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THE LIVING CHURCH publishes some form of persuasive writing in each issue, whether it's an essay, an editorial, or some other sounding on our Catholic Voices page. We do not often publish sermons, but we consider preaching among the highest forms of persuasive communication. Week after week, hundreds of thousands of preachers break open the Scriptures, open their mouths, and call the faithful into closer communion with God. In this issue, theologian Joseph Mangina offers his insights — in clear, brisk prose — on this daunting task.

ON THE COVER: Staff and volunteers at Siloam Family Health Center in Nashville, Tennessee, pray together at the beginning of a clinic shift.

Debbie Barnett photo



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This issue is sponsored by St. David's Episcopal Church, Wayne, Pennsylvania [page 35].

THE LIVING CHURCH

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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.

LeMarquand to Serve Region He Loves

The Rev. Grant LeMarquand was in Egypt last year, preparing for a retreat at a monastery, when the Most Rev. Mouneer D. Anis invited him out for coffee. The bishop asked his friend a life-changing question: Would he consider being appointed an assistant bishop serving the Horn of Africa?

LeMarquand, professor of biblical studies and mission at Trinity School for Ministry, spent the next week and a half wrestling with the bishop's question while on retreat.

As part of his later discernment, LeMarquand met with a committee in London, including Archbishop John Sentamu and retired Archbishop Maurice Sinclair, that advises Bishop Mouneer. The bishop announced LeMarquand's appointment Dec. 8 in a letter to the Episcopal/Anglican Diocese of Egypt.

LeMarquand, a Canadian who earned graduate degrees from McGill University, Montreal Diocesan Theological College and Wycliffe College, has taught at Trinity since 1999. Trinity's website offers a collection of his extensive essays and speeches on Christianity in Africa (is.gd/LeMarquand).

LeMarquand has visited the diocese twice before and his wife — Wendy Jane LeMarquand, who is a physician — has visited once, so they both knew what challenges they would face. After LeMarquand's consecration April 25, the couple will be based in Gambella, Ethiopia. The capital city, Addis Ababa, is more than 700 kilometers away — a short flight but a two-day drive. The horn comprises the nations of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia.

For the LeMarquands a move to Africa was not a new idea. They were Anglican Church of Canada missionaries to Kenya in 1987-89.

"I've been back to Africa nearly every year since then," LeMarquand told *THE LIVING CHURCH*.



Trinity School for Ministry photo

LeMarquand: "I'm hoping the next bishop will be from the Horn of Africa."

He felt drawn to Africa ever since studying alongside a Kenyan while in seminary. The LeMarquands initially were appointed to serve in Sudan, but the church changed their assignment because of that nation's political turmoil. In Kenya they served near the border with Sudan.

The LeMarquands had approached the Canadian church to ask about missionary service, he said. He had become a Christian through the Jesus movement of the early 1970s, and "it was clear to most of us in that movement that you went where God wanted you to go."

LeMarquand has visited Sudanese refugee camps and stood on the tarmac of the Khartoum airport, but a longer stay in Sudan has so far eluded him.

He will serve in a population that's about 60 percent Christian and 30 percent Muslim, with a considerable presence of Sudanese refugees. The Anglican presence in the Horn of Africa is relatively young and priests have little residential theological training. LeMarquand, who will teach in the diocesan seminary in Egypt a few times a year, wants to improve the clergy's access to theological training.

"I'm hoping the next bishop will be from the Horn of Africa," he said.

Orthodoxy's presence in Ethiopia dates to the time of St. Athanasius and the work of two former slaves, Frumentius and Aedesius. When Frumentius traveled to Alexandria to ask Athanasius for a bishop, Athanasius consecrated him and sent him home.

The church's presence in Ethiopia "affects everything from what people eat to the calendar," since the nation marks the year by Gregorian standards.

LeMarquand said he will work in a region heavily affected by desertification (because of climate change and over-harvesting forests), border wars, and a literacy rate of 40 percent (and 20 percent for women). He welcomes those challenges, though, because he believes evangelism, mercy and justice work together.

"Bishop Mouneer has a real vision, like most bishops in the Global South, for holistic mission," he said. "To think that I'll be encouraging people to come to know Christ and teaching people how to purify water so they can prevent malaria — that makes a lot of sense to me."

Douglas LeBlanc

Quitclaim Deeds in South Carolina Questioned

One week after a disciplinary board dismissed allegations against the Bishop of South Carolina, the bishops of Province IV have asked to meet with him on another matter that could lead to a new case. Province IV comprises 20 dioceses in the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

The Rt. Rev. Clifton Daniel II, Bishop of East Carolina and vice president of Province IV, released a letter, dated Dec. 5, that he wrote to the Rt. Rev. Mark J. Lawrence in seeking the meeting.

Bishop Daniel's letter expressed a collective concern by those who attended Province IV's annual bish-

ops' meeting (Nov. 29-Dec. 1) that Bishop Lawrence had authorized distributing quitclaim deeds to parishes in his diocese.



Daniel

"Since we have had no direct communication from you regarding these reported actions, we determined that it is our duty as bishops of this province to address these concerns in direct communication with you, as Jesus exhorts his followers in Matthew's Gospel (18:15-20), and in accord with our ordination vows regarding the unity and governance of the church," Daniel wrote on behalf of the bishops.

The bishops asked Bishop Lawrence what canonical authority he had to make the decision by canon

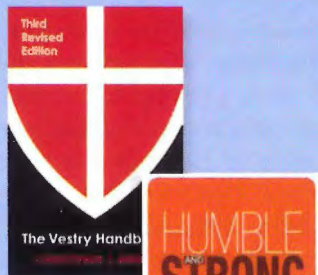
law, whether the diocese's standing committee agreed to the decision, and whether he would provide a sample quitclaim deed.

By issuing quitclaim deeds, the Diocese of South Carolina has relinquished any interest in filing property lawsuits against congregations that choose to leave the diocese. The decision questions the constitutionality of the Dennis Canon, which says: "All real and personal property held by or for the benefit of any Parish, Mission or Congregation is held in trust for this Church and the Diocese thereof in which such Parish, Mission or Congregation is located."

Daniel spoke with Lawrence by phone and then released his letter to news outlets of the Episcopal

(Continued on page 7)

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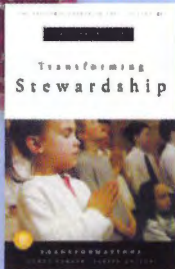
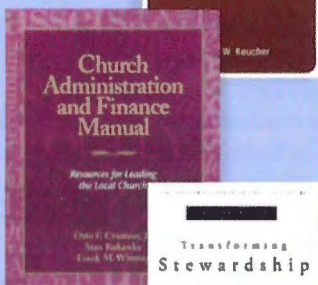
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AMiA Bishops Walk Away from Rwandans

All but two bishops of the Anglican Mission in the Americas have walked away from the AMiA's 11-year ties to the Anglican Province of Rwanda.

The Most Rev. Emmanuel Kolini of Rwanda and the Most Rev. Moses Tay of Singapore were the chief consecrators in January 2000 when the Rev. Charles Murphy III and John H. Rodgers, Jr., took vows as bishops. The two provinces declared Murphy and Rodgers as missionary bishops to North America.

The resignations of eight bishops, including Murphy and Rodgers, follow a weeks-long flurry of exchanged documents between the AMiA and Rwanda's House of Bishops.

The Province of South East Asia had relinquished its oversight of the AMiA with the retirement of the Most Rev. Datuk Yong Ping Chung in 2006.

Kolini, Tay, and Yong have agreed to provide oversight to the departing AMiA bishops.

Rwanda's bishops have appointed two former AMiA bishops, the Rt. Rev. Thaddeus Rockwell Barnum and the Rt. Rev. Terrell Lyles Glenn, Jr., to oversee its connection with AMiA congregations that choose not to follow the eight bishops. Glenn

announced his resignation from the AMiA Nov. 11, citing unsuccessful efforts at resolving conflicts with Murphy.

Rwandan bishops had asked for an accounting of how AMiA has distributed approximately \$1.2 million that they were expecting from the mission. The AMiA released a statement Dec. 9 regarding that money.

Of those funds, "approximately \$800,000 was part of the tithe that paid expenses for the Province directly from the Anglican Mission or was designated to another need," the statement said. "The remaining \$460,000 was a designated gift given to the Anglican Mission for special projects in Rwanda. The donor gave Anglican Mission complete discretion to use this money in support of Rwanda in whatever way it saw fit. In consultation with the Archbishop, these funds went to support items like PEAR Theological College, the Provincial Convention, Diocesan support and the purchase of a provincial vehicle. These were not a part of the Anglican Mission's tithe to Rwanda and were given over and above the tithe."

The AMiA's statement provided links to PDFs providing more details of the funds' distribution. A chart titled "Anglican Mission Tithe Gifts" identified nearly \$500,000 designated for travel expenses and \$312,000 in other designated support between 2004 and 2010.

Another chart offered details of that \$312,000, including \$82,616 for administration of Sister-to-Sister Church Partnerships (which enabled ties between AMiA parishes and Rwandan parishes); \$18,600 for prayer books; \$90,785 for the Rt. Rev. Alexis Bilindabagabo, Bishop of Gahini; \$50,000 for a roof on Gasabo Cathedral; and \$46,820 for medical needs.

The Most Rev. Onesphore Rwaje, who succeeded Kolini as archbishop, served previously as first bishop of the Diocese of Gasabo.

Assisting in Chicago

The Rt. Rev. Christopher Epting has accepted an invitation to become an assisting bishop in the Diocese of Chicago.

The Rt. Rev. Jeffrey Lee announced the appointment during his address to the diocese's annual convention.

Epting was Bishop of Iowa from 1989 to 2001. From 2001 to 2009 he was Presiding Bishop Frank T. Griswold's deputy for ecumenical and interfaith relations. He then served as interim dean of Trinity Cathedral, Davenport, Iowa.



Epting

Bishop Elliott Sorge Dies

The Rt. Rev. Elliott Lorenz Sorge, Bishop of Easton, Maryland, from 1983 to 1993, died Dec. 6 in Denver. He was 82. He was consecrated Bishop of South-Central Brazil in 1971 and served that diocese until 1977.

A native of Michigan City, Indiana, he was an alumnus of DePauw University and of Seabury-Western Theological Seminary. He was priest-in-charge at three congregations in North Dakota: Sts. Mary and Mark Church, Oakes, 1954-60; St. Luke's Church, Ellendale, 1955-60; and St. Stephen's Church, Fargo, 1960-64. Between his years in Brazil and his episcopacy in Maryland, Bishop Sorge was the Episcopal Church Center's field officer for development of ministry, 1977-80, and executive director for education and ministry, 1980-83.

