

Liturgical Arts Issue

September 23, 2012

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*Sic et Non:*

A conversation on same-sex blessings



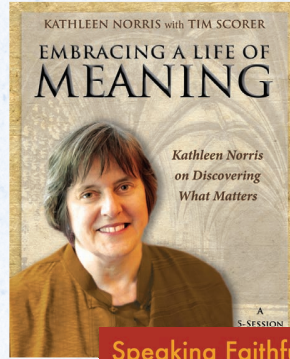
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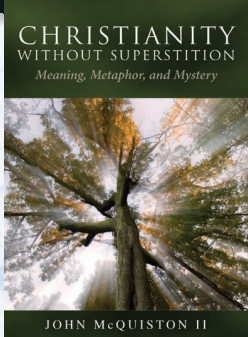


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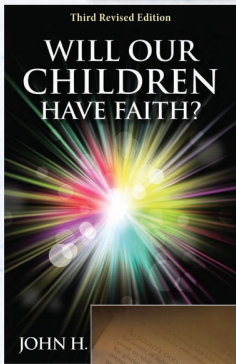


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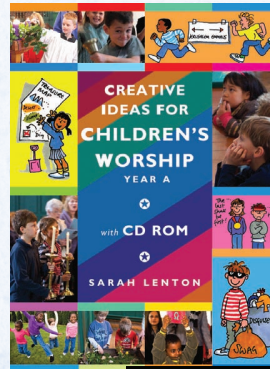
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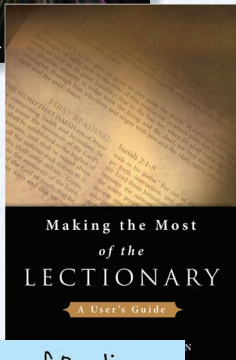
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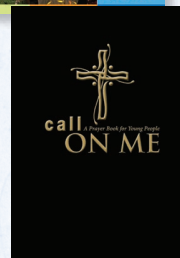
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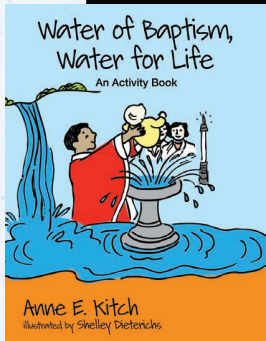
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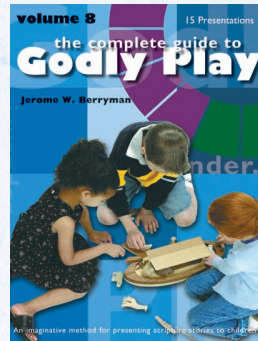
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# THE LIVING CHURCH

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## Blessings vs. Weddings?

“Perhaps because the rite assumes sexual intimacy it strives to imitate a wedding without calling the relationship a marriage.”

—The Very Rev. Jean McCurdy Meade (p. 17)

“There is nothing all that radical about recognizing and blessing states of life other than Holy Matrimony.” —Steven Horst (p. 20)

“Either the same-sex unions we are talking about are sacramental, Christian marriages, or the Church has no business blessing them.”

—The Rev. R. William Carroll (p. 22)



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We are grateful to St. Martin's Church, Houston [p. 29], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.

# A Softer Spotlight on New Hampshire

William Marot could not see or hear well enough to capture every ceremonial detail when 1,300 gathered in Concord, New Hampshire, Aug. 4 to consecrate the successor to the Rt. Rev. Gene Robinson. But a few missed moments did not dampen his excitement.

The 77-year-old Episcopalian from Peterborough had only good things to say about Bishop Robinson, who will retire Jan. 4. But he noted that some in the diocese think Robinson spent too much time championing gay rights nationwide, and they're ready for more locally focused leadership from the Rt. Rev. A. Robert Hirschfeld.

"He's going to be great," said Marot, a member of All Saints Church in Peterborough. "He said if there's a problem in any parish, he'll go down there and fix it."

Hirschfeld, 51, will serve as bishop coadjutor until January, when he will succeed Robinson as bishop. That gives him five months to shift from his prior role as rector of Grace Church in Amherst, Massachusetts, to lead a diocese with 47 parishes, 10,000 baptized members and real challenges unrelated to sexuality.

Hirschfeld's consecration had none of the tension that marked Robinson's in 2003, when bomb sweeps and bulletproof vests were deemed necessary precautions. But the day's sermon made clear that the diocese, in selecting Hirschfeld, has not tired of taking risks.

"I've heard some people say that Rob is a safe choice for the next bishop of New Hampshire," said the Rev. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, priest associate at Grace Church Amherst, as chuckles rose from the assembly. "He's white. He's a man. He's straight. You might expect someone like that to be bland, timid, elitist. ...



Bishop Hirschfeld and his family at the service of consecration in Concord.

Duane Dale photo

Well, I've known and worked with Rob for a good long while, and I have to say: he's not safe."

The people responded with more laughter, cheers and applause.

