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IN THIS CORNER

My Letter from Bally High

Several weeks ago I wrote the Bishop of . . . let's call him the Bishop of Bally High. I was inquiring into the possibility of serving in his diocese. I have been in my present cure for three years, and I was looking for a move. I stated all this in the letter I sent the bishop, and I enclosed a resumé. Recently I received the following letter from Bally High, over his signature and his secretary's initials:

"Dear Fr. Uhls, Peace and greetings to you in the Lord! It would be our great pleasure to have you preach for us at the cathedral on the Feast of the Transfiguration.

"Later in the same day the University of Divinity School is desirous of conferring upon you the degree of Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa*. You will soon be hearing from the dean, if you haven't already.

"My wife, Alice, our Welsh corgi, David, and I would be delighted to have you and 'Mrs. Manitoba' as our guests at the 'episcopal palace' here in _____ over the weekend. We'd love to show you the city, which is beautiful in the summer, and we'll play nine holes on Saturday. You'll find my course worthy of your game.

"The chapter and all of us here do hope you can come. I am, and I shall remain, Sincerely yours in the Lord, . . ."

Naturally I was taken aback by the letter. I have never met the Bishop of Bally High and I am only seven years out of divinity school. But I'd be a liar if I said that the letter did not flatter and encourage me. I dialed the bishop's office.

"Yes," came the lovely, though nervous, voice of a woman. "We do know who you are, Fr. Uhls. We are so sorry. At least I am sorry. You see . . . you see, Fr. Uhls, I am brand new here in the bishop's office. And I am just learning this new software and, you see . . . *Hello, bishop's office. Yes, I'll connect you. Please hold. You're welcome!* . . . Fr. Uhls, excuse me."

"I understand."

"You see, Father, we merged, we think, your name into a letter intended for the . . . for the Archbishop of Manitoba!"

"I understand," I replied, grasping the humor of it.

"And you're not going to believe it," she continued, chuckling now (and I'm certain I heard another, deeper voice chuckling in the background), "but do you know what I did, Father? I sent your letter to the archbishop! Isn't that hilarious? Let me read you the letter, Fr. Uhls."

"Okay."

"Your Grace, Thank you for your letter and resumé. I'm sorry to say that we have very few openings in the diocese at this time. However, I should mention to you a mission church on the west side of the city, to which I've forwarded your profile. They are a small, somewhat peculiar community, in desperate need of love and motivation. They tend to speak only in their native language of Kalanese. They have a reputation for being a 'priest-eating parish,' but I think a good and careful priest could do quite well there. I've enclosed their profile for you.

As she finished reading, she began to giggle again, as did the deeper voice I was hearing over the line. I chuckled, even though I felt a sinking sensation in my stomach.

"But I've got great news, Father," she said after more apologies. "The bishop has forwarded your impressive resumé to, of all people, the Archbishop of Manitoba! With a personal recommendation! How about that?"

Our guest columnist is the Rev. Chuck Uhls, the pseudonym of the writer, who wishes to remain anonymous.

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ON THE COVER

Christ Church Cathedral, Sendai, Japan, where a centennial Eucharist was celebrated recently for the Diocese of Tohoku [p. 8].

LETTERS

A New Meaning

The Rev. Alvin Van Pelt Hart [TLC, Sept. 22] gives evangelism new meaning. He invites fundamentalists who "have crept into" the church to leave it because they "are working from within to throw out both tradition and reason in favor of the Bible only and their mindless interpretation of it."

Does Fr. Hart believe that when Jesus gave us the great commission, he meant for us to discipline everyone except the fundamentalists? His inveigher against "fundamentalists" is chimerical and theologically bankrupt. To deprecate a group of people, call them names (know-nothings), and invite them to leave the Episcopal Church contradicts every sound definition of evangelism.

There are fundamentals which are essential to sound faith. Scripture speaks clearly as to what these fundamentals are. The Episcopal Church historically has held the value of these fundamentals. I am not a fundamentalist in biblical interpretation and I know no one in the Episcopal Church who is. However, in matters of faith and morals, scripture is the desistive authority.

I wish for no person to leave the Episcopal Church. My wish is for all in the church to accept and practice the new life offered by Jesus Christ. In a time in which the church has stated a priority on evangelism, an effort of discipline all people into a relationship with Jesus Christ in the fellowship of the church will reap infinitely more benefit than calling them names, insulting them and inviting them to leave.

(The Very Rev.) WILLIAM C. FORREST
St. Mary's Church
Tomah, Wis.

• • •

I am puzzled by Fr. Hart's letter, "Mindless Interpretation." The judgmental attitude expressed in it seems no different from that which he condemns. How does he identify a "fundamentalist"?

I write to offer a different interpretation of the so-called "fundamentalists'" agenda. While Anglicans have tried to maintain a creative tension among scripture, reason and tradition, scripture's primacy always has been understood. To wit: "I solemnly de-

clare that I do believe the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation" (Ordnations: priest, BCP, p. 526). Unlike Fr. Hart, I believe those whom he labels "fundamentalists" are calling the church to be true to him "who makes all things new."

It is ironic that those who affirm the primacy of scripture are now challenged to justify this strange behavior. My experience with fundamentalists has been more positive than Fr. Hart's. As I have engaged them in dialogue, they have lovingly and firmly reminded me that my reason is not immune to the easy answers and seductive wiles of the prince of darkness. Both liberals and fundamentalists are capable of mindless interpretations. All of us who stand at the foot of the cross are saved by grace.

(The Rev.) JONATHAN T. FORD, Sr.
St. Luke's Church
Kearney, Neb.

• • •

Like Fr. Hart [TLC, Sept. 22], I am tired of reading letters maintaining that the "liberal wing" of the Episcopal Church will bring about its demise. I am also wearied by letters spelling doom at the hand of "funda-

(Continued on next page)



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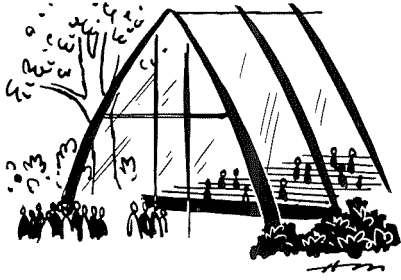


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LETTERS_____

(Continued from previous page)

mentalists." In point of fact, I am concerned that the destruction of the church, if it is to occur, will be the result of a schism brought about by the unwillingness of the proponents of opposing world views to enter into compassionate and intelligent dialogue with each other out of fear that there may be truth on both sides.

While Fr. Hart may be right when he says that "Anglicanism, when it has been true to itself, has always been profoundly liberal . . .," he fails to point out that it also has been profoundly spiritual, basing that spirituality on a high view of the inspired word of God.

Rather than to hope for the departure from the church of those who disagree, I would suggest the alternative that our parish has chosen: to pray daily in rotation for all bishops, for their ministries, their dioceses and for the unity of ordained Christian leaders in this church.

(The Rev.) G. LYMAN REED
Kittanning, Pa.

