



# Vox Clamantis

Bulletin of the Society of Saint Pius X in Scotland

March 2023

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

Dear Faithful,

This year, the whole of March is taken up with Lent, including Passiontide. There is a sprinkling of Scottish saints throughout: St. Adrian on the 4<sup>th</sup>, St. Duthac on the 8<sup>th</sup>, St. Constantine on the 11<sup>th</sup>, and St. Archibald, which this year falls on Passion Sunday. There are a few others but perhaps most importantly, St. John Ogilvie's feast is on the 10<sup>th</sup>. St. John is the only modern Scottish martyr. As we have seen in both the series on the 'Reformation' and now the Restoration, many suffered cruel losses including financial ruin and exile, but the revolutionaries were anxious not to give the Catholic Church more blood martyrs and so extirpated the millennial Faith by a long process of attrition.

Of course, since the 50s, no feasts are celebrated unless they be 2<sup>nd</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup> class. St. Joseph (traditionally a Holy Day of Obligation in Scotland), the Annunciation and the Friday in Passion week which is dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows are the ones we celebrate this year. St. Patrick is 2<sup>nd</sup> class in Glasgow but nowhere else in the country.

I mentioned on the first Sunday of Lent the necessity of Penance during this holy time and particularly the benefits of fasting. The obligation to fast has been greatly reduced recently but this does not affect the value of this practice, recommended in the Old Testament, the New Testament and certainly practised during all ages of the Church.

St. Thomas gives the benefits of this salutary practice:

- first, in order to curb the concupiscence of the flesh;
- then, to facilitate the elevation of our souls toward divine realities;
- finally, to make satisfaction for our sins.

Archbishop Lefebvre explains this, "Our Lord gave us the example during His life here on earth: pray and do penance. However, Our Lord, being free from concupiscence and sin, did penance and made satisfaction for *our* sins, thus showing us that our penance may be beneficial not only for ourselves but also for others.

"Pray and do penance. Do penance in order to pray better, in order to draw closer to Almighty God. This is what all the saints have done, and this is that of which all the messages of the Blessed Virgin remind us.

"Would we dare to say that this necessity is less important in our day and age than in former times? On the contrary, we can and we must affirm that today, more than ever before, prayer and penance are necessary because everything possible has been done to diminish and denigrate these two fundamental elements of Christian life".

It is a curious thing that whereas many modern secular 'influencers' are recommending fasting (and various other penitential practices) merely for health reasons, the Church authorities cannot bring themselves to recommend, much less impose, fasting on the faithful for the higher motives given by St. Thomas. Please make every effort to be generous in your penitential practices this Lent and may God bless and reward you for your efforts!

With every good wish and blessing,

Rev. Sebastian Wall (Prior)





After almost a year, some slow progress has been made on the next episode in our journey towards emancipation and restoration of the Catholic hierarchy in Scotland. The delay is principally due to the enormous amount of material available to condense into two pages of a local bulletin. The situation towards the end of active persecution, taking place at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century is far better documented than the scant details we have from the previous 200 years.

In our last instalment, we saw the violent riots stirred up by the ministers due to the Catholic Relief Act passed for England. Bishop Hay took it upon himself to write to Parliament, a “Memorial in behalf of the Roman Catholics of Edinburgh and Glasgow, containing a full account of their sufferings, and of the means taken to excite the mob against them”. The Memorial contained many powerful arguments. The Catholics of Scotland complained in the petition of the treatment they had recently received, and asked from Parliament compensation for their losses, and the enactment of such measures as would prevent similar excesses for the future. They gave emphatic expression to their sentiments of loyalty and devotion towards their country, for which they were ready, in case of need, to sacrifice their lives and fortunes and they ventured to expect in return the protection of the state in the exercise of their



*William Edward Hartpole Lecky*

religion. The great and serious injury done to them in the late popular risings demanded due compensation, which they earnestly prayed the Government to grant them. Compensation (hardly sufficient for the damage done, one must say) was duly granted but the Catholic Relief Bill which had already passed for England had not even been heard for Scotland.

