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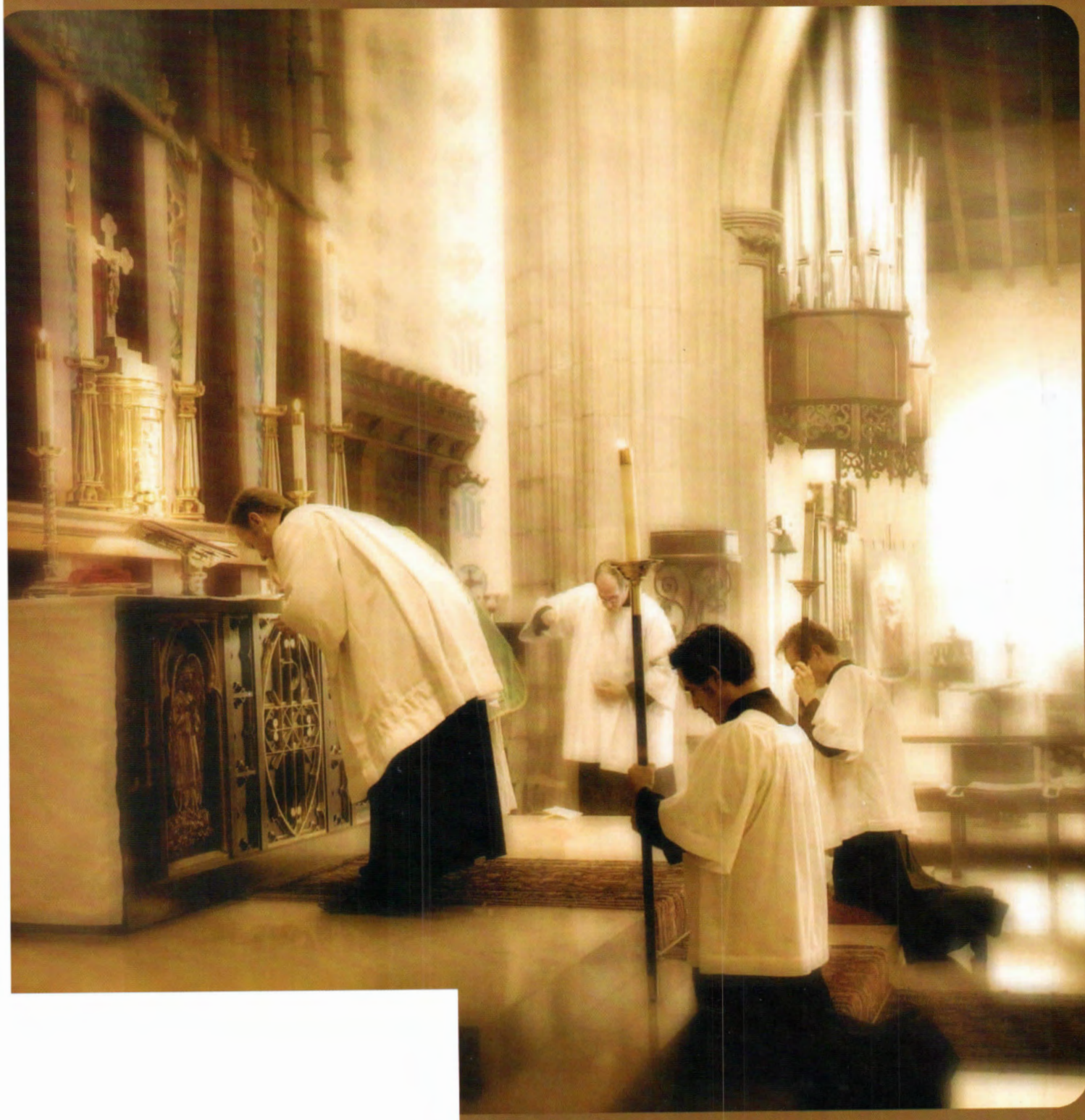

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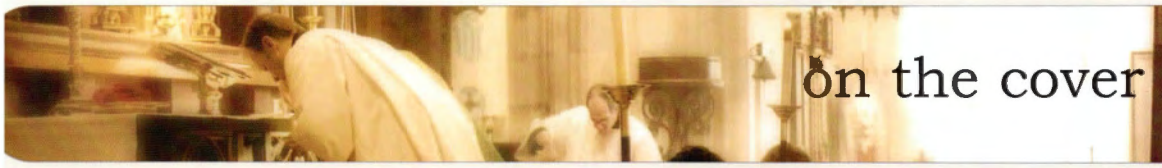

on the cover

The Eucharist at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, Hollywood, Cali[illegible] [p. 20].
David Palmer photo

THE LIVING CHURCH

this week | September 12, 2010

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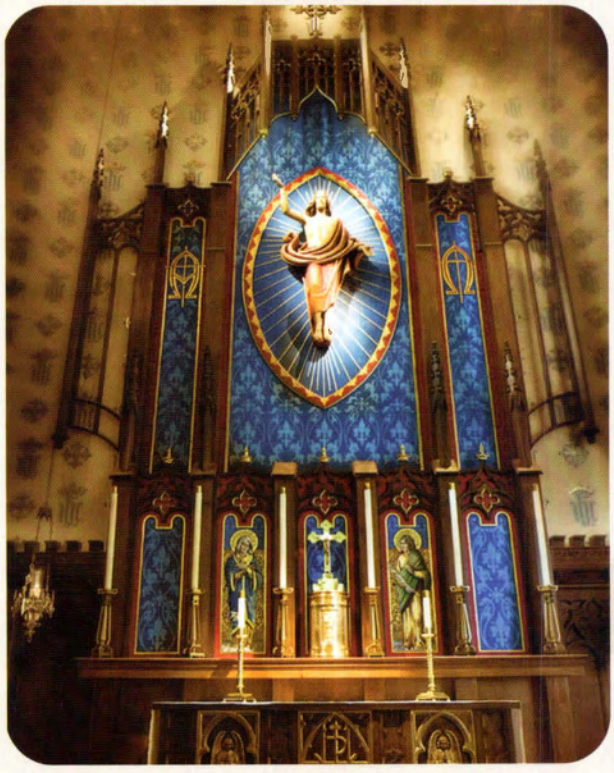

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The Living Church is published by the Living Church Foundation. Our historic mission in the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion is to support and promote the Catholic and evangelical faith of the one Church, to the end of visible Christian unity throughout the world.

Victim's Family Opposes Statute

Two statements from opponents of Bishop Charles E. Bennison, Jr., have called for abolishing any statute of limitations for any allegations related to sexual abuse.

"An Open Letter from the Bennison Trial Witnesses" represents Martha Alexis — who was abused by Bishop Bennison's brother, John, when she was a teenager — plus her immediate family and other supporters.

The other statement is by the Rev. Ann Nadine Grady, interim priest at Christ Church, Montpelier, Vt., where John Bennison's ex-wife, Maggie Thompson, is a lay leader. Thompson, who was also a prosecution witness at Bishop Bennison's trial, joined in signing the open letter.

The Episcopal Church's Review Court for the Trial of a Bishop dismissed charges against the bishop in a ruling dated July 28. The court cited the statute of limitations regarding charges related to sexual abuse. While agreeing with the trial court that Bishop Bennison should have done more to stop his brother's sexual abuse in the mid-1970s, the review court added that the bishop was never accused of committing sexual abuse himself.

"Along our journey, we have written impassioned letters to bishops and met with many of them face to face, only to hear the hollow refrain, 'our hands are tied.' ... It is time to untie," said the statement from Alexis and her supporters.

"The statute of limitations regarding sexual abuse needs to be removed entirely. The crime of complicity and cover-up needs to be regarded as equal in seriousness to that committed by the perpetrator because it allows the abuse to continue," the Alexis statement added. "Further, in matters of clergy sexual abuse, there needs to be a church-wide mechanism that supersedes the autonomy of individual diocesan bishops. At stake are the safety of the people and the credibility of the Episcopal Church as a whole."

The 1,000-word document, posted on Episcopal Café, is an open statement to the people of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, both houses of General Convention — and "Episcopalians Everywhere."

The statement indicates the different paths in which Alexis and her family members have moved over the years. Alexis is identified as belonging to the Western Diocese of the Anglican Church in North America. Her mother, Julia, is an Episcopalian within the Diocese of El Camino Real, whose bishop, Mary Gray–Reeves, was a judge on the review court. Her brother, Andy, is a layman in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Sacramento.

The statement's signatories call the Rev. Margo Maris, a longtime victims' advocate, their "pastor, advocate and editor." She is now a supply priest in the Diocese of Oregon.

Grady, who leads a parish where Maggie Thompson is co-chair of a ministry discernment committee, wrote a message in defense of Thompson.

"She forced the church hierarchy to deal with John Bennison's actions and Charles Bennison's cover-up," Grady wrote. "Busting open secrets always takes courage because there are those who would just as soon not know the secret or deal with its aftermath. It's often the truth-teller whose character and motives are questioned and who suffers in the court of public opinion."

She too called for abolishing the statute of limitations in cases involving allegations of sexual abuse.

"Anyone who's been the least bit involved in sexual abuse cases knows that statutes of limitations protect only the perps," Grady wrote. "It is the accused that hope

for dimmed memories, lost or destroyed documents and dead witnesses. Fear, shame and silence become the allies of those who abuse the most vulnerable among us, our children. For victims, the best statute of limitations is no statute of limitations at all."

Douglas LeBlanc

Western Kansas Plans Rector-Bishop Model

The Diocese of Western Kansas elected the Rev. Michael P. Milliken, 63, as its fifth bishop Aug. 21. Milliken, rector of Grace Church, Hutchinson, won a majority in the clerical order on the first ballot and was elected on the second ballot.

The other nominees were the Rev. Robert Allen Rodgers, 65, deployment officer in the Diocese of Eau Claire, and the Rev. Bryce Dennis Zimmerman, 58, rector of St. Cornelius Church, Dodge City.

Milliken

Because of financial challenges faced by the diocese, Milliken's compensation package will be half that of his predecessor, the Rt. Rev. James M. Adams, who has become rector of Shepherd of the Hills Church, Lecanto, Fla.

Milliken plans to remain rector of Grace Church and move the diocesan office 62 miles southwest to Hutchinson from its current location in Salina. Christ Cathedral, Salina, will continue as the focal point for diocesan worship.

"We're going to be trying a new paradigm where you have a bishop who's also a parish priest," Milliken told THE LIVING CHURCH. "We think it may be an idea whose time has come again."

Western Kansas

Ballot C = Clergy; L = Laity	1		2	
	C	L	C	L
Needed to Elect			14	32
Milliken	17	30	22	33
Rodgers	3	17	1	16
Zimmerman	6	15	4	13

The diocese's plans are similar to a vision advocated by the Rev. J. Stephen Freeman, in his essay "Structural Reform Needed" [TLC, June 7, 1992].

"There is a principle which runs throughout the first five or six centuries of the early church's understanding of itself," Freeman wrote. "That principle is that the Christian life is lived out in specific, particular ways, rather than in generalized,

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abstracted means. Dioceses were small, often no bigger than a small American town. The parish was not so much a center of program as it was a eucharistic community."

African Bishops Discuss AIDS

The second All-Africa Bishops Conference, meeting Aug. 23-29 in Entebbe, Uganda, spent much of its first two plenary days discussing AIDS/HIV. They also heard the president of Uganda preach a message of religious pluralism.

The Archbishop of Canterbury addressed the 400-bishop conference on Aug. 24.

"I had the huge grace and privilege of seeing the work done at the Mildmay hospital here in Entebbe with children living with HIV and AIDS who spoke how the gospel of Jesus Christ enabled them to live in hope to face and contest the stigma that so often so unjustly lies upon them," Archbishop Rowan Williams said. "I shall take that back as one of the greatest treasures of that visit."

The archbishop also alluded to the responsibility of bishops as the Anglican Communion continues discussing its divisions about sexuality.

"We listen to Jesus and *then* we must learn to listen to those we lead and serve, to find out what their own hopes and needs and confusions are," he said. "We must love and attend to their humanity in all its diversity, so that we become better able to address words of hope and challenge to them. We cannot assume we always know better, that we always have the right answer to any specific question."