• • •

If Fr. Hart is "tired" of all the letters, articles and editorials espousing a conservative view of the situation in which the Episcopal Church finds itself, we conservatives are exhausted by having to explain over and over the fundamentals, and I do mean fundamentals, of faith both as Christians and as Anglicans.

After reading Fr. Hart's complaint, I can only surmise that he does not understand the meaning of fundamental. Of course, it means original (the first, earliest, never having been before), primary (first in importance), and basic (essential, rudimentary). Therefore, I believe his statement regarding we who actually believe that the Bible contains all things necessary for salvation; who believe that the history and tradition of the church is the example we are to follow; who believe that human reason means using logic and intelligence to see the first two within the bounds of conscience and sanity, are not "mindless" but are perhaps the only ones using our God-given minds.

That is not all. We also hold our principles through faith; not blind faith, but faith built on the very

tradition Fr. Hart seems to feel we are "throwing out." Fr. Hart might as well get used to seeing more and more of us.

SUE SEIBERT

Mineral Wells, Texas

A Depressing Time

Nancy Doman's series on singles in the church [TLC, Aug. 18-Sept. 1] and especially "A Two-Edged Sword" — hit home.

For many decades, I sang in parish choirs, and, of course, sang the mid-night Mass on Christmas Eve. For years, several other single people in the choir got together for an early dinner and gift exchange before church. That was my Christmas, and it was a happy one.

Then I changed jobs and moved away. An acquaintance recruited me for her parish choir in my new city. It was a revelation. No invitations, just the lonely business of hauling myself out at 10 p.m., usually in bad weather. My fellow choir members chatted merrily about their plans. No one asked what my plans were. Christmas Eve became the most depressing time of the year. Eventually, I dropped out of the choir and the parish.

My Christmases are spent quite alone. I long ago accepted that, though a tad wistfully. But what hurts is that no one knows, or even apparently thinks about it. Even my rector's wife, who certainly ought to know a little about me, wrote on her last Christmas card that she hoped I would have a wonderful Christmas with family. I have no family — except my cats and dogs, and I don't think she meant that.

I don't want to create the impression that single people go about with chips on their shoulders, or that others have responsibility to coddle us. Most of us stand on our own feet and live positive and rewarding lives. But times like Christmas Eve — traditionally "family" times — can be terribly painful. I hope many will read Nancy Doman's articles and be inspired by them.

NAME WITHHELD

More Resources

I have just finished reading Neff Powell's article, "Resources for Small Churches" [TLC, Sept. 8] which ad-

dresses a most important issue for those engaged in small church ministry. Whether that ministry be in rural areas, small towns or in the middle of a major city, the need for adequate and timely resources are still there for all charged with church leadership — both lay and ordained.

I would like to add two resources that my good friend omitted from his article. First, the magazine *Crossroads*, from the Rural Workers Fellowship. Not only is that publication useful to those in small membership churches, but the network itself provides continuing support to those involved with small church ministry.

The second "resource" is the Rural/Small Town Ministry Office at the national church headquarters. This is an excellent point of initial contact with the Episcopal Church Center. We might prove to be that special resource you require.

(The Rev.) ALLEN BROWN, Jr.
Rural/Small Town Ministries Officer
Episcopal Church Center
New York, N.Y.

His Name Is . . .

I appreciated seeing my letter about "Black Letter Days" [TLC, Sept. 29]. Unfortunately it is attributed to "The Rev. Roger Miller, Baltimore, Md.," rather than to me. To my knowledge, there is no Roger Miller among our clergy here, and I know I wrote the letter which you printed. I would like my friends around the church to know that I am to be blamed for the opinions expressed in the letter, rather than some member of the clergy who wants to hide behind a pseudonym.

(The Rev.) RONALD H. MILLER
Associate for Ordained Ministry
Diocese of Maryland
Baltimore, Md.

Pension Benefits

It must be hopeful and helpful for those who benefit to read how well the Church Pension Fund is doing [TLC, Sept. 8].

It is regrettable that over the years more members of the "family" were not asked and allowed to take part. This might have included parish and diocesan lay workers, women missionaries (male missionaries were often ordained) and Church Army officers.

In England, Church Army officers
(Continued on page 14)

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St. Augustine's Life Reviewed at Conference

In celebration of the 1,600th anniversary of the ordination to the priesthood of St. Augustine of Hippo in 391, the Commission for Lutheran-Anglican-Roman Catholic Relations in Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, along with the Medieval Studies program of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, sponsored an international gathering of scholars, priests and bishops of various churches. The conference, which was free and open to the public, took place at the university and was titled "Augustine: His Influence on the Church and the World."

The subject of Augustine's ordination was no mere occasion for another academic gathering, but was itself a point of much interest among the speakers, no matter their specific topic. Almost everyone agreed with Prof. Gerald Bonner that the youthful Augustine was self-centered and selfish and that even his much-discussed conversion (recounted so dramatically in *The Confessions*) was a choice he made, while his ordination was thrust upon him against his will, subsequently forcing the retiring scholar to broaden his circle of acquaintances.

The conference opened with a festival choral Evensong at Luther Memorial Church in Madison, at which the Rt. Rev. Robert Runcie, 102nd Archbishop of Canterbury, preached. His theme, *Amor Dei*, the love of God, was shored up by Augustine's comment, Give me a lover, one who loves, and he will understand me. Lord Runcie spoke of "the cry of longing" we have within us and of the profound sense of "the completeness" we sense in our love. This incompleteness, though, is our way to God — our deep yearning.

Referring to Augustine's ordination in 391 as a "consecrated hijacking," the former archbishop went on to say that Augustine's own mixture of desires makes him a citizen of all the traditions represented at the gathering (a standing-room only crowd of more than 1,000 for the opening service and the lectures).

An array of speakers followed over the next three days: George Lawless of the Augustinianum in Rome on Augustine as preacher; Mr. Bonner of Durham University (England) and Catho-



lic University of America on Augustine's understanding of the church as eucharistic community, Martin Marty of the University of Chicago on Augustine's impact on the American church, Krister Stendahl, sometime of Harvard Divinity School on Augustine and scripture, Elaine Pagels of Princeton on Augustine on nature and human nature, and Henry Chadwick of Cambridge University (England) on "Re-reading *The Confessions*."

Of special interest were Professor Bonner's beautifully written and delivered remarks on Augustine's eucharistic beliefs and practices. Quoting amply from *The Confessions*, *The City of God*, and several sermons, Prof. Bonner spoke of Augustine and his see city of Hippo in practical terms, developing Augustine's understanding of the Eucharist as a gathering of angels, the living (church militant) and the dead (church triumphant). He pointed to African and other patriotic influences on Augustine's thinking, the tradition of a daily celebration of the Eucharist in northern Africa in Augustine's day, and Augustine's careful use of language to speak of the elements of Holy Communion as both real and symbolic.