Edmund Burke, it finally was, who presented the Bill before Parliament in March 1779. It was not adopted by the Government, however, due to the rabid opposition of Lord Gordon among others. His name is indeed associated with the riots which subsequently took place in London the following year. Lecky describes him thus, “He was a Scotchman, and appears to have been honestly fanatical, but his fanaticism was mixed with something of the vanity and ambition of a demagogue, and with a vein of recklessness and eccentricity closely akin to insanity”. Whatever the misgivings of the objective historian, these events successfully kept the discussion of Catholic Relief out of Parliament until 1793.

A solution was actually proposed to Pitt by the Catholic Committee slightly earlier. He then asked for the opinion of the Catholic Universities regarding the Pope’s alleged ability to dispense citizens from obedience to their sovereign. The Sorbonne, Louvain, Douai, Alcalá, and Salamanca, duly replied and a new relief bill was duly prepared in April, 1788. So far, all went smoothly, but in the following year, Bishop Gibson, the Vicar Apostolic in England, and the Catholic Committee put forward an Oath that would be acceptable for Catholics to swear. It was of a very questionable nature. Bishop Hay was particularly dismayed. He wrote to Bishop Geddes, “I would never sign the Paper sent by Bishop Gibson: besides other reasons, it includes, in my Opinion, an equivalent to the Oath of Supremacy”. He even went so far as to say it had been prepared by “pretended friends or false brethren”. His coadjutor, Bishop Geddes, expressed himself in very similar terms; and the joint opinion of the Scottish prelates seems to have had considerable weight with the bishops in England, who soon afterwards issued an encyclical in which the proposed oath was unconditionally condemned.

So, it was not until April of 1793 that the Bill was proposed by the Lord Advocate, who declared that the grounds for which the Penal Statutes had been introduced were no longer valid – i.e. that the Catholics were not a danger to the overthrow of the State. Even at

this late stage and with Relief long since accepted in England, both houses showed some opposition. Lurid tales were told them of the dire consequences should the Scottish Catholics be given any measure of freedom at all. The purveyors of these fantasies were principally, of course, the ministers who could see that, should Catholicism no longer be criminalised, their absolute hold over the population would come to an end. Some of the ministers supported Relief, Principal Robinson among them. He recounts, "My character as a man, as a citizen, and as a minister of the Gospel, has been delineated in the most odious colours: I have been represented as a pensioner of the Pope, as an agent for Rome, as a seducer of my brethren to Popery, as the tool of a king and ministry bent on overturning the Protestant religion. In pamphlets, in newspapers, and hand-bills, I have been held out to an enraged mob, as the victim who deserved to be next sacrificed, after they had satiated their vengeance on a Popish bishop. For several weeks hardly a day passed on which I did not receive incendiary letters, several of them signed by Lovers of truth, and Friends to the Protestant Religion. It was in the name of Jesus I was warned that my death was resolved, and the instruments prepared for cutting short my days. May God forgive the men who have disseminated such principles".

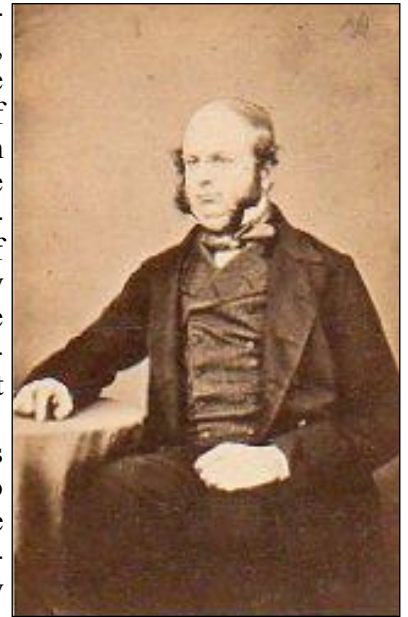
The Bill, nonetheless, still made its passage through the Lower House and then the Upper House, finally receiving Royal Assent in May 1793. The Mission Bishops wrote enthusiastically to the Pope to report this great victory. "Finally, by Divine Providence, and by the favour of our government, the penal laws against our Catholics have now been almost totally suppressed".

