



# Vox Clamantis

Bulletin of the Society of Saint Pius X in Scotland

March 2020

*"The will to do, the soul to dare"*

Dear Faithful,

March is entirely taken up this year with Lent. The actual fasting season began towards the end of last month and continues into April but that means that the whole of this month is devoted to works of penance, prayer and almsdeeds.

Last time we saw the season of Shrove-tide being divided up into periods less than 70, 60 and 50 days long with the Sundays at the start of those periods having the Latin names for those numbers. The word Lent itself is simply the Old English word for Spring, which refers to the time it falls, though in Latin it is *Quadragesima* meaning 40—the number of days before the start of the Sacred Triduum and this has been taken over by Gaelic as *Carghais*. Other languages emphasise the fasting element of this holy season *Wielki Post* in Polish (the big fast) for example.



Of course, as far as precept is concerned fasting is required under pain of mortal sin on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. But Mgr. Lefebvre wrote to the faithful of the Society, "The faithful who have a true spirit of faith and who profoundly understand the motives of the

Church will wholeheartedly accomplish not only the light prescriptions of today but, entering into the spirit of Our Lord and of the Blessed Virgin Mary, will endeavour to make reparation for the sins which they have committed and for the sins of their family, their neighbours, friends and fellow citizens".

Until the Council, there had always been a certain rigour in what the Church required. Mediaeval practices in Scotland included 'Black fasts' i.e. eating nothing at all—this was



on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday; no animal meats and fats, no eggs or dairy products and very often, particularly in religious houses, no food at all until 3pm, the hour of Our Lord's death. Sundays were days of less liturgical discipline but the fasting rules remained. It seems that mediaeval Christians subsisted on bread, vegetables and some salt during Lent, the eggs and dairy going into the pancakes on Shrove Tuesday and the eggs making a welcome return at Easter with special blessings given in the Ritual for them.

A return to Apostolic times or even Mediaeval rigour is probably not practicable in our day but it is certain that we are still tempted by "the concupiscence of the flesh and the concupiscence of the eyes and the pride of life". If we wish to lead a more Christian life, at least during these 40 days, true fasting and penance still unites us to the sufferings of Our Lord in order to give us a share in His redemption. Similarly, a more frequent attendance at Holy Mass, more frequent Holy Communion and the practice of the specifically Christian virtues of humility, meekness, patience, gentleness and mercy will allow the Holy Ghost to lead us in the ways of perfection, in a greater charity towards God and our neighbour.

With every good wish and blessing,

Rev. Sebastian Wall (Prior)

# THE SCOTTISH REFORMATION

## PT. III – INTERNAL CAUSES



Last time we looked at outside elements in the process leading to the destruction of the Church in Scotland and finished with a brief look at the mutual influence of Church and State at that time. Of course, for the purposes of the iconoclasts one of the significant elements in persuading the Scottish nobility to covet or the clergy to look for a life of ease was the question of money.

As far as the Crown itself was concerned, half its revenues from taxation came from the Church in Scotland. This latter's amazing wealth was due largely to the productiveness of its lands. They were run, as we saw last time, by trained men and were less subject to the vagaries of war. Even today, the Church's wealth is a subject of controversy, but in practice, before 1560, it was at any rate used largely for national purposes.

Eighty-six per cent of parish livings were appropriated, which had for a consequence that the clergy were recruited by people whose interests were not primarily religious meaning often poorly paid, badly motivated and ill-educated men – the “impoverished dregs of the clerical profession” as Dennis McKay calls them. The abbots, particularly, were indirectly appointed by the King and the administration of the larger abbeys given, as a sort of pension, to former servants of the crown.

Much of the Church's wealth was thus “laicised” as it were (on top of taxation) and though Popes and bishops made formal protests, monarchs had not been keen to see these practices abolished. The system worked but was very vulnerable to abuse and, of course, led ultimately to a less than ideal clergy. Moreover, the nominal owners of lands – and those who still collected rents – were practically removed from influencing the social welfare of their tenants. So, the Church in theory took the money but seemed to give little back to the poor from whom she took it.

It did not require greater wit than Arran possessed to see that “the sin of covetise” might bring the nobles to effect a change which would give them the whole, not just a large slice, of this particular cake, whereas, for their part, no little resentment was engendered among the laity for what they perceived as poor value for money.

But it would be wrong to see, as the usurpers later claimed, that a general

resentment of the clergy incited the Catholics of Scotland to a rejection of the Catholic Faith in itself. There is a world of difference between wishing abuses to be corrected and a desire for the complete destruction of what was at the time such an important element in the make-up of Scottish society. It is one thing to deny the Church its wealth, another to repudiate its authority. And did the Scottish people (not the nobles) really think that commendatory abbots, for example, were always, or even usually, men of evil lives? Did they see their clergy as unlearned, depraved and avaricious?