Prior to his formal lecture, Prof. Chadwick, an Anglican priest who is principal of Peterhouse at Cambridge

University, spoke on St. Augustine's influence on the Anglican Church (and Episcopal Church which Mr. Bonner humorously described as "roughly the same"), along with Bishop Stendahl and Prof. Lawless.

In his witty and forthright remarks, Dr. Chadwick highlighted Augustine's way of reasoning and thinking which is often "congenial," as he put it, with Anglicanism, especially Augustine's and Anglicanism's proclivity to "charity in all things." On the other hand, Bishop Stendahl urged the audience to a common "hermeneutics of suspicion" on items we could all disagree with Augustine on, noting also that the conference had been scheduled during the Jewish holy days, thus prohibiting Jewish participation. Prof. Lawless directed participants toward Augustine's thorough-going trinitarian faith.

"Augustine was not a Jesus freak, not Christ-monist, and he most definitely was not a fundamentalist," Fr. Lawless emphasized. He also added Augustine's concern for the environment, often overlooked or misread by other Christian scholars, citing Augustine's phrase about creation as "God's engagement ring." He pointed as well to the unlikelihood of Augustine's elevation to a bishopric in our own day if there were public knowledge of his sexually active teenage years and the illegitimate child he fathered at age 17.

Lord Runcie, Prof. Bonner, Prof. Chadwick, along with planning committee members and participants, Bishops William Wantland of Eau Claire and Roger White of Milwaukee, and numerous Episcopal clergy and laity from the United States and England attested to both Augustine's strong influence on Anglicanism and the continuing interest in Augustinian thought on the part of Episcopalians.

By the final day, Lord Runcie's opening remarks about Augustine had most definitely been proved true — Augustine's theories of inclusion and catholicity, his insistence on neighborliness toward pagans and Jews, and his repeated emphasis of charity and love make him a citizen of the Lutheran, Anglican and Roman Catholic traditions.

(The Rev.) TRAVIS DU PRIEST

Toward the City of God

Anglican scholar, Gerald Bonner, talks about St. Augustine

The following interview with Gerald Bonner was conducted by our book editor, the Rev. Travis Du Priest, during a recent gathering to celebrate the 1,600th anniversary of the ordination to the priesthood of St. Augustine of Hippo. Prof. Bonner is a member of the theology department at Durham University in England and is distinguished professor of Early Catholic Theology at the Catholic University of America.

Q: Prof. Bonner, how did you, an Anglican layman, become interested in St. Augustine?

A: I heard of him as a schoolboy in a sermon. I was interested. In about 1943, I read a review of Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, which said (absurdly) that Toynbee's work was "the greatest Christian history since the *City of God*." This quickened my interest. Garrison duty in North Africa in 1947-1948 (where I acquired a copy of the *Confessions* which I still have — a bad edition, but dear to me for sentimental reasons), increased my enthusiasm. Then followed the Oxford edition by Tom Corbishley, SJ, and Tom Parker (Church of England), and from this followed a lifetime's concern.

Q: You have written and spoken widely on Augustine and baptism and Eucharist. What do you find of particular help to Anglicans in Augustine's sacramental theory or practice?

A: I think his notion of the Eucharist as a sacrifice offered by Christ, the great high priest, who offers *us*, who participate in *him*, and are thus his body. This understanding transcends the wearisome debate which has dominated Protestant/Catholic dialogue since the Reformation about the *mode* of Christ's presence in the Eucharist and gives the eucharistic action a dynamic character — we are united by Christ in an active, not a passive sense.

Q: In your opening remarks, you equated the Church of England with the Episcopal Church as "roughly the same." What, positive or negative, do you observe in the American version of Anglicanism?

A: I fear that this was an example of

Bonner's tendency to make provocative remarks, designed to shock; but at the back of my mind was the fact — which I deplore — that the Church of England is an establishment, a part of the English constitution, of which membership is still, in a sense, respectable. (I believe this last is also true of the American view of the ECUSA, but in a different sense.) I don't covet responsibility as a mark of being a Christian believer.

Q: I'm delighted we shall have you in the States for the next three years. How does a devout Anglican find himself at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.?

A: Very much at home, not because I am an Anglo-Papalist or anything like that, but simply because of the friendliness and Christian kindness of the C.U.A. Academically, I find that we speak the same theological language, even if we differ on certain issues of great importance; but at least we know how we differ.

Q: Are there distasteful or unattractive sides to Augustine's thinking to you as an Anglican?

A: Yes, but not so much to me as an Anglican as to me as a baptized Christian believer — or even as a member of the human race. Like other people, I find the way in which he accepts the damnation of the greater part of the human race, while at the same time preaching the primacy of love for our understanding of God, incredible and rather horrible. Here, (though not elsewhere) I would prefer to take an optimistic view and hope for an eventual universal salvation — even of the devil!

Q: In your talk on the Eucharist, you dwelt a long time on angels. Do angels play a key roll in your own personal piety?

A: No, nor does the mother of God, except in hoping that I will be in-



Mr. Bonner

cluded in her prayers. I spoke at length about angels because Augustine insists on their membership of the church, as well as of the City of God; but for me, as for him, there is no other mediator between God and man except the God-man Jesus Christ.

Q: You made several remarks in parting I'd like to follow up, if I may. One, that you rather fancied an afternoon with the Venerable Bede would be more pleasant than with St. Augustine. Care to comment?

A: Yes, I think Augustine is a rather overpowering personality, and I would be more at ease with the gentle Bede; but it may be that Augustine would relax and unwind. However, the great Italian scholar, Alberto Pincherie, long ago made it clear that he would prefer to avoid the restless questioning of Augustine.

Q: I trust you will continue to share your scholarship and your observations with American audiences.

A: Of course. I find American audiences congenial. I was particularly touched when a doctoral student at the Catholic University of America said: "We don't think of you as a foreigner."

Bishop of Missouri Takes Medical Leave

The Rt. Rev. William A. Jones, Jr., Bishop of Missouri, has taken a medical leave of several weeks to undergo treatment for depression and alcoholism. He notified the diocesan clergy September 22 with a hand-written letter stating his intention, and then left immediately for a treatment center.

His letter was given wide circulation both in the diocese and secular media. Appreciation has been expressed for his decision and the fact that it was given publicity. Parishes are including him in their prayers.

The Rt. Rev. Hays Rockwell, Bishop Coadjutor, will be in charge of the diocese during Bishop Jones' absence.

(The Rev.) CHARLES REHKOPF

CONVENTIONS

The Diocese of Fort Worth approved a voluntary system for funding the Executive Council asking for 1992, leaving that decision in the hands of its member parishes and missions.

Acting at its convention in Brownwood, Texas, October 4-5, the diocese approved a budget which includes the General Convention assessment but does not include funding the programs administered by Executive Council. The convention voted by orders, 45-14 among clergy and 69-25 among lay delegates, to accept the new approach and approve the \$1.25 million budget.

Japanese Diocese Marks Centennial

The Diocese of Tohoku, centered in Sendai, north of Tokyo, is entering its second century with a special awareness to its unofficial but long relationship with the American church, especially the Diocese of Louisiana.

