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IN THIS CORNER

A Window to the Past

A mile or two south of the Adirondack Park in New York State, in the village of Fonda, stands the former Zion Episcopal Church. It is an abandoned church, left to disrepair and erosion. Whenever I drove through Fonda, I found myself irresistibly drawn to Zion Church. Sometimes I stopped the car and spent a few minutes looking at the church.

Zion's congregation failed about 60 years ago, and the church building was sold by the Diocese of Albany, and then sold again and again, and finally was abandoned by its last owner after no buyer could be found. The little church cuts a rather lonely, abject figure despite the beauty of its solid, stone Gothic lines and curves. The perpendicular lineaments, the pointed arches of the glassless stone windows and doors, the sense of height and transcendence the building expresses are lovely. This harmony gives one the feeling that the building is reaching toward God.

One day during winter, a friend of mine, also an Episcopal priest, walked with me up the hill on which the church stands. We walked through the snow carefully to see if we could get inside. The snow lay on the ground undisturbed as it had fallen. No one had been in the church since winter began. We wanted to see if the Holy Spirit was still in Zion Church after all these years of neglect.

Everything was locked, but through a glassless window we could see inside. It looked as if the church had last been used as some kind of woodworking shop, maybe for furniture repair. There were clusters of wood pieces lying about the area, a wood stove rusting and falling down on top of itself.

Even though the nave of the church was boarded at several points, we could see where the altar had been. Over the altar there was a circular window, along with windows on the sides, all of them glassless and open. Snow had come through these windows and lay upon the floor of the discolored and dirty nave. We found the cornerstone, dated 1886.

I wonder what it was that happened to Zion Church and caused it to fail. Old Albany diocesan journals show that at the turn of the century there were about 100 baptized members and the rector, the Rev. C.C. Edmonds, reported growth and high hopes. "God is blessing our labors," he said in his report printed in the 1896 diocesan journal. The textile carpet industry was booming, the Erie Canal was an economic lifeline for New York State, and Fonda was situated directly on the canal. The population across the whole of upstate New York was exploding. Why then did Zion Church fail?

Probably for some reason, people stopped caring. Maybe there were internal disputes that became poisonous. Maybe there were squabbles about liturgy or weak leadership or personality clashes or churchmanship fights.

Yet in the abandoned church, there was still evident a feel and a sense of holiness. My friend and I felt like Jacob after his dream when he said the Lord was surely in this place and that the place should be called "Bethel," house of God. The old church came to life as still a living place of God even though no longer a place of people. My friend and I learned that day that the places of God do not depend upon the vagaries of people and that the gates of hell do not prevail.

Our guest columnist is the Rev. Robert M. Haven, a retired priest of the Diocese of Albany who resides in Mount Dora, Fla.

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Religious News Service photo

LETTERS

Staying Put

Some of your correspondents have charged the Episcopal Church with departure from the essence of scriptural and catholic faith because they oppose women priests, the current Book of Common Prayer, or because some well-meaning persons are trying to grope their way toward a more obviously Christian sex ethic — especially for the homosexual minority.

Among Anglicans it has hitherto been considered the better part of valor for disgruntled members to remain in the church, despite its imperfection, and to bear their witness to their perception of truth, rather than abandon the church that has nurtured them to such spiritual maturity that they are able to perceive God's will more clearly than their fellows.

After the General Convention of 1976 voted to admit women to the priesthood, the Rev. David Perman wrote in *The Church Times* (June 2, 1977) that for survival, "the church's first priority is to reconcile their own members to each other, and to the idea of dialogue and discussion rather than confrontation and walk-

outs." That has the ring of Christian authenticity to it.

My prayer is that God will grant forgiveness and better minds to all who have departed from our Anglican tradition and offended against charity, and that he will grant us humility to bear with our fellow church members who disagree with us until such time as the Holy Spirit leads us into all truth.

(The Rev. Canon)

A. PIERCE MIDDLETON
Annapolis, Md.

In Conscience

Since I work and live in the Diocese of Fort Worth, Katie Sherrod's assertion [TLC, Oct. 31] concerning the use of the "conscience clause" in the Diocese of Fort Worth reminds me of the sound of tubular bells — melodious, but hollow. She claims it has been used to "silence those who support the ordination of women," and to commit a host of other offenses against the amazingly tender sensibilities of liberal Episcopalians.

If the Statement of Conscience is used in Fort Worth in an attempt to "silence"

the supporters of women's ordination, the attempt has failed miserably: The supporters of official Episcopalianism's only test of orthodoxy have been very visible and very vocal during the last year, both at the consecration of Bishop Jack Iker and in the diocesan convention. During the former, they held the congregation enthralled (almost in the original sense of that word) for 40 minutes with objections to the consecration ranging in character from politically-correct legalism to bald sentimentality.

It is also interesting to note that Ms. Sherrod claims the Statement of Conscience is used "to deny parishes the ministry of women priests and bishops." I wonder if she is suggesting there is something essentially different in the ministry of ordained women compared with that of ordained men, such that there is something real to deny people in not allowing them to have a woman priest or bishop. If she is saying this, then she is in conflict with another contention of the advocates of women's ordination, which is there is no essential difference between a male

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LETTERS

(Continued from previous page)

and a female deacon or priest or bishop. She cannot consistently hold both positions.

It needs to be noted that, in spite of the great energy invested by the Council of the Laity and the Episcopal Women's Caucus in Fort Worth during the past year, the investment failed to produce any return: After all the organizing, the pamphleteering, the political maneuvering, the use of the secular and church media, and the involvement of the Women's Caucus (which set up a large exhibit with all sorts of radical feminist propaganda at the convention site), Ms. Sherrod's allies lost strength in the convention. An analysis of the balloting for diocesan offices indicates that the "party" within this diocese that wants conformity with the liberal drift of the Episcopal Church convinced more than 15 percent fewer members of this diocese to vote for their candidates than they did last year.

(The Rev.) SAMUEL L. EDWARDS
Executive Director
Episcopal Synod of America
Fort Worth, Texas

By the Numbers

Discussing evangelism, David Kalvelage cited Bishop Swing, who adds 97+3 and 95+5 to calculate that ordaining lesbians and gays and blessing our relationships are "dead issues" [TLC, Nov. 7].

The arithmetic of evangelism is 99+1, as we learned from the first rabbi to visit Samaria. Bishop Swing calculates "dead issues." Jesus calculates eternal life. Grace is amazing still!

When heterosexuals learn how much God loves the outcast, they will get an inkling of how much God loves them too. Joy to absolutely everybody!

LOUIE CREW
Newark, N.J.

} Only the first half of that column dealt with evangelism. Ed.

On the Mark

I can't speak for others, but in my opinion Fr. Paiva's letter [TLC, Oct. 17] should be reprinted, enlarged and encased in a full-page format, and included in every issue of TLC for the next year!