The Rev. Marianne Sorge Ell wrote that her father died while listening to the Taizé setting of "Veni Sancte Spiritus." Bishop Sorge's ashes will be interred at St. Timothy's Church, Centennial, Colorado.

Quitclaim Deeds Questioned

(Continued from page 5)

Church. When Lawrence faced an inquiry by the Disciplinary Board for Bishops, the Diocese of South Carolina took the initiative on releasing most information, including the news that anonymous parties had filed allegations against the bishop.

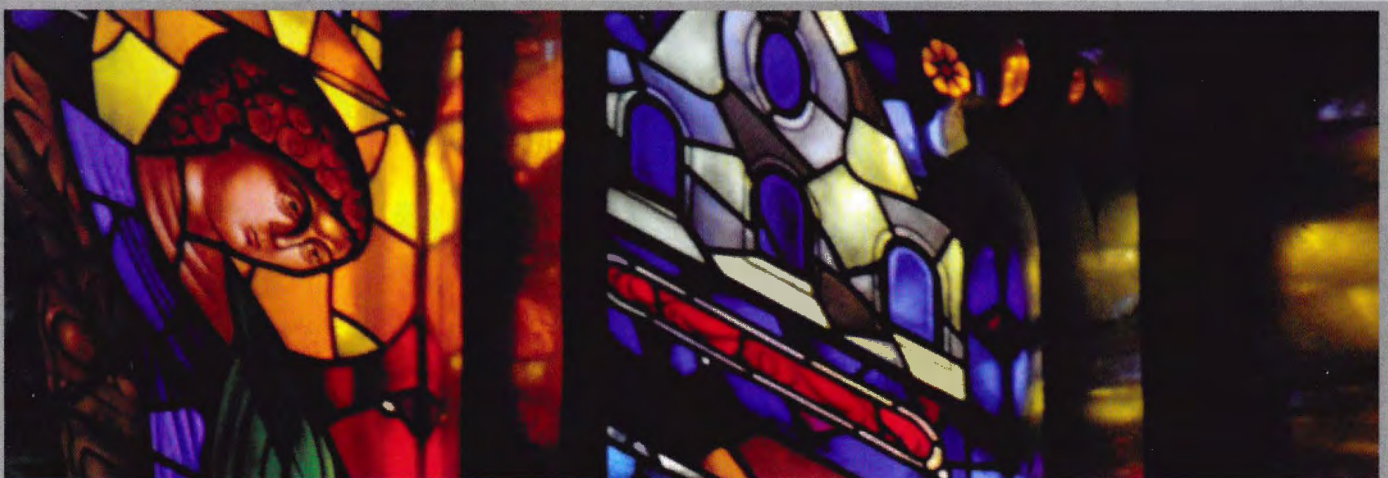
Bishop Daniel declined to elaborate on his letter. Bishop Lawrence's canon to the ordinary, the Rev. Jim Lewis, announced Dec. 6 that the bishop would meet Dec. 15 with his brothers from Province IV.

The diocese's standing committee answered Bishop Daniel's question about its involvement in a sharply worded letter issued Dec. 9.

The 13 members of the standing committee objected to the letter's citation of Matthew 18:15-20. "We fail to see how the issuance of quitclaim deeds to the parishes of

this diocese could be construed to be a 'sin against you,' and of course you have ignored the meeting between 'you and him alone' and proceeded to the last scriptural step by 'tell[ing] it to the church' through your publication of the matter," the letter said. "As to your oaths, if that perceived basis is to uphold the 'doctrine, discipline and worship of the Episcopal church,' then you must realize that your inquiries into the affairs of this diocese, without constitutional or canonical support, are contrary to that oath."

Despite their misgivings about the meeting scheduled for Dec. 15, the committee members wrote, "we fully support Bp. Lawrence and pray that your time together will bring the desired clarity sought by all parties regarding our actions. The Church is never served well by such conflicts, especially when so unnecessary."



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Churches Reclaim Their Role in Healing



By Lauren Anderson

As health care providers anticipate a massive expansion of coverage in 2014, charitable clinics are already feeling the effects of the Affordable Care Act. Since the act's passage in 2010, donations to charity-funded clinics have declined. Many donors are asking why charitable or free clinics are necessary, given the bill's promise of increased access to health care for all.

Steve Noblett, president of the Christian Community Health Fellowship, said a decline in charitable giving to health clinics is not only harmful to the clinics but also to uninsured patients.

"If the Affordable Care Act is fully implemented, America will still have more uninsured people than any other developed nation on the planet," Noblett said. "Even if the bill goes through as it was passed, there is an estimated 20 million people in America that will still be uninsured. The need is great, and is currently greater than ever. But the passing of the bill has indirectly hurt charitable clinics' ability to grow to meet it because of the misperception that the problem is solved."

Nancy West, president and CEO of Siloam Family Health Center, maintains that health care is more than just a matter of public policy, and is a pressing concern for churches today.

West is one of many Christians in the health field whose definition of reform does not necessarily involve policy changes but instead greater church involvement in health care.

"We agree that health care needs to be reformed, but we are trying to reform the delivery of it," West said. "Health care started in the church and we want to see the church reclaim its role in health care."

Siloam, a Christian health clinic for uninsured people in Nashville, served 20,000 patients this year. At Siloam, West and her staff take an alternative approach to health care reform by providing decidedly Christian care.

With a mission of sharing the love of Christ by serving patients, Siloam provides what West calls "whole-person care," which addresses the physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of patients. West says whole-person care could involve simply praying with patients or referring them to an on-staff pastor, social worker or behavioral health consultant.

Siloam is not alone in its approach to health care. More than 300 health clinics and 1,200 physicians are affiliated with the Christian Community Health Fellowship, a national network of Christian health professionals and clinics that serve poor and med-

(Continued on next page)

ANOTHER ASPECT OF HEALTH CARE REFORM

Churches Reclaim Their Role in Healing



How Can Our Parish Help?

- Know your community. Does a free clinic or similar service already exist?
- Support existing services: Ask what is needed. It may be financial support for medications, volunteers (especially medical professionals), or assistance with transportation, among other things. Offer space in your parish for services. Assist with publicity or finding additional partners.
- Form a committee to examine needs and resources available in the community and parish, as well as to oversee the planning and development of your clinic. Be sure to have both medical and nonmedical professionals on the committee.
- Meet with similar clinics in nearby communities to learn from their experience.
- Search and study online resources, such as www.volunteersinmedicine.org, to help the committee understand the issues involved in launching a clinic and sustaining it for a significant time. These resources can also help you understand financial planning, liability issues, and documentation procedures.

Is it more appropriate to support existing services instead of opening your own clinic? The members of the parish must decide this for themselves. It is critical to have a thorough understanding of the issues involved in creating a sustainable clinic as you embark on this rewarding journey of caring for others.

*Matthew Ellis, Executive Director
National Episcopal Health Ministries
www.episcopalhealthministries.org*

Top and middle: Prayer and patient care at Siloam Family Health Center, Nashville. Bottom: Patients participate in a Centering pregnancy program at the Lawndale Christian Health Center, Chicago. Bernardo Barrios photo

(Continued from previous page)

ically underserved communities. Siloam is part of a larger movement of medical professionals united in a mission to provide patients with Christian health care. The form of Christian health care looks different from clinic to clinic.

“We are affiliated with over 300 faith-based clinics that try to provide what they would consider distinctively Christian health care,” Noblett said. “But if you asked what it means to provide distinctively Christian health care, you would get 300 different answers to that question.”

Each Christian clinic chooses to carry out the vision differently, including selecting a model of funding that works best. Each clinic must decide where money will come from and to what extent the government will help fund the clinic’s operations.

Typically, larger clinics receive funding from the government in some capacity. About 50 Christian health clinics are recognized as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC), a selective designation awarded by the government to clinics that serve low-income, underserved

and often uninsured populations.

Clinics often seek FQHC status for the benefits that federal money provides, including enhanced reimbursement from Medicare and Medicaid, an annual grant of at least \$600,000, and medical malpractice insurance for physicians.

Not all clinics make the cut. The process is highly competitive, with only 62 of 1,000 clinics achieving FQHC status last year, Noblett said.

The benefits afforded FQHCs allow them to provide services to underserved areas in larger numbers. Chicago’s Lawndale Christian

Health Center exemplifies this model, handling nearly 156,500 patient visits in 2011. Because Lawndale cannot rely on the community for financial support, the FQHC model is the only option that provides enough resources.

Are Christian clinics limited by receiving public dollars? Despite the expectation that workers at federally funded Christian clinics would be discouraged or even prohibited from expressing their faith when providing care, Lawndale and other FQHC clinics have not experienced those limitations.

“We’ve never been told, ‘No prayer, no Bible verses, no crosses in your logo, or no spiritual care,’” Noblett said. “The federal government doesn’t care about any of that.”

In fact, Christian health clinics have found support from the federal government. Noblett said he has been in meetings with government officials who have praised Christian clinics for their work and encouraged them to continue providing faith-based care. As long as faith is not imposed on patients, the government welcomes the work of Christian clinics, he said.

“The government would not be happy if patients were required to watch a gospel presentation before getting medical care,” Noblett said. “But I don’t think Jesus would like that either. That’s not just bad medicine; that’s bad Christianity.”

Although federal restrictions may not be an issue for many Christian clinics, some clinics opt out of federal funding to maintain greater autonomy. Most CCHF clinics are funded by donations, and are usually smaller.

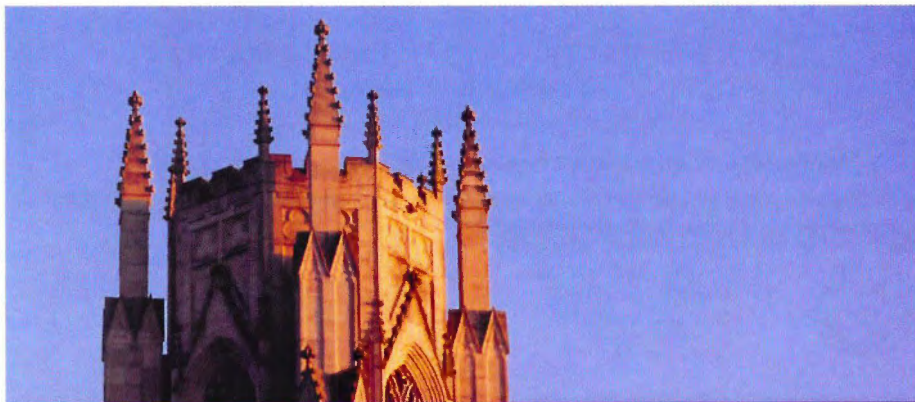
Siloam has chosen to remain charity-funded since its founding. Though discussion about pursuing the FQHC model arose in the last year, Siloam ultimately decided against receiving federal funds because of various regulations, including the requirement that 50 percent of the clinic’s board of

directors represent the demographics of patients. Siloam found this did not fit with the clinic’s vision of including a mix of community leaders on the board.