The Most Rev. Christopher Kikawada, Bishop of Osaka and Primate of Japan, recalled in his sermon at a recent centennial Eucharist in Christ Church Cathedral, Sendai, that the Woman's Auxiliary at St. Paul's Church, New Orleans, sent Miss Georgiana Suthon as a missionary to Sendai in 1889 and she remained until 1919. He also noted that the Rev. and Mrs. William Draper served in Sendai before and after WW II, finally withdrawing to their present home in Charlotte, N.C.

What lies in large part behind the convention's decision is the growing sense of anger over the failure of General Convention to take a clear stand on the question of the ordination of non-celibate homosexuals.

Some delegates had argued that the diocese has pressing financial needs which must take precedence. But a number of delegates said stewardship of church funds was a crucial theological issue. This view prevailed.

The minority had expressed concern that the diocese was deliberately weakening its ties with the national church leadership.

For those parishes and missions

More than 440 members of parishes around the diocese joined representatives from other dioceses of the Nippon Sei Ko Kai (the Holy Catholic Church of Japan) during the service. The Rt. Rev. Cornelius Tazaki, Bishop of Tohoku, was celebrant.

Also present were Sister Alice and Sister Ursula of the Community of the Transfiguration in Glendale, Ohio. Their order's work in Sendai from 1962 to 1977 is now administered by a Japanese community, the Sisters of Nazareth, who have their motherhouse in Tokyo.

At the end of the three-hour celebration, all stood to sing "Onward Christian Soldiers" in Japanese.

(The Rev.) JAMES B. SIMPSON

which choose to have a portion of their diocesan assessment sent to New York, the formula proposed by the General Convention will apply.

The Rt. Rev. Clarence Pope, on the occasion of the seventh anniversary of his election as the bishop of the diocese, issued a call for the election of a bishop coadjutor. He proposed this election take place at the next convention in October, 1992.

Bishop Pope's convention address spoke of new opportunities to work together with other dioceses in proclaiming the gospel in the Decade of Evangelism.

The Rt. Rev. German Martinez Marquez, Bishop of the companion Diocese of Northern Mexico, was given a rousing reception by the delegates. He spoke to the convention about the history of the Episcopal Church's work in establishing a reformed Catholicism in Mexico and also praised Bishop Pope for his theological leadership.

"We in the Diocese of Northern Mexico rejoice in your witness to the unchanging revelation of God," he said. "Since revelation is a gift from God, we can only receive it, not change it. Stay with the Episcopal Church. Any break should not be of your own doing. The Episcopal Church needs you."

The convention voted to accept the decision of the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Arlington, to seek admission to the Roman Catholic Church. Bishop Pope noted with sorrow this decision to sever relations with the Episcopal Church. "We are all deeply grieved that our brothers and sisters have felt it necessary to take this course but we wish them well and our prayers go with them," he said. "As far as their property is concerned, I am more interested in their souls than in bricks and mortar and will not move against them."

The convention also heard moving speeches from Ms. Cindy Hearme of Trinity Church, Fort Worth, and the Rev. William Ilginfritz of St. John's, Brownwood, appealing for a greater sensitivity toward and respect for those who hold differing theological positions. They both argued that ways must be found to include in the full life of the church Christians who may differ on questions such as ordination of women.

(The Rev.) JEFFREY STEENSON

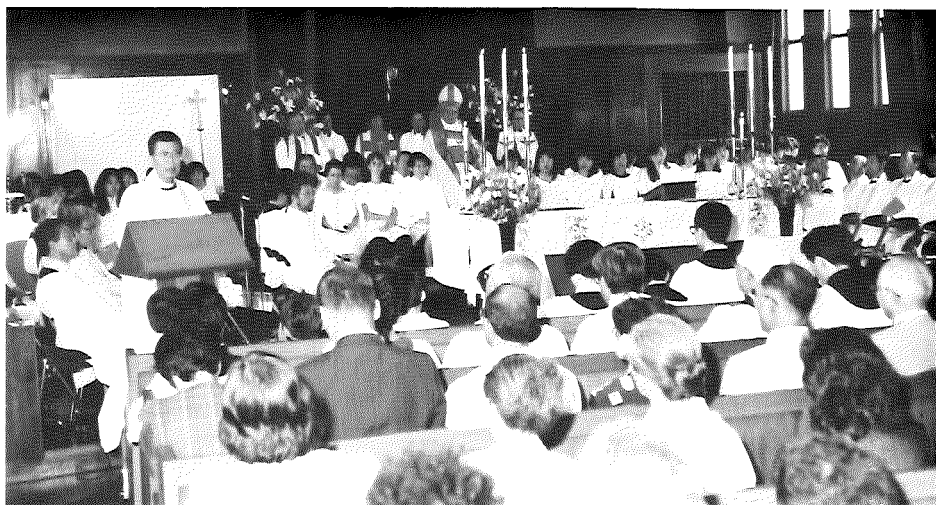


Photo by Kenneth Dimmick

Centennial Eucharist at Christ Church Cathedral, Sendai, Japan

Sacred Spaces

The 'little churches around the corners' are necessary to the nurture of public life.

By RICHARD E. WENTZ

Quite by accident, I stopped at a yard sale one Saturday morning. On one of the tables I found a rare bargain. Twenty-five cents for a copy of *My Little Church Around the Corner*, by J.H. Randolph Ray, for many years the third rector of the Church of the Transfiguration, just around the corner from Fifth Avenue into East 29th Street in Manhattan. The book was published in 1957.

It has been many years since I've been to New York City. I am an easterner and I used to go there often, before I moved to the arid lands below the Mogollon Rim in Arizona. The book helps me remember all the churches around the corners that once made America a little like Japan with its many shrines and temples. The churches around the corners (some of them not so little) were America's temples, places where the visible and invisible meet, where the line between human and nonhuman is not so clearly drawn.

I used to visit those temples like compartments of nonrationality which set my world in order, gave it a jolt out of the complacent rationality into which it had settled. In effect, they set my rationality in perspective, and helped me understand that rationality is the mind in pursuit of its aims, its purposes. The questions we con-

The Rev. Richard E. Wentz is a member of the faculty at Arizona State University, Tempe.



Church of the Transfiguration, New York City, also known as The Little Church Around the Corner.

Photo by Dan Mullen

stantly face: What shall be the aims? What kind of mind shall pursue these goals?

In New York City, Boston, Baltimore and Washington, there were churches around the corners that long ago drew me to them on my visits to those cities. The Church of the Transfiguration, St. Thomas', the Church of the Heavenly Rest, Trinity Church, St. Paul's Chapel in Manhattan. In Boston, the Church of the Advent and Phillips Brooks' Trinity Church on Copley Square. The Cathedral of

Sts. Peter and Paul (Washington National Cathedral) in the District of Columbia, along with churches like the Church of the Epiphany. They are part of the inner cities of America, but I have found them in the smaller cities and even in the American countryside. In Bethlehem, Pa., the Cathedral Church of the Nativity; in Lancaster, Pa., St. James'; and in Hagerstown, Md., St. John's Church. At a rural spot in Maryland just south of Hagerstown, is a little church around the corner of Lappan's Crossroads, one of the most charming little "temples" I have ever seen.

