

Grapevine Prayer Diary Integrated Notes for June

[BCP = *The Book of Common Prayer* of the Church of England.]

Trinity Sunday moves with the moveable Feasts, and can fall on any Sunday of the solar year from 17 May to 20 June: to the accent on the Holy Trinity in Pentecost itself, was added, in the West, in the early Fourteenth century, a Feast especially to honour the Most Holy Trinity on the Sunday following Pentecost. Prior to this, Francis Mershman notes, 'When the Arian heresy was spreading the Fathers prepared an Office with canticles, responses, a Preface, and hymns, to be recited on Sundays' and a 'new Office had been made by the Franciscan John Peckham, Canon of Lyons, later Archbishop of Canterbury (d. 1292).'

1: Justin Martyr (c. 165): A highly-educated Greek Samaritan who moved from one school of philosophy to another without satisfaction, until he became a Platonist – and then met someone who convinced him that to be a Christian "is a genuine philosophy which is the best possession". Convinced "it is our duty to make our teaching known", he travelled the world doing so, in detail, in person and in writing, for decades, as a layman, until he was betrayed together with a woman and five men during a meeting at his lodgings in Rome, in the reign of Marcus Aurelius. Skillfully avoiding revealing where the Church met for services, he refused to sacrifice to "the gods", saying, "No-one in his right mind forsakes truth for falsehood", with which his fellow Christian prisoners agreed – and were all murdered by the State.

Also, Nicomedes (and 15 Sept.), an early martyr in Rome, about whom little else is certainly known: *BCP* describes him as a priest in keeping with later Acts that say he was caught because he helped other Christians, including giving martyrs honourable Christian burial.

The Gospel had already been carried westward in St. Justin's time, and continued to be so, to Roman Britain and on to Ireland, as we shall see. And some 150 years after his martyrdom, Christianity was officially tolerated throughout the Empire. But Germanic raiders and invaders, from the mid-400s on, overwhelmed Christian Britain. From the arrival in Kent in 597 of the mission to them of St. Augustine with 30 monks, sent by his friend, Pope St. Gregory the Great, the Gospel had such success among these Anglo-Saxons, that within a couple generations their missionaries were preaching among the northern Germanic peoples of the Continent – St. Wilfrid to the Frisians as first, followed by St. Willibrord, the son of one of his students.

2: Erasmus (or 'Elmo') is an early martyr of Formiae in the Italian Campagna, whose being undeterred by a nearby lightning strike while preaching (according to a later legend) seems to have made him a patron of sailors and gotten the phenomenon of 'St. Elmo's fire' named after him. Also named after him, at baptism, was Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam. When Formiae was invaded and sacked in 842, his relics were translated to Gaeta. (He is one of four early martyrs with Feasts in June who began in the 14th century to be celebrated together among 'the 14 Holy Helpers': the other three are Sts. Vitus (15), Cyricus (or 'Cyriacus'; French 'Cyr', a child, according to his Legend: 16), and Acacius (22).)

4: Petroc (translation Feasts 1 Oct., 14 Sept.) was a successful Sixth-century Welsh missionary to Cornwall, founding a monastery – the first of several – at what is now Padstow (from 'Petroc's Stow'). He seems later to have lived as a hermit on Bodmin Moor, and his relics were moved there from Padstow around 1000 in the keeping of the Augustinian Canons Regular. In 1177, a disgruntled canon there stole them, took them to Brittany, and presented them to the Abbey of Saint-Méen

(Mevennus, c. 617: 21 June). Bartholomew, Bishop of Exeter, investigated, and brought the matter to the attention of King Henry II, who intervened to get them back (leaving one rib at Saint-Méen) . Walter of Coutances (Henry's Cornish seal-bearer, who later became Bishop of Lincoln, Archbishop of Rouen, and Justiciar of England) gave an ivory casket of Sicilian-Islamic workmanship to serve as a reliquary for St. Petroc's head: it was hidden during the Reformation, to be discovered over the Bodmin porch in the Nineteenth-century, after which it has been in the parish church there.

