

The New Epistle

a newsletter of

The Progressive Episcopal Church

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February



ST. VALENTINE OF ROME
D. 269

Saint Valentine, officially known as Saint Valentine of Rome, is a third-century Roman saint widely celebrated on February 14 and commonly associated with "courtly love."

Although not much of St. Valentine's life is reliably known, and whether or not the stories involve two different saints by the same name is also not officially decided, it is highly agreed that St. Valentine was martyred and then buried on the Via Flaminia to the north of Rome.

In 1969, the Roman Catholic Church removed St. Valentine from the General Roman Calendar, because so little is known about him. However, the church still recognizes him as a saint, listing him in the February 14 spot of Roman Martyrology.

The legends attributed to the mysterious saint are as inconsistent as the actual identification of the man.

One common story about St. Valentine is that in one point of his life, as the former Bishop of Terni, Narnia and Amelia, he was on house arrest with Judge Asterius. While discussing religion and faith with the Judge, Valentine pledged the validity of Jesus. The judge immediately put Valentine and his faith to the test.

St. Valentine was presented with the judge's blind daughter and told to restore her sight. If he succeeded, the judge vowed to do anything for Valentine. Placing his hands onto her eyes, Valentine restored the child's vision.

Judge Asterius was humbled and obeyed Valentine's requests. Asterius broke all the idols around his house, fasted for three days and became baptized, along with his family and entire 44 member household. The now faithful judge then freed all of his Christian inmates.

St. Valentine was later arrested again for continuing to try to convert people to Christianity. He was sent to Rome under the emperor Claudius Gothicus

(Claudius II). According to the popular hagiographical identity, and what is believed to be the first representation of St. Valentine, the Nuremberg Chronicle, St. Valentine was a Roman priest martyred during Claudius' reign. The story tells that St. Valentine was imprisoned for marrying Christian couples and aiding Christians being persecuted by Claudius in Rome. Both acts were considered serious crimes. A relationship between the saint and emperor began to grow, until Valentine attempted to convince Claudius of Christianity. Claudius became raged and sentenced Valentine to death, commanding him to renounce his faith or be beaten with clubs and beheaded.

St. Valentine refused to renounce his faith and Christianity and was executed outside the Flaminian Gate on February 14, 269. However, other tales of St. Valentine's life claim he was executed either in the year 269, 270, 273 or 280. Other depictions of St. Valentine's arrests tell that he secretly married couples so husbands wouldn't have to go to war. Another variation of the legend of St. Valentine says he refused to sacrifice to pagan gods, was imprisoned and while imprisoned he healed the jailer's blind daughter. On the day of his execution, he left the girl a note signed, "Your Valentine."

Pope Julius I is said to have built a church near Ponte Mole in his memory, which for a long time gave name to the gate now called Porta del Popolo, formerly, Porta Valetini.

The romantic nature of Valentine's Day may have derived during the Middle Ages, when it was believed that birds paired couples in mid-February. According to English 18th-century antiquarians Alban Butler and Francis Douce, Valentine's Day was most likely created to overpower the pagan holiday, Lupercalia.

Although the exact origin of the holiday is not widely agreed upon, it is widely recognized as a day for love, devotion and romance.

Whoever he was, Valentine did really exist, because archaeologists have unearthed a Roman catacomb and an ancient church dedicated to St. Valentine. In 496 AD Pope Gelasius marked February 14th as a celebration in honor of his martyrdom.

Relics of St. Valentine can be found all over the world. A flower-crowned skull of St. Valentine can be found in the Basilica of Santa Maria in Cosmedin, Rome. In 1836, other relics were exhumed from the catacombs of Saint Hippolytus on the Via Tiburtina and were identified as Valentine's. These were transported for a special Mass dedicated to those young and in love.

Fr. John Spratt received a gift from Pope Gregory XVI in 1836 containing a "small vessel tinged" with St. Valentine's blood. This gift now stands placed in Whitefriar Street Church in Dublin, Ireland.

Other alleged relics were found in Prague in the Church of St Peter and Paul at Vysehrad; in the parish church of St. Mary's Assumption in Chelmno Poland; at the reliquary of Roquemaure in France; in the Stephansdom in Vienna; in Balzan in Malta and also in Blessed John Duns Scotus' church in the Gorbals area of Glasgow, Scotland.

St. Valentine is the Patron Saint of affianced couples, bee keepers, engaged couples, epilepsy, fainting, greetings, happy marriages, love, lovers, plague, travellers, and young people. He is represented in pictures with birds and roses and his feast day is celebrated on February 14.