The archbishop concluded with encouragement that African bishops continue offering a leadership that will shape the whole of the Communion.

"It has been said that this is going to be the African century of the

Christian Church in terms of energy and growth and vision," he said. "God raises up different countries and cultures in different seasons to bear witness to his purpose in a specially marked way, and it may be that this is indeed his will for Africa in the years ahead. And if the churches of Africa are going to be for this time a city set on a hill, how very important it will be for the health and growth of all God's churches throughout the world that this witness continues at its best and highest."

The bishops also heard from the Rev. Canon Gideon Byamugisha, a Ugandan and the first African priest to go public with his being HIV-positive, Aug. 25.

"One of the great things we've had [in the fight against AIDS] is a message to give people: abstain, be faithful, use condoms," Byamugisha said. "But we did not have a message for leaders."

He suggested asking two questions of leaders in the fight against AIDS: "What are you doing to reduce the stigma, shame and denial about AIDS?" and "What do you have planned for promoting safe practices or access to treatment or increased testing or empowerment of children, youth, women, families, communities and nations?"

Ugandan President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, who addressed the bishops Aug. 25, stressed the biblical teaching that all people are made in God's image. He said that the first Ugandan converts to Christianity were killing one another within a decade.

"I don't know where they heard God wanted them to fight and kill each other," he said. "A civil war between those calling themselves Catholics and those calling themselves Protestants! Then there was another war between the two of them and Muslims. They were all fighting on behalf of God, they said."

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The president also cited Jesus' parable about the good Samaritan. "I am always looking for the good Samaritan," he said. "Jesus says you shall know them by their fruits. You shall know them by their actions. Not by their words, not by their addresses, not by their titles, but by their works, by their deeds, by the products of their works."

Pakistan Churches Seek Flood Relief

Bishop Azad Marshall, President of the National Council of Churches of Pakistan, has asked for Christians' help in relieving the suffering of his fellow citizens amid widespread flooding.

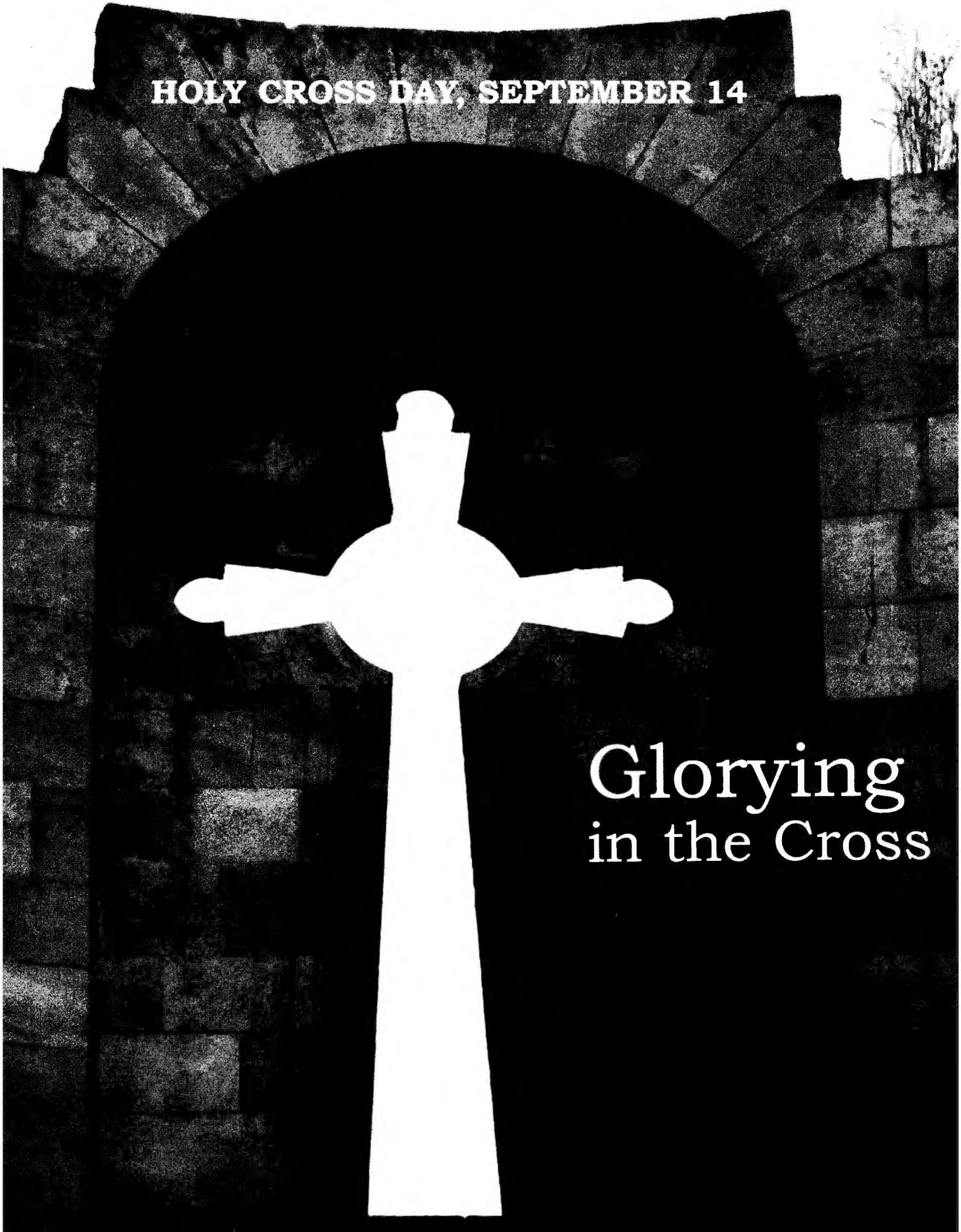
The bishop told the U.K.–based Anglican Mainstream that the church council has teams working in three sections of the country.

"In the former North West Frontier Province around Peshawar we are working closely with Bishop Peter of the Diocese of Peshawar to bring help to 1,500 families of an average of six people a family, 9,000 people," he said.

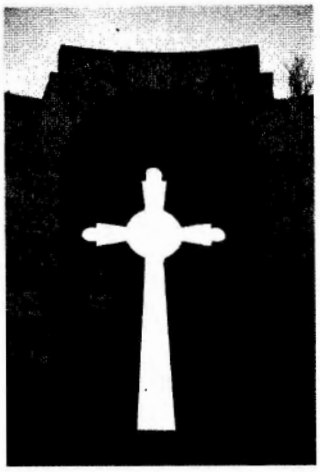
"In the Southern Punjab we are bringing help to 2,000 families in close cooperation with the Diocese of Multan and in the Sindh to 3,000 families in close cooperation with the Diocese of Sindh. We are seeking to help upwards of 40,000 people."

"I strongly support this appeal made by the President of the National Council of Churches of Pakistan," said the Rt. Rev. Michael Nazir Ali. "It is good that churches are working together to relieve the needs for food, clean water and medical assistance where it is most urgent to do so. As always the churches minister to people regardless of their ethnicity, religion or social position. I am certain that giving to this appeal will ensure timely and efficient delivery at the points of greatest need."

HOLY CROSS DAY, SEPTEMBER 14



Glorying in the Cross



feature

Glorying in the Cross

The atonement challenges a hubris that traces back to Eden

By James M. Stanton

In an age when the significance and centrality of the individual seems to be taken for granted, preaching of the cross may seem to be not only counter-intuitive but also counter-productive. It is easy to pillory or caricature the biblical story as follows: God sets up impossible commandments; his human creation cannot fulfill these commandments; God's divine honor is thereby insulted and his honor requires vindication; because God is infinite the insult is infinite; human beings are finite and cannot pay the debt of the insult; so God sends his "Son" to die a horrible death in order to pay the debt which he himself has imposed.

Many, apparently, are trying to remove the cross from the Christian story. We are instructed by the enlightened today that Jesus is no "savior" and that humanity is not in need of saving. A whole band of New Testament scholars even questions whether Jesus died on the cross at all, claiming that there is evidence of alternative views in the early Church that do not include his death as of any significance, and that offers versions of these other — sometimes called "lost" — gospels and their implications for Christian living.

One does not have to go to the "radical" theologies to find a recasting of the Christian story. Some within the Anglican tradition claim that too much was made of the whole sin-and-redemption motif, and the consequent concentration on the cross, in the past. One often hears, for example, that what sets the Anglican way apart is its emphasis on the Incarnation rather than on the atonement wrought by the cross. In this argument, often simply displayed as a narrative, the critical moment of reconciliation was the "decision" of God to enter the creation in the person of Jesus (all in a metaphorical sense, of course). By deigning to unite Godself with the creation in the Incarnation, God effectively reaffirms God's commitment to the creation, redeems it, makes it good, and sets about bringing everyone to re-appreciate and actualize this goodness.

In this narrative, sin is our problem, not God's. The gulf between God and us is to be bridged by us. God has already done God's part in the Incarnation. If we are to talk about sin, it is in terms of greed, selfishness, the bad things we do to each other, knowingly or unknowingly. But there is no need for a savior or a system to deal with all this: because God created the world good, and because God is now immanent in this good world, what is needed is a change of mind or heart — we need to understand where we stand, who we are, and live into this good world to become "all we can be" while maximizing the ability of others to do so as well. This is called "grace."

The martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer was prophetic when, shortly before his death at the hands of the Gestapo, he wrote: "Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, communion without confession. ... Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate" (*The Cost of Discipleship*, p. 47).

Bonhoeffer would pour scorn on attempts to have a Christian faith without the cross. The truth is that ridding the Christian faith of the cross is not an effort to redefine or reinterpret one aspect of that faith, but a replacement of that faith with another. It is not a matter of emphasis, but of substance. Cheap grace is not just cheap, but fraudulent — not a new approach, but a deception. The only grace worth having is a costly grace, the grace that comes precisely through the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The emphasis on Incarnation ("incarnational theology" as it is often flagged) is itself incoherent without the crucifixion and resurrection. Had Jesus not died the traumatic death he did, and been raised by the sovereign power of God, we would not be paying any attention at all to Jesus, or his message, or his movement today. Jesus, for all the good he was and did, and all the good people today want to find in

him, would have been quickly forgotten in the years following his demise.

"Christ died for our sins," Paul writes. Not surprisingly, given this formulation, we must begin with sin. Sin for the Old Testament, as for the New Testament, is *the* problem. But what is sin? The sovereign God, by a sovereign act of will and love, created a world. He created the world for his own ends — an expression of his love and generosity. This created world was good, because God called it into being. But something went wrong. You will remember the story. It's all about a serpent and a woman and a man. Sin is a human thing. But in what does sin consist, exactly? The serpent tempted the woman to do something which, as they both well knew, God had forbidden.

When the tempter tempts, he does so in, as Scripture says, a most subtle way. When the woman tells him what he knows perfectly well, that God had given a commandment, and that if that commandment were abrogated, "you shall surely die," the tempter says: You won't die. God only told you that because he knows that if you eat this fruit, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God — knowing, or having power over good and evil. Ah, *this* is what gets the woman's attention. She is a thoughtful woman, as it turns out — Eve, the model critical thinker. She ponders the fruit, sees that it is naturally beautiful, has certain healthful properties, and is desirable for its ability to make her wise, to expand her world, to fulfill her longings and so forth. So she eats.

The abrogation of God's command is here occasioned only on a more basic temptation: to be like God, to replace God, to be God of her own life. And it is this that constitutes sin: the desire to replace God and to be God. In the period of the Judges, the

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greatest condemnation is that "every man did what was right in his own eyes." The prophetic condemnation was that Israel had pursued its own course rather than acknowledging God as sovereign. Jesus says it succinctly: "You follow the traditions of men rather than the word of God."

The something that went wrong is that the human pair and all humans subsequently have hungered and thirsted to be God rather than to trust God. It is this which leads to the abrogation of God's commandments, God's law, rather than the other way around. And it is this which is at the root of sin generally, and sins specifically. Corresponding to the sweep of this backdrop are the many ways in which the cross addresses the essential problem. Paul and, indeed, all Christian writers from the beginning use many images and words to describe and explain what is meant by "Christ died for our sins."

