



# Vox Clamantis

Bulletin of the Society of Saint Pius X in Scotland

April 2022

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

Dear Faithful,

The date of Easter this year makes it quite difficult to strike the right balance in an editorial. Most of the month is still taken up with the penitential spirit of Passiontide and Holy Week but then a good chunk is devoted to the celebration of the Paschal joy of the Resurrection.

The month begins with Magowk's Day with the same sort of pranking that takes place south of the border but with the cry of 'Huntegowk' when someone has successfully *gi'en someone the gowk* or *magowked* someone. Sir Walter Scott mentions a variation on this phrase in his *Guy Mannering*, "It would look unco-like, I thought, to be sent out on a hunt-the-gowk errand wi' a land-louper like that". There is a similar phrase used—Gowk's nest, meaning something wonderful but absurd (since gowks famously don't build nests).

The bird has a poor reputation in Scotland being called a *bradog* (rascal) in the Highlands due to the neglect of its young. In St. Kilda particularly it is seen as a bird of ill omen. Richard Kearton, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century writes, "It is said the Cuckoo is rarely to be seen in Hirta, and then only upon such extraordinary occasions as the death of MacLeod, his steward, or the arrival of some notable stranger upon the island. This venerable superstition is



more than two centuries old, and is still believed in as firmly as ever. In fact, its truth is said to have been verified only a year or two back, when a bird visited the island as a presage of the late proprietor's death".

Many visitors to Scotland comment on the possibility of seeing four seasons in one day during April. Indeed, a white Easter is far more common than a white Christmas. Particularly alarming at this time is the Gowk storm—an untimely spring storm of short duration, sometimes involving snow. It is uncertain whether this nomenclature is given because the storm occurs at the same time as the gowk arrives or the 'mad' character of the meteorological phenomenon since 'gowk' is often used as an expression for simpleton or fool. Nancy Brysson Morrison wrote a novel set in the Highlands called *The Gowk Storm*.

Last month opened with a wedding and was due to close with a funeral. Alan and Monika Weir were married on the 1<sup>st</sup> March in a beautiful sung Mass and on 20<sup>th</sup> March Dr. Ruth McQuillan passed to her eternal reward. For unknown reasons the funeral on the 31<sup>st</sup> was cancelled by the undertakers and she will now be buried this month on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Ruth was one of those far-sighted souls who recognised the dangers of the new liturgy from the very beginning. We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to those Catholics who first sounded the alarm bells. Requiescat in pace.

With every good wish and blessing,

Rev. Sebastian Wall (Prior)





The forty-two years of George Hay's bishopric were key in the emergence of the Scottish Church from the persistent persecution it had suffered for over two hundred years. For some twenty of these he had as a companion John Geddes. It is difficult to think of two men more dissimilar: Hay, the convert, rigorous, Geddes, the cradle Catholic, expansive. Nonetheless, they remained devoted friends and certainly helped change the opinion of much of society regarding the ancient Faith.



**John Geddes**

Since the '45, the controversy had not been entirely religious. The secular side of the antipathy, however, was certainly helped by the Pope recognising the Hanoverian legitimacy in 1766. This removed the aspect of 'treason' from the persecution of Catholics and indeed Bishop Hay was to find himself sympathetically received when he asked for leases and for materials for building 'Mass-houses'. Bishop Geddes was extremely popular in polite and cultured society being learned and of the widest interests. He regularly walked from Edinburgh to Glasgow both for recollection and meditation but also for the opportunity it gave him to visit old churches and castles and to maintain his interest in archaeology. More than any other individual, John Geddes prepared the way for the support that was given by the more humane and better educated Scots of the time to move for the repeal of the penal laws; for in him they

saw a man who, while his whole life and strength were vested in his religious belief, sustained a lively interest in history and scholarly studies, and a keen practical appreciation of poetry and the arts (he was a friend and correspondent of Robert Burns).

As far as making political progress, however, it was the austere, canny Hay who became the focal figure with those who held the levers of power. Sir John Dalrymple, becoming friendly with his fellow Scots among the Catholics in Paris, realised the folly and injustice of the penal laws back home. Indeed, the Presbyterian historian, Dr. John Cunningham wrote, "There is no more humiliating chapter in our history and legislation than these penal statutes against the down-trodden Romanists... They were to be a proscribed and outcast race, denied not only the rights of fellow citizens, but the charity which is generally extended to the most worthless of our fellow creatures".

Sir John, however, was a Baron of Exchequer, highly respected in Ministerial circles, and had already had some success with the emancipation of Irish Catholics (principally for reasons of military expediency—with war in America and the threat of war with France, Catholics made good recruits). When he came to Edinburgh, Bishop Hay told him that the number of Scottish Catholics was too small and



**Sir John Dalrymple**

that their cause would best be served by uniting it with that of the English Catholics and so put him in touch with Bishop Challoner.

Thus, in 1778 the cause of Catholic Emancipation was launched in England. But Scottish Catholics, clergy and laity, were to be disappointed. The English Catholic nobility secured a relief bill only for themselves without including Scotland in the measure.