In Amherst, Hirschfeld gained national attention by leading a "marriage fast" in 2007. His church refused to host any weddings as long as the Episcopal Church prohibited blessings for same-sex couples. This year's General Convention approved a liturgy for same-sex blessings, which priests may use with a bishop's permission.

New Hampshire Episcopalians seem accustomed to activism from the top. After a decade in the limelight that came with having a gay bishop, the Diocese of New Hampshire is not crying out for healing or conflict resolution, according to the committee that recruited Hirschfeld.

"There never was a lot of tension in the diocese" about welcoming an openly gay bishop, said Margaret Porter, vice chair of the bishop search committee. "The controversy

was mostly outside the borders of this diocese and this state."

Still, Hirschfeld recognizes a pent-up hunger among New Hampshire's parishes for a bishop who, as their shepherd, will attend primarily to their pastoral needs and help them grow healthy congregations.

"It was very clear in the search profile that they've had to grow accustomed to sharing their bishop with the rest of the world [because] he's so much in demand," Hirschfeld said. "There's been some expense to that. ... I will not be as much in demand. I don't really like to fly. My role will be to be the pastor of this diocese."

Hirschfeld and his flock have their work cut out for them. The Gallup Poll classifies only 23 percent of New Hampshire residents as "very religious." New Hampshire and Vermont are tied for least religious state in the union. Average Sunday attendance dropped 20 percent in the Diocese of New Hampshire from 2000 through 2010. The diocese saw

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a one-year, one-percent increase in average Sunday attendance in 2010.

Hirschfeld brings a record of working with teenagers and young adults. He's been a vice chaplain at the University of Connecticut, and his parish ministry skills took root in the college towns of Amherst and New Haven.

Still, he does not purport to be an expert. He plans to listen, observe where the Holy Spirit is invigorating discipleship in New Hampshire and encourage the faithful to follow.

"The churches and the pews have been emptying, but they're starting to come back," Hirschfeld said. "Maybe not on Sunday morning, but I see people coming together for prayer groups, for Bible study, for partnering together to serve those who are most at risk in our society. When you look at those metrics, the church is very alive."

When Robinson leaves for Washington, D.C., in January, New Hampshire may go back to being one of the less prominent, less visible dioceses in the Episcopal Church. For parishioners and clergy here, that will be just fine.

"It was part of our call" to share Bishop Robinson with the world, said the Rev. Fran Gardner-Smith, rector of St. Barnabas Church in Berlin. "What we're excited about with Rob is that he will be here and be present with us."

*G. Jeffrey MacDonald*

## Hospitality in Tampa

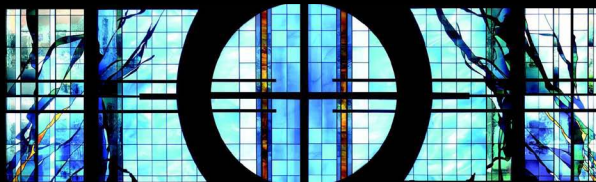
In early September the Diocese of Southwest Florida was "welcoming the elephants" to Tampa, as the Rt. Rev. Dabney T. Smith put it, opening its doors to participants in the week-long Republican National Convention.

Bishop Smith told TLC that welcoming visitors represents the "church in action" and reflects "our

(Continued on next page)

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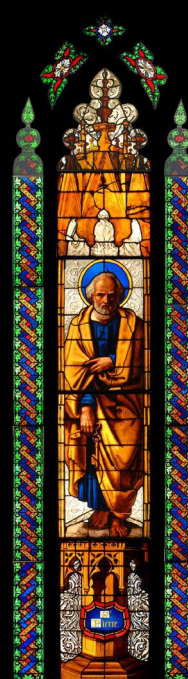
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Edited by  
DAVID R. CONTOSTA

## This Far by Faith

TRADITION  
and  
CHANGE  
in the  
EPISCOPAL  
DIOCESE  
of  
PENNSYLVANIA

## This Far by Faith

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Edited by David R. Contosta

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sense of God's mission to the world." He has said half-jokingly that the Episcopal Church has welcomed elephants to Florida before, noting that for decades it offered counsel and blessings to clowns, acrobats, lion tamers and sword swallows from the wintering Ringling Brothers Circus.

One of Tampa's most historic churches — St. Andrew's, built in 1904 — not only extended its opening hours for the benefit of people seeking solace during the convention but also made its parish hall available to members of the Tampa police force to rest while patrolling just blocks from the convention site.