Maybe it could help us get rid of the smugness, paranoia and self-righteousness with which we are plagued.

R.F. DORUM
Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

SHORT and SHARP

By TRAVIS DU PRIEST

RAPHAEL: The Stanza della Segnatura, Rome. By James Beck. Pp. 96. **GIOTTO: The Scrovegni Chapel, Padua.** By Bruce Cole. Pp. 120. **THE BRANCACCI CHAPEL, FLORENCE.** By Andrew Ladis. Pp. 96. George Braziller. \$22.50 each.

Three elegant art books, beautifully printed and illustrated with color reproductions, in George Braziller's "Great Fresco Cycles of the Renaissance." Each book includes essays, plates of the original frescos, notes, glossary and bibliography. Handsome gifts for the art lover.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF IVORY: Gothic Carvings in North American Collections. By Richard H. Randall, Jr. Hudson Hill (Suite 1308, 230 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10017). Pp. 160. \$75.

An exquisite book on a little-known corner of the religious art world, that of Gothic ivories, some 536 of which are in American and Canadian collections. Almost all of the ivory and bone carvings featured here are on religious themes, a preponderance being Virgin and Child or scenes from the Virgin Mary's life. Each ivory is titled, dated and identified in several paragraphs. Sixteen magnificent color plates begin the book. I confess being drawn to a 15th-century Dutch statue about 4 1/2 inches in height with the Virgin holding the Christ Child who is flipping through the pages of a large book his mother has in her left hand.

1994 BIBLE TRIVIA CALENDAR. 365 GREAT QUOTES FROM C.S. LEWIS 1994 CALENDAR. THE NEW 365 BIBLE VERSES 1994 CALENDAR. Tyndale (351 Executive Dr., Box 80, Wheaton, IL 60189). Tear-off desk calendars, 4 1/2 x 4 1/2 inches in plastic stand. No price given.

In order of listing: A calendar with a biblical trivia question a day: April 3, What disciple outran Peter to Jesus' tomb? August 23, What king built the first temple in Jerusalem? Answers are upside down at the bottom of the page and include biblical citations. From the C.S. Lewis calendar for October 20: "In praying for people one dislikes I find it helpful to remember that one is joining in His prayer for them." And from Bible

Verses, June 6: "Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality" (Rom. 12:13).

A TAPESTRY OF DAILY PRAYER. Compiled by Patricia Newland. Servant. Unpaginated. No price given, paper.

This is not a calendar, but should be kept next to one. It is an almanac of prayers: Each month is devoted to a particular theme — January, Personal Prayers; March, Prayers of the Cross; August, Prayers for Guidance, and the like. A prayer per day, often with source and simple decoration. Pleasing Celtic-like borders in black and white.

THE ROADS FROM BETHLEHEM: Christmas Literature from Writers Ancient and Modern. Edited by Pegram Johnson, III and Edna M. Troiano. Westminster/John Knox. Pp. 352. \$20.

A chronological selection of Christmas literature from scripture and early traditions through the late 20th century, along

with brief introductions. Standard, as well as unusual choices, such as the delightful "Prose of the Ass" from the medieval Feast of Fools. I am pleased to see the hauntingly lovely "Burning Babe" by Robert Southwell from the 16th century, several poems by the textured and stimulating poet, Sor Juana, and "A World Without Objects" by 20th-century poet Richard Wilbur. A beautiful book.

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES: A Family Album of Christmas Celebrations. Paintings by George Hinke. Ideals. Unpaginated. No price given.

A boxed gift book with the high standards of craftsmanship one expects of Ideals Publishing. It will be hard to write in this lovely book, but write is what we're supposed to do — Holiday Visitors, Gatherings, Children's Celebrations, Tree Trimming, Christmas Eve, Treasured Stories, Songs and Recipes. Cheery illustrations of Santa and the elves.

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Kentucky Chooses a Bishop

The Rev. Edwin F. Gulick, rector of St. Stephen's Church, Newport News, Va., was elected the seventh Bishop of Kentucky Nov. 6 at Christ Church Cathedral, Louisville. Fr. Gulick received a majority of votes of the laity on the seventh ballot, and a majority of both clergy and laity on the eighth. The vote was ratified without dissent by voice vote following the eighth ballot.

The Rt. Rev. David B. Reed, sixth Bishop of Kentucky, telephoned Fr. Gulick, and received his acceptance of the election.

For the first time in Kentucky, five youth deputies voted in the election. They represented the youth deputies from each congregation, who have voice but no vote in diocesan conventions.

Fr. Gulick is a native of Washington, D.C., and a graduate of Lynchburg College and Virginia Theological Seminary. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1974. He served as assistant rector at Trinity Church, Towson, Md., and rector of Grace Church, Elkridge, Md., before going to St. Stephen's in 1982. He was director of deacon formation for the Diocese of Maryland, a part-time member of the faculty at Episcopal High School, Alexandria, Va., and worked part-time at the Office of Economic Development in Alexandria.

In national and regional programs, Fr. Gulick served in Evangelism Consultant Training, and chaired diocesan commissions in liturgy and music, ministry, evangelism and program coordination.



Fr. Gulick

Fr. Gulick and his wife, Barbara, have three children: Jennifer, 21; Robin, 18; and John, 16.

Others nominated were: the Rev. Charles G. vanRosenburg, canon to the ordinary, Diocese of Upper South Carolina; the Rev. Sandra Antoinette Wilson, rector, St. Thomas', Denver; the Rev. Walter Krieger, rector of Christ Church, Reading, Pa.; and the Rev. Stephen H. Jecko, assistant to the Bishop of Florida. The Rev. E. Benjamin Sanders, rector of Calvary Church, Louisville, Ky., was nominated from the floor and led in the clerical order for the first five ballots.

JANET IRWIN

Suffragan-Elect Withdraws Name in Diocese of Virginia

Even though he was acquitted of charges of sexual misconduct, the Rev. Canon Antoine (Tony) Campbell has withdrawn his name from the confirmation process of suffragan bishop in the Diocese of Virginia.

Canon Campbell, canon missionary in the Diocese of South Carolina, had been elected suffragan bishop on May 1 along with the Rev. Canon Clayton Matthews [TLC, May 23]. In late May, an adult woman from South Carolina alleged she had an adulterous relationship with Canon Campbell. Following that charge, the Diocese of South Carolina began an ecclesiastical trial which wound up with Canon Campbell being acquitted. Before that trial began, a second woman, an Episcopal priest, made separate allegations of improper conduct toward her. Canon Campbell faces additional charges of conduct unbecoming a member of the clergy, and said he expects to be acquitted on those charges.

