

attending Church of England services, she again refused. The torture inflicted upon her left her partially paralyzed and she had to be carried to Tyburn for hanging.

Also martyred that day were Blessed John Roche (who had assisted Margaret Ward in the escape of Father Richard Watson), three other laymen who had assisted priests, Blesseds Richard Lloyd, Richard Martin, and Edward Shelley, and one priest, Blessed Richard Leigh. The regime was certainly sending a message about laity who assisted Catholic priests.

- Bernard Kellett

Entrance Antiphon: Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.

First Reading: Jeremiah 1: 4-5, 17-19

Responsorial Psalm:70: R/ My lips will tell of your help.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 12: 31-13:13

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, says the Lord; no one can come to the Father except through me. Alleluia!

Gospel: Luke 4: 21-30

Memorial Acclamation: When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

Communion Antiphon: Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.



Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C, 2025 Weekly Reflection: Cheshire/Lancashire Martyrs (2)

There are two events on 30 August 1588 worthy of particular note. One is the execution of six Catholics--one laywoman, four laymen and one priest--in London as part of the English government's reaction to the attempted invasion of England by the Spanish Armada.

The other is the memorial of three female English Catholic martyrs, who were canonized among the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales in 1970 but have this special day all to themselves on the liturgical calendar of the Dioceses of England and Wales. They are featured in the right panel of Geoffrey Webb's reredos from the Martyrs' Chapel in St. James, Spanish Place, London: St. Margaret Ward holds the rope, St. Anne Line the widow is dressed in black, and St. Margaret Clitherow kneels on the door which crushed her when the weights were placed upon it.

The three women share the date of St. Margaret Ward's execution on August 30, 1588, as their memorial--she was part of a second group of martyrs after the failure of the Spanish Armada. She is a virgin martyr: she helped Father Richard Watson escape from Bridewell Prison. She visited him often enough that the jailer finally allowed her to enter without searching her, so she was able to smuggle in a rope. Father Watson unfortunately injured himself while escaping and was unable to retrieve the rope. Margaret found John Roche to help the injured priest once out of prison and both she and John were arrested; John because he had exchanged clothing with the priest and Margaret because the jailer realised that she was the last person to visit Father Watson before he escaped. She was held in chains, hung up by her hands and scourged as the authorities attempted to force her to tell them where Father Watson went after escaping Bridewell prison. She refused, even though she acknowledged that she helped him. Offered a pardon for