The churches I have named are Episcopal churches. There is a reason. Regardless of the motivation, the Episcopal Church has preserved the importance of sacred space. It shares that affinity for the presence of reality with Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches. Certainly St. Patrick's Cathedral is such a holy place. Yet these churches often have a certain sectarian aura derived from the doctrinal constraints of their traditions.

"With my first step into the grand nave of the 12th century Cistercian Abbey near the tiny, southern French village of Le Thoronet," writes artist-sculptor Robert Laylor, "the meaning of mystical architecture flowered into a deep, inner experience. All doubt ceased inside of this pure, simple stone vault. I had entered a sacred space"

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(“Geometry at the Service of Prayer,” *Parabola*, III, 1 [1978], p. 12).

Contemporary society neglects the importance of sacred space at its own peril. The pre-modern world knew secrets of artistry and construction which we have ignored in our secular assumption that all of reality submits to the totalitarianism of technical reason. We have ignored sacred space in our reductionist notions about function, and in our misguided haste for a spiritual chastity untouched by the senses. However, the memory of sacred space has lingered in the aesthetic concern of Anglicanism to build temples not to be undone.

Of course, the newer architecture of Episcopal churches also fails to provide sacred space. We have succumbed to an architecture falsely guided by economic self-righteousness and an imperfect understanding of liturgical needs. We are left with the sacred space offered by those “little” churches around the corners of America, erected in a day of romanticism and Gothicism.

Behind the creation of these “little” churches around the corners of America is an understanding of the church and of its buildings which is somewhat contrary to that of the mainstream of American religion. Predominant to our culture is the notion of the church as a voluntary association of believers. This understanding is a product of the so-called free-church tradition that has Anabaptist and Puritan roots. The church tends to be a contractual organization, a gathered society, and does not exist except as the believers participate in common response to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The building becomes a meeting house, a gathering place. It is a structure designed to meet the functional needs of the assembly.

However, there is a catholic understanding of the church as a divine society endowed with the fortunes of grace and truth for the benefit of humankind. Behind this understanding is a faithfulness to the continuing presence of the incarnate Christ. The church is prior to and greater than the sum of its parts; it is an organic society, the body of Christ. The structure that houses this truth is more than a guild hall; it is sacred space, the place where the presence of the incarnate Christ is celebrated.

The church in this sense is a presence in the world. Its buildings are temples where the “visible and the in-

visible meet.” The building itself is for the life of the world, not for the assembly of a voluntary association of believers. The building is a “little” church around the corner, where believers and unbelievers may come into the presence of the Christ-nature which all share but few recognize except at moments of joy or crisis.

Randolph Ray, in the story of his “Little Church,” reminded us three decades ago that the sophistication of our theology should not lead us to ignore the necessary beauty of sacred space. Nor should it lead us to be so zealous for the prophetic dimension of the Christian faith that we refuse to share “the treasures of grace and truth.” The congregation of the “Little Church” was a community of Episcopal believers, but the parish was the theatrical world of New York, with stained-glass windows commemorating the faces of Edwin Booth, Joseph Jefferson, John Drew and Richard Mansfield. It served as a sanctuary for the poor, shared its Bridal Altar with thousands of couples, and built its St. Joseph’s Chapel for the funerals of all sorts and conditions of humankind.

The “little churches” are necessary to the nurture of public life. Parker Palmer, in a little book entitled *The Company of Strangers. Christians and the Renewal of America’s Public Life*, reminds us: “In public we remember that the world consists of more than self and family and friends.” I should

add: “and church and state.” Only in these shrines, these temples where the visible and invisible meet, can people come to discover that they are so much more than the self-interest they attend to most of the time. Only in such places can they discern the mystery of existence which includes strangers and asserts itself in common interests and experiences.

Palmer tells us that “the mission of the church is not to enlarge its membership, not to bring outsiders to accept its terms, but simply to love the world in every possible way — to love the world as God did and does. The body of Christ is a network of organic connections between people, connections which make one’s joy another’s joy, one’s suffering another’s suffering. In this sense, everyone, Christian or otherwise, is included in the body of Christ” (p. 80).

That mission requires the sacred space of special temples where the presence of the Christ-nature can nurture the public dimension of our lives. Without that presence, there is no freedom from the oppressive functional rationality of our world, a rationality that creates only a mass of consumers. Something must help us to be in touch with that within us in which we are related to all others.

Praise be to the “little churches” around the corners of America. May we find ourselves on our knees, together, before the altar.

The Walk of Faith

Living in faith is not a leap;
It is more like walking
In a deep, dark fog.
You see only a few steps ahead.

You know your destination
But it’s invisible now.
You simply choose to believe
That it is still there.

And so continue walking.

Dixie Anne Mosier-Greene

EDITORIALS

Joyful Feast

Because so few people are present when our churches observe the various saints' days in our calendar, the Feast of All Saints can take on greater significance. In most cases, there may not be any more people in church to observe this feast on November 1 than on any individual saint's day. But, hopefully, there will be an opportunity to celebrate it on the Sunday following All Saints' Day.

This commemoration of the communion of saints, known and unknown, may be made more festive with baptism, which the church recommends for this feast.

Many of the Episcopal Church's parishes and cathedrals are named All Saints. We salute them on their feast day and hope it will be observed joyfully in all places.

Stewards in Many Ways

This is the time of year when most of us begin to hear the word stewardship being used frequently. Parishes make plans for every member canvasses and pledge campaigns, preachers talk about tithing and vestries and finance committees begin to plan 1992 budgets.

All of the aforementioned have to do with money, which is, of course, a major component of stewardship. Churches need money to pay salaries, maintain offices and utilities and for various parish ministries and pro-

grams. But this is a good time to examine our stewardship in other areas as well. Most of us have heard of stewardship as including time, talent and treasure.

Time and talent are often forgotten when we react to the rector's sermon on "stewardship Sunday." We forget that stewardship also includes such activities as volunteering to participate in a parish outreach ministry or as a Sunday school teacher. While the emphasis on parish stewardship campaigns probably will be on money, let's not overlook time and talent.

A Vital Ministry

One of the unsung heroes of the Episcopal Church Center has been William Thompson, executive director of the Church Deployment Office (CDO).

After having been associated with CDO for all but one year of its existence, Mr. Thompson is one of those who retired from the church center when a staff reduction was made recently [TLC, Oct. 20].

Mr. Thompson will be missed greatly by the deployment office and by many whose lives he touched during his 20 years with CDO. He has served this church, and especially its clergy, responsibly and with personal warmth as he headed one of the most visible manifestations of the church center. We salute Bill Thompson upon his retirement and give thanks for his vital ministry.