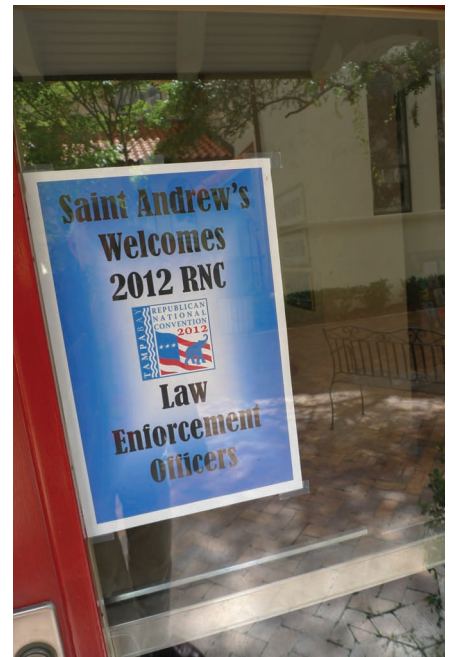
The Rev. John Reese, rector of St. Andrew's, told TLC that the idea to open the parish hall to the officers on break came from the police department. "And we were more than happy to accommodate them," he said.

Other Episcopal churches in downtown Tampa, including St. James House of Prayer and St. John's, also opened their doors to visiting RNC delegates, guests, journalists and protesters, holding noon-day prayers and regular services of Holy Eucharist throughout the week.

The 76 congregations of the southwest Florida diocese — in beachside and downtown churches from Tampa and St. Petersburg to Fort Myers, Naples and Sarasota — have a history of welcoming visitors, including "snowbirds" from Canada and transplants to Florida from countries as diverse as the United Kingdom, Jamaica, Nigeria, Belize, the Bahamas, Trinidad and South Africa.

About 1,000 conservative Christians used the occasion of the convention Aug. 27-30 to protest what they consider the Obama administration's "war on religion."

Ralph Reed, founder and CEO of the Faith and Freedom Coalition, which hosted the two-hour gathering at a Tampa theater Aug. 26, said



St. Andrew's, Tampa, provided a resting place for law enforcement officers.

the Church has "allowed this to happen," noting that 17 million evangelical Christians did not vote in 2008.

"I vowed that after the 2008 elections ... that was never going to happen again," he said. He predicted that the newly energized Christian right would propel Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney to victory in November.

Speakers at the rally also included former House speaker and GOP presidential candidate New Gingrich. "I'm delighted that [Romney] has a faith, and I'm delighted that it matters to him," Gingrich said. "That's a big improvement amongst our left-wing secular elites." He also accused Obama of being "the most extreme, pro-abortion president in U.S. history," saying that he was a "direct threat to the survival of the country I grew up in."

Other speakers blamed the president for the country's high unemployment rate and moral decay and the rise of radical Islam in the Arab world.

For his part, Bishop Smith has sought to offer a message of hope and reconciliation, writing in a recent blog, for instance, that Christian churches serve as "common ground where red-state and blue-state people come together, put away differences and ... drink out of



the same cup, sacramentally and literally.”

“It’s this nonpartisan role where the church needs to continue to assert itself, and remind the national community that the church is needed to do the work of Christ, which includes prayer and protection for our government and people,” he wrote, adding that the Episcopal Church has a long tradition of transcending politics through the Book of Common Prayer.

He said that a joint prayer letter signed by the clergy of St. Andrew’s and St. John’s, among others, which was published in leading newspapers, welcomed those who had come to Tampa for the Republican convention, as well as those who will attend the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., next week.

“[The document] encourages prayers for the citizens of Tampa and Charlotte, that they may be hospitable, and not allow cynicism to balloon into bitterness,” Bishop Smith said. “It includes the line: ‘We pray for our country, that we might be a nation where goodness matters, where justice and kindness are our passions, where truth matters, and is told.’”

Gary G. Yerkey

## Faith Leaders Back ‘Let’s Move’

For Matthew Ellis and the Rev. Scott Stoner, healthy eating and exercise are important factors in their Christian faith.

Ellis, executive director of the National Episcopal Health Ministries (NEHM), announced during a press conference Aug. 28 that Stoner is one of about two dozen Wisconsin religious leaders named to a new council on fitness led by Faith United Against Childhood Obesity and staff from the White House.

Childhood obesity is one of First Lady Michelle Obama’s top concerns, said Max Finberg, senior policy adviser with the Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships

(Continued on page 26)

