



INSTITUTE OF CHRIST THE KING SOVEREIGN PRIEST

In the Diocese of Plymouth

XXIII Sunday after Pentecost

13th of November 2022

A Special Mass for the Feast of St John of the Cross on Thursday 24th November at 6.15pm at Lanherne Convent.

This special Mass for this Carmelite Doctor of the Church will feature a polyphonic setting by William Byrd sung by *Ottavo*, a local ensemble, under the direction of Mrs Petra Stephenson.

Thank you for your generous support of the Seminary! Your help makes it possible for so many young men to be formed for the priesthood.

St Gertrude, Virgin



The school which is founded upon the rule of the great Patriarch of the Monks of the West began with St. Gregory the Great. Such was the independent action of the Holy Spirit who guided it that in it women have prophesied as well as men. It is enough to mention St. Hildegarde and St.

Gertrude, with whom we may fitly associate St. Mechtilde and St. Frances of Rome. Anyone who has tried modern methods will find, on making acquaintance with these ancient writers, that he is breathing another atmosphere, and is urged onward by a gentle authority which is never felt but which allows no rest. He will not find that subtlety, that keen and learned analysis, he has met with elsewhere, and which rather weary than aid the soul.

The pious and learned Father Faber has brought out, with his characteristic sagacity, the advantages of that form of spirituality which gives the soul breadth and liberty, and so produces in many persons effects which some modern methods fail of producing: “No one,” says he, “can be at all acquainted with the old-fashioned Benedictine school of spiritual writers without perceiving and admiring the beautiful liberty of spirit which pervades and possesses their whole mind. It is just what we should expect from an order of such matured traditions. St. Gertrude is a fair specimen of them. She is thoroughly Benedictine ... a spirit of breadth, a spirit of liberty, that is, the Catholic spirit; and it was eminently the badge of the old Benedictine ascetics. Modern writers for the most part have tightened things, and have lost by it instead of gaining. By frightening people, they have lessened devotion in extent; and by overstraining it, they have lowered it in degree.” (Faber, 1855, *All for Jesus*)

In any case, there are many ways, and every way is good which brings men back to God by a thorough conversion of heart. But we are sure that those who may be led to commit themselves to the guidance of a saint of the old school will not lose their time; and that if they meet with less philosophy and less

psychology on their way, they will be subdued by the simplicity and authority of her language, and be moved and melted as they contrast their own souls with that of their saintly guide. And this blessed revolution will take place in almost every soul that follows St. Gertrude in the week of Exercises she proposes to them, if only they really desire to draw yet more closely the ties which unite them to God, if their intention be fixed aright, and their souls truly recollected in God. We may almost venture to assure such persons that they will come forth from these Exercises transformed in their whole being. They will return to them again and again with ever increasing pleasure; for they will have no discouraging memory of fatigue, nor of the slightest constraint laid upon their liberty of spirit. They will feel confounded, indeed, to be admitted so near the inmost heart of so great a saint; but they will also feel that they have been created for the same end as that saint, and that they must bestir themselves, and quit all easy, dangerous ways, which lead to perdition.



And if we be asked whence comes that wonderful influence which our Saint exercises over all who listen to her, our answer would be: from her surpassing holiness. She does not prove the possibility of spiritual movement and advance; she moves and advances. A blessed soul, sent down from heaven to dwell awhile with men, and

speaking the language of the heavenly country in this land of exile, would doubtless utterly transform those who heard its speech. Now St. Gertrude was admitted to such familiar converse with the Son of God, that her words have just the accent of such a soul; and this is why they have been and are like winged arrows, which pierce and wound all within their range. The understanding is enlarged and enlightened by her pure and elevated doctrine, and yet St. Gertrude never lectures or preaches; the heart is touched and melted, and yet St. Gertrude speaks only to God; the soul judges itself, condemns itself, renews itself by compunction, and yet St. Gertrude has made no effort to move or convict it.

And if we ask what is the source of the special blessing attached to the language of St. Gertrude, the answer is that it blesses because it is so impregnated with the divine Word, not only with the revelations which St. Gertrude received from her heavenly Spouse, but with the sacred Scriptures and the liturgy of the Church. This holy daughter of the cloister drank in light and life day by day from the sources of all true contemplation, from the very fountain of living waters which gushes forth from the psalms and the inspired words of the divine Office. Her every sentence shows how exclusively her soul was nourished with this heavenly food. She so lived into the liturgy of the Church that we continually find in her revelations that the Savior discloses to her the mysteries of heaven, and the Mother of God and the saints hold converse with her on some Antiphon, or Response, or Introit, which the Saint is singing with delight, and of which she is striving to feel all the force and the sweetness.