CrossOver Health Care Ministry, a three-site ministry in Richmond, Virginia, that serves the uninsured for free, is also funded by donations. Med-

ical Director Daniel Jannuzzi said the clinic’s volunteer-heavy workforce model has prevented the clinic from pursuing FQHC status. Michael Murchie, assistant medical director, values the partnerships the clinic has formed within the community through this funding. As CrossOver anticipates

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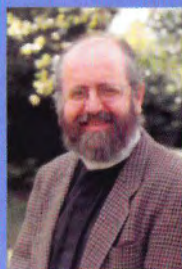
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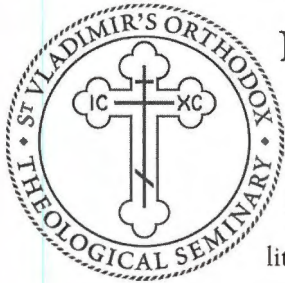
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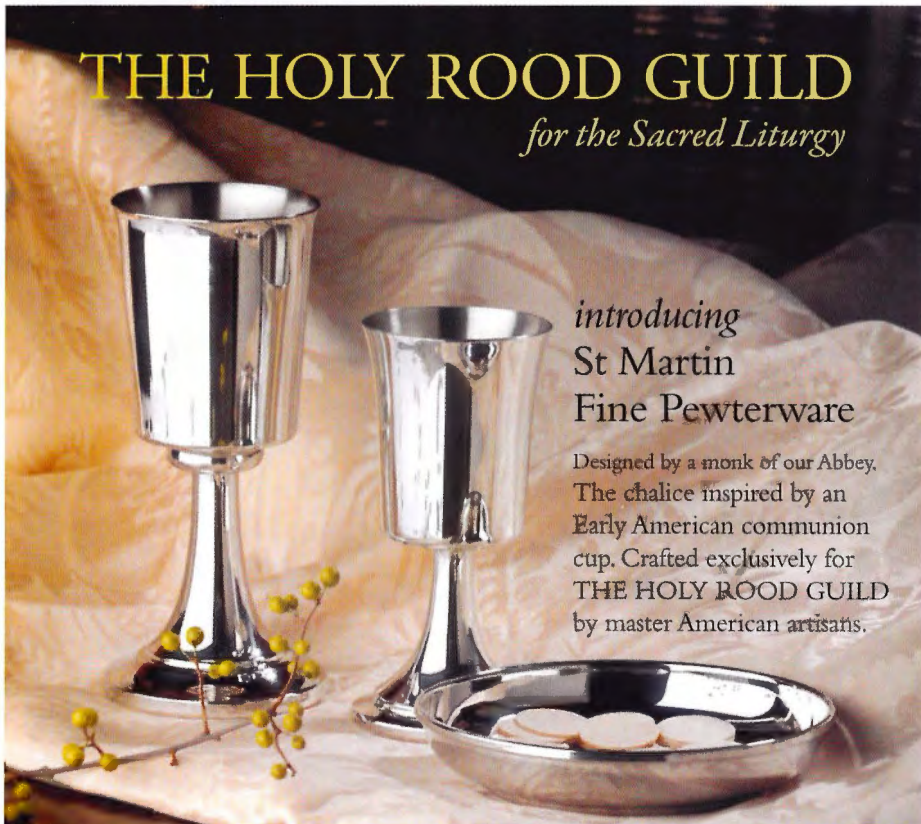
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Churches Reclaim Their Role in Healing

(Continued from previous page)

a growing need to provide care for those covered under the Affordable Care Act, its leaders have discussed seeking FQHC status.

Similarly, Inner City Health Center in Denver is funded by local foundations, churches, corporations, individuals, an occasional grant, and patient contributions. The clinic's model, CEO Kraig Burleson said, reflects its values of building relationships with the community and promoting dignity by asking patients to help pay for their medical care. Burleson says he appreciates that the clinic's sustainability does not depend on the government, but rather on community members and patients. Nevertheless, Burleson said the clinic would consider applying for FQHC status.

Inner City Health Center may have had a better chance of being granted FQHC status in 2010, when the Affordable Care Act allotted \$11 billion for the expansion of FQHCs. But Congress has yet to fund the bill, significantly restricting the number of new FQHCs and new access points for existing FQHCs. While 350 new sites were scheduled for approval in 2011, only 62 went through. Twenty of the clinics that applied for approval in 2011 were faith-based.

In the changing landscape of health care, Christian health care workers are calling on the church to provide patients with holistic care. Whether helped or hindered by reform legislation, leaders in Christian health care are convinced the movement will endure.

"Our mission overlaps with the government's mission; our mission just goes beyond theirs. If the federal government wants to help us do our mission, we're happy to have them do that," Noblett said. "If sometime they decide they won't allow us to, then we'll find another way to do it." ■

Lauren Anderson studies journalism at the University of Wisconsin.



Getting People Into the Story

ON NOT GETTING ANYTHING OUT OF SERMONS

By Joseph Mangina

This past summer I had an interesting email exchange with a theologian friend at another institution, someone I've known since our days together in graduate school. We got to talking about the state of contemporary preaching. My friend asked the arresting question: "How do we get preachers to get people into the story rather than trying to get something out of it?" How, in other words, do we convince seminarians, priests, and pastors that the Bible is not a resource to be accessed but a world to be entered into — that to ask the question of the Bible's "relevance" is to commit a terrific category error, since the Bible does not want to be relevant to our concerns, but to make *us* relevant to *its* concerns?

(Continued on next page)

Getting People Into the Story

(Continued from previous page)

My friend went on to say:

[One of our teachers] once told me that you can always tell which direction of interpretation is operative in any sermon you hear. And I would add (what he was too tactful to say) that the wrong direction of interpretation is unutterably boring. And further, in my experience, pastors (like everyone else) either “get” this or they don’t. So the pedagogy to instill this is going to have to aim at a kind of intellectual/theological conversion, a moment when people just “get it,” after which they have no interest in looking back.

He could not have been more right, first, about the “unutterably boring” character of much preaching. It is sad but true that a lot of contemporary preaching manages to be neither orthodox nor heretical, but simply mind-numbingly dull. The reason this is so, I think, is that our culture is already awash in self-help programs, so that when the preacher stands up and offers more of the same it is just not that interesting. What the pastor has to tell us we have already heard many times on Oprah.

Second, however, my friend was right that people either tend to grasp this point ... or they do not. The pragmatic (and unutterably boring) approach to preaching has the character of a “paradigm,” in the sense popularized by philosopher of science Thomas Kuhn. We cannot just think our way out of it, because it provides the very framework of our thinking. Preaching should be experiential, pragmatic, and purpose-driven. This thought is so deeply woven into the fabric of North American Christianity that we can hardly imagine it should be otherwise. The sermon must always have something useful in it, some moral or lesson that people can “take home with them.” What else would it be good for?

But now let us suppose that all this is deeply misguided. Imagine that we have caught a glimpse of another reality, another world. Suddenly we grasp that the Bible is not about human doings and human problems. It is not really about us at all, but about God. And because it is about God it has its own weird logic, expressed in a strange, wonderful vocabulary — words like election, creation, flesh, spirit, grace, law, apocalypse. Instead of just another self-help manual, the Bible offers us something far more

interesting — an account of *life*, the only life indeed that is worth having; life that comes from God and leads to God. Hearing of such a life, who would not be willing to surrender everything in exchange?

This is, to be sure, a theologian’s way of expressing the matter. To which the working priest or pastor may be forgiven for replying, “Yes, but does it *preach*?” True, the sermon is ultimately — is essentially — about God. But it is also spoken to the assembly and to the particular people within it. The preacher cannot simply dwell in the lectionary text, but must take the risk of interpreting the text for “Mrs. Murphy,” as the great Benedictine scholar Aidan Kavanaugh liked to put it. Kavanaugh was speaking of liturgy, but his counsel applies equally well to the sermon. If the sermon does not address



the needs of Mrs. Murphy, it is hard to see why we should even bother.

I will bend on this point, but I will not break. Yes, of course the text must be interpreted for the hearers. Yes, of course the preacher must venture into the world in front of the text, the world of *our* hopes, fears, desires, longings, and secret guilts. This is harder work than it sounds. There is a certain kind of “biblical preaching” that rests content with an easy, obvious paraphrase of Scripture; that takes no risks, and that therefore reaps few rewards. It is not simply that such a preacher has expounded the text but ignored the world, but *has not even expounded the text*. “Truth” in preaching is not just fidelity to the Bible, it is the two-edged sword of the Word disclosing how things really stand with us. To use technical language, there is no real *explicatio* or *meditatio* without *applicatio*.

All this is perfectly true. Awareness of context, knowledge of one’s hearers, a certain political and cultural sensitivity — all these are essential items in the preacher’s toolkit. Yet they are not the main thing. God is the main thing. God is what your congregation expects to hear from you, not your jokes or political commentary or stories about your children. I will even call Mrs. Murphy as my witness here. Aidan Kavanagh’s point about Mrs. Murphy was not, as we might think, that we should revise the liturgy to make her feel more at home. Quite the opposite: Mrs. Murphy knows what the liturgy is about — mystery, sacrifice, grace, God — far better than many a learned liturgist. The scholar wants the liturgy to be more user-friendly while Mrs. Murphy wants to adore the Trinity. We had better not, then, condescend to Mrs. Murphy.

The same thing applies to preaching. If we step into the pulpit worried about what the congregation or we ourselves can “get out of it,” the battle is already lost. As my friend put it, our primary task is to get *into* the story — the story of the God who creates from nothing and who justifies the ungodly. Fleming Rutledge has laid down the homiletical rule that God needs to be the subject of the verbs. The worry this evokes — that there will be nothing left for us to “do” — betrays a deep misunderstanding, for among the chief things God creates from nothing are empowered human agents. If we begin with God’s agency, then human agency will inevitably fol-

low, whereas the opposite is not the case. This is the very logic of divine election.

One easy way to make God disappear from a sermon is to focus on the gospel text for the day. I know this sounds strange, even blasphemous. Is not preaching about Jesus preaching about God? In principle, yes; in practice, often no. The problem is the use we make of the reading. Because the gospel comes in narrative form — generally some story concerning Jesus and his disciples — it is perilously easy to turn it into a moral or religious object lesson. Poor old Peter, wanting to build those booths for Elijah and Moses and Jesus! Doesn’t he know that eventually you have to come down off the mountaintop? The lesson here is “incarnate your faith in everyday life.” Dear misguided James and John, jostling for the best seats in the kingdom! Don’t they understand what Jesus had to say about humility? The lesson here is “be more humble” or “recognize God’s special love for the lowly.”

