

The Roamin' Catholic

By Brian Wells

Brian Wells is a parishioner of St. John the Apostle who is a student at Franciscan University of Steubenville. He is presently spending a semester abroad in Gaming, Austria, living and studying in the *Kartause Maria Thronus Iesu*, a fourteenth century Carthusian Monastery. This, and subsequent articles, though condensed, is taken verbatim from his travel blog.



Before my semester studying abroad with Franciscan University of Steubenville, a group of us decided to hit up Ireland first. Lara Holley has some extended family in Cavan, Ireland, who we were staying with. When we arrived at their house, Benny and Roselynn instantly welcome us all in, giving us our sleeping assignments and stuffing us with homemade bread and jam with many, many glasses of tea.

This first evening in Cavan we decided to go down to the bottom of the ridge and see the house where Lara's great-grandmother was born (now transformed into a cow stable).



None of us expected the amount of mud on the trek down there though and no one brought mudding boots to Europe. Roselynn, being the mother that she is, brought out a bunch of plastic sacks to tie over our feet and keep our shoes out of the mud.



A little house to Mary

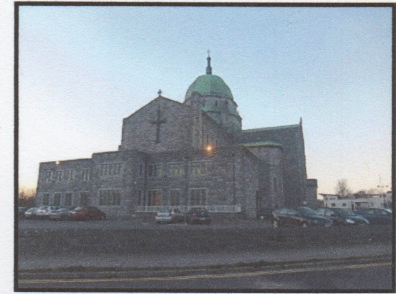
The story of the Mass rock, as told by Roselynn: Back in the 16th century when the Church was being persecuted during the war with England, priests were not allowed to hold Mass for the



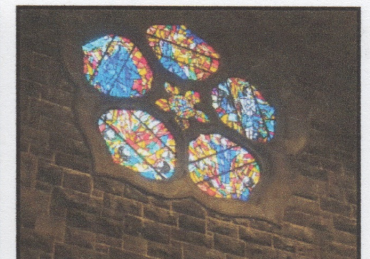
people and if one was found doing so they would be killed on the spot with a reward going to the killer. So, in order to still have the Mass, they would find these large slabs of rock out in the country side where the people would gather. Sentinels would stand watch in the surrounding hills to alert the people if any guards were coming so the priest wouldn't be killed. As Roselynn put it: the Church of Ireland was born in those hills.



Benny and Roselynn helped us figure out that a bus was leaving for Galway at noon on Wednesday. So after Mass Rock Stephen, Sam, Cole, Kaitlyn, and myself all head out to Galway. Four hours later we arrive, find



an awesome hostel with wifi, free storage, free breakfast, and an awesome staff. After getting settled we decide to see what the town had to offer as far as sites and then grab some dinner. We first walked across town to the Galway Cathedral on none other than Nun Island.



Since it isn't tourist season, the locals actually warmed up to us Americans (we were hoping we could blend in a little, especially with our new scarves, but still stuck out like a sore thumb) quite a bit. Talking with them throughout the night I learned some very important things about Irishmen: (1) they never say "Top o' the mornin' to ya!" Apparently it's something Americans came up with for the Irish. (2) Although we're told the proper way to say their language is "Gaelic," it's again only the tourists. The Irish just call it...Irish. (3) According to the Irishman I talked with, the Irish don't have shamrocks. This one had never seen a shamrock before and claimed they didn't exist in Ireland. (4) When in doubt say "Cheers!"



What's happening in April?

Wednesday, April 3: Memorial of Saint Francis of Paola



Saint Francis was born in Paola, Italy in 1415. He and several friends started a community of hermits, which later became known as the Order of Minims. They were an extremely humble order, and the word "Minim" refers to their desire to

embrace extreme humility and simplicity. A legend about him is that he once tossed his cloak on the water and sailed across the Straits of Messina on it.

ANTIPHON: If a man should give away all his possessions out of love, he would feel that he has lost nothing at all.

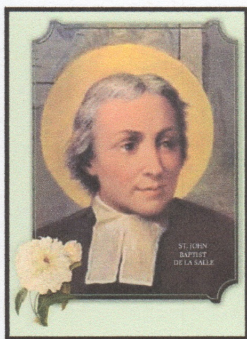
Saturday, April 5: Memorial of Saint Vincent Ferrer

St. Vincent was born in Spain in 1350. As a Dominican priest, he taught philosophy and theology, and he became a great missionary preacher as he traveled throughout much of Europe, including England, Scotland, and Ireland. He is known as the patron saint of builders because of his reputation for building up the Church as he traveled and taught.



ANTIPHON: It is not you who speaks but the spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

Monday, April 7: Memorial of Saint John Baptist de la Salle



Born in France in 1651, he was the oldest of ten children. Ordained to the priesthood in 1678, his work focused on the poor. He started the Institute of the Brothers of Christian Schools and established teaching colleges. He emphasized classroom education over individual instruction, and he was the first to teach in the vernacular instead of Latin.

