading chieftains of the islands, however, were not keen on sacrificing their hard-earned peace for a quarrelsome teenager and, at a *Thing* (the Orcadian parliament), matters came to a head and Haakon was sent into exile. He spent the next few years in Norway and Sweden, licking his wounds.

The Norwegians had annexed the Orkneys in the 9th century, displacing (or assimilating) the Picts. Archaeology shows us that Pictish dwellings existed alongside the Viking longhouses and also that it seemed, two hundred years before our saint, the Vikings paid much more attention and care to their ships than their houses. They had been exposed to Christianity and indeed by 1076, the year of Magnus' birth, Christianity had become established as a religion in Norway but social customs and conventions took longer to take hold. Whereas it is unlikely that many still held to the idea of bloodthirsty warriors being carried by winged Valkyries to Valhalla, nonetheless there was a strict social code involving pagan concepts of valour and honour, rather than mercy, clemency and forgiveness.

Magnus Barelegs, in fact, had the old marauding spirit and indeed was the last of the Viking kings to die in battle. He received the quarrelsome Haakon willingly and in 1098 set off, at this latter's suggestion, to re-establish Orkney as a centre for raiding Scotland and Western lands even as far south as Wales and, later, Ireland.

If Haakon thought he was to be made the sole *Jarl* of Orkney, he was to be disappointed, since Magnus Barelegs installed his 8 year old son as the new *Jarl* sending the twin brothers back to Norway where they were both dead by the end of Winter. Barelegs then set off, raiding and plundering the Western Isles and beyond. Iona was spared plunder and bloodshed but it was a lone exception. Kintyre was ravaged and Man became a Viking possession again. At Anglesey (a Norse name – *Môn* was the Celtic name and the Welsh name even today) there was a fierce battle, the first one of the raids. All hands were called to fight but Magnus, the Orcadian, who had been taken by the king on the raiding mission, sat down, unarmed, on deck.



The king was incredulous and not a little angry but Magnus replied that he had no quarrel with any man present. This should have meant summary execution but the king contented himself with sending Magnus below to go and hide if he didn't want to fight. Magnus, however, refused saying, "Let God shield me; I shall not die if He wills that I should live". And he took up a psalter and sang while the battle raged around him.

This was a terrible disgrace for the still pagan spirit of the Vikings and when the battle was won and they sailed north once more, Magnus was probably more or less under arrest. When they were anchored off the coast of Scotland, however, Magnus escaped, swimming ashore and making his way to Edinburgh and King Edgar, the first of the three sons of St. Margaret to sit on the Scottish throne (Magnus' grandmother had married Malcolm Canmore so they were related in a roundabout way).



Magnus Barelegs continued his raiding taking Erling with him but was ambushed in Ulster, dying the last Viking king in 1103. His son, Sigurd, almost immediately returned to Norway leaving Haakon as the ruler of Orkney but with his steward to represent Magnus' part in the inheritance. The steward was summarily despatched by Haakon who with cruelty and injustice became *de facto* sole ruler. Though he was not anxious to rule, Magnus nonetheless saw it as a duty to return to claim his inheritance principally to curb Haakon's worst excesses. And so, when he returned two years after the death of Barelegs, the people were only too happy to welcome him back as a legitimate heir, which was then confirmed by the child kings in Norway in 1108.

The two cousins then ruled jointly for a time, repelling raiders and protecting the peace. But Haakon's jealousy persisted and some ten years later in Lent (the documents give conflicting dates but the date of Easter and the fact that *Things* were normally held on a Tuesday would seem to indicate 1118) a Norse parliament was called to settle the dispute. These *Things* often ended in bloodshed but Haakon saw he was outnumbered and arranged another *Thing* after Easter (14th April that year) on the island of Egilsay, taking a solemn oath to come with no more than two ships and unarmed. Magnus arrived first but then saw 10 ships coming up the

sound and retreated to the church to pray. The next day, after hearing Mass, he came out to face his cousin.



St. Magnus' church on Egilsay

Even by pagan Norse standards, Haakon's treachery was abject, since it involved breaking of oaths regarded as irrevocable and utterly binding. Thus, when Haakon ordered his standard bearer to kill his cousin, adding kinslaying to oathbreaking, the standard bearer absolutely refused. Finally, the hapless cook, Lifolf, was ordered to be the executioner. Magnus lay down to pray "not for himself and his friends but rather there and then for his foes and banemen, and forgave them with all his heart for what they had misdome towards him". Then he rose and said to Lifolf, "Stand thou before me, and hew me on the head a great wound, for it becomes not to chop off chiefs' heads like thieves; strengthen thyself, wretched man. I have prayed to God to have mercy on thee".

Magnus was canonised some 20 years after his burial and many miracles. The rocky landscape of Egilsay, for example, became a green field when he was buried there. And his life and death were crucial in the development of Christianity in the region, expressing to his people the absoluteness of the Christian claim. The Norsemen of the Scottish islands had accepted something of the general ethic of Christianity but Magnus revealed the truth that the disciple of Christ may have to repudiate both those things that, by the standards of the society in which he lives, may seem to be his duties, and those that he might regard as his rights. This is the demand of supernatural faith, not a mere ethical code, something not limited by human usage and acquired convention. The situation we find ourselves in today is very different from 12th century Orkney but we must have the same strength of faith as St. Magnus to navigate safely through it to our heavenly home.





Mass Schedule



	CARLUKE	GLASGOW	EDINBURGH
Monday 1 st April	11am		
Tuesday 2 nd April			6.30pm
Wednesday 3 rd April			7am
Thursday 4 th April	11am		
Friday 5 th April (<i>First Friday</i>)		6.30pm	
Saturday 6 th April (<i>First Saturday</i>)		11am	11am
Sunday 7 th April — Passion Sunday		10.30am	11am
Monday 8 th April	11am		
Tuesday 9 th April			6.30pm
Wednesday 10 th April			7am
Thursday 11 th April	11am		
Friday 12 th April		6.30pm	
Saturday 13 th April		11am	11am
Sunday 14 th April — Palm Sunday		10.30am	11am
Monday 15 th April	11am		
Tuesday 16 th April	11am		
Wednesday 17 th April	11am		
Thursday 18 th April — Maundy Thursday		7pm	7pm
Friday 19 th April — Good Friday		3pm	3pm
Saturday 20 th April — Holy Saturday		10.30pm	10.30pm
Sunday 21 st April — Easter Sunday		10.30am	11am
Monday 22 nd April	11am		
Tuesday 23 rd April	11am		
Wednesday 24 th April	11am		
Thursday 25 th April	11am		
Friday 26 th April	11am		
Saturday 27 th April		11am	11am
Sunday 28 th April — in Albis (Low Sunday)		10.30am	11am
Monday 29 th April	11am		
Tuesday 30 th April			6.30pm

Contact details:

Telephone: 01555 771523

Email: standrews@fsspx.uk

Resident priests:

Rev. Fr. Sebastian Wall (Prior)

Rev. Fr. Anthony Wingerden

**Saint Andrew's
House**

31, Lanark Road,

CARLUKE

ML8 4HE

**Saint Andrew's
Church**

202, Renfrew Street,

GLASGOW

G3 6TX

**Saints Margaret and Leonard's
Church**

110, Saint Leonard's Street,

EDINBURGH

EH8 9RD

If you require any further information concerning one of these places, or need to talk to a priest e.g. in case of emergency for the Sacraments, please ring the phone number mentioned in contact details.