5: Boniface (baptized Winfrith: 'friend of peace') followed in the footsteps of Sts. Wilfrid and Willibrord, going as a priest with two companions to Utrecht in 716 – without much success there with King Radbod of Frisia. Going to Rome he received a commission from Pope Gregory II to preach in Bavaria and Hesse, and a new name ('speaker/doer of good' in Latin). En route, he ended up spending three years helping St. Willibrord, before reaching Hesse, where he was instrumental in converting twin princes and building a church. Reporting back to Gregory, he was consecrated missionary bishop for all the German lands. A successful decade later, he was consecrated archbishop with the power to consecrate bishops beyond the Rhine as needed. From 742 on, he set about working to reform the Church in France. He commissioned the building of Fulda Abbey, begun in 744. The next year he was made Archbishop of Mainz. In 751, he anointed Pepin King of the Franks. In his 70s, he returned to the Frisian mission field – and was murdered with his companions by pagans in Dokkum, and entombed in Fulda.

6: Norbert (1134), by contrast with St. Elmo, while a nobleman living in wealth and ease as subdeacon and canon in Xanten, was so impressed by his escape from death during an electrical storm in 1115, that he started to take his Christianity seriously. He became a priest, but not all the clergy in Xanten were equally interested in reform, so he resigned his canonry, sold his estates and gave the proceeds away to the poor, and went to Gelasius II (another subdeacon, born in Gaeta, who had been made priest one day and bishop the next in order to accept his election as pope, and was in exile in France) to confess his misdeeds and seek penance. Gelasius instead authorized him to become an itinerate preacher. In 1120, with 13 others, he started a community of canons living by the rule of St. Augustine in the valley of Prémontré: the beginning of the Premonstratensian Canons, dedicated to clergy reform, preaching, and pastoral care. Suffering himself to be made Archbishop of Magdeburg, he survived multiple assassination attempts as he worked to restore property usurped by the rich and powerful and to reform the loose-living clergy.

8: Thomas Ken (1711), probably best known now for the hymn, 'Glory to Thee, my God, this Night', was a tutor at Oxford, then, after ordination in 1662, a priest in various parishes, then, a prebendary of Winchester Cathedral and chaplain to the Bishop as well as fellow of Winchester College, where he had gone to school. Charles II sent him to The Hague as chaplain to Princess Mary, wife of William of Orange, whom he displeased by insisting to him that a cousin of his keep his promise to marry a English lady. Back in England, Ken was appointed a royal chaplain, then chaplain to the fleet in Tangier, to be made Bishop of Bath and Wells on returning to England – and to minister to the dying king. In 1688, he was one of six bishops who refused to publish King James II's 'Declaration of Indulgence' – whereupon they were all arrested, sent to the Tower, tried for 'high misdemeanor' – and acquitted. However much he might disagree with James, he had sworn allegiance to him as king, and so became one of the non-jurors, refusing to recognize William and Mary – whereupon he was deprived of his see. He was given a home at Longleat for the next 20 years by his old college friend, Thomas Thynne, Viscount Weymouth, refusing Queen Anne's offer to restore him to his see in 1703.

9 (also 5, 8 Oct.): Pelagia of Antioch, a Christian virgin of fifteen years old, was home alone, when soldiers came to seize her and force her publicly to offer a pagan sacrifice – and, she was presumably convinced, to rape her. Convincing them to let her first dress for going out, she ran up to the roof and leapt into the sea – and to her death. Both St. Ambrose (397: 7 Dec., *BCP* 4 Apr.) and St. John Chrysostom (407: 27 Jan., 13 Sept., 13 Nov.) write of her as probably well aware of the likelihood she would die in the escape attempt, but honour her as a martyr. Attwater writes of her as the historical basis for ‘various fictitious Pelagias and Marinas (the same name in Greek and Latin)’ and others also treated as saints in later traditions.

Also, (among other dates), Ephrem (373), deacon, and author, in Syriac, of Biblical commentaries, metrical homilies, and hundreds of popular hymns, rich in theology, many still sung today (some also in English translation⁹). Expelled with all the other Christians by the Persian conquerors from Nisibis (363), he continued his work in Edessa. His writings were soon widely translated.