While the canonical process in South Carolina was being followed, the Diocese of Virginia began its own investigation into the complaint, interviewing both Canon Campbell and the woman. The standing committee passed a resolution stating that in order to protect Canon Campbell's rights and not prejudice the ecclesiastical court in South Carolina, it would defer a decision on whether to continue with the consent process. The standing committee said it would base its decision on its own findings and would not be bound by the decision of the court.

When the Virginia standing committee became aware of the second accusation, it interviewed the second woman. The Rev. Martin F. McCarthy, president of the standing committee, said the committee wished to honor its earlier pledge not to make a decision which might influence the first trial court, so it deferred action until Nov. 1. At that time, all 12 members of the committee voted to ask Canon Campbell to resign his election.

"Our decision was made prayerfully and deliberately," Fr. McCarthy said. "We believed that we could not certify to our own diocese, nor those whose consent we would have to seek, that we saw no impediments to Canon Campbell's

(Continued on next page)

Kentucky Votes

C=Clergy
L=Laity

BALLOT	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
	C	L	C	L	C	L	C	L	C	L	C	L	C	L	C	L
Gulick	6	15	8	14	9	14	9	19	15	28	18	39	23	44	31	50
Jecko	10	11	9	13	8	11	3	6	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Krieger	9	10	9	8	8	9	6	8	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
von Rosenberg	9	12	10	15	12	18	19	24	20	30	22	28	23	30	20	26
Wilson	8	20	5	18	3	13	3	8	3	6	2	2	2	2	2	1
Sanders	14	15	15	14	16	17	15	17	15	14	14	13	10	8	5	4

Needed to elect: Clergy 30, Laity 42

An Extraordinary Convention

After years of diocesan conventions that featured acrimonious confrontations with all "sides" going away battered by feelings of frustration and hurt, the people of the Diocese of Dallas have found a new way of conducting business.

Diocesan convention, Oct. 15-16, began with a Eucharist on Friday morning, highlighted by the address of the Rt. Rev. James M. Stanton, Bishop of Dallas, in place of a sermon. Bishop Stanton charged the people of the diocese to "come out of the cave," using 1 Kings 19:9-15 as his text.

"Wearry, spirited as we have been at times, afraid as we may still be about what the future holds for the church, the word of the Lord has come: Get up. Get out of the cave. You have work to do . . ." said the bishop, calling for a 50 percent increase in communicants in the diocese within the next 10 years.

Following the Eucharist, delegates left St. Matthew's Cathedral and boarded buses which took them to one of two houses that members of the diocese are constructing in cooperation with Habitat for Humanity.

During his address, Bishop Stanton pointed out that the Habitat project was accomplished without legislative action of the diocese. "Not one resolution was presented to make this happen," he said.

Like the historic "barn raisings" of pioneer days, clergy and lay delegates hammered and sawed their way through

the day, working side-by-side with others who, in former times, might not have spoken civilly with them. In addition to those assigned to physical labor on the two houses, support people were on hand to provide a sidewalk banquet for the workers.

By the end of the labors, two framed-out and roofed houses stood where only a foundation had been hours before.

Other delegates not involved with the Habitat project boarded buses for tours of four major diocesan ministries: The Austin Street Shelter, a ministry for the homeless in Dallas; St. Philip's School and Community Center, an elementary school in a blighted section of the city that is having a positive impact on the community; Our Friends' Place, a haven for girls and young women in need of a safe environment; and the St. Simon's program for latch-key children.

Delegates reassembled at the Church of the Incarnation Friday night for a fiesta reception and Texas-style barbecue.

The following morning, as delegates arrived to register for the business session, a carnival atmosphere awaited them in the cathedral close. Various diocesan commissions and agencies were joined by national level ministries and schools to provide information to delegates. With booths and balloons, live entertainment and a hubbub of activity, the entrance to the convention floor was a cacophony of sound and motion.

Once inside, delegates dispatched their business in short order.

DON TAYLOR

British Parliament Says Yes to Women Priests

It was, according to the Most Rev. George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury, "one of the most significant pieces of church legislation ever to be presented to the house." Archbishop Carey referred to the measure permitting the ordination of women as priests in the Church of England which was passed in both houses of Parliament by significant margins.

The House of Lords adopted the legislation Nov. 2 without a vote, and the House of Commons passed it, 215-21, four days earlier.

Archbishop Carey's remark was made as he presented the legislation to the House of Lords. He also emphasized "it is the humanity of Christ which is important, not his maleness," and that having women celebrate the Eucharist "would indicate the inclusiveness of all humanity in the person who celebrates the Eucharist."

The measure was adopted nearly a year after the General Synod of the Church of England passed it Nov. 11, 1992, following a lengthy debate. Synod will meet in a special one-day session Feb. 22 to put the legislation into effect as canon law. Then it is sent to the queen for royal assent. Following that action, the first ordinations could take place as early as April 1994, after Easter, because ordinations do not take place during Lent. Archbishop Carey's own diocese, Canterbury, has scheduled its first ordinations of women priests for May 8.

The Rt. Rev. Robert Runcie, former Archbishop of Canterbury, also supported the legislation. "It is high time to breathe spiritual life back into a church which is weighted down by bureaucracy," he said.

The Bishop of London, the Rt. Rev. David Hope, said the issue of ordaining women to the priesthood "remains a disputed question theologically," but added that the attempt by some dioceses to establish themselves as areas which would not go along with the legislation would not work.

Parliament's decision followed a failed attempt by a conservative evangelical group to block the parliamentary legislation.

Episcopal News Service and Religious News Service contributed to this article.

(Continued from previous page)

consecration as a bishop in God's church. This decision was based on our own independent investigation and in light of our particular canonical responsibilities."

On Nov. 3, Fr. McCarthy and the Rev. William Brake, secretary of the standing committee, went to Charleston, S.C., to ask Canon Campbell to withdraw.

"Canon Campbell had earlier told members of our standing committee — and on another occasion, to our bishop — that if he thought he was hurting the Diocese of Virginia in any way, he would withdraw," Fr. McCarthy said. "We felt that the time had come to ask him to honor that statement."

In a statement released Nov. 4, Canon Campbell said, "My last eight years have

been spent building up the church. I have no intention of harming the ministry of the church. I consider it a painful privilege to withdraw my name from the confirmation process for suffragan bishop in the Diocese of Virginia."

"I am deeply saddened that the shared ministry among the three bishops of our diocese will not include Tony Campbell," said the Rt. Rev. Peter J. Lee, Bishop of Virginia. "He is an energetic, visionary priest with wonderful gifts. My prayers are with him and his family."

The other suffragan bishop-elect, Bishop Matthews, was consecrated Sept. 11 at Washington National Cathedral [TLC, Oct. 3].

Bishop Lee said his diocese would proceed "thoughtfully and prayerfully" to consider the next steps in securing an additional bishop.