Christ Died *Because* of Our Sins

Jesus died because our sins — human pride, arrogance, hubris — put him there on the cross. The cross is the ugliest instrument of human torture and death imaginable; it was contrived to be so. It was meant to strike terror in everyone who ever saw it. It is what human beings are left to contrive when the majesty and dignity of life which God intended is abandoned, and human beings wander off to pursue their own ends. Paul says essentially this toward the end of the first chapter of Romans. As he looks out on human history, he sees the wrath — the anger and judgment — of God displayed over human sin, and he says:

> since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a base mind and to improper conduct. They were filled with all manner of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity, they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless (Rom. 1:28-31).

It is to deal with this godlessness, sin in this sense, that Christ died. And in his dying he embraces this reality of the human situation. He takes it on, and it destroys him. Jesus' cry from the cross — "My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me?" — is poignant precisely because it is the cry of the human soul in the face of the cruelty of life without God, and because it demonstrates the complete unity of Jesus with us. Our sins put Christ on the cross, and overtook the one who had no sin.

Christ Died to *Overcome* Our Sins

This, too, is part of what "Christ died for our sins" means. He died for the purpose of dealing with sin. In part, this is explained in one of the most powerful parts of Paul's writing:

> Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:5-11).

This fascinating passage is almost a retracing of the garden story of the Fall. Here, Christ is understood to have been pre-existent and, indeed, to have had unity with the Father. Though he had equality with God, he did not hold on to this equality — he did not cling to his divine prerogatives. Instead, he emptied himself, and took on human form. Indeed, so complete was his identification with the will of the Father, and so faithful was he in obedience to God, that he became subject to death, the death of the Cross. Here, Paul exhibits Christ as bearing the full image of God and at the same time exercising that complete trust in God that was abandoned in the Garden precisely in the quest to become like God.

If sin is pursuing our own ends in the place of God's ends, and seeking to become like God, then the action of Christ in the kenosis, the "emptying," is its opposite. And while certainly this dramatic decision takes place before any earthly human events — and is in that single sense Incarnational — nevertheless, the kenosis is not a remote event in a transcendent dimension, but finds its fulfillment in the very cross which stands at the center of the Christ's life and the Christian proclamation concerning him.

This is God's act, not ours. Consistent with the long tradition of Christian teaching, the atonement— however that may in fine detail be understood — is

always at God's initiative in human favor. It is not merely God's call to us to come to new understanding and behave differently. It is an objective act, God's act, which opens up new possibilities for human existence.

This act is crucial precisely because it represents something human beings could never effect on their own. Christ in his self-emptying and faithful obedience displays precisely the character that Adam and Eve reject in the garden. They cannot turn back the clock and get things right. Only God can do this. And Christ, the one who was equal with God, has done it with extraordinary grace and at a great price.

Clearly Paul uses this example to point the way forward for Christians: "Have this mind among yourselves which you have in Christ Jesus." Many people have mistakenly interpreted this as the "ethical model" for understanding the atonement — or, as some have called it, the "bootstrap theory." If we become obedient to God as we have the example of Christ, then we too can be reconciled with God. But while Jesus sets the example for us, and we are in truth called to understand and live into that model, the gospel does not end there. Because Christ Jesus has done what he did, the whole creation is made new. Perhaps, in the garden, Adam and Eve could have chosen otherwise. But they did not. And because they did not, because fundamentally human beings seek to be their own gods, the whole possibility of "bridging the gap" was foreclosed until God acted to bridge it.

Christ is the *Sacrifice for* Our Sins

The cross was always seen in terms of sacrifice. And yet we may ask in what sense this sacrifice operates.

Clearly the vast majority of Christians have come to see the death of Jesus as in some sense substitutionary. Jesus dies on the cross bearing the punishment for the sins we have each committed. He dies, both symbolically and literally, in our place. There

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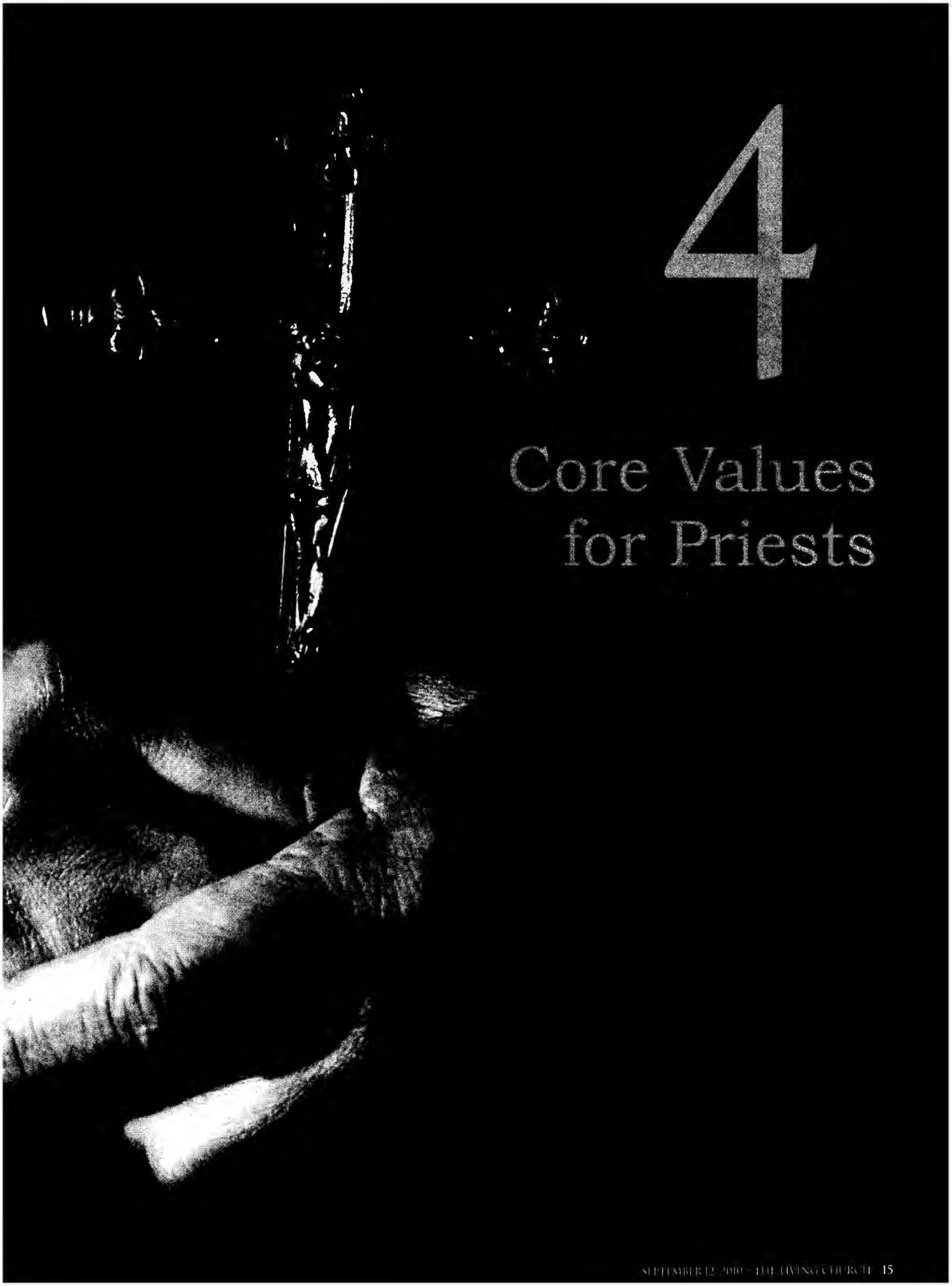
can be no doubt that this is a biblical image, one way in which the cross is to be understood. And it is compelling when we — convicted of our sin, our arrogance, our pettiness, our failure as image bearers of the living God — realize that we are not worthy of the God who made us, and who wills for us far more and far better than we are either willing or able to be. This intensely personal and deeply real apperception is probably what accounts for the enduring character of this image of the atonement.

But this understanding or icon of the atonement, while everywhere present in the New Testament, is not the most compelling, still the only, such image, understanding or icon. If taken to its theological consequence, it also entails much deeper, much more dynamic images.

Paul shows this in several ways. By baptism, we are incorporated into the death of Christ. His sacrifice therefore becomes our own. It is not that we can "earn" our salvation by being baptized, but rather that we come to see that we must empty ourselves, as Christ emptied himself, and by incorporation into Christ actually become what he is. We give up, we must give up, all claim to self. We must "lose ourselves," as Jesus himself taught.

We are to look at the whole of life as sacrificial. "Be living sacrifices," Paul says. "This is truly spiritual worship." The meaning of the cross must be confronted day by day, step by step, in the most ordinary aspects of our lives. In the thoughts we think as well as the deeds we do, we are being trained up into the full maturity of Christ — or not, as the case may be. The sacrifice of Jesus is not something done once long ago. Though complete in itself, its whole point is to catch us up into his self-offering, so that he is able to present us in him to the Father, a bride without spot or blemish. Christ died in or place that we might live in him! This is sacrificial theology in its fullest voice.

The Rt. Rev. James M. Stanton is Bishop of Dallas.



4 Core Values for Priests

4 Core Values for Priests

By David Lee Hyndman

The priesthood is an easy vocation made difficult by those of us called to it. God only knows the number of difficulties I have brought to it in the past 45 years. As I see it — and what I write about the priesthood must be personal — the priest is a conduit funneling God's divine and sacramental grace to his people and a particular pathway for their thanksgiving and praise of him. The priest can be a focus for that meeting that is altogether accomplished by Christ; his the grace and his the praise.

One of the chief dangers of the priesthood is to blur that focus or distort it by simply getting in the way, clogging the conduit with private agendas, strewing the pathway with popular panaceas of one's own choosing. The problem is, of course, that priesthood must have a personality. It is recruited from what St. Paul would call a rum lot ("not many of you were wise ... not many powerful ... not many of noble birth"). We are what we are; it is his grace that

a passion for the gospel

a heart for the lost

willingness to do whatever it takes

commitment to one another

makes us priests. But how are we to school that personality for service and not for obstruction? There must be enumerable ways, but I will use the core values of my longtime diocese, Northern Indiana, as a framework.

The first of those core values is a passion for the gospel, and a priest is called to proclaim the gospel. Passion for me conjures up images of fiery excitement and powerful emotion, but I expect it has more to do with depth of feeling and steadfastness of faith. In my earlier days as an unpardonable introvert, I exercised that passion in a reserved, Anglican sort of way by exegeting the text so as to provide CliffsNotes for the biblically curious.

But I have come to know that a passion for the gospel is less about what I say or how I say it than it is about who I am and how I live it, imperfectly to be sure. The gospel raises questions in the lives of men and women; it is not for the priest to give easy answers where there are none but to be immersed in struggle with those questions. I think that proclaiming the gospel is not just struggling with the text, but striving with Jesus himself who asks us to do some extraordinary things: love, forgive, take up a cross.

That's pretty presumptuous on his part, I would say; it's against my nature, and I am called upon to sell it to others. But passion is to act against the obvious; it calls us to strive to experience grace just as it called Jacob to wrestle with the angel transforming the supplanter to the striver, "for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." That's the kind of passion for the gospel a priest should have, not self-driven for acclamation, but grace-driven for service. In considering a passion for the gospel, I am reminded of the poet Tennyson's words: "to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

The second core value is "a heart for the lost," and a priest is called to bless and declare pardon in the name of God. Who of us is not lost? The task is enormous. The priesthood carries with it huge expectations from people. A priest might arrogantly choose to dismiss them as unreasonable in quest of personal freedom, or naively embrace them all as pathways to peace and harmony with those to whom the priest is called to serve. In either case, the ministry is characterized as either from or to the expectation, and not to the person.

The cynic in us might see our flock as docile, unprepossessing sheep with a scattering of cantankerous ewes and irascible rams. The euphoric in us might see them as wonderfully warm, without spot or blemish, eagerly awaiting priestly direction to a verdant pasture of spiritual bliss. The truth is, of course, where created goodness, warts and all, resides. Blessing and absolution belong to God. The priest, as an implement in our Lord's arsenal of grace and forgiveness, is called to know the flock, to invest in the lives of others, to experience their needs, comfort their sorrows, feel their joys. They are not objects with which to practice our pastoral skills, but persons deserving their integrity and our honor as children of the Father found.