VIEWPOINT

Will We Embrace Prodigal Sons and Daughters?

By MARY THERESA WEBB

God has hung a plumbline in the midst of the Episcopal Church, and yet he calls us to be merciful. The plumbline is the Baltimore Declaration, a statement drafted by a group of priests in the Diocese of Maryland and presented to persons who attended General Convention in Phoenix.

The document is being labeled by liberals as divisive and exclusive. To conservatives and evangelicals, however, it is an orthodox statement of our faith. This statement of the faith is

Mary Theresa Webb is a pastoral/addictions counselor in Swanton, Md.

needed because the Episcopal Church has opted for the ways of the culture. It has forgotten its first responsibility, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength (Mark 12:30). It has denied that following Jesus is the only way to the Father (John 14:6).

This is the doctrine and tradition handed down through the centuries of the church. Like the older son in the parable of the prodigal son, these upholders of tradition and scripture are indignant that the prodigal sons are getting all the attention.

This story, found only in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 15:11-32), is familiar to

all. Jesus tells it to a group of people who had come to hear him preach. This group consisted of tax collectors and other outcasts, as well as some Pharisees and scribes. There were two sons, says Jesus. The younger one decided he wanted his share of his father's property before he died. In Jewish law, this was unheard of, in fact ignoble. This son went off into a foreign land, squandered all his inheritance in debauchery and drunkenness. He lost everything so he had to go to work feeding pigs. Meanwhile, the older son stayed at home and was obedient to his father. He kept to the
(Continued on next page)

SHORT and SHARP

By TRAVIS DU PRIEST

MIRROR OF CHARITY. By Aelred of Rievaulx. Translated by Elizabeth Connor. Cistercian. Pp. 324. No price given.

Written while Aelred was a young monk, this book is the "other" work of the 12th-century monastic famous for his work *Spiritual Friendship*. As one would expect from Aelred, sharp insights on charity, which he understands as the yoke of Christ. Our life, the "interim" between childhood and eternity, is a coexistence of charity and self-centeredness.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN EAST. By Irene Hausherr. Cistercian (Kalamazoo, MI 49008). Pp. 434. \$19.95 paper.

This is a scholarly work. Which is not to say it is, therefore, more or less desirable than the numerous books and pamphlets on the "hot" topic of spiritual direction. Only to say, quite different in nature. This book, with its

many references and citations to the early church fathers of Eastern Christianity, shows the variety of styles of spiritual direction. For me, the richest chapter was V, "The Need for Openness of Heart," which indicates that these early "fathers" knew more than we would assume about repression and other "modern" psychological phenomena. Father and "child" need to have revealed those "movements of the heart" without any need to stir up the past.

WHEN YOU ARE GETTING MARRIED. WHEN YOU ARE FACING SURGERY. WHEN YOUR CHILD IS BAPTIZED. WHEN AN AGING LOVED ONE NEEDS CARE. All by Ron DelBene with Mary and Herb Montgomery. Upper Room. 32 pp. each. \$1.95 each, paper.

These attractively presented pamphlets are part of the "Times of Change/Times of Challenge" series published by Upper Room and written in part by Episcopal priest Ron DelBene who directs The Hermitage, a place of solitude and spiritual direction in Alabama. Practical pointers,

lists, questions and exercises surface in all four. Each is prefaced with a "For _____ and From _____" section to be filled in before being given as a gift or being presented during a counseling session.

DIRECTORY OF DEACONS. North American Association for the Diaconate (271 N. Main St., Providence, RI 02903). Pp. 36. \$3.

This booklet provides the names and addresses of the deacons who are serving on a permanent basis in the Episcopal Church, the Anglican Church of Canada, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As the names are grouped by dioceses, one quickly gains a picture of the spread of the diaconate today. Some dioceses have a great many deacons, some fewer, some none. In Canada there are very few except Caledonia in the far northwest and Toronto. In the ELCA, deacons are reported for eight synods, almost all of them east of the Mississippi. This list includes men and women, but does not include the continuing corps of Lutheran deaconesses. H.B.P.

VIEWPOINT

(Continued from previous page)

moral law and did not do anything wrong (at least that is recorded in the story).

When the younger son came to his senses, he realized that even his father's servants had it better than he had, so he went home planning to make amends. He thought his father might take him back, even if he had to be hired back as a servant. The father ran to meet him and embraced him, before he had even had a chance to repent. It was an amazing act of grace. A banquet was held in the younger son's honor.

Meanwhile, the older son was so angry he wouldn't go into the house. The father said to this son, "You are always here with me, and everything I have is yours." Because the elder son had been the obedient one, the faithful one, the father acknowledged that their covenant relationship was still binding. Patiently he told him that the wayward son needed his attention. He had been

lost and was now found.

So it is in every generation. God reaches out to the lost, the sick, the outcasts and the hurting. They need his attention. When they call for help, he embraces them and brings them into the feast. However, he still needs the morally upright and the keepers of the covenant to be there in the midst of the banquet.

For the past 50 years, the Episcopal Church has been reaching out to outcasts — alcoholics and drug addicts, crack babies, the homeless, the mentally ill, homosexuals and AIDS victims. We have illustrated by our presence and our acceptance that quality of God, demonstrated by the father in Jesus' parable of the prodigal son and in Psalm 145 (vs. 8 and 9) called *hesed*, or mercy: "The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and of great kindness. The Lord is loving to everyone and his compassion is over all his works." This quality of mercy is similar to the agape love that Paul discusses (I Corinthians 13). This love is able to reach every prodigal son and daughter, all human misery, particu-

larly moral misery or sin. It is through his kind of love that human beings are restored, transformed and given new life.

Now, like the older son in the parable and the scribes and Pharisees in Jesus' day, the upholders of orthodox traditions and doctrines, the keepers of the covenant, are upset. We (I am included) are upset because we think, in the name of Jesus Christ, our church has gone too far in including the outcasts in the heavenly banquet, of forgetting about their lifestyles and what they have done wrong.

The challenge before the church then is this: can the elder sons and daughters like me embrace the prodigal sons and daughters as the Father has done? Can we go with the father to greet the prodigal sons/daughters at their homecoming even though they may not yet be repentant? Can we continue to sit down with those prodigals to share in the feast? This challenge will demand of each of us an attitude of mercy. It will mean showing kindness and compassion, providing help and new life to all.

BOOKS

A Broader Awareness

THE CRAFTING OF LITURGY. By Daniel B. Stevick. Church Hymnal Corp. Pp. 251. \$18.95.

The Crafting of Liturgy is imbued with the presupposition that the church now finds itself with a very different situation in regard to its public worship from that which had dominated liturgical practice for several centuries.

The invention of printing in the century prior to the Reformation had a profound impact in making possible a rigidity in liturgical norms which would never have been possible during the early period of oral tradition, nor the later era of hand-written, thus evolving, texts during the early Middle Ages.