In Diocese of Georgia, a Pro-Cathedral

On Nov. 14, during a service of solemn Evensong, St. Paul's parish in Savannah became the pro-cathedral of the Diocese of Georgia. The Rt. Rev. Harry W. Shippo, Bishop of Georgia, signed a covenant agreement with the rector and wardens of St. Paul's.

Bishop Shippo, in his column in Georgia's diocesan newspaper, first announced his ongoing discussions with the leadership at St. Paul's, and discussed the practical and symbolic reasons for establishing a cathedral. A pro-cathedral, he explained, is a church in covenant with a particular bishop whose successor would not be bound to maintain the relationship. Diocesan convention, in cooperation with the bishop, could at any time establish a permanent cathedral for the diocese.

The Very Rev. William Willoughby, III, rector of St. Paul's and dean of the Savannah convocation, was installed as dean of the pro-cathedral during the liturgy.

Bishop Shippo said St. Paul's met vir-

tually all of his criteria for a cathedral church. "The parish represents a true cross section of the diocese," he said. "It is diverse in its membership, with old and young, black and white, single persons, and disabled persons, all of whom are welcomed and take an active role in the life of the parish.

"It is involved in several outreach programs, some very established and others growing, and it already provides a full cathedral style schedule of worship, including daily Mass and daily public recitation of the offices of Morning and Evening Prayer."

St. Paul's dates its beginning to 1892. It was originally designated as St. Matthew's Chapel and was the first free pew parish in Savannah.

The parish, located in downtown Savannah in the Victorian district, operates an emergency food distribution program with the active participation of three other Savannah parishes.

(The Rev.) JAMES N. PARKER, JR.

CONVENTIONS

The Rt. Rev. Richard Shippo, Bishop of **El Camino Real**, echoing last year's convention address which called for theological diversity, lamented "the rising tide of parochialism, a retreat from the diverse whole" in American life. In contrast, he said, the church models great diversity in ministries, ethnic origins and inclusiveness. The church has a "responsibility to, of, and for the whole in spite of contrast, separation and turmoil." **El Camino Real** is itself a "foretaste of the Trinity — diversity in unity."

In a new world in dread of strangers, the bishop said. "We can show the world that it can be healed in the broken body of Christ. We Californians with our complexity can show as we learn from one another, hopeful of inclusiveness — as we live with Jesus — that all may be one."

The convention was held in San Luis Obispo, Calif., Oct. 15-16, and was the first two-day meeting of this young diocese. The two-day format was welcomed by most in attendance and allowed time for pre-convention hearings on resolutions being presented, the budget and the task force on sexual misconduct.

Resolutions adopted included a plan to address institutional racism in the dio-

cese, favoring citizenship of all persons born in the United States regardless of the legal status of their parents, opposing mandatory identification cards for residents of California, favoring the land rights of California Indians, and favoring equal rights for people with HIV-AIDS in employment, education, ministry and participation in diocesan affairs.

The 1994 budget was sent "back to the drawing board" after it was revealed that an unanticipated income shortfall rendered the proposed budget impractical. A special meeting of convention will be called in February 1994 to reconsider approval of a revised budget.

KENNETH H. PLATE

• • •

In his annual address to the convention of the **Diocese of Eau Claire**, Oct. 22-23 in Hudson, Wis., the Rt. Rev. William C. Wantland reviewed the goals and accomplishments of the diocese.

Bishop Wantland said that during this Decade of Evangelism, and in the last five years until his retirement, he will continue as "teacher and defender of the

(Continued on page 12)

Housing Policy Changing at General

The housing policy at General Theological Seminary is being rewritten in consideration of same-sex couples who wish to live together in seminary housing. General's policy prohibiting same-sex couples living together at the seminary was challenged by Prof. Deirdre Good, a member of the faculty who is a practicing lesbian, when she was told she could not continue to live on campus with her partner [TLC, Aug. 8].

A housing advisory committee has been formed to rewrite the guidelines in preparation for the next meeting of General's trustees in January.

The Rt. Rev. Craig B. Anderson, dean of the seminary, presented the trustees with a letter from about 50 General students, spouses or partners supporting a change in the seminary housing policy. The Rev. Richard Corney, a faculty member at the New York City seminary, told Religious News Service that the faculty had reached a consensus that the policy should be reconsidered.

When General's trustees met in October, Bishop Anderson recommended that the seminary have a policy which promotes honesty and justice. Bishop Anderson said his own position on same-sex relationships is accepting of relationships marked by commitment and love. He also said he is supportive of the ordination of gays and lesbians.

Florida Picks Nominees

A search committee in the Diocese of Florida has announced six nominees for the seventh Bishop of Florida, who will be elected Dec. 10 at St. John's Cathedral in Jacksonville.

Those nominated are: The Rev. Richard H. Cobbs IV, rector of Church of the Ascension, Clearwater, Fla.; the Rev. James H. Cooper, rector of Christ Church, Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.; the Rev. Canon Stephen H. Jecko, assistant to the Bishop of Florida; the Rev. C. Bruce McNab, rector of Christ Church, Denver, Colo.; the Rev. August L. Sorvillo, rector of St. James', Ormond Beach, Fla.; and the Rt. Rev. Don A. Wimberly, Bishop of Lexington.

The new bishop will succeed the Rt. Rev. Frank S. Cerveny, who served 19 years before resigning in 1992 to become executive vice president of the Church Pension Fund.

Back Home: Connecticut Parish Returns to Its Building

By PATRICIA WAINWRIGHT

The parish of Trinity-St. Michael's, in Fairfield, Conn., is joyfully emerging from a seven-year period of "homelessness," its members having returned to the church's building last Palm Sunday.

The trouble with the building began in 1986 when a portion of the membership of Trinity-St. Michael's chose to break away from the Episcopal Church, chiefly over the 1979 prayer book and the ordination of women. While the breakaway group continued to use the building, the others who stayed with the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Connecticut met at Golden Hill Methodist Church.