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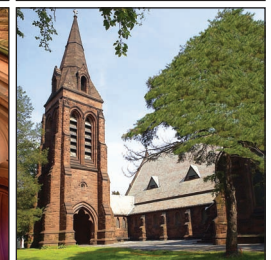
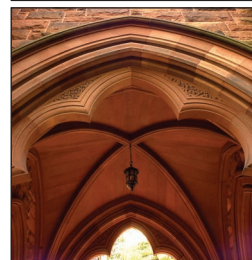
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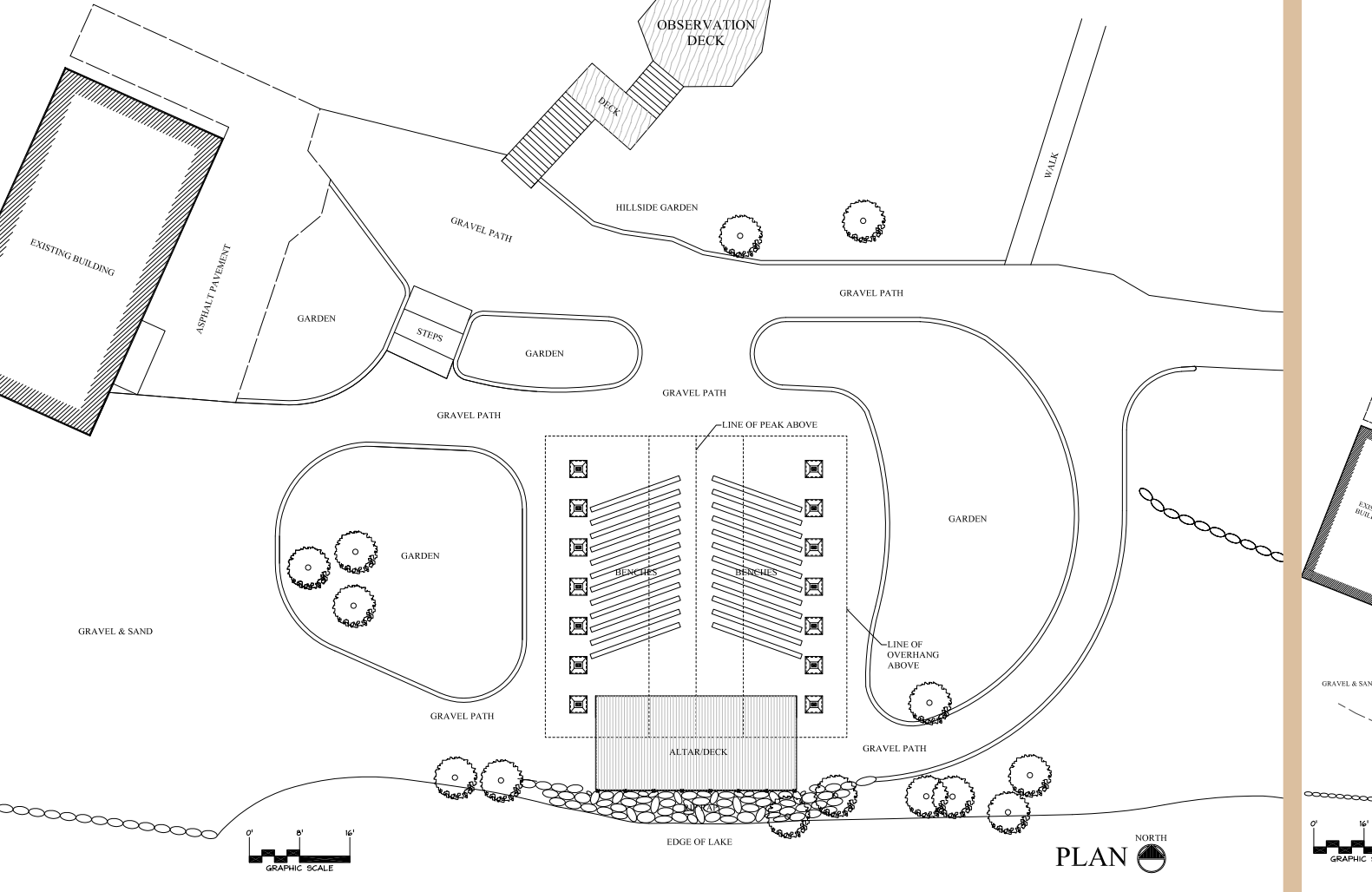


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# Grace in Built Form

By Richard J. Mammana, Jr.

**I**ncarnation Center in Ivoryton, Connecticut, grew out of a late 19th-century “fresh air” ministry of the Church of the Incarnation, Manhattan. From its beginnings in the summer of 1886 in a rented farmhouse on Mohegan Lake, New York, it served the children of recent immigrants, affording them an opportunity to experience rural American life. Incarnation moved to Ivoryton in 1929 and its ministry has now flourished through three centuries. Today, Incarnation Center offers conference facilities all year long, a traditional summer camp supported by the Diocese of New York and parishes in the Diocese of Connecticut, Elderhostel activities, and a wide range of year-round nature programs on a wooded property close to the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound.

The most recent chapter in the

life of Incarnation Center began with the consecration on June 9 of a new chapel, designed in its architect’s words to be “large enough to create a place for everyone at camp and visiting groups to assemble, sing, and perform in a variety of expressions.” It seats up to 320 children or 240 adults, and embraces an impressive 2,300 square feet on the shore of Lake Mohegan.

The construction phase, from groundbreaking to consecration, took just three months in early 2012, allowing for use of the chapel throughout this year’s peak camping season. All engineering and design services were donated.