Once news of the repeal South of the Tweed reached Scotland, a fury of protest broke out. Glasgow rivalled Edinburgh in Protestant zeal. An English merchant, Bagnall, who introduced the manufacture of Staffordshire pottery to Glasgow, gave a room in his house to be a chapel where Mass was celebrated. The house and adjoining warehouses were burned by the mob. And there was more than mob fury. There was organised protest. The General Assembly of 1778 solemnly denounced the remission of the penal laws. It was not a unanimous finding; there were some wise and tolerant churchmen. Principal Robertson spoke in defence of the repeal, and was threatened, from various mob sources, with violence and even death, for his sympathy with the papists. His following was a small one. The minister, Dr. Gillies, who spoke against the repeal had the great majority with him, maintaining that: "Though we have the utmost detestation of everything that wears the appearance of persecution for conscience sake, yet we cannot help thinking that the repeal of a law which self-preservation once rendered necessary for defending the reformed interest in these lands against the arts and violence of those whose intolerant principles oblige them to persecute all those who differ from them, is an object that demands the peculiar attention of this Church... The present state of the Protestant interest among us doth loudly call upon us to be more upon our guard, and to exert ourselves with a greater vigour for its support and preservation, as there is too good reason to believe that the Popish missionaries have, of late, been unusually active and successful". Then, quoting from the Assembly's charge to their Commission, he declared, "The said Commissioners are appointed and empowered to keep a correspondence with the Committee for reformation of the Highlands and Islands, for suppressing Popery and superstition, and for promoting the knowledge of true religion, and carrying on a reformation in these parts... and if need be to apply to the government for a proper remedy and speedy redress". The yellow stick was brandished.

The Synod of Glasgow appointed a fast day in expiation of the national sin of attempting to tolerate fellow-Christians. Other synods

spoke their part vigorously.

The Relief Church Synod, though they might 'heartily detest the doctrine of persecution for conscience sake', were shaken to the core by the idea that freedom of worship might be granted to the papists. They held Catholicism to be "a religion fast spreading in our land, many of the principles of which are false and impious and incompatible with the natural, civil, and religious rights of mankind".

Fear was beginning to show even more plainly than hatred. Catholicism was now not only holding its members, but gaining converts. The Synod of Perth and Stirling expressed toleration of other kirks, 'though dissenting from the Established Church', agreeing to their 'worshipping God according to their lights'. It is scarcely to be hoped that Episcopacy was included in this magnanimity; Romanism was certainly excluded: "Viewing the Popish religion in the same light in which it has been viewed in this Church since the Reformation, as in its principles and spirit subversive of every other system of faith and mode of worship, and also dangerous to the civil as well as religious liberty of mankind, they must disapprove of every measure which tends to promote the growth of so hurtful a superstition".

The Gordon Riots—"that display", as it has been called, 'of a dark diabolic fanaticism... which actually subsists in Great Britain perhaps beyond any country in the world'—had their counterpart in Scotland, though occurring a year earlier and led by the same Lord Gordon. The Scottish Relief Bill was withdrawn by an apprehensive Government.

Thus it was, when Bishop Hay returned to Edinburgh from London in February 1779, it was to cries of 'See the Papist, the black Papist! Shoot him, kill him!' in the streets. When he finally arrived at his home in the Blackfriars Wynd, it was to find the chapel on fire and his house being sacked. His precious library of ten thousand volumes was totally destroyed. While this 'wark o' God' went bonnily on, the Bishop asked an old wife what it all meant, "Eh, sir", said she, not recognising him, "we are burning the Popish chapel, and we only wish we had the Bishop to throw into the fire".

These excesses were repeated a year later in London but this time Gordon had gone too far and though he had prevented relief from coming to Catholics in Scotland, his attempt to repeal the Relief Act in England was unsuccessful. However, as we shall see next time, full relief was not to come to Scotland until 1793 and emancipation even later.

# Mass Schedule

	CARLUKE	GLASGOW	EDINBURGH
Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> April ( <i>First Friday</i> )		6.30pm	6.30pm
Saturday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April ( <i>First Saturday</i> )		11am	11am
Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April — Passion Sunday		9am & 11am	9am & 11am
Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> April	11am		
Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> April	7.15am		
Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> April	7.15am		
Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> April	11am		
Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> April	7.15am		
Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup> April		11am	11am
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup> April — Palm Sunday		10.30am	10.30am
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> April	11am		
Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> April	7.15am		
Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> April	7.15am		
Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> April		7pm	7pm
Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> April		3pm	3pm
Saturday 16 <sup>th</sup> April		Vigil—10.30pm	Vigil—10.30pm
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> April — Easter Sunday		Midnight and 11am	Midnight and 11am
Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> April	11am		
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> April	7.15am		
Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> April	7.15am		
Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> April	11am		
Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> April	7.15am		
Saturday 23 <sup>rd</sup> April		11am	11am
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> April — in Albis (Low Sunday)		9am & 11am	9am & 11am
Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> April	11am		
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> April			6.30pm
Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> April	7.15am		
Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> April	11am		
Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> April	7.15am		
Saturday 30 <sup>th</sup> April		11am	11am

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**ML8 4HE**

**Saint Andrew's  
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**G3 6TX**

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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.