Having a heart for the lost involves a priestly search in others for what wonders there are to bless in praise of God, and priestly compassion and pardon for that which forgiven makes of the lost found. Having a heart for the lost is having a vision like Jesus had for the people. He saw the lost Zacchaeus in a tree and called him down to repentance: "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost." Jesus saw the created human good in him and brought him home. A priest is called to exercise that self-same vision.

The third core value is a willingness to do whatever it takes. A priest is called to share with the bishop in the overseeing of the church. Leadership is to embrace what is and step out with it toward what it may become. Leadership is always counter-cultural; there is no necessity to lead to where you already are. The church as we experience it is exceedingly complex, incredibly exasperating at times, and yet so

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dear to us that we cannot think to live without it. There is a danger, however, in dismissing what is as of little or no value and pointing to what could be as where all ought to be and call that leadership. That can leave people behind and uncared for. The real task of leadership is far more difficult than that. It involves work and understanding, patience and education, to discern a common vision and step in concert toward it.

Doing whatever it takes is not a carte blanche for a priest's whims; it is creatively laboring together to produce a community where others are welcomed, fed, and cared for. Doing whatever it takes is leadership that is sensitive to what has been a spiritual joy for many without limiting the creation of new aspects of spiritual joy that may reach out to others. It is important for a priest to realize that there are no throwaway souls. Difficult souls, yes; stubborn souls, yes; but souls without the spirit of Christ somewhere within them, no.

Of course, working in such a counter-cultural environment is stressful, often tiring, and sometimes painful, but it is not without its rewards, because the success of leadership can be measured in changed lives, not for the benefit and comfort of the priest, but for the transformation of persons in the love of the Lord. Doing whatever it takes, leading the church in these amazing times, makes the doer, the leader, especially vulnerable, but it comes with the territory. Jesus tells us that the cost of discipleship is self-denial and a cross, the loss of life for the sake of the gospel to save it. It is no different for the leaders of the church who are willing to do whatever it takes for the sake of the gospel. It may be good to remember the words of St. Paul: "'All things are lawful for me,'

but not all things are helpful. 'All things are lawful for me,' but I will not be enslaved by anything." To take on the task of leadership with humility, it would be best to remember that "You are not your own; you were bought with a price."

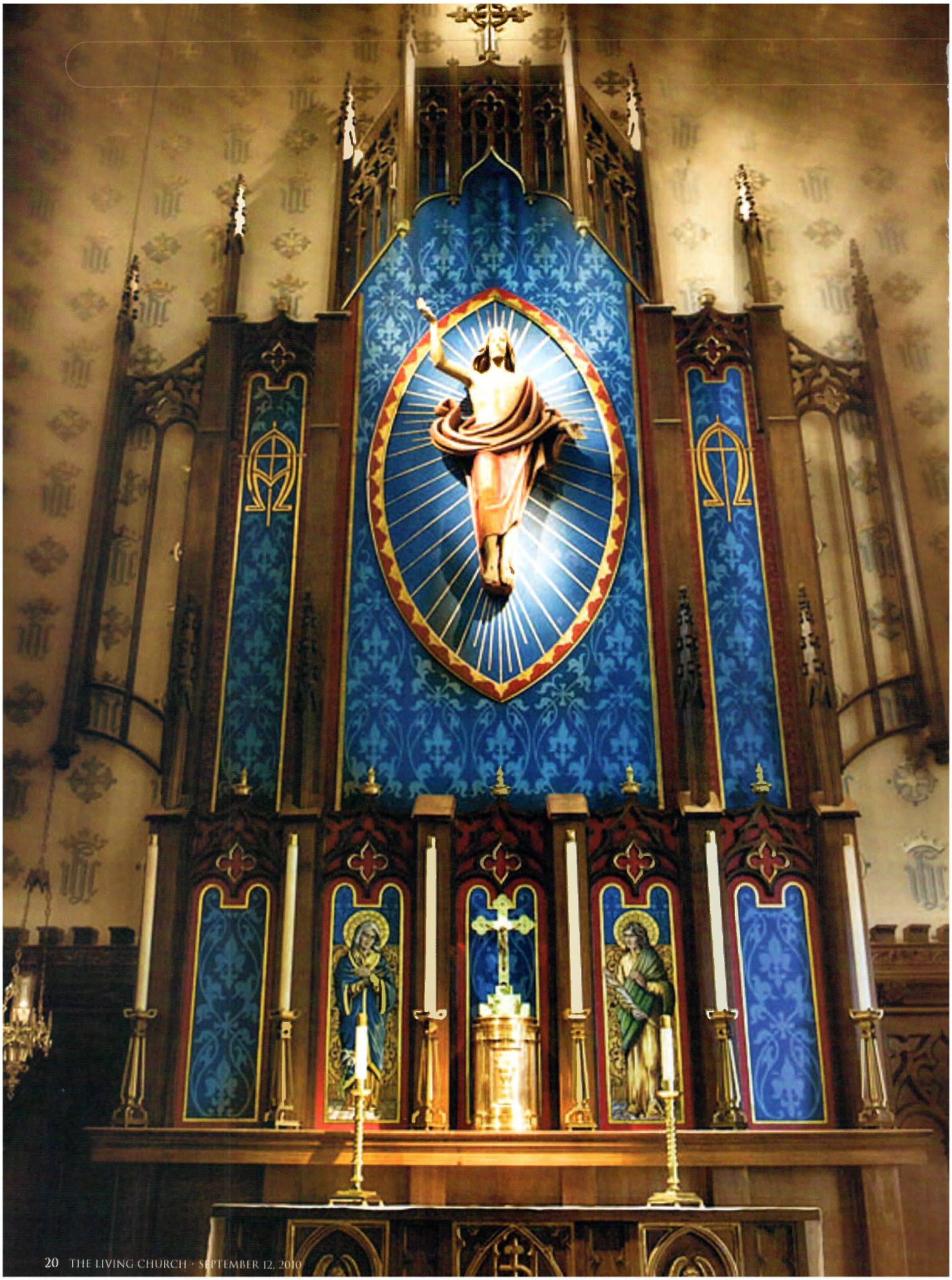
The last core value is a commitment to one another. A priest is called to administer the sacraments. The administering of the sacraments is the administering of God's love to his people: his love for their acceptance and inclusion in him; his love in his gracious feeding of them; his love in the gift of the Holy Spirit; his love in the joining of man and woman in wedlock; his love in his ministry of reconciliation; his love in his grace for ministry; his love for their healing in body, mind, and spirit. The very core of our commitment to one another is love. All love is sacramental; that is, all love is holy; it is what binds us together. A priest is called to be an icon of that love. It has been said that all a priest must do to be successful is to love his people.

But what is the nature of that love? What is asked of us? In the last verses of St. John's gospel Jesus asks Peter, "Do you love me?" The Greek word employed by John for Jesus is *agape*, self-sacrificing love. Peter's response that he loves him employs the word *phileo*, indicating friendship and affection. Jesus and Peter in the second instance of asking use the same words. But oddly enough, when Jesus asks the third time he uses the word *phileo*.

We tend to think that Peter was slow on the uptake; he didn't get what Jesus was saying. But I think that Peter got it exactly right; he knew he couldn't love Jesus the way Jesus loved him. Really, can any of us? The priest's love is only tangentially to assure the people of the priest's love; the primary task, the task that brings commitment to one another as a grace from God, is to assure the people of God's self-sacrificial love in Jesus Christ at all times and in all circumstances. That is the priest's sacramental duty.

So, as I said in the beginning, the priesthood is an easy vocation. It is up to us diligently to strive not to muck it up. May God's grace ever assist us in that endeavor.

The Rev. David Lee Hyndman is rector of St. Augustine's Church, Gary, Ind.



Apolitical Inclusion

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CHURCH, HOLLYWOOD

By Willy Thorn

Using a two-sides-of-the-coin approach — traditional liturgy and social outreach — St. Thomas the Apostle Church, Hollywood, has found success in a transitory neighborhood and an often anti-religious culture. In the process, it has become a model for catechetical training, new-member retention and fundraising.

"If you want snobby 'privileged at prayer' go to Beverly Hills," said longtime parishioner Michael Ensign. "We're a funny little outpost at Hollywood and Gardner; a real ship of fools. But we're clear about who we are. We're messy and very human, but in messiness is God."

Ensign has been at the church for 22 years. He is a career actor and veteran of too many movies and television series to list (including *Big Love*, *CSI*, and *Boston Legal*).

"It doesn't feel like every other place," Ensign said. "The incense is thick, and everybody loves to sing. We pray like Catholics and sing like Baptists. But it's not just some esoteric Sunday morning show. St. Thomas is active. We figure, if we don't do it here, it won't be done. We find people are looking for what we do."

The Traditional

St. Thomas proudly declares itself the only Anglo-Catholic parish of any size in Los Angeles. The other-worldly quality of traditional liturgy — including weekly Latin Mass with Gregorian chant — appeals to parishioners' dramatic side. The rector, the Rev. Ian Elliott Davies, restored the altar to an eastward-facing position and celebrates Mass with his back to the congregation in lieu of "the bartending position."

Ensign recalls UCLA students fascinated by the celebration — as opposed to "'that old hippy crap our parents like.' One guy had never seen a pipe organ," Ensign said. "For us baby boomers what was so meaningful, relevant, and rebellious is so old hat. What's old is new again."

The Not-So-Traditional

St. Thomas has a tradition of social activism in the surrounding area, including among the homeless in Hollywood and gay and lesbian residents of West Hollywood.

Its bimonthly "homeless breakfast club" was the first (and only) faith-based community to win a grant from the city of West Hollywood. It does referrals, and is developing a medical component that includes screenings, flu shots, and foot care. The parish also hosts 12-step programs in its hall.

"We also prepare lunches for the county HIV/AIDS clinic," Fr. Davies said. "Parishioners take 200 lunches downtown to the University of Southern California hospital, to serve those waiting in line for testing and treatment. We collaborate with 30 other synagogues and churches. Each takes one day a month."

"But Propostion 8 [California's marriage amendment] has never been preached about," Ensign said. "Preaching is always gospel-centered and Scripture-based. We're here to worship Almighty God. If you want to be political, join a political group."

A Remote Mission

In 1906 two missionary nuns visited the Rt. Rev. Joseph H. Johnson, Bishop of Los Angeles, to request a church for Hollywood. "It's just orange groves and avocado trees," the bishop purportedly responded. "I doubt very much anyone will ever live there." The sisters settled on "doubting" St. Thomas as a patron.

The parish formed in 1912, and was admitted to the diocese in 1920. The neighborhood exploded in the next decade. An architect from the National Cathedral project designed a magnificent building. Then the Great Depression hit, and construction stalled at the nave (which still exists today). The area went middle class after World War II, suffered an influx of apartments and transitory inhabitants, and by the 1960s and 1970s was synonymous with sleaze and drugs.

Enter Father Barbour

"I got suckered in by Fr. Carroll Barbour," Ensign admitted. "Urban legend goes: in the early 1980s St. Thomas was downgraded to mission status. The

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bishop called Fr. Barbour in — then in his late 50s, and serving in Long Beach, with a checkered past, and history of alcoholism — and said, basically, it was make or break for both.

"He took the parish Anglo-Catholic in theology, teaching, and ritual, and threw the doors wide open," Ensign said. "He held his ground when parishioners left, then went to work. There was little money, no answering machine, let alone a secretary. No organ, no choir. Just a mock English gothic building in a so-so location.

"He was a little guy from North Carolina; a real jackass," Ensign said. "But he was no-nonsense, and a real priest. Not a social worker, or politician; always humbled by the altar. The priesthood was most important in his life.

"He was a broken man. He often said, 'God loves broken things. We break bread, and broken people

avid Palmer photo

are ready to listen,'" Ensign recalled. "He had a special spirituality of suffering.