Thus, printing, along with an inherited view that liturgy was virtually the private domain of the clergy, led to a narrow identification of liturgy with authorized texts and rubrics. This is a mentality which has dominated into recent decades and which is, for many laity as well as clergy, a basic assumption about liturgical prayer.

Daniel Stevick's book stands in sharp contrast to the rubrical type of liturgical manual which was the outward expression of the clerical model in which liturgical norms were really no more than directions for the clergy as to what was to be said or done. Although this shift has been evident to liturgists and many others for decades and is presupposed by the 1979 BCP, it has proved a painful transition for many clergy and laity because it involves far more than merely the changing of some of the Prayer Book language or the re-thinking of certain rituals. It has involved the coming to birth of a new liturgical mentality, the emergence of a new way of looking at this aspect of the church's life. This shift is especially painful for some clergy and laity because it touches the deeply interior level of personal piety, of how a person has prayed or led public worship for perhaps many years.

The Crafting of Liturgy will prove helpful for all who are preparing for ordination, for parish liturgical teams and for groups who are charged with planning events for special occasions. For all these readers, it will broaden the awareness of the range of issues which need to be considered in liturgi-

cal planning. Stevick's book offers a blueprint for a new approach which sees liturgy in relation to the whole community in the context of its own particular situation, the space in which it will gather, the resources its members will bring to the assembly through whom the common resource of the Book of Common Prayer will take flesh.

(The Rev.) LOUIS WEIL
Church Divinity School of the Pacific
Berkeley, Calif.

Highly Structured

A DO-IT-AT-HOME RETREAT: The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. By Andre Ravier, SJ. Ignatius. Pp. 233. \$11.95 paper.

The Ignatius Press tends to be infamous for publications which reflect an antique transmontane triumphalism. This present book, written by a European Jesuit and embodying as it does



the early Jesuit traditions of "military spirituality," is an ideal book for males (there is, of course, not even a gesture toward inclusive language: the second day chapter is quite astoundingly entitled: "This Fundamental Truth Regulates My Relations With Other Men") who appreciate a spiritual discipline which is highly-structured, directive and systematic.

A spiritual phenomena of recent times in the Roman Church (and increasingly in the Episcopal Church) has been a rediscovery of and an attraction to St. Ignatius' "Spiritual Exercises." One begins to hear from those who have "made the 30-day retreat" with something of the same frequency that one heard about Cursillo in the 1960s, Zen in the 1970s and Meyers-Briggs in the 1980s. Retreat houses are now advertising the classical month-long Ignatian retreats, and they are very much the "in" thing these days. Some may have problems with this highly masculine, linear, technological approach to spiritual experience, but

it must also be recognized that it is a style of spirituality which is meaningful and valuable to many.

This book will prove a real boon to those who need and appreciate this structured pattern of spiritual practice, but we add the caveat that although it is designed for a "self-directed" retreat at home, the author recommends (and we strongly second the recommendation) that the retreat not be undertaken without access to a spiritual director. St. Ignatius was not fooling around when he developed his Spiritual Exercises; they were designed for a complete conversion of life, and they have the potential of leading one into fields too psychologically and spiritually dangerous for solitary travel.

And one last warning: although there is a tendency for this book to suggest that this is the spiritual way, readers ought to be reminded that there are millions of spiritual ways, and one may find that this one is not one's cup of tea.

(The Rev.) JOHN JULIAN, OJN
Waukesha, Wis.

Books Received

CHURCH AND THE WORLD: The Unity of the Church and Renewal of Human Community. A Faith and Order Study Document. WCC Publications. Pp. 90. \$8.50 paper.

MEETING JESUS. By William P. Sampson. Harper Collins. Pp. 254. \$12.95 paper.

THE MONK'S TALE: A Biography of Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B. By Kathleen Huges, R.S.C.J. Liturgical. Pp. 383. \$18.95 paper.

THE GOSPEL DAY BY DAY THROUGH EASTER. By Brian Moore, S.J. Liturgical. Pp. 94. \$10.95 paper.

THE QUESTION OF HUMANISM: Challenges and Possibilities. Edited by David Goicoechea, John Luik, and Tim Madigan. Prometheus. Pp. 341. \$29.95.

ARMAGEDDON, OIL AND THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS. By John F. Walvoord. Zondervan. Pp. 234. No price given, paper.

CHURCH FINANCES FOR PEOPLE WHO COUNT. By Mack Tennyson. Zondervan. Pp. 157. No price given, paper.

JESUS: REDEEMER AND DIVINE WORD. By Gerard S. Sloyan. Liturgical. Pp. 160. \$10.95 paper.

WHO IS A CHRISTIAN? A Study in Pauline Ethics. By Robert F. O'Toole, S.J. Liturgical. Pp. 168. \$9.95.

MEMORIAL BRIDGE. By James Carroll. Houghton Mifflin. Pp. 495. \$22.95.

DO YOU LOVE ME? Ministry in Today's Church. By Dominic Grassi. Thomas More. Pp. 178. \$11.95 paper.

PEOPLE and PLACES

Appointments

The Rev. Norman M. MacLeod, III, is vicar of St. Augustine's, Kingston, RI, and chaplain at University of Rhode Island; add: Lower College Rd., Kingston 02881.

The Rev. James C. McGill is associate of St. Peter's, 705 Williams, Pasadena, TX 77506.

The Rev. Robert M. Muir is interim of Holy Trinity, Tiverton, RI; add: 133 Rockland Rd., North Scituate, RI 02857.

The Rev. Nicky D. Novak is deacon-in-charge of St. Paul's, Box 546, Woodville, TX 75979.

The Rev. David L. Olsen is vicar of Christ Church, St. Helens, OR; add: 430 "A" St., Columbia City 97018.

The Rev. Lloyd L. Olsen, Jr. is rector of St. Paul's, 309 S. Jackson, Jackson, MI 49201.

The Rev. Kristin Orr is assistant of St. Mark's, 3816 Bellaire Blvd., Houston, TX 77025.

The Rev. Todd Ousley is associate of Good Shepherd, Box 5176, Austin, TX 78763.

The Rev. William Padgett is senior missionary of Greater Waterbury Ministry; add: 65 Cables Ave. #12, Waterbury, CT 06710.

The Rev. David Parachini is senior missionary of Litchfield Hills regional ministry; add: 42 Blue Jay Dr., Northford, CT 06472.

Ordinations

Priest

Kansas—Douglas Dettmer (by the Lord Bishop of Exeter, England for the Bishop of Kansas), curate of St. Peter's, Ilfracombe, North Devon, England. Elizabeth Gomes, curate of Good Shepherd, Wichita, KS; add: 8021 W. 21st St., Wichita 67212.

Nebraska—Lee Allen Hutchison, curate of St. Matthew's, Lincoln, NE; add: 2325 S. 24th St., Lincoln 68502. James Kenyon Knutsen (for the Bishop of Northern California), assistant of St. John the Evangelist, Hingham, MA.

Transitional Deacons

Atlanta—Mary Margaret Blanchard, curate of St. Paul's, Box 1306, Selma, AL 36702.