**All engineering and design services for Incarnation Center were donated.**

I spoke recently with award-winning architect Duo Dickinson — a camper at Incarnation in 1964 and 1965 — about his work on this project. Dickinson, properties chair at Trinity Church on the Green in New Haven, began his own architectural practice in 1987. *The New York Times* has described his building and design phi-

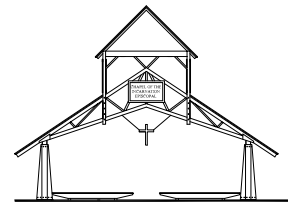


## EXISTING

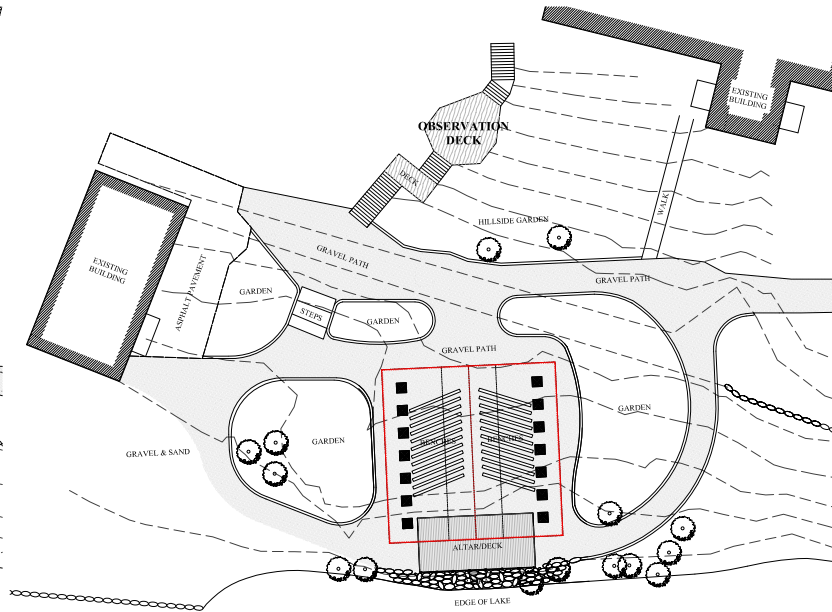
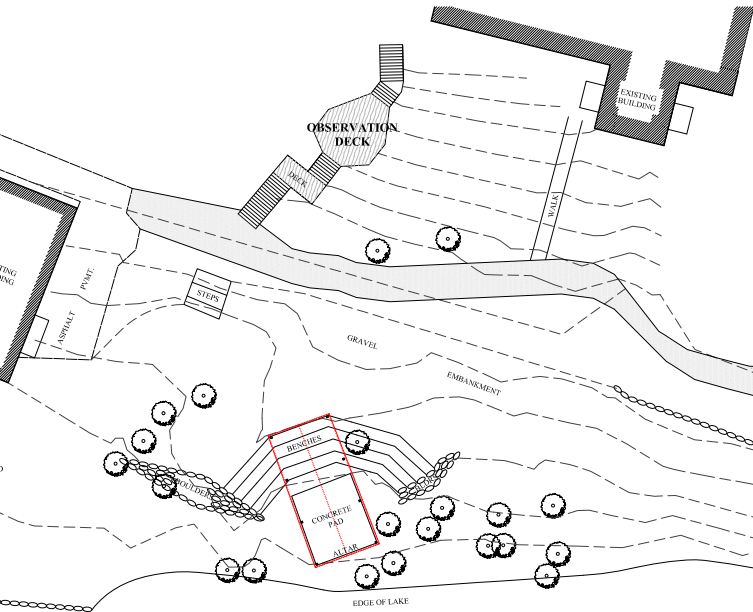


ELEVATION

## NEW



ELEVATION



SITE PLANS

## An interview with Duo Dickinson, Architect

osophy in succinct terms: “Design it small, make it as beautiful as possible and practice every trick in the book to keep it as cheap as possible.” Dickinson is a regular newspaper columnist, lecturer, and blogger on architectural matters ([savedbydesign.wordpress.com](http://savedbydesign.wordpress.com)). His most recent book is *Staying Put: Remodel Your House To Get the Home You Want* (Taunton Press, 2011).

### How does your new design relate to the previous chapel?

The new chapel replaces a structure built well over 50 years ago and refurbished 20 years ago. Rather than ignoring the legacy of the original chapel, the design incorporates the original sign and cross, but most significantly, the exact shape of the original chapel is replicated as the central crowning roof form. The earlier chapel measured 600 square feet, so the new chapel is almost four times the size. The altar area/deck is an additional 450 square feet.

(Continued on next page)





# Grace in Built Form

An interview with Duo Dickinson, Architect

(Continued from previous page)

**You have mentioned that you drew inspiration for the new chapel from barn design.**

The trusses are field-ganged rot-proof stock dimensional lumber yellow pine, and thus have the raw and rough-hewn sensibility of a barn. The angled shrouds that protect the interior steel columns from the weather are wrought of the same material. Just like a barn, there will be some warping, checking and rough edges. But also like a barn the new chapel is comfortable in its own skin, and engineered to weather well over the long term.