"The church is a hospital for sinners and not a country club for the saved," he said. "The church exemplified that. At a time of fear and trembling about HIV/AIDS, he became the first mainline clergyman to deliberately minister to the community.

"Lots of heartbreaking stuff: people coming up for communion with walkers, or pushing IV stands," Ensign said. "He'd be on the pulpit: 'I was up all night with so-and-so. He died, but had a good death.'"

The parish averaged one requiem Mass weekly, peaking at 11 in one month. "We joked it was supported by funeral fees," Ensign said. St. Thomas quickly began interring ashes in the walls. Fr. Barbour built a chapel honoring Fr. Damien of Molokai, a 19th-century Roman Catholic Belgian who ministered to Hawaiian leper colonies. He is the patron for people with infectious diseases. The chapel has an AIDS memorial book, and Damien is honored alongside Saint Thomas at every Mass.

"In the same breath Fr. Barbour was so inclusive," Ensign said. "He'd say: 'I'm the worst sinner here. So get over anyone being over anyone else. That really resonated."

Liver damage forced him out in 2000. His 2003 death made the front page of the *Los Angeles Times*, with a photo above the fold, and a full-page obituary inside. He was posthumously honored citywide.

The Congregation

The parish enjoys unique advantages. Hollywood Boulevard attracts thousands of tourists from around the world. Tour buses regularly pass the church. Both Grauman's Chinese Theatre (of sidewalk handprint fame) and the Kodak Theater (home to the Academy Awards) are within a mile. Neighborhood home prices are middle-class, and rising.

But "L.A. is huge," said Fr. Davies, who arrived in 2002 from All Saints Margaret Street, in London. "The freeways are packed all hours. People travel upwards of 60 miles for work and never meet anyone other than coworkers. It's very disengaged."

The congregation includes African Americans, and Asian, Latino and Caribbean immigrants. "But on the whole it is white," Fr. Davies said. "Gay, straight, confused, whatever; probably 20 to 30 percent straight. Many former Roman Catholic monks and nuns, who find St. Thomas a helpful staging post in their personal journeys. Education is high — doctors, lawyers, teachers — mostly upper middle class. Some are wealthy indeed, and some wander in off the streets."

St. Thomas "has a long history as an actor's church," Ensign said. Shelley Winters and Marilyn Monroe stopped in regularly. Rita Hayworth was married at St. Thomas, as was David Carradine, who was also baptized there. "Dorthy Lamour and Lana Turner — unfortunately, none wanted to make us rich."

The tradition continues today, Ensign said. "Illeana Douglas, Robert Patrick, and Glynis Johns, plus others who don't like their names out there. There's 15 to 16 in the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences. Plus, a lot of wannabe actors."

Parishioner David Bomba is a scenic designer, who devoted his talents to the 1919 California-bungalow rectory. It previously served as a school, sexton's quarters, and parish office, before Fr. Davies moved in.

"Fluorescent lights and linoleum; everything

painted over," Ensign said. Bomba "took it to 1919, with period moldings and lighting. He also incorporated leftover pieces from films: wallpaper from *Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood*; a tabletop Barbara Streisand provided; a bed from a Kevin Bacon movie."

St. Thomas is not an easy community to join, but it's not exclusive, either. In its catechumenate, 10 to 12 new parishioners meet every Saturday morning for nine months to discern their individual Christian vocations. The parish has an 82 percent retention rate.

"We take newcomers very seriously," Ensign said. At Mass, "they stand, and get a little red bag, with a mug and brochure. It helps identify them at coffee hour, afterward. They also tour the building." Follow-up includes monthly orientation, attention from a greeters and newcomers committee, and regular newcomer dinners.

"We do an [annual] every-member canvas," Fr. Davies said. "All parishioners are visited by teams, for brunch, lunch or at least a coffee. We chat: What is parish life like? Where are you growing? What should we emphasize? Nobody gets a pledge card until their meeting."

"We've found that people are looking for and hungry for a feeling of God," Ensign said. "They yearn for connection with that which is greater and more meaningful than themselves. Especially in a place like L.A., that is transitory and schizophrenic.

"Everyone's here to make it. If you don't, you go back where you came from," he said. "While you are who you are, you're also a product. One day they want you, the next they don't. There's a great spiritual need for purpose and identity outside show business. St. Thomas is an oasis."

Willy Thorn is a writer based in Milwaukee, Wis.

The Aristotle TOUCH

at St. Alban's Church, Brentwood, Calif.

By Douglas LeBlanc

The Rev. Aristotle Rivera's pilgrimage toward the priesthood involves three dioceses, a decades-long call, and a detour through the U.S. Army. Father Rivera, 32, is vicar of St. Alban's Church, Brentwood, just over 50 miles northeast of San Francisco.

Rivera is the son of immigrants from the Philippines who "came here with a suitcase and a phone number" of relatives. His parents, both accountants, named him after the shipping magnate Aristotle Onassis, Jacqueline Kennedy's second husband.

Rivera favors his nickname, Aris. "That name helps lower people's expectations," he said, laughing.

His parents, like a majority of Filipinos, were Roman Catholic. "As I grew up, my parents were involved in the charismatic movement," Rivera said. He had a charismatic experience at age 6, and it was then he first felt called to the priesthood.

After finishing high school, he attended the United States Military Academy at West Point and joined the U.S. Army, staying on for a decade. From his years in the army, he developed a love for collaboration and for discovering what works best.

At West Point, he also discovered a love of sharing what he learned. When he had difficulty with a subject, he approached a professor for extra guidance and would memorize what the professor told him. He began sharing such guidance with a few classmates. Eventually a small group built around him in what became a learning-by-teaching experience.

He now applies that passion for learning to the challenge of congregational development. Rivera describes Brentwood — long a farming community that is seeing some effects of long-distance suburban sprawl — as the fastest-growing city in California during the first half of this decade. It is now the state's fastest-shrinking city, he said, because of the economy's toll.

In St. Alban's, he stepped into a congregation with an uncertain future. St. Alban's had experienced a time of division, some of it tied to the Episcopal Church's debates about sexuality after the consecration of the Rt. Rev. Gene Robinson as Bishop of New Hampshire.

"I love serving here," Rivera said. "The people are a great blessing. They are very patient with me as a new priest, and they help each other."

Rivera said he intends to stay at St. Alban's for a long term. His pressing goal is to help form a college of

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congregational development.

Rivera said one elderly couple had left the congregation with no intention of returning, but the congregation kept the couple on its roster for receiving home Communion — and the wife was buried from the church a few years later.

Rivera became an Episcopalian while serving in the army, after reading about the iconoclastic books of John Shelby Spong, the retired Bishop of Newark. Rivera said he disagrees with Spong on many doctrinal points, but he appreciated that the Episcopal Church gave Spong the freedom to express his dissent openly.

Seeing divine healing at work in the life of his sister, who emerged from depression, gave him a sense of calling toward being a military chaplain. By the time he attended seminary, however, he had married Roselle Castro, and did not believe that committing himself to more years with the military was the best way to begin married life.

Rivera pursued his sense of calling while living in the Diocese of Los Angeles, but he and the diocese parted ways on the question of which seminary he should attend. Rivera had chosen Berkeley Divinity School at Yale, which he attended as a postulant adopted by the Diocese of Albany.

He formed an especially strong bond with the Rt. Rev. David John Bena, an Air Force veteran and Albany's suffragan bishop at the time.

"That diocese, they're on it," Rivera said. "The Spirit is really there. They gave me a deeper understanding of healing. They helped me know that you can trust God. You can fall in love with the one who created you."

Rivera was ordained a deacon in May 2008 by Albany's bishop, the Rt. Rev. William H. Love. Seven months later, he was ordained to the priesthood by the Rt. Rev. Marc H. Andrus, Bishop of California.

The Rev. Canon Michael Barlowe, the Diocese of California's canon for congregational ministries, hired Rivera and is pleased with his work.

"When we were first planning area ministry, the eastern part of Contra Costa County was one of the fastest growing parts of the Bay Area," Barlowe told THE LIVING CHURCH. "St. Alban's, a small church originally founded for the small farming community of the early 20th century, was in the middle of that growth. The congregation had talented and dedicated lay leadership, but had gone through a period of decline for a variety of reasons. Close by, and with a similar history,

Rivera

The Rev. Aristotle Rivera favors his nickname, Aris. "That name helps lower people's expectations," he said, laughing.

was St. George's, Antioch. We envisioned these two congregations, with excellent lay leadership already in place, as anchors for the area ministry initiative in this fast-growing part of the diocese. We already had an excellent deacon, but we needed to recruit priests with a strong commitment to the gospel, a passion for evangelism, proven leadership ability, and the ability and desire to lead among a team of lay and clergy — a collaborative model."

Rivera came to Barlowe's attention when he sent in a cold-call resume while searching for a ministry on the West Coast. "I was impressed by his experience in life and the military, and could see that, on paper, Aris had the gifts we needed," Barlowe said. "Extensive conversations with Aris and people he had worked with (both in the army and in the church) confirmed that what was on his resume was a true reflection of his abilities. It was a risk to call a newly ordained person to such an important post, but we believed he was the right choice — as did the folks at St. Alban's. We were also blessed to have already called a more seasoned priest, with complementary and overlapping talents, as the vicar of St. George's (the Rev. Amber Sturgess) — so we knew Aris would have an excellent colleague on the team, and other support nearby. We have not been disappointed. … Aris is a fine priest, and we are blessed to have him in the Diocese of California."

Intercessors at the Christ Church prayer table.

TABLETOP
Pastoral Care

By Jake Dell

Christ Church uses remarkably simple equipment to take prayer to the people in southeast Schenectady, New York.

I arrived at the church at 9 a.m. with Torre Bissell and we set up a 4-by-4 folding table with five chairs.

"Put it here," Torre said, pointing to the crack in the sidewalk that must have been the property line. "That way no one can say we're on the sidewalk. And point chairs this way, facing out. That way people don't feel trapped."

And that was it. A laminated sign reading "Prayer Table" flapped from the front. Torre pulled out a pen and paper and jotted down my name and his and the day's date. Then he pulled out a bag of wooden crosses and laid out a few along with a thin paperback English Standard Version New Testament.

"Good morning!" he called to a man walking across the street. "Can we pray for you?"

The man waved and walked on his way.

Christ Church is on State Street in Hamilton Hill, which most people just call The Hill. In the cities where I've lived, The Hill is never a nice neighborhood. Hamilton Hill is no different.

"The Hill provides two essential services to the suburbs: prostitution and drugs," Torre told me later over lunch.

Another man approached.

"Good morning! What do you need us to pray for?" Torre called.

There really isn't any way out of that one. It's direct and not a yes or no question. And who doesn't have some burden to pray about?

"Um, yeah," the man said as he sat down.

"What's your name?" Torre asked.

"T—," he replied.

"What can we pray for?"

"Um, my girlfriend's been in a terrible car crash. And I'm kind of dealing with that."

We prayed for him and his girlfriend. He thanked us and left. Torre made a note of the encounter.

Then G— approached. I could smell the alcohol.

"I just came from Florida, and I need a place to stay."

We joined hands. And we just did it too, not asking "May I touch you?" The fear of insurance and liability were distant while the Holy Spirit moved.

"Lord, we pray for G— that he will find a place."

"My friend is supposed to help me. I am supposed to call him."

"We pray, Lord that you would open that door for G— or if that is not the right path for him show him the place to which he is to go."

G— thanked us and left. We gave him a wooden cross necklace.

Then we saw three passersby. Some of them needed jobs. One just wanted to "give thanks." Each received a cross.

K— came by. She's been here before. Gang-raped last year, she's shaved her head. Her brother is in prison.

"I'm seeing him tomorrow. He may get out next month!" She smiled.

"Lord we pray for K— and her brother. You have all things in mind for them; lead them."

Torre looked at his notes and counted, then checked his watch.

"Not bad," he remarked.

This is Christ Episcopal Church in action.

R— stopped by.

"R— what can we pray for?"

"Um, my girlfriend and I aren't on the same page. And I'm out of work six months now and that kind of messes up my attitude."

"We come to you in prayer, Lord, and we give R— and his job and his relationship to you," Torre prayed.

R— took his Yankees cap off as we prayed. He wore a Yankee tee shirt with a digital print of himself holding a young boy.