(from [Catholic Online](#))



Almighty and everlasting God, who didst enkindle the flame of Thy love in the heart of thy holy martyr Valentine: Grant to us, thy humble servants, a like faith and power of love, that we who rejoice in his triumph may profit by his example; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.



<https://www.cpg.org/global/online-resources/cartoons/advent-and-lent/>

LENTEN MEDITATIONS

As we move into the reflective and penitential season of Lent, may we quietly reflect upon these intentions, taken from the New Zealand Prayer Book.

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness; give us grace to direct our lives in obedience to your Spirit; and as you know our weakness so may we know your power to save; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

God, you know better than we the temptations that will bring us down. Grant that our love for you may protect us from all foolish and corrupting desire.

Heavenly Father, you see how your children hunger for food, and fellowship, and faith. Help us to meet one another's needs of body, mind and spirit. God of the hungry, make us hunger and thirst for the right, till our thirst has been satisfied, and hunger has gone from the earth.



EVOLUTIONS

Miscellaneous TPEC news

ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PARISH has been officially chartered as a Parish of the Progressive Episcopal Church. Rev. Cn. Rick Ward-Harder is the rector, and also serves as Canon to the Ordinary in the Diocese of the Delta under Bishop Daniel Varga. St. Michael's Church also has three Diaconal candidates.

St. Michael's has been around for a while, but has been experiencing solid growth, and the community is becoming formally organized and will be incorporating as a non-profit in Arkansas.



St. Martha's Table is the newest of our communities to be formed, under the leadership of the Revs. Sheldon & Amanda Alley. It is still on the formative stage, but they hope to have the website up soon. They have launched a Facebook page, which may be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/stmarthastable/timeline>.



From the Office of the General Secretary

The end of January has seen an increase of activity and potential for growth. We have issued the very first Parish Charter, to St. Michael the Archangel Church on Arkansas, which also has three diaconal candidates, currently being licensed as Lay Ministers.

An established Progressive faith community in Arizona is exploring the possibility of affiliation with us.



When our church was first established as the Diocese of the South, we were a member Province of the Anglican Free Communion. Due to vociferous objection from some of the African members over our policy of radical inclusivity, we withdrew in order to keep the peace all around. The Anglican Free Communion (founded in 1897) has revised its Bylaws and Constitution, and the new documents were approved by the Bishops Consistory on May 31th, 2015, the Solemnity of the Holy Trinity. The new Constitution declares the Communion to be fully inclusive, with marriage and Holy Orders being open to all regardless of gender, marital status or sexual orientation.

In view of these changes, we are looking into renewing our relationship with the AFC, and to being re-admitted as a Province. No decisions have been made, but initial contacts have been made. The Council of Bishops will be convening to further discuss this. We would also welcome input from our clergy members. The Communion's website may be found [here](#). There are currently 40 member churches/provinces in the Anglican Free Communion.



Please consider a contribution to TPEC to support the costs of administration. Administrative expenses for 2015 came to \$1088.63. Checks may be made out to Rev. Thurlow Weed and mailed to the General Office at 1005 N. Columbus St., Lancaster OH 43130. Support can also be given via PayPal using the identifying address of tweed@greenapple.com. Whatever your means of giving, you will be provided with a receipt.

Thank you,
+Thurlow Weed
General Secretary



February 2016



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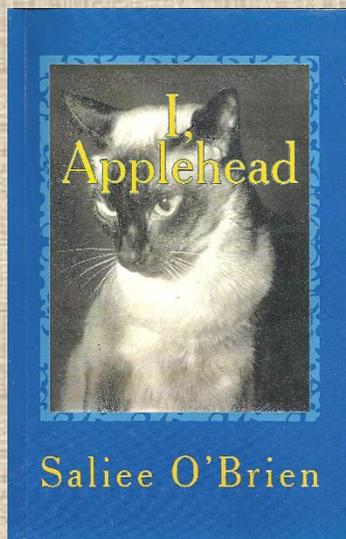
Churchman's Ordo Edition