Also, Columba (Latin for ‘dove’), who inherited and spread the Gospel and Irish Christian culture, founding the monasteries of Derry and Durrow, before moving with 12 companions to an island granted him by an Irish ruler in Scotland, which he named Iona (Hebrew for ‘dove’). From there, they preached among the Picts, converting their king and founding two churches in Inverness (where St. Columba is also reported to have driven off a water monster to save a swimmer in the river Ness). In 574, he consecrated Aidan King of Argyll. (Another Aidan (31 Aug.; 651), one of the monks of Iona of the following generation, was sent to King St. Oswald of Northumbria (5 Aug.; 642), who had been converted there while an exile, and who appealed to the monastery for missionary help. St. Aidan was consecrated bishop and given the island of Lindisfarne, where he organized a monastery.) St. Columba, who was both a bard and a scribe (a manuscript in his hand survives), died in Iona in 597.

11: Barnabas may be followed in his apostolic work in Acts (4:36-37, 9:26-27, 11:22-30, 12:25, and chapters 13-15). St. Paul also refers to him in his letters (1 Corinthians 9:6, Galatians chapter 2, and Colossians 4:10). Various scholars hotly contend for or against the striking *Letter of Barnabas* having (possibly) been written by him.

12: Odulf (translation Feasts 10 Oct., 24 Nov.: 855), born in Oirschot, became a monk and priest in Utrecht, and after a few years was sent by the Bishop, St. Frederick (18 July: 838), to minister to the converts and continue the missionary work among the Frisians. He built a church and monastery at Stavoren, ministering from there for many years, before retiring to Utrecht, where he died and was buried. Some of his relics were stolen from Stavoren by Vikings in 1034, taken to London, and sold to Bishop Aelfward, who gave them to Evesham abbey over which he still ruled. A later Norman abbot, Walter, tried to move the Evesham relics to Winchcombe – unsuccessfully, in a way interpreted as meaning that St. Odulf disapproved and wanted them left undisturbed in Evesham.

14: Elisha the Prophet (see 1 Kings 19, and 2 Kings chs. 2-6, & 8, 9, & 13). Also, Richard Baxter, a Deacon, and later a Chaplain of Charles II, who refused a bishopric, and was also a great admirer of the Westminster Assembly during the Commonwealth and the Confession it produced. A prolific writer, he is the source of C.S. Lewis’s title, *Mere Christianity*. In 1680, he wrote, “I am against all Sects and dividing Parties: but if any will call *Mere Christian* by the name of a *Party*, because they take up with *mere Christianity, Creed, and Scripture*, and will not be of any dividing or contentious Sect, I am of that *Party* which is so against *Parties*”.

15: Amos, author of what seems to be the first surviving written book of prophecies.

17(*BCP*; 22 in other calendars): Alban is the first recorded martyr of Britain, and the only one in England with a continuous cult since Roman times. Constantius of Lyon tells of Sts. Germanus of Auxerre and Lupus of Troyes visiting his tomb at Verulamium (later renamed 'St. Alban's') in 429. St. Gildas (6th century) writes that he "for charity's sake saved another confessor who was pursued by his persecutors, and was on the point of being seized, by hiding him in his house, and then by changing clothes with him, imitating in this the example of Christ, who laid down his life for his sheep, and exposing himself in the other's clothes to be pursued in his stead", and places his martyrdom during the persecution of Diocletian (around 305) – some modern scholars argue for an earlier date such as around 354 or even 209.

Also (with a translation Feast on 1 Dec.), Botulf (also 'Botolph', c. 680) and his brother Adulf (also 'Adulph'), who are reported to have been sent from England to study abroad, where they both became monks. St. Adulf seems to have been identified with a bishop of Maastricht 'of similar name, famous for teaching and almsgiving' (Farmer, who thinks 'This is almost certainly wrong' to see them as the same person). The brothers seem both to have returned to England where St. Botulf (according to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle) 'began to build the minster at Icanho'. Keenan says, his 'life is shrouded in mystery and conflict' – including, as to the identity and location of 'Icanho'. Two contenders are Boston, in Lincolnshire, which is certainly named after him (with Boston, Massachusetts named after it), and Iken, in Suffolk, which has a St. Botolph's Church. So do a great many other places, as there were dozens of ancient dedications, in East Anglia, Essex, West Sussex, in Cambridge, and four in London, three of which were rebuilt by Wren after the Great Fire, in one of which Keats was baptized. There is one in Aalborg, Denmark, too. His name is further perpetuated in Botolph in Sussex, Botulph's Bridge or Bottlebridge near Peterborough, Botesdale in Suffolk, Bossal in Yorkshire, and the parish of Buttsbury (originally, Botolfvespirie, 'Botolph's Pear Tree') in Essex. St. Adulf was buried at Thorney Abbey, in the Cambridgeshire Fens, which shared relics of St. Botulf with Ely, Bury St. Edmunds, and Westminster Abbey, among other places.