These things are true, of course. It is good to come down off the mountaintop, just as it is good to be hum-

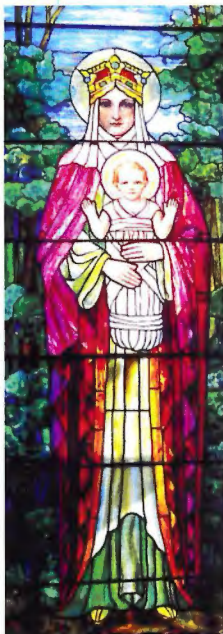
If we step into the pulpit worried about what the congregation or we ourselves can “get out of it,” the battle is already lost.

ble. Certainly part of what is going on in Matthew 20 (on James and John) is a commendation of humility. Yet to remain at this level is to rest content with mainly an image of Jesus as teacher. Surely the most interesting thing about both these passages is what *God* is doing *in* Jesus to enact the kingdom. The Transfiguration is not about mountaintop experiences, but about the Law and the Prophets bearing witness to the Son. Likewise, the reason James and John must learn

humility is because the Father hides his mysteries from the wise and understanding and reveals them to babes (Matt. 11:25). Humility is an eschatological virtue. Notice how the text from Matthew 20 opens up only when we situate it within the larger, apocalyptic story told by Matthew. “Moralizing” sermons are often the result of not having done our homework. Baffled as to what we should say, we default to exhortation. Be more humble! Have more faith! Love God better!

Well, we *should* love God better. But if it is really God we would love, we must be willing to move beyond our homiletical comfort zones. Two good rules of thumb might be: “Embrace the Old Testament” and “Dare to engage Paul.” In my experience, Anglican preachers tend to avoid the Old Testament, or touch on it only lightly, as background material for

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Getting People Into the Story

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the gospel. The reasons for this are obvious. The Old Testament is hard. It is even frightening. This is true despite the best efforts of our lectionary-makers, who, Mrs. Grundy-like, leave out the most offensive bits. All these are reasons to claim the Old Testament as our own. Many people who have been attending church for years really have no idea why these books are in our Bible. Ignoring Israel's Scriptures will simply confirm their worst suspicions. Moreover, the Old Testament is not just scary, it is majestic and glorious and not least exciting. The priest who decided to preach through the David cycle, say, would command the attention of the congregation. They would come back each Sunday just to find out what happens next.

The same is true of preaching on Paul, often ignored because he is seen as forbiddingly theological and abstract. Like the Old Testament, Paul is "difficult." But he is difficult because he is wrestling with the questions that really matter. Life, death; spirit, flesh; sin, grace; suffering, hope. And at the center of it all, a determination to "[know] nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Moreover, the rumors of Paul's supposed abstractness are greatly exaggerated. Paul hammered out his theology in response to the travails of his churches. He was an apostle and church-planter before he was a theologian. The letters to Galatia and Corinth, in particular, offer rich possibilities of exploring the nature of Christian mission to a pagan world, and in a situation where the church itself is badly divided. Does this sound familiar? In our current climate, nothing could be more "relevant" or "contextual" than a strong dose of Paul.

None of this is to say that we should not preach on the gospel

readings. We should. But without the Old Testament and Paul — as well as, of course, the other apostolic writings — we will stand little chance of understanding the Figure who confronts us in the gospels. I often think that the problem besetting our churches is not a low Christology but a shallow one. Jesus, it is said, shows us "what God is like." We are thus treated to an endless parade of sermons on the theme "God is love." True enough; we have this on apostolic warrant (1 John 4:8). Yet I fear that we fail to grasp the true import of this great saying. For the apostle goes on to say: "*In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins*" (1 John 4:10). This is deep Christology, secured by the active verbs *loves* and *sends*. Jesus here is more than just revealer of the loving attitude of a far-away deity. In the words of Austin Farrer, he is God's "self-enacted parable." And more even than parable, but the divine love poured out and embodied in a particular human life, Jesus of Nazareth, Love come dangerously close, God-under-the-skin.

What can we "get" out of such a story? Not very much, if what we are looking for is homely advice for getting through the day. The advice column in the newspaper will do for that. But everything, if what we are looking for is news about God. This is what the people in our congregations — it is what we ourselves — are hungry for. This hunger for the Word can be satisfied nowhere else. It is the great privilege of the Christian minister to help people get into the story, where they can be fed and perhaps feed others in turn. What a wonderful calling. What an extraordinary gift. ■

Joseph Mangina is professor of systematic theology at Wycliffe College, Toronto.



Covenants and Fragments

By Ephraim Radner

The recently disclosed rupture in the relationship of the Rwandan House of Bishops and bishops of the Anglican Mission in the Americas, although hardly yet resolved or completely transparent, illumines at least a couple of key elements about ecclesial existence, especially among Anglicans. I was never a supporter of the AMiA's formation, for mainly two reasons: it diluted traditional Anglican witness within North America and it provided a model of and stoked the dynamics for Anglican fragmentation around the world. But for all that, many of the AMiA's leaders have been people of enormous missionary commitment and skill, and the public dispute among their American and Rwandan leaders hardly does them the honor they deserve.

But what does the dispute illumine? First, it clarifies some of the perennial limitations of "strategizing" for the Church's "reform." These limitations, it needs to be said, afflict Christians of all theological commitments, not just the AMiA. And they do so precisely because strategizing reform is an inevitably political process that demands marshaling decision-making powers and, in the case of ecclesial recognition ("replacement" provinces, "pressures" on Canterbury, and the rest), persuading other such powers on one's behalf.

Politics may be both necessary in the Church and the potential place for the exercise of certain virtues, but it is in fact rarely the latter, and

because of this, the reality of the former is a burden to be borne rather than deliberately assumed, let alone constructed. Questions of authority, resources, and legal standing emerge as tools and objects of contest, and it is almost inevitable that instead of reform one finds the corruption of purpose and relationship.

The fact that money, jurisdiction, and threatened lawsuits are now part of the dispute is hardly a surprise: they are the natural result of politicizing the shape of Christian witness. North American Anglicanism's landscape is now littered with such examples. Non-corrupting reform within the Church comes from another source, surely, to be discovered on another path.

Thus, second, we can now see more clearly some of the alternative and contrasting "graces of Christian communion," to use Philip Turner's term, through which reform may indeed arise. It is telling that one justification for the AMiA's episcopal defection from its Rwandan connection is exactly the absence of a "covenantal" relationship, according to AMiA chairman Chuck Murphy: the agreement of connection was meant to be renewable yearly, if desired, and limited by various local purposes, and the breakability of the relationship was therefore always an intrinsic aspect of its character.

In his resignation letter to the Most



Rev. Onesphore Rwaje, Rwanda's archbishop, Murphy wrote that "there is no covenant" between the AMiA and Rwanda. Indeed. But for this reason, the characteristics of communion were themselves never woven into the expectations of a common life and points of accountability. For some Anglicans, of course, this is just what they would wish and expect of one another, and here some liberals and conservatives converge.

But the conflicts between the AMiA and Rwanda underscore why such wishes and expectations fall short of Christian unity in its evangelical depth and breadth. By the same token, they show how a covenantal relationship is not at all the same thing as a political one, and why the fears of such covenantal relationships in Christ are driven by political concerns more than anything.

If, for instance, the proposed Anglican Covenant fails for *political* reasons — if it is deemed unhelpful to the manipulative purposes of this or that church and her strategized pro-

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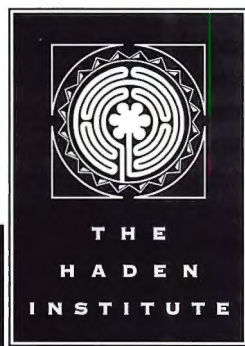
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Covenants and Fragments

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grams — that will be just as well; for the Covenant's purpose and potential, after all, lie elsewhere. The graces of Communion include just those fruits of the Spirit that build, renew, and restore the Church: faith, joy, patience, self-control, generosity. In most respects they stand to the side of strategized reform.

Liberal bloggers have already seized upon the AMiA's troubles with glee. But ecclesial *schadenfreude* is a dangerous temptation to feed. In this case, not only are the critics (all of us) ill-placed to cast stones; more important, the Church herself is only as strong as her weakest members.

There are probably ways to reintegrate North American Anglicanism, sensibly and faithfully, including the AMiA (and perhaps aspects of the Anglican Church in North America) within it; they include resettling the AMiA as a "missionary society" (if not quite in the way Murphy has proposed). There are many in the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion who may not wish to see an influx back into established structures (under, say, new Anglican versions of personal prelatures) of successfully mission-minded congregations and leaders with traditional theology working in North America. But what could be more exciting and ground-changing?

Still, any of this would have to be in a framework more supported by patience and generosity on the part of all parties, including the Episcopal Church, than one can reasonably expect, alas, at this stage. But one must not stop praying! Meanwhile, there is much grace to be had in the relationships we do in fact hold and within which we seek a renewal of our witness to Christ. ■

The Rev. Ephraim Radner, professor of historical theology at Wycliffe College, served on the Covenant Design Group and is a member of the Living Church Foundation.

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In his formal iconography Coelho mostly follows traditional Byzantine technique. He describes the work as a "constant struggle," both in painting and the temptation to "turn the symbol into a simulacrum." From this struggle the icon emerges as a source of divine light.

Coelho's icon of the Melanesian Brothers stands in Canterbury Cathedral's chapel of modern martyrs. His current project (donations welcome) is a large-scale reredos depicting the City of God at the Anglican parish of Christ the King in Rio de Janeiro's Cidade de Deus ("City of God") neighborhood.

Coelho is a candidate for holy orders in the Diocese of Rio de Janeiro and a geomatics engineer in urban planning. See his work at www.luizcoelho.com.



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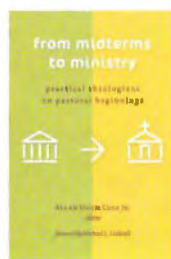
BOOKS

From Midterms to Ministry

Practical Theologians
on Pastoral Beginnings

Edited by **Allan Hugh Cole, Jr.** Eerdmans.
Pp. 348. \$24.

"Of making many books there is no end," says the Preacher (Eccl. 12:12). Academics and pastors fulfill this prophetic Scripture each year in part with books about themselves. This volume collects the essays of 24 pastors reflecting on their experience in congregational life. All but three of the essayists have returned to academics.



