**ADRIAN FORTESCUE**

Writer on oriental churches and Roman liturgy; b. Jan. 14, 1864; d. Letchworth, England, Feb. 11, 1923. He was of the family of St. Adrian Fortescue, martyred in 1539 under [Henry VIII](https://www.encyclopedia.com/people/history/british-and-irish-history-biographies/henry-viii).

His father Edward Bowles Knottesford Fortescue (1816–1877) built the church at Wilmcote in Warwickshire in the most advanced spirit of the Oxford Movement. In 1850 he became Provost of the St. Ninian Scottish Episcopal Cathedral at Perth.

Through his first wife, Francis Spooner, he became connected with Cardinal Manning and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Archibald Tait.

Among the seven children born from this marriage were George, who became the Keeper of Printed Books in the British Museum, and his heir, Edward Francis, who was an expert on the Armenian church. For fourteen years Edward was the President of the Association for Promoting the Unity of Christendom (A.P.U.C.). After the death of his first wife, he married Gertrude, the daughter of Reverend Sanderson Robins. Together they entered the Roman Catholic Church in 1872.

The second child of this marriage, Adrian Henry Timothy, was baptized in the Sacred Heart Church, Eden Grove, London, on Jan. 24, 1874, and educated at the Jesuit school at Boulogne–sur–Mer in France and at St. Charles, Bayswater, London.

In 1891 he entered Scots College, Rome (Ph.D. 1894) and then to the theological college at Innsbruck. He was incardinated a priest in the Archdiocese of Westminster, where he served at St. Boniface (The German Church) in Whitechapel, as well as at Walthamstow, Ongar, Colchester, Enfield, Witham, and Maldon. After earning the degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1905, he spent a year traveling and studying in the Near East.

During this period he produced his first major work *The*[*Orthodox Eastern Church*](https://www.encyclopedia.com/philosophy-and-religion/christianity/roman-catholic-and-orthodox-churches-branches-schisms-and-6) (Catholic Truth Society, 1908, third edition, 1911). Also at this time he contributed the first of 110 articles (about 250,000 words) to the original *Catholic Encyclopedia*. On his return to London, he was asked to found a parish in Letchworth in Hertfordshire. He and his cousin Charles Spooner designed the church, which was dedicated to St. Hugh of Lincoln.

The opening ceremony was marked by a Mass in the Roman rite as well as by a Byzantine–rite (Melkite) liturgy. *The Tablet* reported the church as a place "where the services (always strictly liturgical) are carried out in a manner which might well be imitated." In 1912, at the suggestion of Herbert Thurston, he wrote his second major work, *The Mass* (Longmans, second edition, 1913). He wrote the preface and edited *A Roman Missal* (tenth edition, New York 1951).

In 1918 *The Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described* first appeared. Until the reforms of the 1960s this volume made the name Fortescue almost synonymous with the Roman liturgy, and it was reproduced many times, as recently as 1996 by St. Austin Press. Fortescue lectured frequently on the Oriental liturgies, and in 1919 he was made consultor of the Congregation for the Oriental Church.

**Bibliography:** J. McCarthy, *Adrian* (Cleveland 1999). J.G. Vance, *Adrian Fortescue: A Memoir* ([New York](https://www.encyclopedia.com/places/united-states-and-canada/us-political-geography/new-york) 1924). *The Wisdom of Adrian Fortescue,* ed. M. Davies, ([Fort Collins](https://www.encyclopedia.com/places/united-states-and-canada/us-political-geography/fort-collins), Co. 1999).