Their joy was generous. Most of the penal statutes, especially the very worst from the first Parliament of William III, were gone. Catholics were allowed the peaceful possession and free disposition of their property but they were still excluded from almost every public office and marriages and baptisms were still registered in the local (Presbyterian) parish church. But, at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the penal laws had really run their course. Notwithstanding the inhuman treatment which a not inconsiderable section of the Scottish people had for more than two centuries endured on account of their religion, the Catholic Church in Scotland included three bishops, forty priests, twelve churches, and some 30,000 faithful. She had come forth from the fire of persecution purified and strengthened; and it was in no mere empty form of words that the Scottish bishops, in a letter to Rome, extolled the Divine Provi-

dence which had overruled for good the malice of their enemies, and expressed their fervent wish that their people might continue in the future to render themselves worthy of the protection of heaven.

The effects, however, produced in the spiritual life of the Scottish nation by the dominant religious system of the 18<sup>th</sup> century were noticeable even to a secular Protestant historian

(Henry Thomas Buckle), who said of the Scots, "A people in many respects very advanced, and



**Henry Thomas Buckle**

holding, upon political subjects, enlightened views, do, upon all religious subjects, display a littleness of mind, an illiberality of sentiment, a heat of temper, and a love of persecuting others, which shows that the Protestantism of which they boast has done them no good, and that it is unable to free them from prejudices which make them the laughing-stock of Europe and a byword and a reproach among educated men".

Lecky adds that the Presbyterian atmosphere meant that the Scots, "have been more destitute of all grace or charm, more vehemently intolerant, and at the same time more ignorant and narrow".

In truth, there probably never existed among a civilised people a system of espionage like that of the Presbyterian Church, extending, as it did, its authority to even the most intimate relations of human society. Nothing could escape the vigilant eyes of the ministers, whose agents not only paraded the streets, but invaded the privacy of the domestic circle in order to make sure that none absented themselves from the preaching. In every relation of life the ministers claimed a right to interfere and a decisive voice.

Nonetheless, when Emancipation finally came round, they still made their objections known and delayed the process where they could. The process was, however, extremely complicated with all sorts of factors playing a role in the final decision. But that is for another article.

# Mass Schedule

	Carlisle	Glasgow	Edinburgh
Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> March	7.15am		
Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March	11am		
Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March ( <i>First Friday</i> )		6.30pm	6.30pm
Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup> March ( <i>First Saturday</i> )		11am	11am
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> March — Second of Lent		8.30am & 10am	9am & 11am
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> March			7am
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> March	7.15am		
Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> March	7.15am		
Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> March — St. John Ogilvie	7.15am		
Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup> March		11am	11am
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> March — Third of Lent		8.30am & 10am	9am & 11am
Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> March			6.30pm
Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> March	7.15am		
Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> March	7.15am		
Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> March		11am	11am
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> March — Fourth of Lent (Laetare)		8.30am & 10am	9am & 11am
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> March — Saint Joseph (transferred)		6.30pm	6.30pm
Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> March	7.15am		7am
Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March	7.15am		
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	11am		
Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> March	7.15am		
Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> March— Annunciation		11am	11am
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> March — Passion Sunday		8.30am & 10am	9am & 11am
Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup> March	7.15am		
Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> March	7.15am		
Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> March	11am		
Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> March — Our Lady of Sorrows		6.30pm	6.30pm

**Contact details:**

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**Resident priests:**

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**Rev. Fr. Reid Hennick**

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**Saint Andrew's  
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**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.