Their reflections on their entry into ordinary congregational life leapfrog from wonderful insights on preaching to terrible writing on theology and occasional extreme self-focus. Some essays are dotted with delightful anecdotes of how the authors encountered the world of ordinary church. A Presbyterian tells of introducing the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday and being screamed at for Romanism and, in the same breath and for the same reason, blamed for the parishioner's pending divorce.

Another essay, after a lengthy autobiographical review, so worries about "the pedagogues of formation and contextualization" that I struggled to finish it. Will Willimon's snapshot story on being told to buy land next to the bishop's house at the lake is priceless — an honest glimpse of the politics of many denominations.

Carol Schnaubl Schwitzer's superb essay on gossip, a pervasive church problem, is reason alone to buy the book. Another excellent essay is "The Meandering Ministry" by M. Craig Barnes. Barnes quotes Henri Nouwen: "If you say 'yes' to loving Jesus, it will mean meetings, meetings and meetings because the world likes meetings."

It is a mixed bag of a book. Half

the essays have good to excellent insights and speak of the richness of ordinary churches. The rest are sodden with concerns for relevance and reflect the dying of American mainstream Protestantism. A fiercer editor and more essays from active pastors might have moved the book from a jumble of good and bad to a great volume.

(The Rev. Canon) **V.R.T. Heard**
Canon for Church Planting
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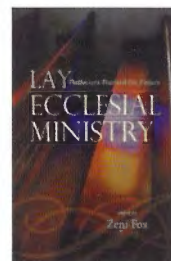
Lay Ecclesial Ministry

Pathways Toward the Future

Edited by **Zeni Fox.** Rowman & Littlefield.
Pp. 242. \$27.50

Lay Ecclesial Ministry is a collection of essays by a wide range of Roman Catholics — lay persons, nuns, ordained priests, even a bishop — aimed primarily at those involved or considering involvement in the various lay ministries that have evolved in recent decades. Two major factors contributed to increased lay ministry: the priest shortage and Vatican II's *Called and Gifted: Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity* (1965). *Called and Gifted* transformed laity from a "pray, pay, and obey" status to people whose education and talents empowered the church in its missions.

Zeni Fox, editor of this volume, is a professor of pastoral theology at Seaton Hall and a member of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops subcommittee charged with writing *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord* (completed 2005). Christians with traditions of lay ministries predating Vatican II may think this book simply follows in their wake. But that would be dismissive of theological reflections and described practices from another perspective that could enrich their own, especially in those parishes where, recognizing "the need for more services," leaders have created



vibrant outreach programs.

Co-Workers was the response of the USCCB to a national phenomenon, and *Lay Ecclesial Ministry* examines its development further according to the threefold task of “naming, claiming and sustaining” the ministry in whole and in its variations. The book is divided into four parts: a report of the response of the church in the United States from its incipient parish beginnings through its expansion on the diocesan and national levels and the evolution of lay ministry training in academia; an exploration of biblical and theological traditions; a focus on the spiritual formation of lay ministers; and a discussion of practical implications in *Co-Workers*.

As Edward Hahenberg points out in his essay, the wide range of ministries running from parish to diocese, to hospitals and universities (often chaplains are trained lay persons or nuns), has militated against easily claiming or sustaining the ministries. There is no set manner among parishes or dioceses on how ministerial offices and authorities are conferred or developed. Given that even within the more clearly defined ministry of the permanent diaconate such problems exist, it is anything but surprising in an even wider range of both administrative and liturgical functions.

Such complications are inevitable as new models of church life replace the more constrained perspectives of past centuries. Rather than becoming disheartened by the challenge, the authors are optimistic that they can be met.

Regina Bechtle’s essay examines how we can use the examples of the saints as they grappled with similar problems in their own times. Keeping one’s eye on the prize engenders hope in the evolution of a more unified community whose interior vigor and social outreach will serve as an evangelizing example in its own right to the rest of the world.

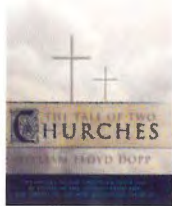
Charles Cassini
Miami Shores, Florida

We Can Do This

The Tale of Two Churches

By William Floyd Dopp. Trafford Press.
Pp. 140. \$9.95, paper.

Review by Bruce Robison



For those of us in parish ministry it’s just about impossible these days to get through our morning cornflakes without coming across yet one more survey demonstrating the futility of our endeavors.

We know the story all too well: aging and shrinking congregations, imploding endowments, crumbling buildings, and all around us a secular society self-reporting as “spiritual but not religious.”

Best-selling authors seize their 15 minutes of fame by proposing the latest magic elixir: one creative “new paradigm” after another. Meanwhile those of us hanging on within the institution seem counterintuitively to be devoting what little remains of our energy after a day of sermon preparation, budget committee meetings, youth group outings, hospital calls, and shut-in visitations to our increasingly intense internal theological battles — each of us apparently intent on sparing no cost to be at the helm when the ship finally gives up the ghost and sinks beneath the waves.

In the midst of all this, what’s remarkable and even fun about *The Tale of Two Churches* is that William Floyd Dopp still believes, really believes, that we can get it right. To paraphrase Mark Twain, Dopp would have us understand that the reports of the death of the parish church have been greatly exaggerated.

That’s not to say that Dopp has not read the same papers we have all been

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BOOKS

We Can Do This

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reading. He quotes extensively from the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life Survey, the Episcopal Faith Communities Today Survey, and all the rest. And he notes that you don't need to look far to find plenty of examples out there of parishes that have indeed lost their way.

Dopp calls these "Old Chapel Churches," or the "OCC." They are churches characterized by passivity, uncritical reliance on an inherited, Constantinian Christendom establishment status, tired formalism, declining interest — without energy, self-absorbed, focusing on their own survival, and ignoring the world around them. The community changes, the cultural tide seems to shift, and the neighborhood parish church seems helpless, floundering, remote, disengaged.

But in the summer of 2000 Dopp and his wife visited St. Andrew's Cathedral in Kisoro, Uganda, and what they saw and experienced there inspired his vision of what he calls the "Emerging Missionary Church," or the "EMC" — an "energized and growing" movement marked by a hopeful and evangelistic spirit and an authentic relevance in an increasingly non-Christian world.

That experience, half the world away, was a catalyst to help Dopp bring into focus what he had learned and attempted to put into action during several decades of parish and diocesan ministry.

Despite all the evidence, Dopp argues, congregational renewal really is not rocket science. But there seems to be a deficit of leadership. Looking back over mostly failed efforts to launch a "Decade of Evangelism" and one program after another to stimulate membership growth, Dopp sees more form than substance.

"The Episcopal Church has done very little to help the parish church; in fact, some of the programs have led to decline.

"Preoccupation with secular issues



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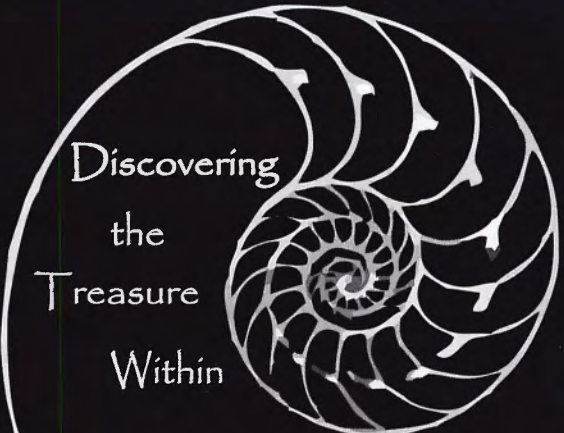
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Dopp argues that the key to missionary growth and vitality is “a motivated bunch of good Christians.”

and politics has dominated Episcopal national conventions and little is being done by church bishops to refocus the mission of the church,” he writes. “The church is in denial. I don’t believe church leaders aren’t concerned; I believe mission is just not their priority.”

Against this backdrop, Dopp simply and straightforwardly argues that the key to missionary growth and vitality is “a motivated bunch of good Christians” who will ask not what the church needs from the wide world in order to survive, but what God can give through the church for the survival of the world.

Dopp quotes Ralph Waldo Emerson: “Nothing great has ever been achieved without enthusiasm.”

In chapters on education, worship, service ministry, and evangelism, and

with particular examples and accessible, good-humored commentary drawn from his long experience in the church, Dopp sketches out straightforward and even homely examples of transformational ministry — all the Christ-centered, Spirit-led enthusiasm and power of the first Jerusalem Pentecost in a Vacation Bible School class, or at a coffee hour, or in a brief conversation with a man who stops in at the church to ask for directions to a nearby community center. The overarching thrust is the recovery and discovery of a Christ-centered, biblically informed missionary vocation, and the heart of an evangelist, in the ordinary patterns of congregational life.

“The church is not going to be dead,” Dopp assures us. “When things grow old, as even people do,

we must find newness. The wonder of the Resurrection is not only the promise of eternal life, but is also the promise of new life here and now. This is transformation.”

At the end of each chapter Dopp offers a set of questions designed for personal reflection and to spark discussion and to inspire new energy in parish study groups. His point and rallying call: *we can do this*.

“God is asking the church to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to people of our times,” Dopp says, reminding us that “if God is asking us to do something, it *is* possible.”

It happens all the time, and not just in East Africa. It’s something that can happen where we are.

The Rev. Bruce Robison is rector of St. Andrew’s Church, Pittsburgh.

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Basil Pulled No Punches

On the Human Condition

By **St. Basil the Great**. Translation and Introduction by **Nonna Verna Harrison**. Popular Patristics Series 30. St. Vladimir's Seminary. Pp. 126. \$16.

On Social Justice

By **St. Basil the Great**. Translation, Introduction, and Commentary by **C. Paul Schroeder**. Popular Patristics Series 38. St. Vladimir's Seminary. Pp. 112. \$15.

Review by Peter Eaton

Basil, called “the Great,” was born in about the year 330 in what is now Turkey into an important Christian family and became one of the most influential and creative theologians of the early Church. He died at a relatively young age in perhaps 379 as the bishop of Caesarea, worn out by

work and ascetic discipline. Basil was a bishop of focused action, a monastic of rigorous devotion, and a preacher and writer of remarkable breadth and imaginative power.

Such has Basil's influence been on the subsequent life and thought of the Church that it is hard to identify any one particular sphere as standing above the rest. He shaped the development of monastic life, mostly in the East, but also in the West. St. Benedict knew the debt he owed to his Greek forebear. Basil contributed significantly to the articulation of Nicene Trinitarian theology, and his treatise *On the Holy Spirit* remains a primary text for anyone who wishes to grasp the richness of fourth-century theological reflection about God.

Basil's address “To young men on Greek literature” is his judgment on the value of reading non-Christian classical literature, and along with his lifelong friend, Gregory of Nazianzus, he compiled an anthology of the works of Origen. Basil corresponded with people all over the Mediterranean world, and his homilies and lectures range across a broad spectrum.