**What made the chapel design and construction process different from your work for non-religious clients?**

I have designed about 500 homes for private clients over the last 30 years, but from the start at least 20 percent of the work of our firm has been dedicated to *pro bono* or at-cost work for not-for-profits, so the budget constraints presented by this project were familiar. With a tight budget of \$180,000, our single goal was to accommodate the entire sleep-away camp population under one roof for worship at the same time. Paul Torcellini of Waverly Construction, Scott Erricson of E2 engineers, and my office spent the better part of a year in permitting, budgeting, and planning to make this process come together in the nick of time within the specified budget. For me, the result was a vibrant and expressive wood-wrought celebration of the site, the camp, and of the Holy Spirit.

*'If what I have to offer leverages a greater good then my indebtedness creates abundance.'*

**What about other factors in design that would set a chapel for campers apart from other building projects?**

My personal history of learning to canoe and camp here almost 50 years ago, and having designed about a dozen other projects at Incarnation over the last 25 years, as well as sitting on its board, created a host of intermingling imperatives. It was very important to me to have specifications for this project that required "zero maintenance" for the staff of the center going forward. This means the structure will resist the ravages of weather, rust, graffiti, and regular wear from use. But I also wanted to convey in built form the deep sense of





grace I feel every day of my life. That sense informs everything I design, but overtly so here.

**How was this project important to you as a Christian and as someone whose spiritual life was formed in the camp chapel?**

All of our *pro bono* work serves as an acknowledgment that everything we have has been given to us. If what I have to offer leverages a greater good than my indebtedness creates abundance. The abundance provided by a dedicated camp staff, a generous group of donors of treasure and talent, and, most importantly, the grace of God that passes all understanding created the miracle by the lake that is the new Chapel of the Incarnation.

**What kind of longevity do you envision for the new chapel?**

We sought to design this as a zero maintenance facility: every surface can be sanded back to its base condition, and every piece of metal is stainless. Scott Erricson's structural design resists hurricane-force winds and heavy snows. Although "light" in countenance, this building aims to be around for the long haul.

**Have you heard anything from campers or other worshipers in this first season of the chapel's use? What do they think of it?**

I have witnessed it. We need to add 10 more pews (all under the roof line) because they adore the space. The first wedding is in September of two camp alums. One more reason for belief in a higher power is that the acoustics, completely undesigned, are remarkable. Beyond the new pews, permanent lighting will be provided once funds are secured, and we hope to build a "sacristy shed" as well. ■

*Richard J. Mammama, Jr., a recent graduate of Yale Divinity School, is founder and director of Project Canterbury (anglicanhistory.org).*

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Left: *St. Augustine* (2000), written by Illinois artist Lu Bro, on a wooden board using several layers of egg tempera, 14K gold and sealant.

Above: *Beyond the Window* (1992), *Gothic Inventions III* (1990), and *Gothic Inventions I* (1991) by painter and printmaker Rudy Pozzatti.

Far left: *Birds in Flight* (2011) sculpture, screen fabricated from stainless steel, by Timothy S. Werrell.

# Altar Care in Hard Times

By Lauren Anderson

As parishes continue to cope with a weakened economy, the National Altar Guild Association is increasing its efforts to provide churches and clergy with economical and practical options for celebrating Holy Communion.

At its 2012 triennial convention, NAGA focused on equipping its members with hands-on workshops led by artisans from across the country, with topics including linen care, needlepoint, altar flowers, baptismal banners, and an Altar Guild 101 workshop.

"The goal was and is to bring these services as an outreach pro-

gram for smaller parishes that don't have the resources and funds," said Katrina Packard, NAGA's president.

Packard, who planned the convention, said it was necessary this year to focus on providing more practical resources for churches.

"My concern was the economy and increasing outreach," Packard said. "With the economy like it is, it made sense to teach and share rather than bore people with lectures."

Packard said NAGA recently decided to initiate a disaster-relief program in the next triennium. NAGA will provide churches with kits that include all the necessary elements for celebrating the

Eucharist after a natural disaster.

Amid economic constraint, NAGA continues to highlight aesthetics by sponsoring an Ecclesiastical Art Exhibit at General Convention, featuring more than 40 pieces of art by about 30 artists. Artworks included sculptures, paintings, metal work, iconography, and garments.

This year, the exhibit's name changed from Liturgical Art Exhibit to Ecclesiastical Art Exhibit, representing a shift from an exclusively liturgical focus to a broader focus on the Church. ■

*Lauren Anderson studies journalism at the University of Wisconsin.*



## Wisdom Literature

### Ressourcement Thomism

Sacred Doctrine, the Sacraments,  
and the Moral Life

Edited by **Reinhard Hütter** and **Matthew Levering**. Catholic University of America. Pp. xviii + 409. \$64.95

Review by Aaron Canty

*Ressourcement Thomism* is a collection of essays dedicated to Thomistic theologian Romanus Cessario, OP, on the occasion of his 65th birthday. Cessario has written 18 books and more than 100 articles generally focusing on Thomas Aquinas's moral theology and its relationship to contemporary issues. The title of this commemorative volume indicates that the contributors, most of them Fr. Cessario's students and colleagues, attempt to follow his method

of going back to the sources — in this case, not the early Church Fathers alone but also Aquinas's writings, in order to foster a renewal of Thomistic theology. The authors include those who have benefited from the friendship and scholarship of Cessario, although, as the editors point out, soliciting essays from everyone influenced by him would lead to a volume many times larger.

