

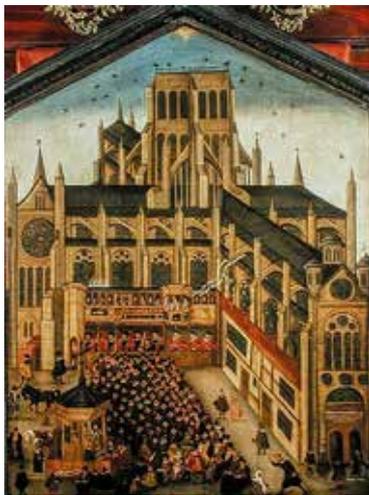


Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest

Bl. John Forest

Blessed John Forest was born in 1471 near Oxford. At 17 he joined the Franciscan Observant Friars. He later studied at Oxford and was ordained at the age of 26.

Henry VIII had favoured the Observant Friars, as had his father before him. Their friary at Greenwich served the royal family at Greenwich Palace and John Forest eventually served as confessor to Queen Catherine. He was invited by Cardinal Wolsey to preach at the important pulpit of St Paul's Cross, and continued to preach there regularly.



St Paul's Cross - influential pulpit located outside of the old St Paul's Cathedral. The old cathedral was destroyed in the Great Fire of London in 1666 and replaced by the building designed by Christopher Wren that still exists on the same site.

But it was all to change once Henry embarked on his effort to put aside his wife in order to marry Anne Boleyn. Failing to obtain an annulment from the Church, Henry decided to make himself head of the Church in England so that he could have his way. In 1531 he took the title of Protector and Supreme Head of the Church of England. The Act of Supremacy of 1534 declared that the king was "the only supreme head on Earth of the Church of England" and the Treasons Act of 1534 made it an act of high treason to deny this title. The Oath of Supremacy was the test.

Because the Observant Friars did not support Henry, many of them were arrested and in 1534 their order was suppressed. Some died in prison and some were hanged, drawn and quartered. John Forest was unique among them in being burnt to death. This was then the usual punishment for heresy and Thomas Cromwell, Henry's chancellor, decided to try Blessed John for heresy - that is, heresy against Henry's new religion.

On 22nd May 1538 Father Forest was taken on a hurdle from his prison at Newgate to the place of execution at Smithfield. There he was harangued by the heretic Bishop Latimer, but Forest would not recant. Wriothesley, one of the king's courtiers, wrote that Forest remained silent while Latimer spoke and when Latimer finally asked him in what state he would die, Forest "openly declared with a loud voice to the Bishop as followeth : That if an angel should come down from Heaven and show him any other thing than he had believed all his lifetime past he would not believe him, and that if his body should be cut joint after joint or member after member, brent



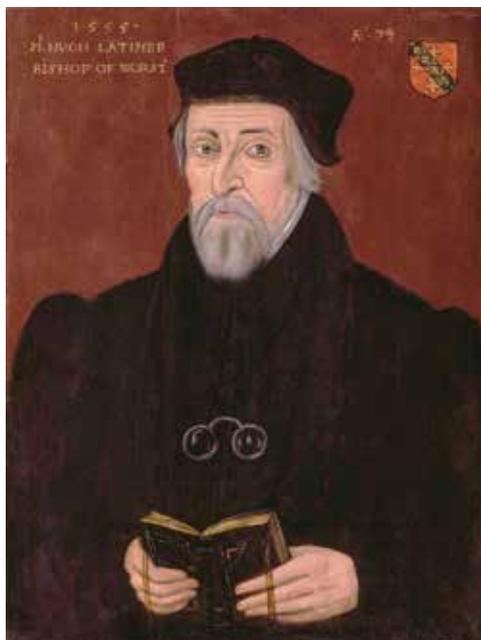
Blessed John Forest at Shrewsbury Cathedral

8 SEPTEMBER 2019

hanged, or what pain soever might be done to his body, he would never turn from his old sect of this Bishop of Rome.'

"In all the Acts of our Martyrs there is no braver confession of the faith than this, and its value is enhanced by having been preserved to us by an enemy[Wriothsesley]." (Comment and quote from Dom Bede Camm, Lives of the English Martyrs declared Blessed by Pope Leo XIII in 1886 and 1893, Vol. I, 1914, p. 16.)

That Latimer had himself sold out to Henry's cause was observed by Forest when he said, "Thou hast known me for many years, Latimer, and I am still more astonished at thee, that for the pomps of the world thou hast endangered thine own soul." Enraged at this speech, Latimer then shouted "Burn him! Burn him!" Did he perhaps recall these words when, some years later when the wheel of fortune had turned, he, Latimer, found himself facing a similar death sentence.



Hugh Latimer, by anonymous, National Portrait Gallery

This was also a time when Cromwell was keen to destroy statues, shrines and places of pilgrimage as part of his effort to wipe out the Catholic Faith in England. Statues and crucifixes were usually publicly

burnt and a statue of St. Derfel was brought from Llandderfel in Wales and put on the fire as fuel to burn our martyr. Many remembered an old prophecy that the image of St. Derfel would burn down a forest.

As they hoisted him in chains above the fire, Forest said "Neither fire, nor faggot, nor scaffold shall separate me from Thee, O Lord." And his last words: "The holy man beat his breast with his right hand, and then raised both his hands to heaven and said many prayers in Latin, his last spoken words being, Domine, miserere mei : and when the fire reached his breast he spoke no more and gave up his soul to God."

Before this, when his time was near, he wrote words of encouragement to another martyr-to-be, Blessed Thomas Abel: "Count not your tortures, my son, for that is to add pain to pain...For our Saviour says 'he that shall endure unto the end, he shall be saved.' Therefore, neither the tortures of thirty-seven days, nor of a thousand years, but the last end will crown your combat. Think you, my son, that we shall run together, and drink of the same chalice? A greater combat awaits for me; but for you lighter sufferings remain. Whatever they be, act manfully, our Lord supporting you. Farewell." (Henry Sebastian Bowden, Mementoes of the English Martyrs and Confessors, 1910)

NEW MASS TIMES

Starting 14th and 15th September, Masses on Saturdays and Sundays will start at the new time of 11.15 am. Please remember to check times of all Masses in the weekly newsletter.

Please note new Mass Schedule for St Wulstan's, Little Malvern.

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Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest

Weekly Schedule *

		Ordo	Cathedral	St Winefride's	Mass Intention
Sun	8 Sep	XIII Sunday after Pentecost, Comm. of the Nativity of the BVM.		11.45 Confessions 12.15 Mass	Private Intention
Mon	9 Sep	Commemoration of St. Gorgonius Martyr, Comm.	7.30am Mass		Private Intention
Tue	10 Sep	St. Nicholas of Tolentino Confessor, III class.	7.30am Mass	7pm Mass	Private Intention Private Intention
Wed	11 Sep	Commemoration of Ss. Protus and Hyacinth Martyrs, Comm.	7.30am Mass		Private Intention
Thu	12 Sep	The Most Holy Name of Mary, III class.	7.30am Mass 11am Holy Hour		Private Intention
Fri	13 Sep	Feria.	7.30am Mass	6.30pm Confessions 7pm Mass	Private Intention Private Intention
Sat	14 Sep	On the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, II class.		10.45am Confessions *11.15am Mass	Private Intention
Sun	15 Sep	XIV Sunday after Pentecost, Comm. Seven Sorrows of the BVM.		*11.15am Mass	Private Intention

* Changes to usual schedule: Sunday September 15th at 3.15pm Sunday Mass at St. Wulstan's Little Malvern. Please also note changes to Mass times at St Winefride's.