Basil was well-known for his attention to the sick, the poor, and the disadvantaged of his diocese, and he kept both civic administrators and clergy accountable to their responsibilities to the less fortunate. The *Basileiados*, his vision of the “new city,” was a combination of what we



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Photo by Bill Brodhead

would now call social services for the poor, centered on a chapel and a residential community, and was among the first of what became a long tradition of Church-sponsored hospitals.

Basil shared with his fellow Capadocians, Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus, a distinctive concern for what Sister Nonna Verna Harrison calls “the theology of the human person,” and it is from this area of his reflection that she collects the texts that make up her excellent volume *On the Human Condition*.

Harrison gives us the two homilies *On the Origin of Humanity*, and the homilies *Explaining that God Is Not the Cause of Evil, Against Anger, On the Words “Be Attentive to Yourself,”*



Letter 233 to Bishop Amphilochius, and selections from the *Long Rule* or *Great Asceticon*. She acknowledges that the first two homilies may not be by Basil, but she is right to say that scholars “are largely agreed that

the thought that they express is that of Basil.” This is a common consideration in assessing early Christian literature, and does not devalue the testimony of these pseudonymous texts.

Of these selections, the homily on God and evil is the most difficult for the modern reader, and illustrates the gulf that can exist between our ancient companions in faith and us. Our worldview has changed, and we would explore and explain the matter differently. But equally remarkable is how clear so much of Basil’s writing remains. *Against Anger* is full of wisdom, and *On the Words: Be Attentive to Yourself* is a proper reminder that the “word of truth is hard to catch and is easily able to escape those who do not examine it attentively.” But, as always in patristic literature, attentiveness to the self has a more noble, indispensable purpose: “that you may be attentive to God.”

Patristic reflection on what it

means to be human stemmed directly from, and was intimately connected to, reflection on the nature and being of God. Those who think that patristic anthropology is simply an exercise in reframing a patriarchal narrative need only turn to the scintillating work of theologians like Elisabeth Behr-Sigel (in *The Ministry of Women in the Church*) to see how patristic anthropology can help us in our current

debate on the relation of humanity to God and the worth of women and men in society and Church.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu once famously said, “I am puzzled about which Bible people are reading when they suggest religion and politics don’t mix.” Basil would not have used these words, but he would have understood the meaning behind them. Basil not only gave away his

(Continued on next page)

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BOOKS

Basil Pulled No Punches

(Continued from previous page)

family fortune for the care of those in need; he considered it part of the bishop's responsibility to "stir up the conscience" of clergy and public officials alike. As Gregory Yona remarks in his foreword to Paul Schroeder's translations in *On Social Justice*, "Basil pulls no punches."

There are four genuine homilies in this invigorating collection: *To the Rich, I Will Tear Down My Barns*, *In Time of Famine and Drought*, and *Against Those Who Lend at Interest*. Schroeder also includes a related homily attributed to Basil, *On Mercy and Justice*.

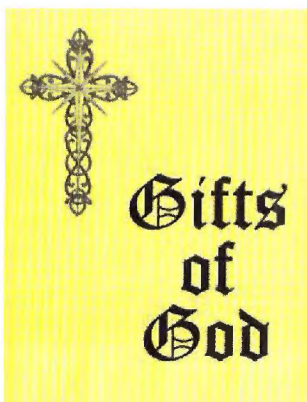
Along with the texts that are collected in Catharine Roth's contribution to the same Popular Patristics Series, *St. John Chrysostom On Wealth and Poverty*, we have a manifesto to support our contemporary Christian social action and to ground it in classical Christian thought. Given the forthrightness of Basil and John, who use language that can sound harsh even in our uncivil times, it is hard to blame the Church for what some see as our preoccupation with social ministry. No church that considers itself in living relationship to its patristic heritage can do otherwise than make the poor a priority and work to change the structures of society that trap people in poverty. There is help in Basil's homily *Against Those Who Lend at Interest* even for our current debate on payday lending!

Schroeder's introduction is a good primer. He sets Basil in context, and gives a useful summary of patristic understanding of that crucial text in Matthew's gospel: "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me" (19:21). Response to this text was not univocal then, any more than it is today. This text, though often ignored by many, was the cause of wide-ranging consternation in the early Church, and sparked

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by Patricia Swift

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Basil's writings provoke us to new thought and committed action in our own day.

the emergence of monasticism. And it has continued to be influential from time to time, inspiring people from St. Francis of Assisi to slum priests to modern missionaries.

Basil, Schroeder reminds us, advances the interpretation of this verse from the purely personal and individualistic, and makes it social. Basil understands the poor differently. No longer are the poor anonymous players in the salvation of an individual believer; Basil makes their plight real and concrete. If Schroeder's picture of the Basileia-dos seems a trifle idealized, nonetheless he makes the point clearly enough that Basil's thought and action, rooted in his understanding of human nature, emphasize that we are "social human beings," and incomplete apart from this divinely rooted human reality of relationship.

Basil lived in a world of thought and action quite different from our own, yet his writings provoke us to new thought and committed action in our own day. Harrison and Schroeder help Basil to speak clearly across the centuries. This is not an easy task, but it is a vital one, and they make it possible for us to work in concert with one who taught us that we are called in the Church not "primarily to a new charitable institution," but to something much more urgent and radical: "a new set of relationships."

For "it is not names that save us," Basil wrote to some monks under pressure in about 376, "but the choices we make and the true love we have for the One who made us." It has always been so.

Peter Eaton is dean of Saint John's Cathedral, Denver, and a member of the Episcopal Church's Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Inter-religious Relations.

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Un-silent Nights in Bethlehem

This is the first of two pieces on Israeli-Palestinian relations. THE LIVING CHURCH will publish a response by the Rt. Rev. Edward S. Little II in the January 15 issue.

By O.C. Edwards, Jr.

The Scottish painter David Roberts, whose 1839 lithographs of the Holy Land adorn guidebooks to this day, depicted Bethlehem as a small group of separated clusters of buildings in a landscape of arid hills. In those days before electrical power, the streets, such as they were, would of necessity have been dark, and the town likely would have known the deep and dreamless sleeps mentioned in “O Little Town of Bethlehem.”

Bethlehem is in a very different situation today. The residents allowed to work in Jerusalem or to leave for other purposes start assembling at the security wall as early as 2:30 a.m. so they can have their IDs checked and be permitted by the Uzi-armed guards to go about their business. Some will spend as many as five hours just traveling to and from their jobs, but they are the lucky ones: half of the population is unemployed.

Thus the three-story wall that imprisons their town, with its barbed wire on the top and regular watchtowers along the way, has become a symbol to the Palestinians in Bethlehem of all their hardships. On a large metal door near the Church of the Nativity, a painting shows Santa Claus in a tractor tearing down the wall.

Along with my wife, my brother, and a friend I visited Israel in September as a pilgrim, a historian, and

a tourist. We stayed in Jerusalem for two weeks at the guesthouse of St. George’s Cathedral. The warden of St. George’s College, the Rev. Heather Mueller, showed us one of the latest symbols of the wall.

It was a lovely olivewood crèche of what must have been a standard design, with one major difference. Between the kneeling Magi and the manger was a wall, obviously modeled after the one around Bethlehem. Nothing else I saw so poignantly epitomized the agony of the Palestinians as this modification of a traditional symbol.

Some Jews remained in Palestine all along, although the Romans banned their presence in Jerusalem after the Bar Kokhba rebellion (132-36). Some descendants of those who left began filtering back during the 15th century, fleeing from Christian persecution in Europe. Major return, however, only began with the Zionist movement under Theodor Herzl at the end of the 19th century. Yet a large majority of the population remained Arab until the time between the World Wars, when the number of Jews increased from one sixth to two-thirds that of the Arabs. By then refugees from the Holocaust began to pour in and that increased after the United Nations divided the Holy Land into an Arab and a Jewish state. The hostilities between the two groups that began immediately have continued intermittently ever since.

The tensions are heightened by traumas experienced on both sides. After seeing millions of their people slaughtered in the Holocaust, Jews who immigrated to the Holy Land were committed to preventing further persecution. The Palestinians,

on the other hand, did not see why the United Nations had any right to give away land that their families had owned and farmed for centuries. They believed it was still theirs and they wanted it back. While some Israelis and Palestinians work for peace, extremists on both sides would say what the third-

Each side is so locked into its own grievances that it is unable to see that there are two legitimate sides to the argument.

century theologian Tertullian believed the Roman Empire was saying to Christians: *Non licet esse vos* (“It is not lawful for you to exist,” “You have no right to be”). Some religiously observant Jews say God gave them the Holy Land in the Exodus, it has been theirs ever since, and they intend to keep it, while some Palestinians refuse to recognize the existence of Israel.

Each side is so locked into its own grievances that it is unable to see that there are two legitimate sides to the argument. Each side has done terrible things to the other. When one looks at the situation of the Bethlehem Palestinians, it is impossible not to sympathize with them,



Bethlehem wall O.C. Edwards photo

but they are not totally innocent victims. They have offered guerilla resistance, employing terrorist techniques like suicide bombing and considering any Israeli who enters their territory as a target for stoning or shooting. Indeed, Israelis say they erected the walls precisely to protect themselves from these attacks. The difference between the two sides, then, is not so much in morals as in having almost all of the power on one side.

The only hope is for the two sides

to make the kind of concessions to one another that can result in an agreement. Key to that agreement must be the concepts recommended by the Quartet for Middle East Peace (the United Nations, the United States, the European Union, and Russia). That agreement must be a two-state solution recognizing borders set in 1967.

But Christian answers to problems can never be just about what “they” should do; there have to be courses of action to which we com-

mit ourselves. Excellent ideas are available in Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori’s “Pastoral Letter on Israeli-Palestinian Peace” (bit.ly/rBTykr) and the Episcopal Public Policy Network’s action alerts (bit.ly/rAza2S). Pray for the peace of Jerusalem — and Bethlehem.

The Very Rev. O.C. Edwards, Jr., is former dean and president of Seabury-Western Theological Seminary.



Meeting of Isaac and Rebekah

Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione, 1640. The Hermitage, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation painting. Oil on canvas.

GUEST COLUMN

Star Trek, or Couples' Club?

By Lawrence N. Crumb

The late Bishop Donald H. Hallock of Milwaukee called it “the Star Trek liturgy,” but if he were alive today he might call it “the couples’ club liturgy.” I refer to Eucharistic Prayer C, as often expanded by adding the name of a Hebrew matriarch after that of each patriarch. Leaving aside the question of whether a priest has the authority to do that (at an informal midweek service I suppose one could do most anything and call it Rite III), there is the question of where to add names, if at all. I would prefer not to do so, but it could be done after the names of the three patriarchs. After all, “the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” is not only biblical but a very important biblical phrase, serving as one of the names of God, and thus a sacred part of the Jewish tradition.