"Is that your son?"

"Yeah, that's one of my kids."

"Have you accepted Jesus into your life?"

"Yeah, I did a long time ago when I was young."

"Lord, we pray that you would lead R— back to you as you once led him to you in the beginning."

Torre interrupts to pray. Conversations with him are punctuated by a different grammar.

But life is always being interrupted, and why let the devil have all the interruptions?

"How long have you been with your girlfriend?" Torre was back on point.

"Oh, for a long time, about six years," R— answered.

"And have you thought about marriage?"

"Oh yes."

"And you both want that?"

"Yes. But I am not ... it's ... my financial situation. I am not used to that. As the man I should be providin' and I can't right now."

Torre nodded his head and reached into his breast pocket and pulled out a diary. He opened to the back page and showed R— a picture of the Bissell family. There are at least 30 people in the picture: Black, white, and Asian faces flank Torre and his wife, Jean.

"This is my wife," Torre pointed.

"When we arrived back from Africa" — Torre and Jean had been overseas missionaries — "we had no money. But we had family. What I want to say to you, R—, is that God doesn't want you to live this way. We all want to be comfortable and have nice things, but think about it. Think about making this woman your wife."

I braced at thinking R— might think he was being judged. I expected a defense or a comeback. Instead he rose thoughtfully with a much different look on his face than I would have had. There didn't seem to be any shame or embarrassment. If anything I thought I saw a bit of relief, as if he had been given permission to do something he's really wanted to do for a long time.

More regulars came and went. The prayer table is located near a bus stop and box-store clerks and other service industry workers stream by. A pretty young Hispanic woman, two younger girls, and their grandmother walked by. I don't think she spoke English, but Torre held the woman's hand, prayed for her, and gave her a cross. Fifteen minutes later she passed by again and smiled. She was wearing the cross.

This is Schenectady.

M— passed by with a baby, who smiled sweetly as we prayed over his mother.

Two boys rode by on bicycles laden with cans.

"There is a can redemption center up the street, but I like to think of Christ's Church as *the* redemption

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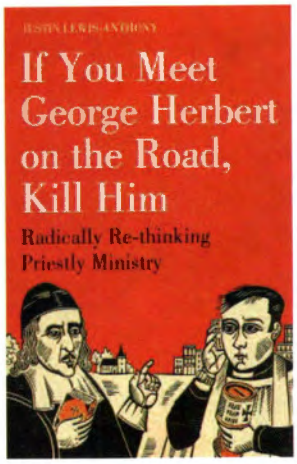

Review Essay

Should Herbert Be Spared?

By Sudduth Rea Cummings

False memories are dangerous. We can all easily see our fantasies and prejudices as reality (see Luke 9:59-62). The Rev. Justin Lewis-Anthony, rector of St. Stephen's, Canterbury, points to a "romantic and wrongheaded false memory of the life and ministry of George Herbert" as the source of a self-defeating fantasy about parish ministry. Herbert's *Country Parson, His Character* (later retitled *The Priest to the Temple*) was published in 1652, long after his death in 1633 at 39. A hagiography by Izaak Walton, *The Life of George Herbert* (1670), helped create Herbert's image as a great influence over generations of Anglican clergy. While Herbert was a parish priest for less than three years, according to Lewis–Anthony, his very brief pastoral ministry became a deadly myth for ministry today.

This portrayal of Herbert reminds me of a modern fantasy of parish life lived in Mitford by Father Tim as pictured by Jan Karon. Both Herbert and Father Tim are popular, but they are also sources of unreasonable expectations of clergy. I've never known a parish like Father Tim's, or clergy who can match Herbert's image. Lewis-Anthony offers a diagnosis of such fantasies and a spiritually sound and realistic alternative.

"Herbertism" is "the dominant model of parochial ministry in the Church of England, a development which grew out of our reverence for the life and ministry of George Herbert, which, in turn, is an expression of the Church of England's need for ecclesial legitimacy in the years after the Reformation and Commonwealth," Lewis–Anthony writes, adding:

> In "Herbertism," parsons are not just representatives of the Church of England, they *are* "the Church of England" in any given place .... The religion and deity which they represent are both benign, and they, remembering the gentlemanly roots of their profession, will never behave in an indecorous or discomforting manner. ... Like Mr. Grace in *Are you Being Served?* they should expect to be wheeled on at the end of any function to proclaim "You are all doing very well." In short, under Herbertism the clergy of

If You Meet George Herbert on the Road, Kill Him

Radically Re-thinking Priestly Ministry

By **Justin Lewis–Anthony**. Mowbray. Pp. 256. $29.95. ISBN 978-1-9062-8617-0.

the Church of England are to be omni-present, omni-competent and omni-affirming.

Lewis-Anthony focuses on Anglicanism's baggage and treasures of ecclesiology and practical theology. His goal is to carry us far beyond both Herbertism and the somewhat sterile modern images of the priest as facilitator and professional. While he concentrates on the Church of England, there has been a parallel decline in clergy life and work in the United States.

These are hard times for the parish priest. Budgets are declining precipitously while expectations of clergy are escalating. The burden of administrative paperwork from diocesan bureaucrats increases geometrically, placing greater burdens on small churches with little or no staff. Tumultuous and constant social changes stress congregations, which expect more and more from their clergy. The romantic image of the priest as the one-person wonder who is the master of all skills, available 24/7 for any pastoral need while building up the congregation and addressing all the local social needs, has to be replaced.

The traditional Anglican temptation is pragmatism. That tendency has become even more dominant today.

Lewis-Anthony's historical insights are clear and useful. He examines our situation through a theology of priesthood, using the writings of Michael Ramsey (especially *The Christian Priest Today*) and Rowan Williams. Ramsey was a powerful influence on my generation of seminarians. Lewis–Anthony points to the centrality of Ramsey's vision of the priest as a person of theology, the minister of reconciliation, prayer and the Eucharist. This is his summary of Ramsey's lucid and compelling understanding: "The priest is pastor when he is a man of teaching and learning *and* when he prays *and* when he presides at the Eucharist. To do all these things in a harmonious whole is to be a pastor." A priest, he adds in a passage that quotes Ramsey, "is called to reflect the priesthood of Christ … and to be one of the means of grace whereby God enables the Church to be the Church."

The traditional Anglican temptation is pragmatism. That tendency

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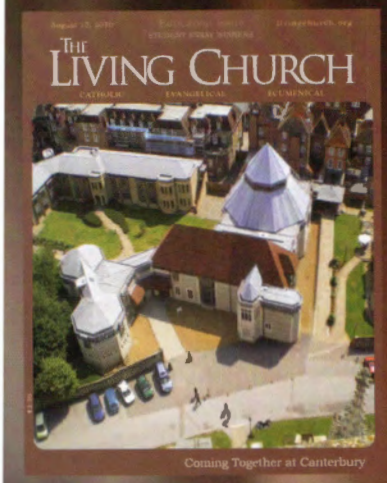

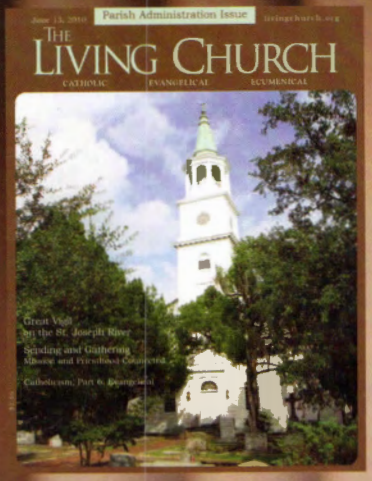

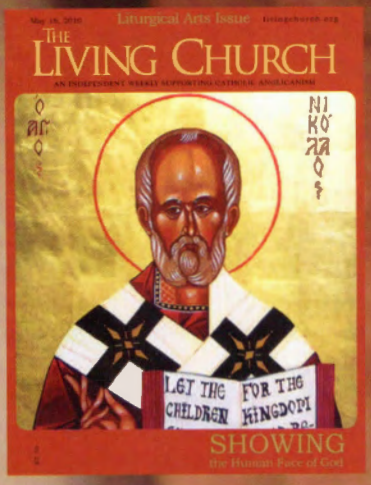

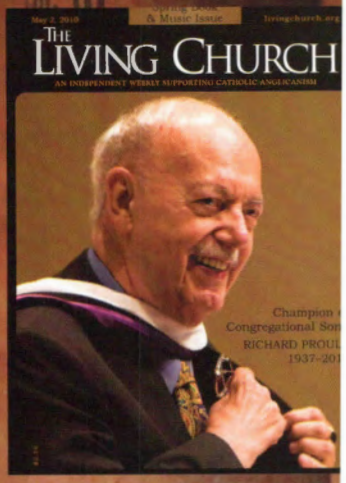

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(Continued from page 31)

has become even more dominant today. For example, far too often our bishops and commissions on ministry seek to define what the diocese needs now and then focus only on aspirants who fit that description. This pervasive utilitarianism loses the holiness of vocation. God calls the individual mind, heart, and life of a person for Holy Orders and other God-given ministries. As Lewis–Anthony points out, the essential question should be: "What ordained ministry does *God* require?" or "What *Church of England* does *God* require?" Priests are not servants of a human institution whose central task is to "make things run more smoothly," Williams has written. Rather, they are called to "the Church ... in which people may become what God made them to be (God's sons and daughters), and what we have to do about the Church is not first to organize it as a society but to inhabit it as ... a place where we can see properly — God, God's creation, ourselves."

Too often, men and women called by God are turned away because they don't fit the latest job description. God's Church is too often reduced to "another voluntary association." We have lost our way in the weeds of committees, meetings, reports, trying to reach the impossible dream of keeping all the shareholders happy. Lewis–Anthony helps us recover the basic teaching expressed in Malachi 2:7: "For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, and from his mouth men should seek instruction — because he is the messenger of the LORD Almighty."

To Lewis–Anthony, the work of priesthood is to be witness (in word and sacrament), watchman (Hab. 2:1 and Isa. 21:8-9), and weaver (builder of community). "Being a Christian priest today, therefore, begins and ends in worship," he writes. "The priest is nothing and no one if not a person of prayer. This is certainly a vision to set against the corrupted busy-ness of Herbertism."

Lewis–Anthony loses his touch as he wanders around these three categories. While trying to build a theology of ministry for today, he gets lost in the thickets of theological interpretation. He paraphrases materials that have been far more effectively explicated by Dallas Willard, Ben Witherington, Richard Foster, and especially Eugene Peterson. The reader could skip over the less interesting and less helpful material on pages 87–142.

Of far greater value are the chap-

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)
ters on "The KGH Method" at the end of the book, which presents his program of "killing George Herbert." He proposes five pillars of pastoral ministry: rule ("know who you are, and what rule you will live under"), role ("know what you are for"), responsible ("know who you are set over"), reckoning ("know how to make decisions"), and reconciling ("know how to manage conflict"). His observations about the last pillar are revealing: "Herbertism managed conflict by pretending that it didn't exist, or if it did, behaving as if it didn't. KGH, on the other hand, has to face conflict, not 'manage' it."

The chapter on rule is worthwhile for all clergy, seminarians and aspirants. Lewis–Anthony echoes the seminal but too-often forgotten work of Martin Thornton (*Pastoral Theology, Christian Proficiency*). Thornton laid a foundation for the good work today of Rick Warren (*The Purpose Driven Church*) and Simon Chan (*Spiritual Theology*).

The question remains: Should George Herbert be spared? Is he the patron saint of Anglican ordained ministry or the curse of our parish priests and deacons? Can we still love him as a priest and poet? His exquisite and powerful sacred poems in *The Temple* (also published posthumously, in 1633) are solid food for meditation and inspiration. They are both realistic about spiritual struggle and confident in the transforming grace of God. And, after all, he did not create Herbertism. His later interpreters found him useful in defending the Church of England's life and ministry. They are responsible for building the myth. My suggestion is to treasure both Herbert and to read Lewis–Anthony's book as a guide to understanding ordained ministry today.

The Rev. Dr. Sudduth Rea Cummings has served churches and seminaries in several dioceses.

