

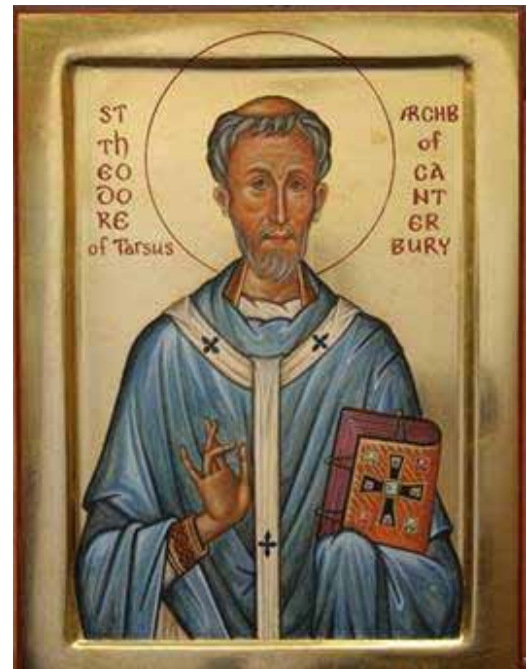
Weekly Musing + September 19, 2011

One might wonder why I would tell you about St. Theodore of Tarsus when this week contains the feast of St. Matthew, a red letter feast day. Well, probably because we honestly know so little about St. Matthew. Was he a tax collector; maybe. Did he write the gospel bearing his name; probably not. I would rather tell you about someone we do know about and so St. Theodore.

Theodore was a native of Tarsus which is in the province of Cilicia, the underbelly of Asia Minor or Anatolia (modern Turkey). The astute among you will recognize this as St. Paul's home town. This area was under Persian control during Theodore's time which is nothing special in that it had been part of the Persian Empire a thousand years ago. I collect the coins of Cilicia and thus Tarsus during the satrapal period when the language on the coins is Aramaic, the language of Jesus ("eli, eli, lama sabachthani"). The important thing is that it was a cultural crossroads where Greek was the theological language. Theodore ended up in Rome, a rather interesting circumstance since he would then be in a place where the ecclesiastical language was now Latin. The royalty of the British Isles had sent a candidate to Rome to be consecrated as Archbishop of Canterbury. Said candidate died and Theodore was appointed in his place.

Theodore was already a vast repository of ancient church learning, first the Greeks of the earliest period and then Latin church history as well. He brought this learning and its music to England. He reformed church life by calling two important councils and reconfiguring diocesan boundaries. Dry stuff you say and you would be right in a sense but by this time, the missionaries sent by Rome were to do exactly this. Christianity was secure but Rome, unlike the Eastern Church from which Theodore had come, was always interested in conformity and orthodoxy as the Holy See defined it. Whatever the value of these accomplishments (and there were many including a stable church) Theodore also brought with him enormous learning which one of the reasons he was selected by Rome for this weighty position.

We live in an age where classical learning, that is learning the arts and classics, not just the science of a profession, is on the wane. In fact, education in general faces many hurdles of recent. No place is that more apparent than in the lack of



education in newer, mostly American, forms of Christianity. A consumer society wants what it wants now. The goods of religion must be delivered quickly and palatably. The resources of history, tradition, and scholarship are seen as incumbrances. The fruit of this is public discourse devoid of logic, perspective, and finally, charity.

Cilicia coin. St. Theodore's humble grave site near Canterbury, "Archbishop Theodores d. 690"



News from St. Luke's

The youth group meets each Wednesday at 6 pm. (over by 8 pm). We are meeting with St. Stephen's. A good time is had by all.

St. Luke's vestry meets tomorrow evening at 6:30 pm. We will talk again about service times, the annual pledge drive, and diocesan convention.

There will be altar guild training on October 15 (Saturday) at 9:30 am. We also need a few more chalice bearers for the 10 am. Eucharist. There will be training. Please let the rector know if you are interested.

Thanks to all those who helped take care of weeds etc. around the playground.

Don't forget the St. Michael and all Angels celebration Thursday, September 29 at Holy Cross Parish (meeting at Lillis Chapel on the campus of St. John's retirement community). **Please RSVP.** We would like to know who is coming (more or less) so as not to buy too much food. We start at 5 pm.