The general structure of the book follows some of Cessario's central theological themes: sacred Scripture and sacred doctrine, sacraments and metaphysics, and moral theology.

The three essays on sacred Scripture and sacred doctrine treat different facets of Aquinas's understanding of *sacra doctrina*. For Aquinas, sacred doctrine is a creaturely participation in God's self-knowledge, communicated through Scripture as received by the Church's

teaching. It is the discipline by which revealed truth is articulated, defended, examined rationally, and contemplated. Such a discipline requires not only the inspired source of revelation, sacred Scripture, but also rational argumentation. Reason does not prove divinely revealed truths, but it can show the relationship between those truths and discern their implications. (Drawing on contemporary Dominican trajectories, one author interestingly argues for both a "trans-historical, sapiential dogmatic theology" and a "modern sensitivity" to historical context, associated respectively with Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange and Marie-Dominique Chenu.)

*Ressourcement Thomism* also con-  
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## BOOKS

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tains four essays on sacramental theology. They address themes central to the very concept of a sacrament: sacraments as signs, sacramental causality, the relationship between Christ's human actions and sacramental actions, and the role Christ's sacrifice plays in the Eucharist. Although these topics are common in sacramental theology, the four essayists in this section are all thoroughly familiar not only with Aquinas's theology but also with various post-Vatican II developments that either develop or marginalize his theology (by, for instance, emphasizing Scripture and limiting the role of philosophy in developing a sacramental theology, emphasizing the importance of the liturgy, or deploying recent ecumenical dialogues concerning the relationship between Christ's sacrifice on the cross and the Eucharist).

The last section of the volume addresses moral theology with seven chapters on a wide variety of topics — from the common good, natural law, and the virtues to contemporary spirituality, modern economics, and artificial contraception. The volume closes with a reflection by renowned philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre, an admirer of Cessario.

Although *Ressourcement Thomism* is written with an academic audience in mind, especially scholars interested in bringing Aquinas's thought to bear on contemporary topics, all of the authors either maintain or approach a "sapiential" view of theology, that is, a view of theology as *wisdom*. Such a view attempts to hold together the intellectual pursuit necessarily involved in talking "about" God with contemplation, which requires a faith-filled response to the living God who has chosen to reveal himself. The lat-

ter involves the will and affections and is necessary for a spiritually fruitful encounter with God. *Ressourcement Thomism* will serve its purpose if it spurs readers on to Cessario's own works and of course those of St. Thomas, which are eminently "sapiential" — intellectually rigorous and spiritually deep.

*Aaron Canty is associate professor of religious studies at St. Xavier University in Chicago.*

## Worthy Praise for 1662

**The Book of Common Prayer**  
Past, Present and Future  
A 350th Anniversary Celebration

Edited by **Prudence Dailey**  
Continuum. Pp. 216. \$19.95

Review by Jason Ballard

As the subtitle suggests, this volume offers a *celebration* of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer by women and men who use it, love it, and desire to share its treasures with others. While some discussion of earlier antecedents (1549, 1552, 1559) and later developments is included, the sustained focus remains on the 1662 gold standard.

Much like *The Oxford Guide to The Book of Common Prayer: A Worldwide Survey*, this volume collects essays by a wide variety of authors — priests, laypeople, college principals, bishops — not all of whom are scholars. Following an introduction by His Royal Highness Prince Charles, the book falls into four categories: history, language, worship, and mission.

The first section starts with an adroit exploration of medieval piety and the Sarum Rite by Neil Patterson, followed by two capable studies of English society and the English Reformation as related to the formation of the prayer book by

(Continued on page 23)

## Our Lady of Walsingham Pilgrimage

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### Friday, October 12, 2012

Quiet Day of Prayer and Meditation.

12:00pm Service for Noonday and Meditation

3:00pm Service of Prayer and Meditation

6:00pm Solemn Evensong and Meditation

The Meditations will be led by **The Reverend Canon Arnold W. Klukas**, Professor of Liturgics and Ascetical Theology at Nashotah House.

### Saturday, October 13, 2012

10:30 am Solemn Pontifical Mass

Celebrant is **The Right Reverend Russell E. Jacobus**, Seventh Bishop of Fond du Lac.

The preacher is **The Right Reverend Lindsay G. Urwin OGS**, Administrator of the Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Walsingham, England

**Dr. R. Benjamin Dobey** Organist and Choirmaster and the Gaudete Brass of Chicago.

12:00 pm Harvest Lunch. The cost is \$15.00.

Please make reservations by October 8, 2012.