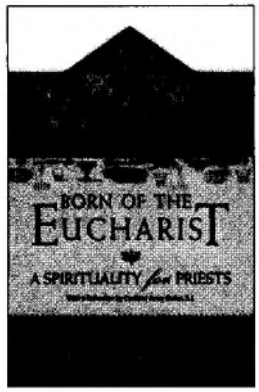
Born of the Eucharist

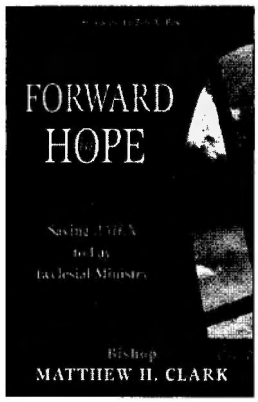
A Spirituality for Priests
Edited by **Stephen J. Rossetti**. Ave Maria. Pp. 192. $15.95. ISBN 1-59471-217-4.

Forward in Hope

Saying Amen to Lay Ecclesial Ministry
By **Matthew H. Clark**. Ave Maria. Pp. 128. $11.95. ISBN 1-59471-191-7.

We can imagine a bad book on Roman Catholic priesthood. It might portray the priest as a completely otherworldly mediator, whose capacity to consecrate the Eucharist separates him from the assembly. Or it would see him as a functionary, whose words and gestures simply allow the assembly to worship itself.





Born of the Eucharist: A Spirituality for Priests, edited by Stephen Rossetti, is a collection of short reflections and three longer essays that happily is *not* such a book. The priest has a distinctive role in liturgy, but is not isolated from the assembly. As Avery Dulles, SJ, reminds us: "The priest is not alone in offering the sacrifice, but the people offer it through his hands" (19). Fr. Peter Murphy says of praying the Mass: "I have a strong sense that the people are with me in this prayer" (27). The Rev. Msgr. John Zenz adds: "When I remind myself that I am praying *with* and *for* the community, then I remember I am part of a larger drama" (115).

But the priest *is* distinctive, not simply a "presider." As Msgr. Rosetti says, he specifically "offers himself with Christ's sacrifice" in the Mass. Christ acts through the priest's very being, not merely through his ability to speak and gesture, and thus the priest must have integrity and sanctity to make the paschal mystery present (86). We can add, following the Archbishop of Canterbury and others, that the priest must have integrity and sanctity to "concentrate" realistically and give voice to the *assembly's* offering in the first place. This would clarify that the priest is not apart from the assembled congregation, but, indeed, *with* and *for* them.

Rossetti suggests that "functionalism" — the belief that the priest is simply the performer of a set of functions — enables scandal. Here, relating the priesthood directly to the Eucharist means that becoming a priest must be a radical act of self-dispossession. Representing the people before God and God to the people means setting aside personal agendas. The Rev. Msgr. Wilfrid Parent warns against demanding that the Eucharist "must be pleasant or must fulfill any worldly need" (61). The Rev. David L. Toups writes: "To say 'I don't say Mass for that group' is to cease being a servant" (71). Zenz says that praying the Eucharistic prayer is self-emptying, and "a hidden energy seems to rise out of our own spiritual emptiness, darkness, and weakness" (113).

Perhaps the only necessarily disconcerting essay in this useful (if inevitably uneven) collection is Bishop John McCormack's, which claims that the Eucharist comforted him and kept him "moving forward" while dealing with the sex abuse scandal (64). The *vagueness* of the response is problematic, because it might lead to what Charles Gore called "nihilianism": the view that the supernatural — Christ's presence — obliterates the natural — meaning, in this case, practical reforms and accountability.

But, after reading *Forward in Hope*

(Continued on page 37)

'She Chose Me'

A mezzo-soprano reawakens Hildegard of Bingen's voice

By Retta Blaney

Many actors talk about their work as a calling, but Linn Maxwell believes her call came from someone who died 831 years ago. Maxwell has no recollection of how she first heard of Hildegard of Bingen, the 12th-century German abbess and mystic. She only knows she couldn't say no to her.

"I'm convinced Hildegard stayed on my case," she said. "I didn't choose to do it. She chose me."

Maxwell, 66, has written a one-woman play, *Hildegard of Bingen and the Living Light*, with which she tours. In April, she brought the show to New York City for three weekends at the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration (also known as The Little Church around the Corner). What came across most powerfully, even more than all of Hildegard's extraordinary achievements, was her deep belief that God dwells in each of us and longs for us to know that.

Linn Maxwell's call came from someone who died 831 years ago.

How did a 21st-century woman — who has sung opera throughout the Unites States and in 25 foreign countries, appeared in cabarets and other writers' one-woman plays — bond with the mystic who preached salvation, but also practiced holistic healing and wrote about Viriditas, her name for nature's life force?

"I had done two or three one-woman plays that included singing," Maxwell said. "It's the genre I like best. Hildegard wrote close to 75 songs. I felt I could portray her."

A mezzo-soprano who had performed with an early music ensemble, she was familiar with ancient hymns. She began researching Hildegard's life, which included two visits to Bingen, Germany, where she stayed in the hotel built on the site of Hildegard's convent, which was destroyed in the 1600s by the Swedes.

Hildegard, whom many consider one of the most important figures of the Middle Ages, had been in charge of the abbey project from the beginning, and Maxwell believes she wants to be heard today. She also read biographies and drew as much of the script as she could from the nearly 400 letters to or from Hildegard that still exist.

"I had to put her words in my mouth," she said.

What has developed is a 70-minute show in which Maxwell, as Hildegard, shares anecdotes and talks directly to the audience, eliminating the "fourth wall," that invisible barrier between performer and audience. Clad in a habit made of layers of black chiffon that give it an ethereal illusion, and a bodice of scalloped French woolen white lace, Maxwell lets Hildegard speak.

"I became quite well-known during my lifetime," she tells the audience, employing wry humor frequently. "Certainly not by being well-behaved or obedient."

And she explains why she is there.

"I came back to reassure you that the light you are seeking is already in you and it longs to shine forth."

Maxwell not only sings seven of Hildegard's songs, she also accompanies herself on an Iberian tenor psaltery, medieval harp and symphonia, instruments she learned to play for the show, which she has been developing for close to two years. Before each performance, she prays to be open to God's promptings.

"I pray that God will use me however he will want and for me to reach whatever needs people in the audience have."

(Continued on next page)

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Erv Raible, the show's director, said audiences have been quite receptive. "It hits home immediately," he said, adding that for a woman in her day, Hildegard "had a lot of chutzpah."

The Rt. Rev. Andrew St. John, Transfiguration's rector, agreed.

"She's a robust character," he said after a performance, saying he had known a little about Hildegard before seeing the show but had never heard her music. "It was revealing."

The play offers a message for Anglicans about the importance of learning from figures from the past, he said.

In a review of the play, John Hoglund wrote: "This is one of the most original and historically captivating pieces of art to emerge in many moons from a cabaret-theater artist. It's opera. It's theater. Mostly, it's unique in the truest sense of the word."

After New York, Maxwell was to perform the play for the International Hildegard Society at the International Medieval Congress at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo before taking it to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in the summer. She also had numerous bookings throughout the country. (For scheduling and booking information visit linnmaxwell.com.)

Hildegard's life has definitely hit home with Maxwell, who was raised in an evangelical home, and was an Episcopalian for awhile as an adult. She and her husband of 20 years attend a Methodist church near their home in Alto, Mich.

"I've learned that when God speaks to you, you may not want to be out there, you may not want to go, but you've got to go forth," she says.

Her show makes it clear that Hildegard, in her own quest to do God's will, became a woman who wasn't afraid to confront authorities when she believed something was amiss.

"I wrote back to the pope and told him he should work harder to try to reform the church," Hildegard tells her listeners, much to the delight of the audience.

In this regard, as well as her concern for the environment and interest in holistic healing with plants, Hildegard has a message that may be even more timely today, Maxwell said.

Sue Fischer photo
Linn Maxwell on stage as Hildegard of Bingen.

"That message is so contemporary, with corruption in the Church. We know we need to be open to cleaning out the Church."

Retta Blaney (uponthesacredstage.blogspot.com) is the author of Working on the Inside: The Spiritual Life Through the Eyes of Actors.

(Continued from page 34)

by Matthew H. Clark, Roman Catholic Bishop of Rochester, we might say that an omission in the former collection is the lack of discussion of collaboration with lay ecclesial ministers. Bishop Clark explains that, despite the medieval dualism that separated the laity from the ecclesial world of the clergy, laypeople are called to cooperate with their pastors in ministry, build the community of the Church for transformation of the world, and, while not replacing them, provide necessary help for the ordained.

Bishop Clark exhibits what Joseph Chinnici has called the key characteristics of many American bishops after Vatican II — an emphasis on the Church as the People of God, with shared responsibility between laity and clergy; fidelity that is open to the future ("life assures over and over that everything changes": 25); and the importance of dialogue. Clark quotes an earlier article in which he described the bishop as not a "lonely prophet," but "the one who clothes with words what he sees and hears in the hopes and dreams of the people he serves" (83). Much of the book even consists of other "Voices from the Vineyard."

Clark will not calm those worried that the boundary between lay and ordained ministers is porous — particularly when lay ministers become pastoral administrators, and, in many ways, the parish's most noticeable "bridge to Christ and to the Catholic Church" (to take the words of one lay minister: 47). The book also cannot fully address the concern of the signatories of the 1977 Chicago Declaration that the emphasis on lay involvement within the Church has detracted from recognizing the "laity as laity" ("clericalism" of the left). Who now can even imagine an Association of Catholic Trade Unionists?

Neil Dhingra
Westminster, Md.

Reviving Parish Ministry

By Tony Clavier

It is generally accepted that we are in the midst of a clergy crisis. Its symptoms range from burnout to attacks on the role of the parish priest, allegedly patterned by George Herbert in the early 17th century, now deemed obsolete as the laity have come of age. Often clergy seem to occupy a no-win zone. They are warned not to emulate the "Father knows best" pattern, on the assumption that it patronized and undervalued lay participation in parish life. Yet they are also expected to be attractive, self-possessed individuals who draw in newcomers and keep the parish family happy, new members added and funds replenished.

The parochial system began as an evangelical tool. The older pattern of a bishop in every place, assisted by priests and deacons, became unsustainable as the church grew. Priests were soon deputized to represent the bishop and given an area or territory which became their cure and special responsibility. This territorial identification did not originally suppose that the population of such an area was Christian.

Priests were sent into areas as missionaries, centered in an emerging community of the baptized, and charged with evangelizing the entire community. Whether such a priest was sent, or raised up within the community or church in the district, the concept was the same. A priest was given an area to evangelize and serve, leading those who formed the core group as they also witnessed to their faith and lived into their baptisms.

Success altered the mission plan. As the population became Christian, the task of parish priests moved from evangelism to sustaining the faith of the parish and all its inhabitants. It was this system Anglicanism inherited at the Reformation. It prided unity above all else because the division of the Church into sects not only weakened the realm but also compromised the calling of the priest. As denominationalism thrived, priests found themselves no longer "parish" priests, but priests serving identified adherents, or "members." As such they began to lose something essential to catholic priesthood, to be servants of the one Church for the one people.

Of course some semblance of an earlier evangelical role remained, for the laity believed and still believe that the priest is the essential evangelist, the person who draws in new members.

Yet the adherent-based model of parish life hastened the disconnect between parish and population. The priest was not permitted, for instance, to pray at school graduations or other "secular" rites of passage. The priest and members in effect withdrew into buildings, purportedly "open to the public." The task of the priest became primarily keeping the members happy, retaining their approval and particularly the approval of the vestry. Territorial titles, whether claimed by the national church, the diocese, or the parish, became theories incapable of practice but useful in opposing "schismatics."

Daunting as the thought may be, the time has come to recapture the original concept of parish priesthood. While it has always been the task of the priest to incorporate the faithful into the whole Church on earth and in heaven by offering the sacraments; while it has always been the primary role of the priest to preach and teach and prepare the baptized for ministry and service, it should now be the task of the priest — and the laity — to identify the area or community to be served, and to evangelize the unchurched and the no-churched. A community need no longer necessarily be made up of the local population, although that remains a consistent model. It might be groups identified by use of the internet.