To include it in our liturgy is to honor that tradition; to change it would seem to dishonor it.

I think the problem is that people see the names of the patriarchs and think they are being honored without the matriarchs who also deserve honor. In this context, however, it is not Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who are being honored but the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the heritage that we share with our Jewish brothers and sisters. It may be that the passage was well-intentioned at the time of writing but does not work as intended in today’s climate.

I am certainly in favor of honoring the matriarchs when it is appropriate to do so (for example, when they are mentioned in the first lesson), and there is a provision for doing so in the conclusion to Prayers B and D; it could also be done in a collect

after the intercessions. With so many rites floating around, it seems best to respect the integrity of each, using it as written and authorized. Eucharistic Prayer 4 in the *Canadian Book of Alternative Services* (1985) begins

People see the names of the patriarchs and think they are being honored without the matriarchs who also deserve honor.

like our Prayer C, but continues very differently after the Words of Institution, with no personal names. This may be where we need to end up.

There is, however, a place where it is appropriate to speak of the patriarchal couples, and with a long Anglican precedent. All English prayer books, from 1549 through

With so many rites floating around, it seems best to respect the integrity of each, using it as written and authorized.

1662, have a prayer in the marriage service that mentions Isaac and Rebekah. There is also a prayer in 1552 through 1662 that mentions Abraham and Sarah. (The same prayer is in 1549, but names Tobias and his Sarah.)

Abraham and Sarah never made it into the American book but Isaac and Rebekah did — until 1928, when they were dropped on the ground that we are not sure their marriage was happy. No later rites in England, including the proposed book of 1928, have these names, but *An Australian Prayer Book* (1978) mentions that Isaac and Rebecca “lived faithfully together” and, after invoking the “God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob,” asks the Father to “bless them with the blessing you sent on Abraham and Sarah.” *A Prayer Book for Australia* (1999),

without the threefold invocation, offers this: “God of Abraham and Sarah, bless these your servants and sow the seed of eternal life in their hearts.” Jacob is a problem, since he had two wives. The story of Rachel is more romantic, but Leah is the wife who bore him six sons, including Judah, the ancestor of Jesus, and Dinah, who may have been his only daughter.

The alternate rites that have come out of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music (of which there will no doubt be more) have the advantage of guidance from liturgical experts and critical review by a broad-based panel of representative church members. This is very different from unilateral revisions at the local level by those who may have neither the expertise nor the authority to do so. The Anglican temptation

to liturgical anarchy was satirized many years ago by S.J. Forrest, vicar of Leighton Buzzard, England, in such poems as “What’s the Use?” (in his book of that title [1955]) and “Quasimodo” (in his *Orders in Orbit* [1962]). “Quasimodo,” inspired by a parish priest’s stated intention “to keep the Sunday after Corpus Christi as of a quasi-octave,” ended with the prediction that

Experimental liturgy
Shall never be absurd,
If *quasi* be allowed to stay
The operative word.
And reconciling opposites
Would be a slender hope,
Without the parish clergyman
Who is a quasi-pope.

The Rev. Lawrence N. Crumb is priest-in-charge, St. Andrew’s, Cottage Grove, Oregon.



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Application Deadline: January 9, 2012



A Better Advent

I write as the founder (2005) and convener of the Advent Project Seminar in the North American Academy of Liturgy and in response to the article "Lessons & Carols as Anglican Treasure" [TLC, Dec. 4].

Bishop Daniel H. Martins precisely identifies the problem that exists between our surrounding society's ever-expanding Christmas culture and the Church's attempt to observe Advent in an appropriate manner. In fact, the Church lost Advent to that Christmas culture long ago and has since been complicitly involved in losing for itself

the primary focus of the season, namely, participating in the manifestation and awaiting fulfillment of the cosmic implications of God's reign as established in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In other words, eschatology not incarnation is the primary focus of the season.

The suggested solution of a blended Advent and Christmas Lessons and Carols on the earliest weekend of December is, however, a case in point rather than a way forward in the face of the problem. Such a hybrid in effect limits the eschatological focus of Advent to

one half of one service extremely early in an already truncated four-week season (it once was longer and still is among the Orthodox).

For our culture (insofar as it even cares), this reduction leaves Advent unchallenging and innocuously acceptable as a countdown to Christmas. But for the Church itself, the season then becomes merely a ramp-up to Christmas, the massive evidence of the liturgy (collects, lections, proper preface) to the contrary notwithstanding.

For a better alternative that proposes a more authentic observance of an expanded Advent with a focus on the eschatological and what that might mean not only for the Church's (not the culture's) Christmas season but also for the entire liturgical year, I invite readers of THE LIVING CHURCH to visit our website at www.theadventproject.org.
(The Very Rev.) William H. Petersen
Emeritus dean and professor
Bexley Hall Seminary

Persistence of Differences

I have read and re-read "The Persistence of Memory" [TLC, Dec. 4.] in an effort to decide which of the three stances the writers have posited is best. Secession was never a consideration for me.

On the first reading I opted for Accommodation, in part influenced by William Alexander, Archbishop of Armagh. Upon my third reading of this excellent article, I opted for Witness, which really I have been doing ever since I began subscribing to TLC in March 2010. So great has

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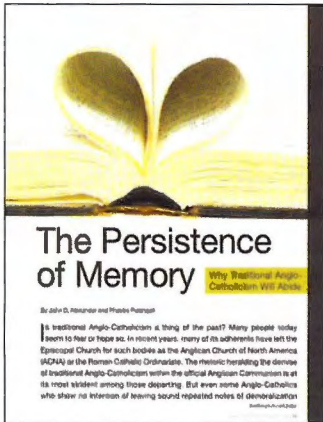
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We need to pray for the Holy Father, and we need to look past 19th-century ceremonialist controversies as viewed from romanticized Oxford towers.

been my desire to see a Church united worldwide that, in my 88 years, I have attended services in countless churches of different beliefs, races and creeds.

Yes, there will be tension and differences of opinion ahead, as now, but surely we can handle them with civility, respect and understanding in deference to our love of God and, more especially, his love for us.

*Ruth M. Gill
Bradenton, Florida*

John Alexander and Phoebe Pettingell's essay concludes: "Anglo-Catholicism will continue to emerge in each generation as an abiding — and often transforming — feature of the total Anglican landscape." For me there's a fourth option: what Horton Davies calls "papal Anglicanism."

In *The Making of the Restoration Settlement*, Robert Bosher dealt comprehensively with issues of which the lives and challenges of Keble, Pusey and Newman are in logical trajectory, but in no real sense the primary causes or even metonymms for mid-Victorian epiphenomena that produced, say,

the Assize Sermon, the Camden Society, or the Tractarians.

The fact is Continental Catholicism was destroyed by Napoleon, but the Catholic faith survived in England (with no help from the Jesuits). We need to pray for the Holy Father, and we need to look past 19th-century ceremonialist controversies as viewed from romanticized Oxford towers.

*(The Rev.) Dave Langdon
Parchman, Mississippi*

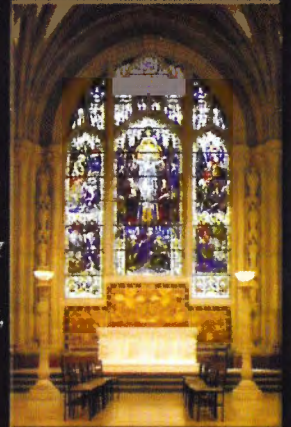
I do not understand the claim in "The Persistence of Memory" that the ordination of women is a "narrowly defined issue" which "changes from generation to generation."

It has only changed once and is the principal reason we have gone from the church we had 50 years ago to the church we have today. It is still my idea that God made men and women differently. Interchanging them (and now approving of homosexuality) is not a "narrow issue" but one that is the ruination of our church as we know it.

*David M. Bull, Jr.
Alva, Florida*

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Leaving and Loving

With half-closed eyes the monk has retreated into prayer, unplugged the world, killing its worldly noise. He breathes a breath of life in and out, slowly, with all the purpose of a sleeping dog. What restfulness. Oh that we could all leave the world. How unprofitable all the buzzing of the crowd. Beware of the Scribes and the Pharisees. Throw your TV set in the trash. Let us set out for a lonely place and smoke the fresh air and eat rattlesnakes roasted over juniper branches. Let us breathe the biting air.

As long as the world turns, there will always be those who would rather die with Christ now than tolerate two more minutes of worldly tedium. Even those who would rather not — the life-lovers, the affirmers, the optimists, the ones sitting in the bars talking to girls: Do they not at least hear the haunting wind, the inviting voice, “Come get buried in baptism for good”? It is finished.

Come to me all who labor and are heavy laden. Come. Let the dead bury the dead. Is this a cruel departure, this rejection of the world? No. A sixth-century iconic Jesus has awoken from his inner prayer. With gaping walnut-shaped eyes he looks out over the world. He is not of this world. He does not recycle the world's verbiage and he declines all its addictions. He is free. Out of those eyes pours a river of love. His very name means “Savior,” saving us from the world and for the world. He makes us adopted sons and daughters, pours his living Spirit into our hearts, and invites us to give prayer a chance. Say Abba to the wind and sky, say Abba to the naked trees, say Abba in your secret room. Be close to your heavenly father in everything and wherever you walk.

Jesus has a thousand shining

faces. He shines over his people, he blesses and keeps, and delivers a solemn peace. He writes one of his given names into our hearts: God with us.

St. Luke's account of Jesus' arrival is the most well known. It gives us at least two ways to consider what new life in him entails. “The shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’” Thus they move, going to Jesus. They leave what they were doing for him. In just this way every disciple is asked to leave the world, utterly and completely, for Jesus' sake. There is another character in our tale who doesn't leave, the young girl who has nowhere to go in search of this thing, the mystery in her womb, the child upon her breast. Once again, Luke tells us she was thinking, “conserving each of these words and gathering them into her heart.”

So Luke gives us a program. Leave the world like a Franciscan lunatic, run over the snow in your bare feet. Get thee to a nunnery where the holy child rests. Move out of the world and into Christ. He also suggests, however, that we not move at all. Conserve each word with exegetical exactness. Let the sharp sword of Scripture open your dry heart. Jesus wants heart and blood, bone and tissue. He wants to be where you are.

Look It Up

Read Luke 2:19. Don't move. Let the Word adhere to your heart.

Think About It

Go with God, provided you recall that you could not go but for the convenient trick that God is already with you.