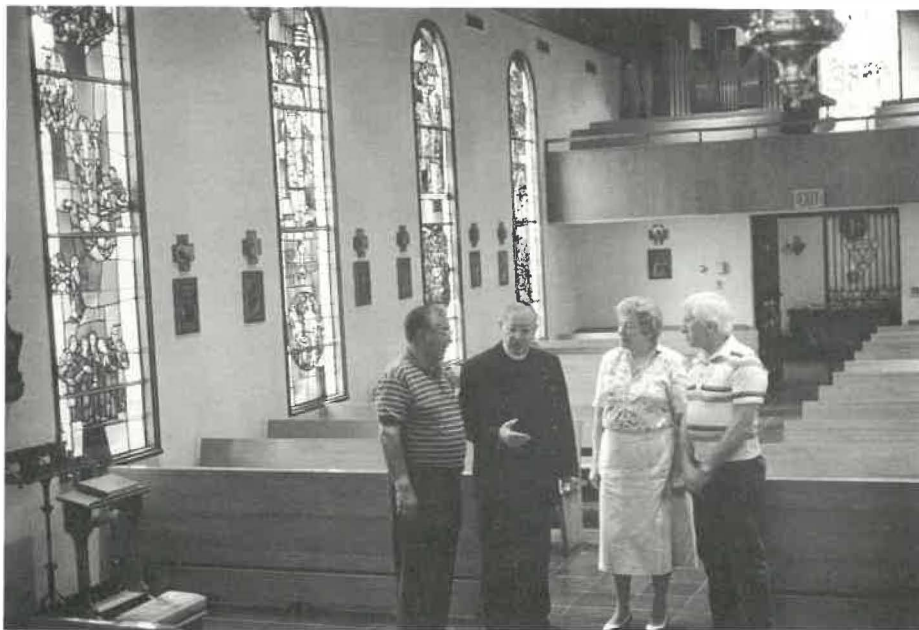
The breakaway group, originally led by the Rev. Ross Baxter and later by the Rev. Rocco Florenza, affiliated with the Diocese of Christ the King, a traditionalist body which is not part of the Anglican Communion. Fr. Florenza said in a telephone interview that the "1979 prayer book departed from the settled doctrine of the Episcopal Church and the wider catholic church. [The disagreement] was not over a book, but over what the book says."

Following a lawsuit by the diocese and a counter suit by the traditionalist group, the Connecticut Supreme Court upheld a lower court ruling that the buildings and assets of Trinity-St. Michael's are "held in trust for the benefit of the Diocese of Connecticut and the national Protestant Episcopal Church" [TLC, March 28]. With this decision, those members of the parish who remained Episcopalians were able to return to the building.

As for the breakaway group, Fr. Florenza said the church presently numbers 80-100 members, and within the year hopes to have a new building in the area. "We are in communion with Christ," he said. The congregation, re-christened the Church of the Resurrection, now meets in a United Church of Christ building in Bridgeport.

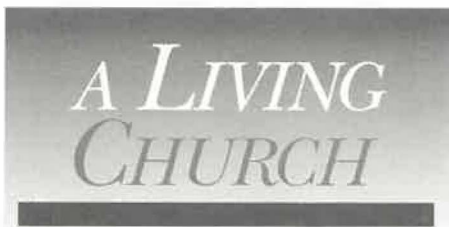
ST. MICHAEL'S WAS originally an Italian mission, built in 1921 largely by craftsmen-members. It was a mission of Trinity Church until that building was

Patricia Wainwright is an editorial assistant at THE LIVING CHURCH.



The Rev. Canon Samir Habiby, priest-in-charge of Trinity-St. Michael's, visits with senior warden Gene Dardani (left), altar guild director Janice Wilson and treasurer Ray Brown.

torn down to make way for a freeway. "The mother church came to the mission," said the Rev. Canon Samir Habiby, now priest-in-charge. Junior warden Dr.



William Baird said crucifixes, an altar cross and lights had been brought from the "beautiful old church" to the mission building.

Fr. Habiby, described by diocesan communications officer James Thrall as "a whirlwind," seems at first an unusual choice as priest-in-charge of the small parish. He was born in Haifa in what was then Palestine, served in the U.S. Navy as a chaplain, and has performed varied, sometimes dangerous, special ministries all over the world. One perhaps closest to his heart was working with Terry Waite for the Archbishop of Canterbury on hostage humanitarian issues, and subsequently in searching for hostage Mr. Waite.

He said he considered retirement after Mr. Waite was released. But the Rt. Rev.

Arthur Walmsley, then Bishop of Connecticut, persuaded him to accept interim ministry. "He said, 'If something special comes up, I want you to take it,'" Fr. Habiby said. Serving the parish part time gives him freedom to work on the book he is writing, said Fr. Habiby, and "being at the altar every Sunday makes a difference in how you see life."

Trinity-St. Michael's has initiated a Saturday evening service using Rite I, and gained the permission of the bishop to continue using the 1928 prayer book, with the three-year lectionary, for its Sunday morning service. Fr. Habiby hopes to restore "all normal activities" — Sunday school, holy days, midweek services. A new Episcopal flag and outside lighting have made the building more eye-catching. Letters have been sent to all former members inviting them to return, and ads have been placed in community newspapers.

In October, Fr. Habiby reported that the attendance has doubled, with membership having increased to 75. Midweek and holy day services have been added, and a "pre-Sunday school" taught by Mrs. Habiby has 11 children ages 5-8. During the weekend of Sept. 12, all three Connecticut bishops, present and future, visited Trinity-St. Michael's to rededicate and bless the church. For its first "open

(Continued on page 14)

Good News

Freedom from the Grip of Sin

Second of a six-part series

By RUSSELL J. LEVENSON, JR.

One of my most vivid and haunting memories comes from a trip to the Orient years ago. Some friends and I chartered a bus in Macau and traveled into one of the last bastions of communism — the People's Republic of China. Our excitement on entering this fascinating country diverted our attention from the bag and body searches, the soldiers with machine guns and the immense amount of paperwork required to get us across the border. It was not until our return home that we paid attention to the barbed wire fence running along the China coast and, at the border, a machine gun turret. We were told by our guide that an average of one body a week washes up on the shores of Macau — individuals who were desperate for freedom from communist oppression.

This memory has been a poignant reminder of the danger of sin. Excited by its momentary thrill and ignorant of its effects, we fall into the clutches of sin without ever realizing its power to oppress, smother and, if left unthwarted, to kill the very people we were created to be. Sin is an oppression of the human spirit, but as Christians we are called to allow God to throw off its shackles. If we do not, St. Paul warns clearly that “the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23).

Talk of sin is not very common these days. A few decades ago, renowned psychiatrist Karl Menninger wrote a book called *Whatever Happened to Sin?* His thesis was that humanity was slowly losing its ability to come to terms with its sins — both corporately and individually. Menninger proposed that people were more concerned with placing blame (on poverty, education, ignorance, bad parenting, unhealthy society, etc.) than in accepting responsibility.

Our catechism defines sin as “the seeking of our own will instead of the will of God, thus distorting our relationship with God, with other people, and with all creation” (BCP, p. 848). The New Testament use of the word comes from the

Greek *hamartia* — an archery term used to mean “missing the mark.” This implies that while humans may try to live without sin, there is something within each of us that causes us to live askew.

All of scripture and Christian tradition points to the fact that there is indeed something basically “off” in our human nature that causes us to err. Commonly

Our destiny seems to be destruction.

called original sin, this teaching, Frederick Buechner writes in *Wishful Thinking*, “means we all originate out of a sinful world which taints us from the word go. We all tend to make ourselves the center of the universe, pushing away centrifugally from that center everything that seems to impede its freewheeling.”