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>READINGS Mass — Year C Office — Year Two</p> <p>Weekday Eucharistic Readings for use throughout the year are found in LFF, pages 498-528.</p> <p>See Notes on Reverse</p> <p>[] - In some Places</p>	<p>Brigid, Abbess of Kildare, 523</p> <p>1</p> <p>Prf.St.2</p>	<p>THE PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE also called the Purification of Saint Mary the Virgin</p> <p>2</p> <p>Glo.Cr.Prf.Epi.</p>	<p>Anskar, Archbishop of Hamburg, Missionary to Denmark and Sweden, 865 [Blasius]</p> <p>3</p> <p>Prf.Ap.</p>	<p>Cornelius the Centurion</p> <p>4</p> <p>Prf.Pen.</p>	<p>The Martyrs of Japan, 1597 [Agatha, Martyr in Sicily, 250]</p> <p>5</p> <p>Glo.Prf.H.Wk. [Common of Martyr III]</p>	<p>[Titus, Bishop and Confessor, 1st Century]</p> <p>6</p> <p>[Glo.Prf.Pen.]</p>
<p>The Last Sunday after the Epiphany [Quinquagesima - V]</p> <p>7</p> <p>Glo.Cr.Prf.Epi. or L.D. [Cr.Prf.Tri. or L.D.]</p>	<p>Feria</p> <p>8</p>	<p>Feria</p> <p>9</p> <p>Shrove Tuesday</p>	<p>ASH WEDNESDAY Fast</p> <p>10</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1</p>	<p>Lenten Feria</p> <p>11</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1</p>	<p>Lenten Feria</p> <p>12</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1</p>	<p>Lenten Feria [Absalom Jones, Priest, 1818 - W]</p> <p>13</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1 (Prf.St.1)</p>
<p>The First Sunday in Lent</p> <p>14</p> <p>Cr.Prf.Lent 1</p>	<p>Lenten Feria * [Thomas Bray, Priest and Missionary, 1730 - W]</p> <p>15</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1 (Prf.Pen.)</p>	<p>Lenten Feria *</p> <p>16</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1</p>	<p>Lenten Feria Ember Day</p> <p>17</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1</p>	<p>Lenten Feria * [Simeon of Jerusalem, Bishop and Martyr, 1st Century - R]</p> <p>18</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1 [Common of Martyr I, Prf.St.3]</p>	<p>Lenten Feria Ember Day</p> <p>19</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1</p>	<p>Lenten Feria Ember Day</p> <p>20</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1</p>
<p>The Second Sunday in Lent</p> <p>21</p> <p>Cr.Prf.Lent 1</p>	<p>Lenten Feria * [St. Peter's Chair at Antioch - W]</p> <p>22</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1 [Propers for Jan. 18 Glo.Cr.Prf.Ap.]</p>	<p>Lenten Feria * [Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr of Smyrna, 156 - R]</p> <p>23</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1 (Glo.Prf.St.3)</p>	<p>SAINT MATTHIAS * THE APOSTLE</p> <p>24</p> <p>Glo.Cr.Prf.Ap. Commemorate Lent</p>	<p>Lenten Feria * [Ethelbert, King and Confessor - W]</p> <p>25</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1 [Common of a Saint 2, Prf.St.2]</p>	<p>Lenten Feria *</p> <p>26</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1</p>	<p>Lenten Feria * [George Herbert, Priest, 1633 - W]</p> <p>27</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1 (St.1)</p>
<p>The Third Sunday in Lent</p> <p>28</p> <p>Cr.Prf.Lent 1</p>	<p>* Lenten Feria *</p> <p>29</p> <p>Prf.Lent 1</p>	<p>✠</p>	<p>Glo.—Gloria Cr.—Creed Prf.—Proper Preface of Adv.—Advent Inc.—Incarnation Epi.—Epiphany H.Wk.—Holy Week Eas.—Easter Asc.—Ascension</p>	<p>Pen.—Pentecost Tri.—Trinity Sunday A.S.—All Saints St.—Saint Ap.—Apostles Ded.—Dedication Bap.—Baptism L.D.—Lord's Day</p>	<p>Days of Special Devotion are noted with *</p>	<p>Lenten Note: All weekdays in Lent are Greater Ferias, with memorials either ignored or commemorated. The letter (R, W) denotes the color if the memorial is kept. Propers for Lenten Weekdays are found in LFF. All Lenten Weekdays are traditionally marked by Special Devotion.</p>

For cat lovers

If you love cats, or pet stories in general, there is a new book on the market by best-selling author Saliee O'Brien. Though the author passed away in 2002, several unpublished manuscripts have been found and are in the process of being prepared for publication. The first of these is now in print, and is available from Amazon.

The story is the autobiography of the author's Siamese cat, Princess Applehead. Delightfully and humorously written, it enchants the reader with both laughing and crying. It is a work of non-fiction; all names, locations, and events are real. Edited & published by the author's grandson Thurlow Weed.



<http://www.amazon.com/I-Applehead-Saliee-OBrien/dp/0692610618>

OPEN INVITATION TO TPEC CLERGY . . .

If you have a book or publication you would like to have mentioned in the newsletter, please send a note to the General Office at admin@tpecusa.org.