

Last Thursday we marked the life of John Calvin, radical Protestant Reformer. This week we show the breadth of persons whom the Episcopal Church commemorates by focusing on a Roman Catholic pope -- or, to use the official title, a Bishop of Rome.

Pope John XXIII (1881-1963) was pope for a mere five years, 1958-1963. Yet he served during a period, and arguably placed his stamp on its events, when the Roman Catholic Church underwent one of the most radical transformations in its history by way of the Second Vatican Council. Already 77 when elected, he was expected to be a short-term placeholder, a "pope of minor consequence." But, being a personal proponent of the use of the vernacular in the ritual of the church, he immediately called the Second Vatican Council for the purpose of modernizing the liturgy (among other things). Many may argue as to whether the results of the Second Vatican Council was a good or a bad influence on the church (progressives tend to see it positively, traditionalists to see it negatively), but one cannot dispute that it had a major effect. It is not my intent to take sides (I must admit to conflicting feelings within myself, as I am a liturgical traditionalist, and the downgrading [as I see it] of Roman Catholic liturgy and music since Vatican II is something that saddens me; but I am a theological progressive, and see other positive effects on the church. Squaring these two parts of my own persona has been, one could say, the major work of my life). So one could simply note the outsize impact of this papacy, and leave it at that. One biographer said sweepingly that he "changed the landscape of twentieth century Christianity," and this is a fair assessment, I think.

June 4, 2020, 5:45pm Choral Evensong: John XXIII (Angelo Roncalli)

Voluntary: Sanctus and Benedictus (from *Mass for the Convents*), by Francois Couperin (1668-1733)

Responses: Timothy J. Krueger in A (2001)

Canticle of Light: "Dirigatur oratio mea" by Moritz Brossig (1815-1887)

Psalm: 50:1-6 – plainchant

Service: E. T. Cook (1880-1953) in C

Anthem: "Ecce sacerdos magnus" by Tomas Luis de Victoria (1548-1611)

Office Hymn: 31 (*Dunedin*)

Voluntary: Benedictus (Op. 59 No. 9) by Max Reger (1873-1916)

E(dgar) T(homas) Cook was organist at Southwark Cathedral for much of the first half of the 20th century (1909-1953). This is an interesting little service, written in 1935, featuring the sopranos (optional whether it's a solo or full trebles. It also says the organ part is optional, but this seems quite odd, since a solo soprano line minus the accompaniment seems a bit spare to me). The sopranos carry every other verse by themselves, and the full choir comes in on the alternate verses. This pattern reminds me of the *alternatim* more usual in a fauxbourdon service, where plainchant and harmonized plainchant alternate. Perhaps this was Cook's inspiration/intention (and perhaps why the organ part is optional), but it sounds nothing like a fauxbourdon service, with some lovely if occasionally unconventional harmonies (at "the rich he hath sent empty away," right on the word "empty," there is an abrupt movement from C# minor to A minor that provides a nice bit of word painting).

The text *Ecce sacerdos magnus* ("Behold a great priest...") is an antiphon traditionally used at the visitation of a bishop, so I thought it appropriate here. If I had three trombones, we'd do the Bruckner setting. ;-)

If you tune in -- first, download the service leaflet here:

<http://www.standrewdenver.org/online-worship#leaflets>

Then go to the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/standrewdenver/>. We will go live at 5:40; the organ voluntary will begin precisely at 5:45. The service will likely last about 40-45 minutes. We have a sextet of singers, and Linda Mack, our principal substitute for Ralph Valentine, is at the console.

If you watched last week's choral evensong, apologies that it was difficult to understand the spoken word. Use of a different phone than usual resulted in the stream using the microphone on the cell phone itself, rather than the fancy sound system and vastly superior mics that were supposed to capture the service (which we weren't aware of until afterwards). The music is rendered fairly well by the phone's mic, but the spoken word was pretty faint. So, again, apologies for that.

This coming Sunday is Trinity Sunday. It's sort of the conclusion of the string of big feasts that come in a cluster around Pentecost (and, by extension, Holy Week/Easter). It's always the service that I associate with the shift to summertime operations at the church. Not so much this year, however. Here's the music:

June 7, 11:00am, Choral Matins: *Trinity Sunday*

Organ Voluntary: Partita on "Holy, Holy, Holy" by Piet Post (1919-1979)

Responses: M. J. Gibson (2006), "Modal"

Mag and Nunc: Adrian Batten (1591-1637), 4th Service

Psalm: 8 - Anglican chant by William Boyce (1712-1787)

Anthem: "O Trinity, most blessed light" by C. Kenneth Turner (1959)

Hymns: 205 (*Gelobt sei Gott*), 306 (*Sursum corda*), 208 (*Victory*)

Organ Voluntary: Prelude in G major by J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Same instructions for tuning in/downloading a service leaflet as above.

If anyone could tell me anything more about C. Kenneth Turner, I'd be much obliged. I have only been able to trace that he was organist at Llandaff Cathedral in Wales, 1952-1957.

Tim

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