

# Friends at Court

## GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

August 23, Sunday.—Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost. The Most Pure Heart of Mary.  
 „ 24, Monday.—St. Alphonsus, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor.  
 „ 25, Tuesday.—St. Bartholomew, Apostle.  
 „ 26, Wednesday.—St. Zephyrinus, Pope and Martyr.  
 „ 27, Thursday.—St. Joseph Calasanz, Confessor.  
 „ 28, Friday.—St. Augustine, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor.  
 „ 29, Saturday.—Beheading of St. John the Baptist.

St. Bartholomew, Apostle.

After the Ascension of our Blessed Lord, St. Bartholomew carried the Gospel to the most remote and barbarous countries of the East. He afterwards preached in Asia Minor, and crowned his labors by a glorious martyrdom in Armenia. The manner of his death is not absolutely certain, but the common tradition is that he was flayed alive.

St. Zephyrinus, Pope and Martyr.

St. Zephyrinus became Pope in 202, the year in which the Emperor Septimus Severus began a general persecution of the Church throughout the Roman Empire. His pontificate, extending over seventeen years, was troubled by many heresies which the holy pontiff resolutely combated. Whether his death was that of a martyr, or this title was given to him on account of his previous sufferings for the faith, cannot be accurately determined.

## GRAINS OF GOLD

### MOTHER OF MERCY.

Mother, when I shall stand on that dread day  
 In heaven's court before the Mercy Throne—  
 Poor, weak, and sinful, full of fear, alone,—  
 Oh, come to me and show thy potent sway!  
 Turn to thy Blessed Son, and, pleading, say:  
 'This earth-child poor is mine, my very own;  
 Oft have I heard her cries; long have I known  
 How dark and stormy was the homeward way.'

And, with my hand securely held in thine,  
 I shall not fear the Majesty Divine;  
 Ah, well I know the mother-love must win!  
 He'll hear thy voice and will forgive the sin.  
 And in my Judge, my eyes shall only see  
 A little Child upon His Mother's knee.

'Ave Maria.'

The day on which we have learned nothing is lost. Think and speak of what thou lovest, and dwell little on what is distasteful to thee.—Bishop Spalding.

If we would only go to work making happiness a habit, what a bright place this world would be! And it is a possibility for each one of us—not a dream!

If we only set as high a value on the favors we receive as we do on those we bestow, the bond of Christian charity would be firmly knit together, and peace would reign where there is now nothing but jarring discord.—Father Hayes.

There is the honor of pure living and pure thinking. These bring with them a badge which far outshines any to be had of mundane sources. For there is nothing more to be desired than a good face—not a handsome one but a good one—wherein may be seen the reflection of high motives and right ideals.

When the priest at the altar offers the sublime sacrifice the angels stand beside him, and all around the altar are ranged choirs of heavenly spirits, who raise their voices in honor of the Victim Who is immolated! Wherefore, if thou dost unite thy prayers during Mass to those of the angels, they will together with them pierce the clouds, and will obtain a favorable hearing more certainly than if thou didst offer them at home or alone. Let us do what in us lies to hear Mass daily, that our prayers may be carried up to Heaven in the angels' pure hands.—St. Chrysostom.

# The Storyteller

## AN UNWARY WORD

A beautiful September day in the beginning of the seventeenth century had drawn to its close—one of those still autumn days which have all the warmth and beauty of summer, without its steady glow and scorching heat. Shortly after the sun had set, a mist began to rise from the meadows around the town of Oxford, hanging heavily over the river that wound its slow course beside the walls of the gaol. As the hours crept by, the mist thickened, so as completely to hide the surface of the water from the sight of a prisoner, who was eagerly gazing out of the window of his cell, waiting, listening in breathless suspense for the first faint sound indicating the approach of the friendly skiff that was to bring him deliverance from the durance vile in which he, a prisoner of Christ, had already languished for several weeks. The zeal of the pursuivants, by whom the faithful servants of God were hunted down like wild beasts, had lately been reawakened by the stringent laws passed by King James I. against his Catholic subjects, and the large rewards promised to those who informed against priests and recusants.

The prisoner of whom we are now speaking, Rev. Thomas Tunstall by name, was one of the secular, or, as they were then termed, seminary priests (in contradistinction to the Jesuits and other Regulars), who, by ministering in secret to their afflicted co-religionists, helped to sustain their courage and keep aglow the flame of the Faith at the peril of their lives in unhappy England during three centuries of persecution.

Whilst journeying on a missionary tour from one Catholic nobleman's house to another in the County of Oxford, in disguise and passing under an assumed name, Tunstall had been betrayed by one of the false brethren who were more to be dreaded than open enemies, and lodged by the magistrate in Oxford Gaol. There he awaited his removal to the Tower of London, that grim fortress where so many martyrs and confessors had been immured in the preceding reign. But a Catholic gentleman residing near, who had himself suffered a long imprisonment, and been forced to sell a large portion of his property to pay the enormous fines imposed on him for refusing to attend the Protestant worship, had concerted a plan for the rescue of the good priest.

Among the warders of the gaol was one who had been a domestic in the gentleman's service; and it was an easy matter to persuade this guard to place a file and a stout rope in the cell of his prisoner. A night had been fixed upon, and an hour chosen when the sentry on guard would be least likely to keep a sharp lookout, for the attempt at escape. This eventful night had now come, and a very favorable one it proved; as the mist that hung over the river veiled from sight a light boat drifting down the stream until it lay alongside the walls of the prison, below the window where Tunstall stood peering out into the darkness, listening to the footsteps of the patrol going his rounds, and the soft swish of the water as it flowed lazily past.

It is astonishing how acute a man's senses become at such a moment as this. To no other eyes than those of the expectant prisoner could the dim form of the boat beneath have been discernible, to no other ears than his would the sound of the muffled oars have been audible, before a ray of light from a dark lantern flashed momentarily on the ceiling of his cell. At this signal, Tunstall immediately began to remove one by one the lower bars which he had laboriously filed through. He then fastened the rope securely to one of the upper bars, threw the end of it down to the silent watchers beneath, and proceeded to climb through the aperture. The rope was caught, drawn in, and held tightly; a few instants of terrible apprehension followed, while the prisoner slid down the rope and let himself noiselessly into the skiff, which had been brought close under the walls.

Then the rowers resumed their seats. Tunstall's rescuer welcomed him with a warm grasp of the hand; and, with a few quick strokes of the oar, they put off unobserved, and under cover of the darkness, reached a landing place above the town on the opposite bank of the river. There two swift horses stood ready saddled and bridled, in the charge of a serving-man, their heads turned in the direction of Wallingford.

The escape of the priest was speedily discovered, and search was made for him in the houses of all the recusants in the neighborhood who were suspected of harboring so-called 'traitors.'