20: The *BCP* commemorates the translation of the relics of King Edward the Martyr today as well as his Feast on 18 March.

22: Paulinus of Nola (431) was born in Bordeaux of a senatorial family, his father the highest magistrate in the west, Prefect of Gaul, who had estates in Spain and Italy as well. There St. Paulinus was educated by the poet, Ausonius, after which, he practiced law, wrote poetry himself, was made consul of Rome (before Ausonius held the same highest office), and governor of Campania (while Ausonius became Prefect of Gaul: both travelled widely, Ausonius to Nijmegen!). In Nola (in Campania) he improved the road to the tomb of St. Felix (c. 260: 14 Jan.), son of a Syrian centurion who had retired there, and built a guest-house for pilgrims – and later attributed his own conversion to Christianity to his influence (writing, 'In your light, joyful, I loved Christ'). Thereafter, he studied with St. Ambrose in Milan, and, returning to Bordeaux, married a wealthy, landed Christian noblewoman from Barcelona, Therasia, and was baptized by its Bishop, St. Delphinus (c. 404: 24 Dec.). St. Paulinus and Therasia moved to Spain, and after their son died shortly after baptism, at 8 days old, they began to live as brother and sister, agreeing to sell much of their property to help those in distress. Insistent popular clamour in his favour moved both the Bishop of Barcelona and himself to allow him to be made a priest *per saltem* (without having held any preceding orders through deacon, first). But he did not long remain there to serve: they retired to Nola, selling more of their property and building an aqueduct and several Churches, including one by the tomb of St. Felix, where he served as porter, sweeping up and being night watchman, sharing a monastic life in the

guest-house with some friends, and with pilgrims, and anyone in need – whom he called ‘his masters’ and served and cared for. Many old friends and family, including Ausonius, were dismayed by all this, and not a few were hostile. His answer (as he wrote to a friend in similar straits) was, ‘O happy affront to displease you with Christ’. He told Ausonius that he had not abandoned poetry, but had turned to Christian poetry – much of which has not survived, though over thirty of his poems have (including one of the first Christian wedding-songs), with nearly half of these written one-a-year for the feast of St. Felix, with the hymn, ‘Another year completed’ being a translation of one. In one poem he says, ‘to us the one art is faith, and Christ poetry [or ‘music’]’. He called on various arts to decorate the Church of St. Felix, with marble work, silver lamps, many wall paintings, and a mosaic representing the Holy Trinity. Among his many friends, in person, by correspondence, or both, were Sts. Martin, Jerome, Augustine, Amandus (c.404: 18 June – his convert), Nicetas (c. 414: also 22 June!), Victricius (c. 407: 7 Aug.), Alypius (c. 430: 15 Aug.), Pammachius (410: 30 Aug.), and Sulpicius Severus. (Ausonius seems to have become a Christian, at last, too.) Butler notes that, if anyone admired his benefactions and the sacrifice involved, ‘he replied that the only sacrifice which God accepted was that of the heart, which he had not yet begun to make as he ought’. When the Bishop of Nola died, the faithful acclaimed St. Paulinus as his successor – in which office he served the last 20 years of his life. When the Visigoths invaded in 410, he was taken prisoner, and prayed God, ‘Suffer me not to be tortured for gold and silver; for You know where I have placed all that You gave me’ – and, happily, was spared. On his deathbed, he concelebrated the Eucharist with two visiting bishops, after which someone came with a huge bill for clothes given to the poor – which he could not cover: until someone unexpectedly arrived from the other side of Italy with a gift for more than enough. After a few centuries, his relics were translated, spending many more centuries in Rome, till returned to Nola by Pius X in 1909.

