

ST PAUL MIKI AND THE JAPANESE MARTYRS

By Fr Mark

Catholicism was introduced to Japan in the 1549 by Francis Xavier and Jesuit companions from Spain and Portugal. They were joined by Dominicans and Franciscans, and in 1575, Pope Gregory XIII placed Japan under the Portuguese diocese of Macau. Despite considerable language difficulties, the missionaries converted many Feudal lords, who brought with them their subjects. By 1579, there were about 130,000 converts, and hundreds of churches were built. St Francis allegedly considered Japan the most fruitful ground for conversion in all the Far East.

All changed when a disgruntled Spanish trader claimed that the missionaries were in Japan to prepare it for conquest. The great warlord and unifier of Japan, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, was alarmed at the potential for disloyalty among Catholic Feudal lords, and by the Portuguese foundation at Nagasaki. In July 1587, Hideyoshi banned Catholicism on the basis that it harmed Japanese unity, and in 1614 legislation forbade Catholicism on pain of death. The persecution of the Japanese Church proceeded in a particularly cruel manner—many of the persecutors having been trained by the Jesuits devised fiendish ways to attack the faith; *Fumie* (ikons of Christ and Mary) were produced, and citizens were told to trample them. Those who hesitated were arrested, and executed.

Over 1,000 Japanese Catholics were martyred, until toleration in 1867. On February 5 1597, twenty Japanese and six Christians were executed at Nagasaki in a cruel parody of their faith, being crucified and then pierced with spears. Among them was Paul Miki, son of a military officer, who had joined the Jesuits in 1580. Arrested in Kyoto, St Paul was forced to walk 600 miles to Nagasaki—tradition has it he chanted the *Te Deum* all the way. Raised on the cross, he called out that this was his greatest pulpit, and he preached his last sermon. The martyrs were canonised in 1862.

The feel of the persecuted Japanese Church is captured in the astonishing novel *Silence*, by Shusaku Endo (the Japanese 'Graham Greene'). The novel follows the fate of a Portuguese Jesuit who enters Japan, pivoting on his arrest and the demands of his captors to trample on a *Fumie*. Do not leave Cambridge without reading it.



FISHER HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Sunday 2 February

THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

CALENDAR

Sunday 2	THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD 8.00 Extraordinary Form (Tridentine) 9.00 Sung Latin Mass 11.00 Sung English Mass
Monday 3	12.30 Mass Ss Laurence, Dunstan, Theodore <i>Blessing of St Blaise on throats after Mass</i>
Tuesday 4	1.05 Mass
Wednesday 5	12.30 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 1.05 Mass St Agatha
Thursday 6	1.05 Mass St Paul Miki and companions
Friday 7	1.05 Mass 7.30 Mass
Saturday 8	1.05 Mass St Josephine Bakhita 4.30 Confessions 6.00 Vigil Mass of Sunday
Sunday 9	FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME 8.00 Extraordinary Form (Tridentine) 9.00 Sung Latin Mass 11.00 Sung English Mass

BLESSING OF ST BLAISE

The traditional blessing of throats will take place after 1.05 Mass tomorrow.

FISHER SOCIETY AGM

Next Sunday, after 11.00am Mass, your chance to vote for the officers and members of the Fisher Society.

FRIDAY 7.30pm MASS

If you are a musician, and would like to participate in a more contemporary style of Mass please contact John Darlison on jd600.

CRUMBS ON FRIDAY

After the 7.30pm Mass, a four-minute explanation of things we do, but don't know why we do them. This week: Fr Kevin on *Why do we add water to the wine?*

PARLIAMENTARY INTERNSHIPS 2014—2015

Organised by the Catholic Bishops' Conference, is for recent graduates; there are various posts in Parliament, the Bishops' Conference, and Archbishop's House. You can apply online—please see outside the chapel for details.

ELBOW FOR BRASSO?

If you would like to volunteer to polish some sacristy brass, please see Fr Mark or Sister Ann.

CATHOLIC-ORTHODOX EVENING

On Monday, members of the Cambridge Orthodox chaplaincy will join us for drinks and readings. Entry is free. Fisher Room 8.00pm.

GRADUATE SOCIETY

This Wednesday, at 6.15pm in the Fisher Room, Lord Alton will speak on pro-life issues. All welcome.

CATHOLICISM FOR THE CURIOUS

Fr Mark will lead a discussion at 1.15 on Monday in the Fisher Room, on *Sacraments and Sacramentality*.

SAINTS AND SCONES

Sr Ann hosts a discussion on saints, over cream tea, on Sunday at 4.30pm in her study. This week: James Lawson on *Fr Miguel Pro*.

APOLOGETICS LECTURE

Dr William Carroll, of Oxford University, will speak on *The Error of Beginning and the Beginning of Error*. 5.00pm Sunday 9 February, Fisher Room. Contact Sam Trizuljak (st571)

ROBINSON COLLEGE MASS

Tuesday 11 February, 6.15pm. Followed by Hall, price £12.35. Contact Tobias Paul on tsp26

SISTERHOOD OF ST ELIZABETH

The Sisters from St Elizabeth's convent in Minsk will be at Fisher House on Friday, and there will be a sale of their goods after 1.05 Mass to raise money for their work with orphans and in a psychiatric hospital. Please see the poster outside the chapel for details.

PRO-LIFE TALK

Questions of Life and Death - Lord David Alton will speak on abortion and assisted suicide at 5.00pm on Wednesday, 5 Feb in the Manby Room, King's College.

ROSARY LEGION OF MARY

The Rosary is prayed in the Chapel on Saturdays at 5.30pm, Sundays after the 11am Mass, and Tuesdays and Thursdays after 1.05pm Mass. *FisherHouseRosary@gmail.com*

CHOIRS—NEW MEMBERS

If you wish to sing in the 9.00am Latin choir contact Matthew Swanson (mjswanson2@gmail.com); for the English Mass choir contact Dominic Wong (dhtw2)

COMMUNION AND LIBERATION

Meets every Thursday at 9.00pm in the Music Room at OLEM. See the poster outside the chapel, or contact Mark Young (my321)

BENSON DINNER

The Graduate Society dinner is on 15 February, in the elegant Wordsworth Room at St John's. Meet at Fisher House 6.30pm. The speaker is Dr Ralph Townsend, Headmaster of Winchester. Cost £41 cash or cheque (made out to Fisher House) to Hugh Burling at St John's, on hdp2 with name/field/college.

CHRIST'S COLLEGE MASS

On Tuesday 4 February, 6.30pm. All are welcome.

LOST PROPERTY

There is quite a collection of coats, scarves and hats on the hooks by the doors of Fisher House. Please reclaim what is yours—the rest goes to the SVP.

POETRY, FORM AND FAITH

On Tuesday at 6.00pm in the Library, Sr Anna Mary OP will lead a weekly discussion on poetry and literature. All welcome.

RETREAT TO WORTH

The traditional retreat to Worth takes place 21—23 March. More details soon, or contact Anna Webb on aew64

COLLECTION LAST WEEK £509.30
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