The first step toward a recovery of mission must be an abandonment of denominationalism and "particularity."

The first step toward such a recovery of mission must be an abandonment of denominationalism and "particularity." An Anglican parish is a microcosm of the Church Catholic, armed with the tools of word, sacraments and ministry, none of which is the property of a denomination or national church. Our Episcopal traditions are not that which define us, although they have great utility. We are defined by our "churchmanship" and called to its universal mission.

Far from widening our appeal, denominationalism narrows our vision and obstructs our mission. A return to parish ministry will require training and retraining of priests as ordinands are invited into the richness of grace which God gives to those who intend his Son's commandments: "Go tell, go baptize, do this in remembrance, love one another." It will also require educating the laity, which is no easy task. After all, it is so comforting to be the unique object of a priest's time and ministry!

The Rev. Tony Clavier (afmclavier.wordpress.com) is rector of St. Paul's Church, La Porte, Ind.

Ecumenists Before Their Time

Thanks for Richard Mammana's excellent article on Bishop Grafton [TLC, Aug. 22], including the picture of Bishop Weller's consecration in 1900. What is not widely known is that Grafton intended Bishop Tikhon to take part in the laying-on of hands, but one of the Episcopal bishops objected.

Four years later, Bishop Tikhon invited Grafton to join him and the only other Russian Orthodox bishop in America in consecrating a third bishop. Only a serious illness at the last minute prevented Grafton from doing so — an ecumenical first that almost was.

(The Rev.) Lawrence N. Crumb
Eugene, Ore.

I greatly appreciate Richard Mammana's three articles in issues of THE LIVING CHURCH during the past year under the general title "Anglican Faces." In the case of Jackson Kemper [TLC, Nov. 1, 2009] he mentioned that the Episcopal Church's first missionary bishop is commemorated in our calendar on May 24.

In the case of Charles Chapman Grafton, he mentioned his commemoration in the calendar contained in the Anglican Service Book. Surprisingly, he neglected to draw attention to *Holy Women, Holy Men* (the enlarged calendar of the Episcopal Church approved in 2009) where provision is made for the annual commemoration of Bishop Grafton on Aug. 30 as "Bishop of Fond du Lac, and Ecumenist."

I look forward to further articles in the "Anglican Faces" series and hope that reference will be made, where appropriate, to the greatly enriched calendar now available to us.

The Rt. Rev. Jeffery Rowthorn
Salem, Conn.

Inappropriate Words

I agreed with much of Fr. Clavier's article, "Unity is Costly" [TLC, Aug. 22]. However, I found such phrases as "our imperfect sacraments" and "our defective sacraments" confusing and/or misleading.

Our appreciation of and response to the sacraments may indeed be defective and imperfect. Nevertheless, sacraments themselves are not human works, but gracious gifts of God. They manifest God's holy perfection irrespective of our imperfections (*v.* James 1:17). Therefore, it seems to me that adjectives such as defective or imperfect are hardly appropriate in describing them.

The Rev. Dr. Kenneth D. Aldrich
Huntingdon, Pa.

(Continued from page 29)

center," Torre joked.

The one who had been gang-raped passed by again, this time with a baby.

"Is that her brother?" I asked.

"It's her *son*."

"How old is K—?"

"Nineteen."

K—'s baby boy looked at us apprehensively.

"He doesn't know you," his mother explained matter-of-factly.

But he knows the darkness.

(Lord, let there be light.)

A minute later a minivan drove up. A man and his son sat in the front seats. Torre smiled. The driver's side door opened and the man got out and ran over to us.

"Here you are, gentlemen — for your efforts," he said, as he handed us a piece of paper.

It was a check for $500 made out to Christ Church.

Money follows ministry.

(Let the church understand.)

Torre was quick to explain that the prayer table does not accept offerings or donations. But this man, who had a life-changing experience at Christ Church many years ago, occasionally drives all the way down to The Hill to deliver his support.

"10:30," Torre said, glancing at his watch. "Time to pack it up." Within two minutes, we struck the setting of our low-tech ministry and drove off.

State Street turned from vacant storefronts to houses and finally to the bulldozed earth cuts of new development. We turned toward Barnes & Noble adjacent to Panera in one of those new, upscale brick-and-stucco shopping centers that dot the landscape from Milwaukee to Birmingham.

Inside the superstore, a mural depicting Faulkner, Rimbaud, Wilder, Waugh, Eliot, Joyce, and countless other *literati* posing in a Parisian night cafe created an ersatz sophistication.

Jake Dell lives and works in New York City.

Deaths

The Rev. **Arthur F. Kimber, Jr.**, 76, a retired priest of the Diocese of Massachusetts, died June 23 at Cape Cod Hospital.

He was born in Boston. After high school, he served in the Navy Medical Corps in the Korean War. He then earned a BA at Fairmont State College in 1959 and a master's of divinity at the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge in 1962, the same year he was ordained deacon and priest. He was priest-in-charge of All Saints', Lynn, MA, 1962-67, then a non-parochial priest until 1986. Beginning in Boston and then Cape Cod, he worked for the state Department of Community Affairs for ten years, advocating and creating policy for public housing. He became regional director of public housing for Western Massachusetts. After earning a master's degree in public administration from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, he was director of the Barnstable Housing Authority in Hyannis for six years. From 1987 to 1991, he was was responsible for all public housing development throughout Massachusetts. In retirement, he earned a doctorate of ministry degree from the Graduate Theological Foundation in Indiana and was associate at St. David's, South Yarmouth, and chaplain at Hospice of Cape Cod. Survivors include his wife, Joan; three children, Rhonda, Pamela and Phillip; two grandsons; and a sister, Ann Porter of Marblehead, MA.

The Rev. **Ralph Olin Marsh**, 80, died June 7 in Athens, GA.

He was born in Leslie, GA, and reared in Ft. Myers, FL. He was a veteran of both the Navy and the Marine Corps. He completed a degree at Emory University in 1949 and worked in the advertising field in Atlanta for several years before teaching at Briarcliff High School in Decatur. He was a 1965 graduate of the University of the South's school of theology. He was ordained deacon in 1965 and priest in 1966. He was Episcopal chaplain at the University of Georgia for 32 years and led the campaign to construct St. Mary's Chapel. He was a charter member of the Athens Mental Health Board and worked for nearly 20 years in preventing drug addiction. He founded Touchpoint, a halfway house. Fr. Marsh held associate degrees from the University of California and Rutgers in preventing and treating drug addiction. Fr. Marsh's wife, Frances Bryan Marsh, preceded him in death. He is survived by sister, Mrs. Clyde

L. Wade of Greenville, Texas; two sons, Kyle and Kevin Marsh; three grandchildren, Amy Marsh Misenheimer, Joshua Marsh and Rebecca Marsh; one great-granddaughter, Ada Misenheimer; one great-grandson, Cole Misenheimer.

The Rev. **Miguel A. Quevedo**, 86, of Southport, CT, a retired priest of the Diocese of Connecticut, died Aug. 14.

Born in San Juan, PR, he was a World War II U.S. Army veteran and a member of the National Guard in Puerto Rico. He moved Bridgeport, CT, 32 years ago as an entertainer participating in a telethon for handicapped children of Puerto Rico. He was instrumental in establishing Hispanic congregations at both St. Luke's and St. Paul's parishes in Bridgeport, as well the creation of a soup kitchen at St. John's, Bridgeport. He is survived by his wife, Hilda; ten grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

The Rev. **Bruce Donald Rahtjen**, 77, of Kansas City, MO, died June 22 in Topeka, KS.

A native of Rochester, NY, he was a graduate of the University of Rochester and the College of Rochester Divinity School and earned a Ph.D. from Drew University. He was ordained deacon in June 1979 and priest in October 1979. He was associate priest, St. Paul's, Kansas City, 1979-83; campus chaplain, 1981-83; rector, Trinity Church, Independence, MO, 1983-90 and 1996-98; dean, Diocese of West Missouri, 1985-88; rector, St. Mary's, Kansas City, 1990-99. He was a chaplain at St. Luke's and Texas Children's Hospital, and worked at an archeological dig in Israel. He was a professor at the St. Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, for 18 years. During a sabbatical from St. Paul's he translated the first 18 chapters of Isaiah from Hebrew for the Today's English Version of the Bible. He is survived by his wife, JoAnn; two sons, Donald Bruce Rahtjen of Denver, CO, and the Rev. James Robert Rahtjen of Glen Ellyn, IL; a daughter, Nancy Jeanne Wachter of California City, CA; a sister, Georgia Finch of Pittsburgh, PA; three stepdaughters, Carol Munro of Seattle, WA, Ruth Swanson of Rockford, IL, and Laurie Evans-Pizzo of Pasco, WA; 10 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

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The Shepherd's Delight

"There is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10).

BCP: Exod. 32:1, 7-14; Psalm 51:1-18 or 51:1-11; 1 Tim. 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10
RCL: Jer. 4:11-12, 22-28; Psalm 14 or Exod. 32:7-14; Psalm 51:1-11; 1 Tim. 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10

The Lectionary Drafting Committee was blessed with a sense of dramatic flair (or at least rhetorical consistency) in choosing this week's texts. They ring the changes on the theme of God's delight in forgiveness, his burning desire for reconciliation. In the words of the Lenten collect, they show him as the one "whose glory it is always to have mercy."

The Exodus lesson begins with one of the Bible's most glaring tales of apostasy. While God is imparting the covenant to Moses on Sinai, the Israelites make a golden calf, and acclaim it as their true deliverer. The LORD is furious at their stiff-necked ingratitude and faithlessness. He is prepared to destroy them completely. But Moses cries out for mercy, appealing to the ancient promises, and God's record of gracious help. "Change your mind, and do not bring disaster," he cries, and the LORD relents.

St. Paul describes God's mercy to him. He calls himself "foremost" of sinners. His former life of disgust for Jesus and hatred for his followers weighs heavily on his conscience. Jesus met him, confronted him with his errors. When he asked for forgiveness, it was freely offered — "grace overflowed" for him, to create faith and love. He is a living sign of the "patience of God" — his abundant offer of a second chance.

Jesus is looking for the lost. He takes great risks to search them out — like a shepherd who will not rest until the final sheep is found. The shepherd rejoices, he says, when he finds the sheep and must carry him home. He rejoices in a heavy burden, for a frightened sheep won't walk back home. There is nothing more delightful to God than the repentance of sinners. There is nothing he won't do to bring them home.

"It's hard work making disciples in this neighborhood," the inner-city pastor told me. His church's program sends out buses to pick up needy folks all over town. There's a meal, Bible study, games for the kids, the Eucharist. "They come here high, out of work, they don't know the first thing about decorum. They need Jesus, and everything else at the same time. We can only handle fifty, but there could be a hundred of them here. We tried to get a couple suburban churches to come here and help out. We didn't get much response." Maybe we don't rejoice in the burden as Jesus does.

Look It Up

Read Heb.12:1-2. Might the parable's description of the risk-taking but rejoicing shepherd gesture towards the atonement?

Think About It

Is your congregation merely "welcoming" to the lost, or is it taking risks seeking them out and bringing them home?

Next Sunday **The Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost (Proper 20C), September 19, 2010**

BCP: Amos 8:4-7 (8-12); Psalm 138; 1 Tim. 2:1-8; Luke 16:1-18
RCL: Jer. 8:18–9:1; Psalm 79:1-9 or Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 113; 1 Tim. 2:1-7; Luke 16:1-13

THE LIVING CHURCH

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SUN 6

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The Rev. Thomas E. Macfie Jr., University Chap

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(931) 598-1274 — **vcunning@sewanee.edu**
Sun H Eu 8, 11, Choral Evensong (1st Sun of month) **4**, Growing in Grace **6:30**; Mon-Fri MP 8:30, E P **4:30**; Wed Catechumenate **7**

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335 Tennessee Ave., Sewanee 38383
(931) 598-1478 — **theology@sewanee.edu**
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The Rev. John Maxwell Kerr, SOSc, chap
Bruton Parish: Sun **5:30** (followed by dinner)
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Canterbury Room: Thurs **6** "The Canterbury Programme"

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Fr. Tony Noble, SSC
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Sun Eu 9

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