We must distinguish between “sin” and “sins.” “Sin” is that power that works in opposition to the grace of God, the result being our various manifestations of sin. Jesus taught . . . “everyone who sins is a slave to sin” (John 8:34). Sin is the oppressor, our sins merely manifestations of its presence in our life.

We seem to have been backed into the proverbial corner. Sin abounds, not one of us is immune, and our destiny seems to be destruction. And yet, ringing down through the centuries come some of the most powerful words ever spoken: “Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world” (John 1:29).

We may sin because we are genetically predisposed, poorly reared or emotionally challenged. Or we may sin simply because we are rotten folk! But pinpointing why we sin does not eliminate the guilt, pain or isolation.

God calls us to recognize our sin and to confess it. This is the first step a person can take in understanding the magnitude of what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. “Sin has power over us because we lose our liberty when our relationship with God is distorted.” So teaches our catechism (BCP, p. 849). In confession, we admit we are held in the grip of sin's power and we want God to deal with it.

There are several methods of confession. In the privacy of our own hearts, we may lay all that we are in the forgiving

hands of Christ. Confession may be made directly to our Lord. In addition, we are told in James 5:1 that confession one to another, combined with prayer for each other, is a powerful healing technique — perhaps because it is so humbling. Our prayer book has made provision for this method through the forms of the Reconciliation of a Penitent (pp. 447-452). Lately, of course, our corporate services make possible another opportunity to offer the darkest corners of ourselves to God.

In John 1:9, we learn “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” The psalmist offers

words of assurance for those who seek the forgiveness of God: “. . . as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us” (103:12). What a freeing thought! On a cross, one dark Friday afternoon, two millennia ago, God chose to forgive me without my permission. All we need do is bring ourselves to the foot of the cross just as we are.

Guilt can be both a curse and a gift. It is a gift when the Holy Spirit brings to our heart those things which have broken our relationship with God. However, once our sins are confessed, we need to allow God to take both the sin and the guilt. Guilt becomes a terrible burden when used by the evil one to convince us that we are bad and unworthy of God's forgiveness. Nothing could be further from the truth.

After we have experienced the forgiveness of God, we need, by faith, to forget it. My colleague, John Claypool, counsels, “If the memory of our sin returns, we need simply rejoice!” Rejoice that we are forgiven, rejoice that God no longer remembers our sin and has no intention of holding our past against us.

Confession, in many ways, is merely the beginning of our struggle with sin. Perfection for any of us will not come until the great Resurrection. But, in our earthly journeys, we are called to bring all we are to the grace and healing of Jesus, to know the peace of forgiveness and freedom from guilt that only God can give.

Work is still to be done. Once we give our sin to God, he will want to strengthen us to face the future.

Next week: The Call to Conversion.

The Rev. Russell J. Levenson, Jr., is associate rector of St. Luke's Church, Birmingham, Ala.

Taking Vows Seriously

Commitments are essential to human life. We would have little food if farmers did not stay on the field until crops ripened, no houses if contractors did not complete them, no clothes if clothiers did not fulfill orders. Promises, contracts and pledges express the commitments people need to plan and to move into the future. Within the spiritual realm, some commitments touch the very heart of our moral being, and solemn vows to God and to each other are required. Thus we have the vows of baptism, confirmation, marriage, and for some, ordination.

None of these contains a proviso that they are terminated after 25 years, or when children have reached maturity, or when we retire from our work. The very essence and nature of these Christian vows is permanence — “for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health,” as we say in marriage.

There may be cases when the Christian community, through its authorized representatives, declares ties should be severed, but permanence remains the fundamental intention and purpose of vows. The disregard of them because of ambition, desire for more wealth, physical or romantic attractions, ill health, or change of employment, is not acceptable. Certainly many lay persons and clergy do live up to their vows sacrificially and at great cost to their personal freedom.

For all these reasons and others, the casting off of the bonds of fidelity by leaders in the church (either privately or publicly) is especially painful. It is a scandal not because the news media speaks of it, but in the literal and original sense of the word scandal: It is a stumbling block. It undermines the links of credibility and shared life in the community. The church does not wish retaliation or revenge on such individuals, but it

can ask for responsible recognition of the harm that is done, and for Christian repentance.

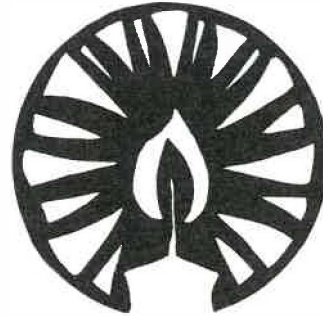
All of this bears particularly on the House of Bishops. To preserve its credibility, it cannot forever gloss over aberrations in the church with a business-as-usual attitude. We know many good bishops would like change. Historically, this body has been much concerned to protect its members publicly. Let it be equally and publicly concerned with their probity, accountability and self-discipline.

Beginning Again

Happy new year! We refer, of course, not to the calendar New Year's Day observance, but rather to the beginning of another church year. Nov. 28 is the first Sunday of Advent, the first and shortest season of the church year. It is a season of hope and expectation as we await the birth of our Savior.

We switch to Year B in the Sunday lectionary and to Year 2 for the daily office readings.

May this be a meaningful time of prayerful preparation for all of us.



VIEWPOINT

Tithing: A Joyful Response to God

By SCOTT H. HARDING

The premise of Fr. Scott in his article concerning the tithe [TLC, Aug. 15] is faulty at its source and execution. The tithe was never intended either scripturally or logically to be the end of stewardship. But from the language used in his article, one is led to believe this was his personal understanding as well as his public teaching. His description of the fault of the tithe in execution then reflects his apparent lack of ability to deal with the initial flaw.

The tithe was and is intended as a

Scott H. Harding is a stewardship consultant in the Diocese of Texas. He resides in Austin, where he is a member of St. Matthew's Church.

means of stewardship training and teaching. The point missed by Fr. Scott is that stewardship is not tithing, but that tithing can be, and has been, a useful tool for those who want to explore a deeper meaning of stewardship.

As a stewardship consultant, I am engaged in helping people understand that stewardship is a committed, joyful response to God for the blessings he has poured on our lives. This response involves the totality of our being, and the tithe is the minimum biblical standard for monetary stewardship. We do not teach people to tithe, we teach people to respond and hold up standards we believe will be helpful to people in determining what and how to give.

The issues brought up by Fr. Scott reflect the errors of execution based on a fatally flawed premise of the tithe:

1. The concept of exclusivity of tithers can exist only in an environment where tithers are celebrated and non-tithers are made to feel a level of guilt and shame. The error is not the tithe as standard, but leadership that is not focused on accepting the gifts of the people regardless of size or percentage of the gift. I am convinced that every individual gives everything he or she can based on where they are spiritually, emotionally and monetarily. Our task is to give people a way to grow spiritually and emotionally so they will be free to respond in the ways in

(Continued on next page)

CONVENTIONS

(Continued from page 8)

faith." In order to accomplish this, Bishop Wantland said he is setting a personal goal by conducting teaching missions in every congregation of the diocese in hopes of doing at least four such missions in every congregation during the next five years.