**A performance of *Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* from the 1950s in Edinburgh**

Lindsay's *Kitteis Confesion* and *Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* are often cited to show they did. But this is problematic. They were *satires* and have the same value of some of the works of the 1960s have about the establishment in Britain of its time. Similarly, they had a very small readership. Most people in Scotland got their criticism of lax clergy from orthodox preachers throughout the preceding centuries since the denunciation of the vices of every class of society was probably a common mediaeval sermon theme.

When we come to accusations of ignorance, we need to look at what the Church did for education and culture. The Grammar schools were all run by priests, the universities staffed by the clergy. When the revolutionaries talk about ignorance, it is because the orthodox refused to accept their novel doctrines. Indeed, the bishops in the middle of the century were anxious about improving still more the knowledge acquired by their clergy precisely because heresy and false doctrine come normally from an ignorance of the teachings of

the Fathers and Councils, history and theology. Dr. J. Wormald writes “Scotland presents the extraordinary spectacle of what was almost a ‘Counter-Reformation’ taking place before the Reformation itself” and it was no small feat that Scotland possessed the Tridentine decisions barely months after they were made and to put them into force years before any other country in Europe. Lessons from the catechism were read out half an hour before High Mass, a “two-penny faith” was made available in Scots for those who could read.

Once again, however, efforts were hampered by the aristocratic patronage of the Scots Church which meant that time-servers were put in place instead of a more fervent clergy (Wauchope, a vigorous defender and propagator of the Council’s teachings was passed over for the See of Dunkeld in favour of the earl of Arran’s brother). At any rate, Hamilton, Wishart or John Knox have not left any evidence of their *own* learning behind them so the point would seem to be moot.

The accusations of lack of chastity are similarly wildly exaggerated. Looking at the records of the Privy Seal for the thirty years before 1560 there could not have been more than one in a hundred of the clergy living in concubinage. When we examine the motivation behind this, it is often linked to the reception of benefices. If a man wished to be a bishop, he had to receive major orders (he was probably in minor orders already), so, with an eye on possible promotion, some did indeed found bastard families (just in case). The abbots *in commendam* could be dispensed from major orders, but by marriage they would forfeit their position and revenues so a bastard family was the route taken.

We have to remember also that, though there were cases of abuse, this was consistently condemned by the religious authorities of the time. The Bishops Hamilton and Beaton admitted that they had *broken* the law of God by their concubinage (before entering major orders), Methven, Wishart and Miln, who all lived thus, wanted the law *destroyed*. It is absurd to say that in the eyes of the common man the heretics set a better moral tone than the orthodox clergy of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Indeed, if we look to where the preachers of novel doctrine came from, many were priests of the Church and used their priestly authority to teach the doctrines they had adopted. All of them had abandoned the ideal and practice of clerical celibacy. After the armed incursions and the destruction of the Church Courts of Justice, Catholic discipline could no longer be applied and without the strength that comes from the sacraments and discipline, celibacy

became a difficult doctrine to defend.

Perhaps the most popular accusation of secular sources is to say the Scots disliked the “heresy hunting”. The case which is always quoted is the execution of George Wishart in 1545. As we have seen, however, the Church was an integral element of the social order and since the preaching of novel doctrines threatened this order, she had a duty to resist it. Cardinal Beaton applied the heresy laws strictly before and after the death of James V, yet he was enormously popular among the people. Indeed, after his murder the number of executions for heresy can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

What caused the downfall of the Church in Scotland was, it seems, not abuses among the clergy but precisely the efforts of the Church herself to correct these abuses. If a priest were a heretic, or lecherous, or a seeker of money and position rather than the salvation and, indeed, social welfare of his flock, he may have got away with it before the self-imposed reforms of the Church following Trent and particularly the local Councils held in Scotland between 1549 and 1560. When the Church tried to extirpate these abuses, the clergy, not all of whom were in that state for the best reasons, had the choice of correcting their error or losing their livelihood. If this is combined with the force of foreign arms, it only took a small group of determined enemies of the Church, Knox et al., to present what they saw as a “reformed” vision of the Church and increasing numbers of the clergy slipped into their ranks. The circumstances of how Church and State were united, together with the unstable political climate after the death of James V, meant that, whereas these reforms elsewhere in Europe led to a renewal of Church life, they were not given the time nor opportunity to do so in Scotland.

Next time we shall look at the second attempt of the revolutionaries to take advantage of this unstable situation and the growth of Calvinism.



**John Knox with the sword before Wishart**

# Mass Schedule

	CARLUKE	GLASGOW	EDINBURGH
Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> March — 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent		10.30am	11am
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March			7am
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March			6.30pm
Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> March			7am
Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> March ( <i>First Friday</i> )	11am		
Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> March ( <i>First Saturday</i> )		11am	11am
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> March — 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent		10.30am	11am
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> March — St. John Ogilvie		6.30pm	
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> March		11am	11am
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> March — 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent		10.30am	11am
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> March — Saint Joseph		6.30pm	12.30pm
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> March		11am	11am
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March — 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent (Laetare)		10.30am	11am
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	11am		
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> March — Annunciation		6.30pm	12.30pm
Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup> March		11am	11am
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> March — Passion Sunday		10.30am	11am
Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> March			7am
Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup> March			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.**