Hence that unceasing flow of unaffected poetry which seems to have become quite natural to her, and that hallowed enthusiasm which raises the literary beauty of her writings almost to the height of mystical inspiration. This child of the thirteenth century, buried in a monastery of Suabia, preceded Dante in the paths of spiritual poetry. Sometimes her soul breaks forth into tender and touching

elegy; sometimes the fire which consumes her bursts forth in transports of fervor; sometimes her feelings clothe themselves quite instinctively in a dramatic form; sometimes she stops short in her sublimest flights, and she who almost rivals the seraphim, descends to earth, but only to prepare herself for a still higher flight. It is as though there had been an unending struggle between the humility which held her prostrate in the dust and the aspirations of her soul, panting after Jesus, who was drawing her, and who had lavished on her such exceeding love.

Still we pray the reader not to be frightened at the thought of being placed under the guidance of a seraph, when his conscience tells him that he has still so much to do in the purgative way, before he can venture to enter upon paths which may never open to him on earth. Let him simply listen to St. Gertrude, let him fix his eye upon her, and have faith in the end she proposes to him. When the holy Church puts in our mouths the language of the Psalms, she knows full well that that language is often far beyond the feelings of our soul; but if we wish to bring ourselves up to the level of these divine hymns, our best method is certainly to repeat them frequently in faith and humility, and await the transformation they will assuredly effect. St. Gertrude detaches us gently from ourselves, and brings us to Jesus by going before us herself, and by drawing us after her, though at a great distance. She goes straight to the heart of her divine Spouse, and she might well do so; but will it not be an inestimable blessing if she bring us to his feet like Magdalen, penitent and transformed by love?

Even when she writes for her sisters alone, let us not suppose that these exquisite pages are useless to those of us who are living in the midst of the world. The religious life, when expounded by such an interpreter, is a spectacle as instructive as it is striking. Need we say that the practice of the precepts of the Gospel becomes more easy to those who have well pondered and admired the practice of its counsels? What is the Imitation of Christ but a book written by a monk for the use of monks;

and yet who is not familiar with its teaching? How many seculars delight in the writings of St. Teresa; and yet the holy Carmelites make the religious life the one theme of her teaching.

The list of the devoted admirers of her writings would be long and imposing. But there is an authority far higher still—that of the Church herself. That mother of the faithful, ever guided by the Holy Ghost, has in her holy liturgy set her seal upon St. Gertrude. The Saint herself, and the spirit which animated her, are there forever recommended and glorified in the eyes of all Christians, in virtue of the solemn judgment contained in the Office of her festival. (Gueranger, Exercises of St Gertrude (1865), Preface)

The life of Gertrude the Great, as she has merited to be distinguished among the Saints of the same name, was humble and obscure. (1256-1302). At five years of age she entered the Abbey of Helfta near Eisleben, and there she remained hidden in the secret of God's face. (Psalm 30:21)



For several centuries, by an error which has also found its way into the Legend of the feast, she was confounded with the Abbess Gertrude of Hackeborn, who governed the monastery during our Saint's lifetime, and was herself favored with divine gifts. It was not until Gertrude's sublime Revelations, contained in the five books of the *Legatus divinæ pietatis*, or *Legate of divine love*, had at length been published, that in 1677 her name was inscribed in the Roman Martyrology. In the following century (1738) Clement XII ordered her feast to be celebrated, as a Double, by the whole Church. The West Indies chose her as patroness; and a town in New Mexico bears her name.

The Sisters of Lanherne are grateful to the Providence of God who supplies their needs through the generous support of the faithful.

Lanherne Nuns

Sort code: 30-98-76

Account: 45742568

Holy Angels

Collection: £80.50

Bank Transfers: £457

Torquay

Account Name: ICKSP

Account Details: 40-03-33

Account Number: 12333902

Date	At Lanherne	Canon Tanner
	Mass Offered For:	
13	Richard Thomas RIP Novena Benefactors	Novena for the Holy Souls
14	Richard Thomas RIP Novena	Paul Barrett RIP
15	Richard Thomas RIP Novena	Anne Harding
16	Richard Thomas RIP Novena	Eveline Finch
17	Richard Thomas RIP Novena Private Intention	Michael O'Sullivan
18	Richard Thomas RIP Novena	Poor Souls
19	Richard Thomas RIP Novena	Father Hahnesy RIP

Rev. Canon Scott Smith
Chaplain of Lanherne Convent
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lanherne@icksp.org.uk

Safeguarding Reps:

Christina Hunt

Sarah Checkley

At Lanherne Convent

Sundays:

8.30am Low Mass

10am Sung Mass

Monday through Saturday:

8am Mass

Thursdays:

8am and 6.15pm Mass

Confession:

Thursdays: 5.15pm-5.45pm

Fridays and Saturdays after Mass

Rev. Canon Scott Tanner, Prior
House of Saint-Richard-Reynolds
Holy Angels Church, Queensway,
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Safeguarding Rep: Katarzyna Adamiak

At Holy Angels

Sundays:

9.45 -10.15am Confessions

10.30am Mass

Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays &

Fridays:

5pm Adoration (with Confession available)

6pm Mass

Tuesdays & Saturdays:

8.30am Mass

Plymouth: Sundays at 8.30am