ANTIPHON: The man of compassion guides and teaches his brothers with the gentle care of the good shepherd for his sheep.

Sunday, April 13: Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

Holy Week begins as we gather for a procession into the sanctuary, palm branches in our hands. We are commemorating Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem. Catholics have been doing this since the early part of the fourth century when the tradition began in Jerusalem. We will take our palms home, putting them into vases and sometimes folding them into crosses.



ANTIPHON: Six days before the Passover, when the Lord came into the city of Jerusalem, the children ran to meet him; in their hands they carried palm branches and with a loud voice cried out: "Hosanna in the highest!"

Thursday, April 17: Holy Thursday

On Holy Thursday, we commemorate the last night of Jesus' life as He gathered with his Disciples in the Upper Room. The events of that evening were of such significance that John devoted five chapters of his Gospel to those hours that led up to the arrest of Jesus.



Before celebrating the feast of the Passover with His disciples, He first washed their feet, an act of humility; it represents the service and charity of Christ who came "not to be served, but to serve." "If I, therefore, the master and teacher have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet, I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do....I say to you, no slave is greater than his master nor any messenger greater than the one who sent him." (John 13:14-16)



That evening He also celebrated the first Eucharist and instituted the Sacred Priesthood. "While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to His disciples saying, 'Take and eat; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you, for this is My blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins.'" (Matthew 26:26-28)

He continued to teach His disciples that final evening, trying to prepare them for what was to come, He then went to one of His favorite places to pray, the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives, along with his three

closest disciples, Peter, James, and John. There He suffered through what we call the Agony in the Garden. Knowing that death was near, He prayed that God's will would be done. Soon His betrayer was at hand, and He was arrested. His Passion had begun.



In our churches today, the Blessed Sacrament is transferred by procession to the place of repose at the back corner of the church. We leave the sanctuary in silence. Some linger to pray. The tabernacle is empty; the sanctuary lamp is extinguished. Jesus is gone.

ANTIPHON: We should glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom is our salvation, life and resurrection, through whom we are saved and delivered. Amen.

Friday, April 18: Good Friday: The Celebration of the Passion of the Lord



We enter the church in silence. The mood is solemn. The altar is completely bare, without a cross, candles and cloths. We will hear the Word; we quietly come up to venerate the Cross, some touching, some kissing the body of Christ hanging on the cross. We take Communion, and then we leave in silence. Our Lord has died.

Saturday, April 19: Holy Saturday

"Something strange is happening -- there is a great silence on earth today, a great silence and stillness. The whole earth keeps silence because the King is asleep. The earth trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and he has raised up all who have slept ever



since the world began. God has died in the flesh and hell trembles with fear."

"He has gone to search for our first parent, as for a lost sheep. Greatly desiring to visit those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death, he has gone to free from sorrow the captives Adam and Eve. The Lord approached them bearing the Cross, the weapon that had won

him the victory. At the sight of him Adam, the first man he had created, struck his breast in terror and cried out to everyone: 'My Lord be with you all.' Christ answered him: 'And with your spirit.' He took him by the hand and

raised him up, saying: 'Awake, o sleeper, and rise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.'" (From an ancient homily for Holy Saturday, author unknown)

Sunday, April 20: Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord

Christ has risen! Mary Magdalene was the first to see her



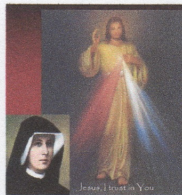
Risen Lord. She quickly ran to tell the disciples. We share their wonder and their joy, for this is the very heart and soul of our Catholic faith. Without the Resurrection, Jesus would

have been remembered simply as a teacher, perhaps a prophet. "I have risen and I am with you still, alleluia. You have laid your hand upon me, alleluia. Too wonderful for me, this knowledge, alleluia, alleluia." (Entrance antiphon)

ANTIPHON: The Lord is truly risen, alleluia. To him be glory and power for all the ages of eternity, alleluia, alleluia.

Sunday, April 27: Divine Mercy Sunday

In 2000 Pope John Paul II canonized St. Faustina, a Polish nun who had been chosen by God to reveal His message of Divine Mercy to the world. He also announced that from that day on, the second Sunday of Easter would be called Divine Mercy Sunday. It is only fitting that Sunday, April 27, was the date chosen by Pope Francis for the canonization of both Pope John Paul II and Pope John XXIII. Estimates are that perhaps up to one million Catholics will head to Rome, hoping to witness the canonization of these two well-loved Popes in St. Peter's Square.



When Pope Francis was asked to describe these two men, he said, "Blessed John was "a bit of the country priest, a priest who loves each of the faithful and knows how to care for

them.... He was holy, patient, had a good sense of humor and, especially by calling the Second Vatican Council, was a man of courage. He was a man who let himself be guided by the Lord." As for Blessed John Paul, Pope Francis said, "I think of him as 'the great missionary of the church,' because he was a man who proclaimed the Gospel everywhere."

ANTIPHON: Receive the joy of your glory, giving thanks to God, who has called you into the heavenly kingdom, alleluia.