In business sessions, a capital funds drive, narrowly accepted by a special convention in April and referred to this convention, was postponed for a year in order to have sufficient time for adequate preparation.

A resolution was adopted to lower the diocesan apportionment by 1 percent to 24 percent of net disposable income of parishes and missions.

A budget of \$244,285 was approved, a decrease of \$11,000 from 1993.

The convention was dedicated to the memory of the Rev. Irv Kelliher, a deacon who died suddenly Oct. 16 after completing arrangements for the worship services during convention.

DONNA VIERBICHER

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The Rt. Rev. Edward Jones, Bishop of **Indianapolis**, shared his vision for the 1994 General Convention, to be held in Indianapolis, during his opening address to diocesan convention Oct. 15-16 at Trinity Church, Indianapolis.

"Predicting General Convention agenda is about as sure a thing as August weather in Indiana," he said to more than 300 delegates and visitors. "Nonetheless, there are a number of themes which are likely to command the energy and imagination of deputies and bishops. They are not new. They have been with us for some time and most certainly will continue to be.

"One is human sexuality," Bishop Jones said. "There is no secret about the prayerful and time consuming energy which has gone into the whole range of issues having to do with human sexuality."

The bishop also said racism and evangelism should receive considerable attention at the convention, and "there looms the very large question about decision making in the church."

Among resolutions adopted were those which:

- called upon each parish and commission to engage in at least one intentional ecumenical activity during the coming year;

- authorized lay eucharistic ministers to carry the sacrament consecrated at the Eucharist to congregation members who, because of illness or infirmity, were unable to be present;

- make every vestry and bishop's committee responsible for providing liability insurance for clergy and members of the laity serving the church.

The Rev. Elizabeth Canham, director of Stillpoint Ministries, was guest

preacher and spoke of St. Teresa of Avila. The Rev. Canon Donald Nickerson, secretary of General Convention, presented an overview of convention and what it will mean to the diocese.

A budget of \$2.07 million was adopted.

GAY TOTTEN

TLC Foundation Meets

Five new members were elected to the Living Church Foundation when it held its annual meeting Oct. 12 at the University Club in Milwaukee.

Elected to three-year terms on the foundation were the Rev. David Apker, deacon at St. Anskar's Church, Hartland, Wis.; Elizabeth Hood of Key Largo, Fla.; the Very Rev. Gary W. Kriss, dean of Nashotah House seminary; Dr. Joanna Seibert of Little Rock, Ark.; and the Rev. Larry Smith, rector of Trinity Church, Wauwatosa, Wis.

The Rt. Rev. Donald M. Hultstrand, retired Bishop of Springfield and president of the foundation, presided at the meeting. He also celebrated the Eucharist at All Saints' Cathedral during which names were read of persons for whom memorial gifts to the foundation were received during the previous year.

All members of the board of directors were re-elected to one-year terms and the four officers also were re-elected.

VIEWPOINT

(Continued from previous page)

which they want to respond.

2. I found it silly to talk in terms of the tithe not being fair. The United Way talks about "your fair share." Is the Episcopal Church just another charity, or is it the bride of Christ? If just another good non-profit organization, then fairness is an issue. If, however, we are more than this, then fairness is a meaningless point. When Christ died for us, he didn't give his fair share. And in his call to us he told us to take up his cross and follow him. Our response to God should not be predicated on fairness. It must be based on what is right. It should be a response from joy and gratitude, not an obligation one judges as fair or unfair. Many have seen the tithe in the light of a challenge and have experienced great joy in achieving and then surpassing this standard as their response to the life and salvation found in this gift from God, his Son.

3. "The tithe isn't appealing to the giver" was the third premise of what is

wrong with the tithe. Fr. Scott got this part right. He then goes on to speak of why it is not appealing. Every part of that discussion was based on a legalistic and computational model of the tithe. This is where the true conceptual nature of the tithe as taught by Fr. Scott became exposed. Spiritual growth issues are rarely attractive. They are contentious and challenging. The issue at stake is not whether the tithe is attractive, but what are we going to do to convert people's lives, especially where money and materialism are the idols of today's world?

I find it interesting that we as a church, or at least some in it, cannot see that conversion is the real issue of stewardship. My task in working with congregations is to help them first see that Christ is the empowerment and means of spiritual conversion and growth. That Christ also has come to save us from our sinfulness as it relates to our material wealth and misplaced priorities. This is a message of grace and hope. The tithe then fits into a context of discipline, the same as prayer, study, worship and serv-

ice as we live out our expression of thanksgiving for God's grace. It is not important to make the tithe attractive, it is important to set people free from the darkness that envelops all of us regarding our committed response of all of who and what we are to God. This is what needs to be made attractive.

4. Fr. Scott makes the point that "tithing promotes law, not love." The tithe cannot promote law or love. Only people can promote anything. It depends on the person talking about the tithe whether law or love is promoted. And herein lies the rub. I'm grateful Fr. Scott has dropped the concept of tithing, because for him the tithe was law. That understanding of stewardship is better off unspoken. Many of us are committed to teaching new standards of stewardship based solely on love, gratitude, joy and thanksgiving. We see the tithe and percentage giving as tools, means whereby people can become intentional about giving as a tangible means of taking up Christ's yoke of ministry, his cross, and living our lives as disciples.

PEOPLE and PLACES

Appointments

The Rev. **Allyn B. Benedict** is assistant of Trinity, 1109 Main, Branford, CT 06405.

The Rev. **Cathleen Chittenden-Bascom** is chaplain of Canterbury at K-State, ECM Bldg., 1021 Dennison, Manhattan, KS 66502.

The Rev. **Jack Cleveland** is vicar of St. John's, 2109 17th, Box 917, Kenner, LA 70063.

The Rev. **John T. Docker** is coordinator for Professional Ministry Development at the Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Ave., New York, NY 10017.

The Rev. **Christopher Eade** is associate of St. Matthew's, 1031 Bienveneda Ave., Box 37, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272.

The Rev. **Frank Geoffrey Ethelston** is vicar of Grace Church, 26701 Cherry Valley Rd., Duvall, WA 98019.

The Rev. **Elizabeth Gradone** is assistant of St. James', Box 206, Glastonbury, CT 06033.

The Rev. **William Leroy Hills, Jr.** is rector of St. Paul's, 710 Main, Box 1086, Conway, SC 29526.

The Rev. **Thomas Kehayes** is priest-in-charge of Resurrection, 15220 Main St., Bellevue, WA 98007.

The Rev. **William M. Krulak** is rector of St. John's, P.O. Box 336, Tappahannock, VA 22560.