El Camino Real—Margaret Bourne-Goodwin, assistant of St. Jude's, Cupertino, CA. Holly Hudson-Lewis, assistant of St. Philip's, San Jose, CA. David Longwood, assistant of Trinity Church, Gonzales, CA. Janet Meikle, assistant of St. John's, Morgan Hill, CA. Mary Louise Reed, assistant of St. Thomas, Sunnyvale, CA.

Kansas—Darrel Dwayne Proffitt, curate of Church of the Holy Comforter, Kenilworth, IL; add: 222 Kenilworth Ave., Kenilworth 60043.

Northern California—David Patrick Galletly, curate of Holy Trinity, Midland, TX; add: 1412 W. Illinois, Midland 79701.

Receptions

The Rev. Roberto Arciniega was received as a priest from the Roman Catholic Church by the Rt. Rev. John L. Thompson, III, Bishop of Northern California. Fr. Arciniega serves as Hispanic missionary in the Diocese of Northern California; add: 29 Monaghan Cr., Sacramento, CA 95823.

LETTERS

(Continued from page 5)

are included in the pension fund, and there may be low-cost housing in a church home on retirement.

Some years ago, some Church Army officers received a pension supplement which has made a big difference. This amount was raised recently, which has helped to keep up with inflation and the high cost of many necessities. This is received with much appreciation. One sentence in the letter was very special. It said it was a small token of thanks for all the years of service.

Sr. LOIS C. ROBINSON, CA
San Diego, Calif.

No Compromise

It is disheartening to find that the Episcopal Church apparently has broken away from its biblical moorings and is adrift on a sea of indecision [TLC, Aug. 4, 11]. As for the media interest in one issue, shouldn't we expect people to be deeply concerned about the most intimate of human relationships and the decisions that affect those relationships?

To say that we will simply interpret human behavior in the light of love is fine, as long as we all agree on what we mean by love. If we reject the guidelines God has given us, we are stuck with whatever arbitrary definition of love the culture of the day provides. The resolutions spelling out and affirming moral obligations for clergy and laity indicate that, because of past experience, many people in the church no longer feel they can trust their leaders always to choose biblical over cultural standards. This represents a crisis in church leadership.

If the life and death of Jesus Christ best illustrate God's love for us, then of one thing we can be certain: love is not compromise. The temptations in the wilderness afforded Jesus ample opportunity to compromise his ministry and mission, but Jesus didn't fall for

To Our Readers:

We welcome your letters to the editor. Each letter is subject to editing and brevity is appreciated. We prefer submissions to be typed and writers must include their names and addresses. Because of the large volume of letters we receive, we are not able to publish all letters, nor able to acknowledge receipt.

that and neither should his church.

Developments at General Convention suggest that the Episcopal Church is only too willing to adapt itself to contemporary culture but unable or unwilling to proclaim God's power to transform that culture. Let's hope that in the process of making itself culturally relevant, the Episcopal Church does not become spiritually irrelevant.

ELIZABETH HILL
Montgomery, Ala.

Tell Us More

Fr. Simpson's article, "James DeKoven's Enduring Influence" [TLC, Sept. 15] was a most interesting account of one of the great heroes of our American church. I wish, however, we had been told more about his early religious background. There is the rather ambiguous statement that DeKoven "followed an older brother into church." What does this mean? Does it refer to entering the Episcopal Church via confirmation or to subsequent ordination? I am sure Fr. Simpson is too intelligent to speak of ordination as "entering the church."

I am reminded of something William Temple wrote in a letter to a friend who was thinking of taking holy orders: "O, John L. Stocks, for evermore never talk about 'entering the church': seeing that you are in it already!"

(The Rev.) NELSON W. MACKIE
Greenville, R.I.

'Uninformed' View

I thank God that the uninformed views of Judy Turner [TLC, Sept. 8] are a minority statement. Unfortunately, there are many who read THE LIVING CHURCH who haven't had the opportunity to receive appropriate, timely and accurate information.

For the Native American to be insulted in such a way as Mrs. Turner did is nearly unthinkable. Unfortunately, it is that kind of uninformed view that historically led Christians into misconceptions about "traditional Native American spirituality." I would not presume to try to correct all of the statements made in her letter. Suffice to say she is pitifully wrong as were so many who have attempted to "evangelize" the Native American population. I thank God that many who read her letter offered a prayer for her ignorance of the Native American religious worship experience offered in holiness not only at General Convention, but

as it is in daily lives and communities across this hemisphere.

(The Rev.) STAN VER STRATEN
Cluster Missioner
Diocese of Oklahoma

Antlers, Okla.

Poetry Missed

I miss the poetry of Canon Cannaday from the Diocese of West Texas.

He is a person who made us think in images instead of verbs. He is an outstanding poet because his work is based on the finest theology we know.

JANE MATTHEWS

Victoria, Texas

} See *TLC* issue of October 13. Ed.

Grace as Evangelism

During our study group one of us raised the question of what to do in the Decade of Evangelism. As we probed the matter, one of us said, "We could say grace in restaurants."

That struck a chord and life-examples began to flow: Two of our search committee members, a couple years ago, had been having supper in a hotel and said grace. A woman leaving who had overheard them said, "Thank you." One of us saying a silent grace in an executive dining room, had afterward been called "a man of God" by a tablemate. Finally, a friend told one of us that the memory of a grace said in a university sandwich shop in about 1940 still stuck in the friend's mind.

Is there a witness in saying grace? There certainly can be. We say it because our Lord did and because others can understand what we are doing. May it not be an invitation, an influence to others to turn to him?

NORMAN S. HEANEY

Annapolis, Md.

Proper Perspective

We would all do well to remind ourselves from time to time that the church is not the kingdom of God, nor the words of General Convention the word of God. For which, thanks be to God! This may help to keep things in proper perspective.

(The Rev.) GEORGE RAYMOND KEMP
Church of the Resurrection
Kew Gardens, N.Y.

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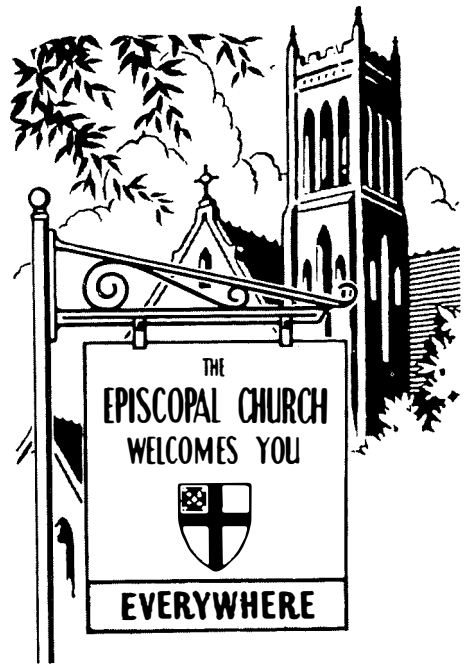
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