The Wind and the Word

The Holy Spirit has made a prodigious comeback in recent years. We live by the Spirit, discern by the Spirit, are led by the Spirit, and even, it seems, disagree by the Spirit. For the Spirit is said to be speaking on both sides of any contested issue. Part of the problem is the very fact of talking about spirit or wind. It is quite hard to pin down, and remained so, as far as definitions are concerned, for a considerable period of time. The Council of Nicaea simply said, "We believe in the Holy Spirit."

The Genesis story tells us that the wind is *from God*. The wind is not created by God, for the wind is in the beginning. Thus the wind is God in creative action. God is not just wind but word. Together wind and word call out to make light, to order the light as distinct from darkness, to give evenings and mornings to the whole of the created world. Perfect freedom and perfect order are the hallmarks of this action. The wind is free and the word is precise. Here we have the suggestion that we who live by the Spirit may drift like vagabonds, packing a providential map as our only game plan. Where would you go if the Spirit pushed you? On the other hand, the Spirit is not antithetical to purposeful word. The word is effectual and firm.

Speaking the truth about the Spirit of God will always require a delicate balance between what is fluid and what is firm, what is charismatic and what is definite and fixed. Do not quench the Spirit! Test every spirit!

St. Paul finds the Ephesians entirely bereft of Spirit. They had become believers but missed out on the secret baptism of the Spirit. They say, "We have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." This is an unacceptable deprivation, for the Christian life is a life in the Spirit of Christ. So Paul baptized them in the name of the Lord Jesus, and then, by

the laying on of hands, the Holy Spirit came upon them. They spoke in tongues and prophesied. Enthusiasm is a dangerous thing, to be sure, but not to have any is worse still. (Oh, you secret charismatics. You keep showing yourselves, telling me in shy whispers that the Spirit gurgles in you with a foreign tongue. Rave on, oh glossolalia.)

In St. Mark's account of Jesus' baptism there is a kind of private revelation, a divine voice that John may not hear. Ascending from the waters, Jesus sees the heavens rent and the Spirit come like a bird to rest upon him. He hears a voice addressed to himself alone. "You are my Son, the beloved, in whom I am forever pleased." But since Christ is never separated from his body, it is a word to all who are baptized in his name.

The Spirit moves us, but not without *purposeful word*. The Spirit unties the tongue for eloquence and secret speech. The Spirit makes us sons and daughters of God, all of which may be affirmed without the folly and immaturity of blaming the Spirit for personal opinions and shoddy plans. As for being led by the Spirit into all truth: take the long view, think of the Grand Canyon, say the words "2.9 billion years ago" and be a bit doubtful that you are always on the winning side.

Look It Up

Read Mark 1:7,8. Get two baptisms for the price of one dipping: *paenitentia in remissionem peccatorum et Spiritus Sanctus* (repentance for the remission of sins and the Holy Spirit).

Think About It

"The mind is so unburdened by the weights of sin and passion as to be restored (by Spirit) to its natural buoyancy" (Cassian, Conference IX). Float.



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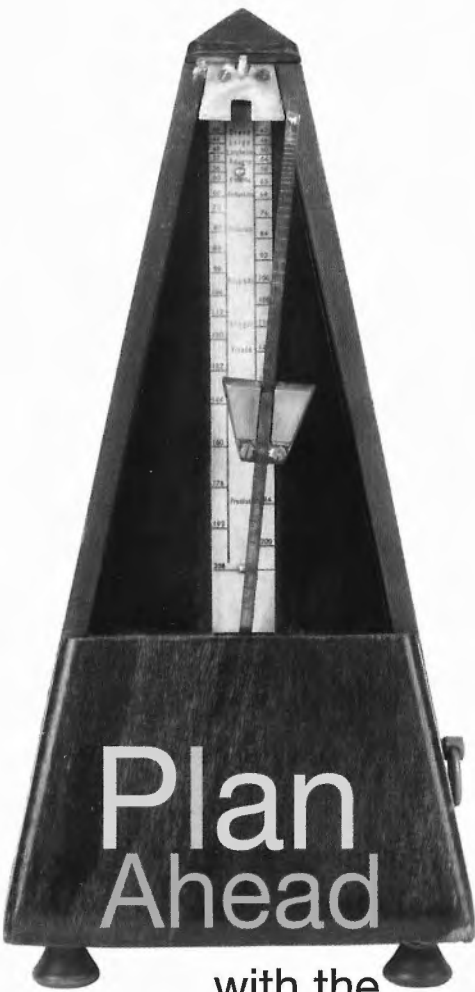
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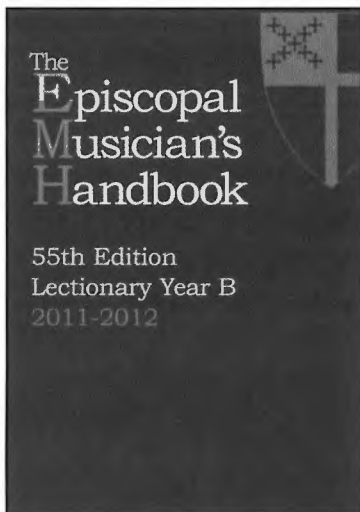


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The Rev. **A. William Phillips** is priest-in-residence at St. Paul's, 101 E Vermilion Street, Abbeville, LA 70510.

The Rev. **Jeff Queen** is priest-in-charge of St. Andrew's, 3 Chalfonte Pl., Ft. Thomas, KY 41075.

The Rev. **Donna Reidt** is priest-in-partnership at St. Mary's, P.O. Box 1366, Wilmington, VT 05363.

The Rev. **C. Jonathan Roberts** is rector of Grace, 405 Glenmar Ave., Monroe, LA 71201.

The Rev. **Michael Way** is priest-in-charge of Christ Church, 321 West Ave., Red Wing, MN 55066.

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Resignations

The Rev. **James G. Benbrook**, as rector of Redeemer, Ruston, LA.

Retirements

The Rev. **Wayne H. Carlson**, as rector of Holy Family, Park Forest, IL. He is living temporarily in Fresno, CA, with plans to move to Eastport, NY.

The Rev. **Denis Ford**, as vicar of St. Paul's, Montrose, CO.

The Rev. **George Hill**, as rector of St. Barnabas', Cincinnati, OH.

The Rev. **Harold Warren**, as rector of St. Luke's, Fort Collins, CO.

Deaths

The Rev. **Ralph E. Merrill** died Nov. 21 in New London, CT. He was 79.

Born in Thompsonville, CT, he was a graduate of Trinity College and General Theological Seminary. He was ordained deacon in 1956 and priest in 1957. Fr. Merrill served congregations in the Diocese of Connecticut for all his vocation. He was curate, St. Mark's, New Britain, 1956-60; rector, St. Paul's, Huntington, 1960-74; archdeacon of the diocese, 1961-73; rector, St. James's, New London, 1974-95; and a member of the Commission on Ministry, 1979-86. While serving in New London, Fr.

Merrill cofounded the Covenant Shelter, which still serves the city's homeless population. He retired from St. James's in 1995, was named its rector in 1999, and attended St. John's, Niantic. When not traveling with his wife, he volunteered at the New London Information Trolley. He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Audrey; his sister, Anne Larson of Somers; three children, Ellen, Thomas, and Sarah; and three grandchildren.

The Rev. **William N. Penfield**, long-time executive director of the Society for the Increase of the Ministry, died Oct. 28 in Torrington, CT. He was 87.

Fr. Penfield, a veteran of World War II, was a graduate of Hobart College and of General Theological Seminary. He was ordained deacon and priest in 1952. He completed a master's degree of sacred theology at General in 1975, and was a General Seminary trustee in 1978-84. He was an assistant at Christ Church, Newark, NJ, 1952; rector and headmaster at St. Bernard's Lower School, Gladstone, NJ, 1953-54; teacher, organist and choirmaster at Kent School, Kent, CT, 1954-63; rector, Good Shepherd, Hartford, 1964-65; member of the Diocese of Connecticut's Board of Examining Chaplains, 1964-68; executive director, Episcopal Metropolitan Mission, Hartford, 1965-68; coordinator of urban ministry, Diocese of Connecticut, 1968-73; chaplain to diocesan clergy, 1975-83; assistant, Bethesda-by-the-Sea, Palm Beach, FL, 1983-90; and executive director, Society for the Increase of the Ministry, 1991-2002. Fr. Penfield is survived by his wife, Meredith; son, Nicholas; daughter, Sarah; and brother, Walter.

Other deaths as reported by the Church Pension Fund:

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William Forbes	95	Mount Vernon, WA
James A. Forrest	87	Pittsburgh, PA
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The Rev. Andrew J. W. Mullins www.epiphanynyc.org
Sun 8:30, 11, 6

CHARLESTON, SC

CHURCH OF THE HOLY COMMUNION 218 Ashley Ave. (843) 722-2024
www.holycomm.org office@holycomm.org
The Rev. Dow Sanderson, r; the Rev. Dan Clarke, c; the Rev. Patrick Allen, assoc
Sun Mass 8 (Low) 10:30 (Solemn High)

NORTH AUGUSTA, SC

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY 160 Merovan Dr.; 29860
www.holytrinityna.org (803) 341-0075
Sun Eu 10

DALLAS, TX

CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION 3966 McKinney Ave. (216) 521-5101
Website: www.incarnation.org
The Rt. Rev. Anthony Burton
Sun 7:30, 9, 11:15, 5:30

MILWAUKEE, WI

ALL SAINTS' CATHEDRAL (414) 271-7719
818 E. Juneau Ave. www.ascathedral.org
Sun Masses 8, 10 (Sung), Daily Mass, MP & EP as posted

LUTHERAN

MOJAVE, CA

HOPE & RESURRECTION CHURCHES K and Inyo Sts. 1 block east of Carl's Jr. (909) 989-3317
The Rev. William R. Hampton, STS
Sun Eu 9

CHURCH DIRECTORY KEY Light face type denotes AM, bold face PM; add, address; anno, announced; A-C, Ante-Communion; appt., appointment; B, Benediction; C, Confessions; Cho, Choral; Ch S, Church School; c, curate; d, deacon, d.r.e., director of religious education; EP, Evening Prayer; Eu, Eucharist; Ev, Evensong; ex, except; 1S, 1st Sunday; hol, holiday; HC, Holy Communion; HD, Holy Days; HS, Healing Service; HU, Holy Unction; Instr, instructions; Int, Intercessions; LOH, Laying On of Hands; Lit, Litany; Mat, Matins; MP, Morning Prayer; P, Penance; r, rector; r-em, rector emeritus; Ser, Sermon; Sol, Solemn; Sta, Stations; V, Vespers; v, vicar; YPF, Young People's Fellowship. A/C, air-conditioned; H/A, handicapped accessible.

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