23 (*BCP* 17 Oct.): Etheldreda (which eventually became ‘Audrey’), daughter of the king of East Anglia, lived with her first husband as brother and sister: widowed after three years, she retired to the isle of Ely, her dowry. She was brought out of her retirement for a dynastic marriage to Ecgrith, prince of Northumbria: they also lived as brother and sister. When, after succeeding to the throne, he wished to go back on this agreement, she was supported by St. Wilfrid, and eventually allowed to become a nun. She retired to Ely, restored a church there, and founded a double monastery over which she presided as abbess, dying in 679.

24: Unusually, not the day of St. John the Baptist’s martyrdom (29 August), but the day of his birth is his principal Feast – six months before the Nativity of Our Lord (recall St. Luke 1:36) – because he had already recognized Him while both were still in the womb. The year and the daylight are like St. John the Baptist from here on: “I must decrease” (St. John 3:30).

25: Adalbert (c. 710) was a Northumbrian and one of the disciples of St. Willibrord. He preached and served successfully as a missionary in Egmond. A church was built over his grave, and a couple centuries later, the first Benedictine monastery in Holland was established at the site by Count Dirk I and became the burial place of many of the Counts of Holland. It was destroyed by another ‘Dirk’, Sonoy, in 1573, but St. Adalbert’s relics were brought to safety in Haarlem – for the next 400 years. The abbey was refounded in the 1930s and his relics returned in 1984.

28: Irenaeus, as a boy, knew St. Polycarp of Smyrna who was in turn a disciple of St. John the Evangelist. Coming west (like his older contemporary, St. Justin), St. Irenaeus studied in Rome, and, travelling further at the invitation of its first bishop, became a priest in Lyons (something of a western centre of international trade). Living up to his name (‘peace-loving’ in Greek), he was sent in the

midst of persecution in Gaul to plead in Rome for leniency towards Montanists (for whom he had little sympathy) in Phrygia. Returning, he was made successor to the martyred St. Pothinus as bishop. A decade or so later he was off to Rome again, now to plead, successfully, that their tradition of celebrating Easter on the 14th day of the Jewish month Nisan, even when it was not a Sunday, was no reason to break communion with various Eastern Churches (though he favoured the Sunday tradition himself). His great work, *The Detection and Overthrow of the False Knowledge*, shows how set he was against the danger of saying 'peace' when there is no peace. Its careful setting out of the teachings of various Gnostic schools, in order to show in detail where and why each is getting it wrong, was our principal source about them, until supplemented by a major archaeological discovery of a library of later papyrus books in 1945.

Also, Patomiæna of Alexandria (c. 202), who was a young virgin who, together with her mother, St. Marcella, appears to have been one of the students of the great Biblical scholar, Origen. Eusebius gives a fairly detailed account of her martyrdom in his *Church History* (VI, 5). Having unsuccessfully subjected her to 'severe tortures upon her entire body' to get her to renounce her Christian faith, her judge 'at last threatened to hand her over to the gladiators' to be raped – equally without success: after which, he sentenced her to death. St. Basilides, a pagan Roman army officer, took her to execution, but, 'showing her much pity and kindness', protected her from attempts to abuse her en route. She 'exhorted him to be of good courage, for she would supplicate her Lord for him after her departure, and he would soon receive a reward for the kindness he had shown her.' She was then killed by 'burning pitch being poured little by little, over various parts of her body, from the sole of her feet to the crown of her head', with her mother being burned to death as well. Not long after, St. Basilides, refusing to swear to something, confessed he was a Christian. His fellow soldiers thought he was joking, but when he insisted, he was taken before the judge, sentenced to death, and imprisoned awaiting execution. Questioned by Christians, he 'said that Potamiæna, for three days after her martyrdom, stood beside him by night and placed a crown on his head and said that she had besought the Lord for him and had obtained what she asked, and that soon she would take him with her.' They baptized him, and the next day he was beheaded. In the Martyrology 'of Jerome', Sts. Patomiaena, Marcella, and Basilides are commemorated together with six other disciples of Origen today (in the Roman Martyrology, St. Basilides' day is 30 June).

29: Unusual in a different way is that the principal Feast of each of these great Apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul, is this which they share. (The *BCP* notes only St. Peter as 'Apostle & Martyr' on this date, remembering St. Paul on the Feast of his Conversion, 25 Jan.)

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