The Rev. **Jacqueline McGrady** is assistant rector of Good Shepherd, Box 412, Nashua, NH 03061.

The Rev. **Felix Medina** is vicar of St. Luke's and St. Paul's churches, Bridgeport, and Iglesia Betania, South Norwalk, CT.

The Rev. **JoAnn Munro** is rector of St. Michael's, 210 Church St., Naugatuck, CT 06770.

The Rev. **Carl Neely** is rector of Trinity, 4th and Beaver, Beaver, PA 15009.

The Rev. **Thomas E. Nicoll** is rector of St. John's, 4 Fountain Sq., Larchmont, NY 10538.

The Rev. **Debra Rice** is part-time assistant at St. Mary's, 140 St. Mary Church Rd., Morganton, NC 28655.

The Rev. **George C. Spratt** is interim rector of St. Matthew's, 100 South Grove, Mexico, MO 65265.

The Rev. **Ann Staples** is deacon-in-charge of St. Thomas, Barnesboro, PA, and St. Luke's, Patton, PA.

The Rev. **Mark E. Waldo, Jr.** is rector of St. Alban's, Box 446, Murrysville, PA 15668.

The Rev. **Jeffrey Walker** is rector of Christ Church, 254 E. Putnam Ave., Greenwich, CT 06830.

The Rev. **Roderic Wiltse** is interim vicar of Trinity, P.O. Box 652, Kirksville, MO 63501.

Deaths

The Rev. **Herbert Geer McCarriar, Jr.**, vicar of Christ Church, Coudersport, PA, and All Saints', Brookland, PA, died Sept. 19 at the age of 46. His death was ruled a suicide.

Fr. McCarriar was born in 1947 in Baltimore, MD. He earned a bachelor's degree from Mississippi College in 1969, and a master's degree from the college a year later. He graduated from the Episcopal Seminary of Kentucky, was ordained a deacon in 1972 and a priest in 1973. He began his ministry in Gainesville, AL, and served parishes in the Missionary Diocese of Panama, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Florida. He was a member of diocesan

council and served on the diocesan department of missions.

The Rev. **Timothy Avery Marshall**, associate priest at St. Peter's, New York City, died Sept. 22 at the age of 40.

Fr. Marshall was born in St. Albans, VT, and was a graduate of the University of Vermont and the General Theological Seminary. He was ordained in 1978 and served parishes in the Diocese of Vermont until 1984. He then moved to the Diocese of New York as an assistant of St. John's-in-the-Village, where he founded the AIDS Bereavement Group. Later, he was in the AIDS chaplaincy program at St. Luke's Hospital. He was prominent in the Community Resource Initiative which reviews experimental AIDS treatment procedures. Fr. Marshall is survived by an aunt and a brother in Vermont.

The Rev. **Thomas D. Jansen**, vice president and executive director of St. Francis Academy, died Aug. 14 at his home in Salina, KS. He was 57.

Fr. Jansen was educated at St. John's College in Camarillo, CA, and earned a master of divinity degree from Mount Angel Seminary in Mt. Angel, OR. In 1969 he was licensed as a marriage, family

and child counselor in California. In 1979 he developed California's "No Heat" drug abuse counseling program for teenagers. Fr. Jansen joined the St. Francis Academy staff in 1990, after having been rector of St. Luke's, Auburn, CA, since 1985. He was an Army chaplain during the Vietnam War. He is survived by his wife, Alice, four stepchildren and four grandchildren.

Fred Gore, founder and president of Faith Alive, a national Episcopal ministry based in York, PA, died following a lingering illness on Oct. 18. He was 78.

A forerunner in church renewal, Mr. Gore's adaptation of effective lay witness ministry to the sacramental and liturgical piety of the Episcopal Church has prompted numerous parishioners to take on leadership roles, both lay and clerical, in church ministry. He retired as executive director of Faith Alive in 1987, but continued to serve as its president. He was supervisor of construction and maintenance for E.I. DuPont de Nemours in Wilmington, DE, until his retirement. He served as an Army major during World War II. He also served as president of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew for many years. Mr. Gore resided with his family in Hockessin, DE.



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TRAVELING?

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BACK HOME

(Continued from page 9)

house," the congregation was host to the convocation of the Bridgeport Deanery.

"People in the neighborhood are pleased with the way we've fixed it up, and the lights at night," Fr. Habiby said. Trinity-St. Michael's has posted eight signs along major roads within its parish boundaries. The Connecticut State Patrol informed Fr. Habiby that eight was a state record for highway sign requests. "It's easy to get lost," Fr. Habiby said.

Senior warden Eugene Dardani said, "We're going to have a better church. We can't miss. Everybody is happy about being back." He said some Sunday services had 65 people in attendance — "and it [was] summertime!"

"We use Rite I on Saturday nights to show people how close it is." He predicted that it would be accepted in time. "I'm an old 1928 prayer book man from way back," he said. He and his wife were married at St. Michael's, and just celebrated their 50th anniversary.

Junior warden Dr. Baird saw positives in the difficult times. "We struggled but we stayed together," he said. "Someone from another parish carved a wooden cross for us. We had gifts and loans from many parishes."

'Safe Area'

He believes the church in Fairfield has an opportunity and an obligation to minister to the people in nearby Bridgeport. The larger city is undergoing difficult economic times, with old, formerly home-owned, industries closing or becoming multinational and leaving the area. Fairfield, he said, is a "safe area, a town of 52,000, near the end of the New York commuter line." Dr. Baird has been a member of Trinity-St. Michael's since 1983, even though he lives "four towns away."

Fr. Habiby wrote recently to the clergy of Fairfield County: "I see this as a special ministry within the whole church," and described Trinity-St. Michael's as a "small but vibrant parish family."

Sexton Brent Weber, caught in the middle of "painting, stripping, redoing floors, rugs," said of the parish home, "It's shaping up."

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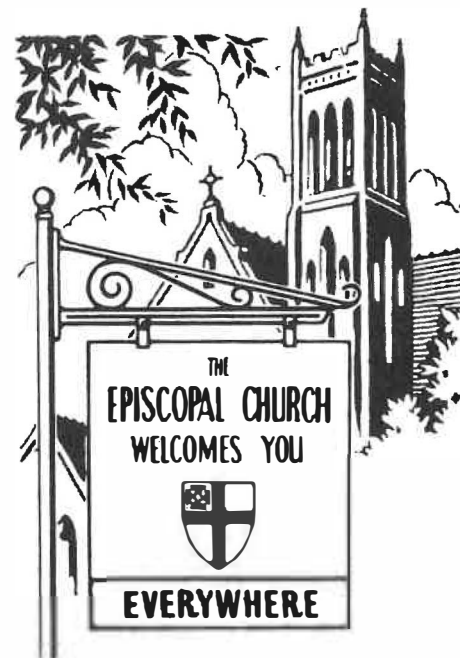
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