2:00pm Anointing with Walsingham water and Healing Prayer, musical offering, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

*To register and for more information:*

(920) 452-9659 [office@gracesheboygan.com](mailto:office@gracesheboygan.com) [www.gracesheboygan.com](http://www.gracesheboygan.com)





# Logical Questions on Same-sex Blessings

*Sic et Non*  
A conversation

By Jean McCurdy Meade

**1. The introduction to “I Will Bless You, and You Will Be a Blessing: Resources for Blessing Same-sex Relationships” emphasizes that it is not a marriage rite but the blessing of a relationship — sexual, lifelong, and exclusive — between two people of the same sex.** Thus, the rite seems to reserve marriage for a sexual union of male and female, perhaps because of the Genesis creation account which Jesus quotes when asked about divorce and remarriage: “But from the beginning of creation [*b’reshit*], ‘God made them male and female.’ ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’” Therefore, he says, “man” should not put them asunder (Mark 10:6-9, Gen. 2:24).

We call this new rite a blessing of a relationship, but it is one without any precedent in Scripture. Citing David, who said the love of the fallen Jonathan was dearer to him than the love of women, lacks credibility, because David had several wives and certainly procreated with them in abundance. Jonathan likewise was married and had children. Many a male friendship has been described over the centuries as stronger and more lasting than the love between husband and wife, but that does not imply the relationship is sexual, exclusive, or blessed by God. One thinks of “we band of brothers” in Shakespeare’s *Henry V*,

or of the aging Ulysses, in Tennyson’s poem, who cannot abide his peaceful life with Penelope once he has returned to Ithaca and vows to set out to sea with his old comrades: “One equal temper of heroic hearts made weak by time and fate, but strong in will / To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.”

While we honor and treasure these relationships, and they can be peculiarly enduring, we do not bless the love between dear friends, any more than we bless that between parents and children, or between siblings. Perhaps because the rite assumes sexual intimacy it strives to imitate a wedding without calling the relationship a marriage. And, of course, many consider same-sex unions a “right” in the civil sense. Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, several other U.S. states, and the whole of Canada have affirmed such a right in recent laws. Many think that what is legally possible for heterosexual couples should be available to any two consenting adults in the Church. It is not clear to me, however, whether our church’s new rite is designed for contracting a civil marriage. The bishops of Connecticut and New York have authorized their clergy to use the rite for celebrating civil marriages, but the provisional rite claims *not* to establish marriage.

There is a nest of issues here in need of greater attention and honest engagement.

**2. Should the rite also be available to people of the opposite sex who do not desire to marry in the eyes of the civil law but want the Church’s blessing?** We all

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know of examples of people who live as husband and wife but do not marry because of pension and Social Security issues from previous marriages. Financial considerations, like parents' insurance coverage and alimony from a previous marriage, also dissuade some younger couples from marrying, although they live together and have children. To be fair and "gender-neutral," should we say that legal marriage is a non-normative issue in our church: that living together in a sexual relationship, whether you are young or old, heterosexual or homosexual, can be blessed if it is faithful and loving?

**3. Without "one man and one woman" as the standard, what is the logical reason to restrict the blessing to two people?** *Ménage à trois* describes the long-observed fact that some people consider sexual threesomes suitable, stable, and desirable. Some people self-identify as bisexual, just as some people self-identify as homosexual. Are not the sexual desires of all these people equally worthy of being fulfilled in a "blessed" relationship? Susan Howatch's novel *Glittering Images* (1988) explores how such a *ménage à trois* is contracted with prayers and a ring, and how it works out for an English bishop and his wife and mistress. What are the implications for bishops and standing committees, now that "gender identity and expression" is a protected class for people who seek ordination or other leadership positions in the Episcopal Church?

From the earliest days of the new Christian faith, the Church urged men to have only one wife and women to have only one husband. The council in Jerusalem of Acts 15 decided that Gentiles did not have to keep ritual Jewish law but that they should abstain from fornication — *porneia*, in the Greek. St. Paul often insists that the marriage bed remain "undefiled" and that Christians not imitate their pagan friends and family in sexual infidelity. So it was assumed in our marriage vows, and still is, that although a man may not be naturally monogamous, he can and will keep his vows of fidelity.

**4. Is there a provision for ending the vows of love and fidelity if the relationship fails? What would this look like in states that do not permit civil marriage?** Anyone who has been divorced, or who comes from a family of divorce, knows the havoc it can wreak; yet, to paraphrase C.S. Lewis, divorce is like amputating a limb: the procedure can be fatal but sometimes is the only way to save a life. A divorce is a legal proceeding, not a liturgical one; but adultery, one of the prohibitions in the Ten Commandments, is still grounds for civil divorce. Not coincidentally, sexual misconduct (*porneia*) was the only reason cited by Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew for allowing divorce and remarriage. (Of course, our legal system rec-

ognizes several other grounds for divorce, including cruelty, abuse, and refusal to anticipate in marital intimacy.) The Roman Catholic Church has provisions for an annulment if one spouse can demonstrate to the tribunal that there was lack of ability and/or intention on the part of the other to make and keep the marriage vow, thus rendering the sacrament invalid. But the result is the same. Thus, once a legal marriage is dissolved by legal divorce, remarriage is possible in most Christian churches.

Lacking any civil procedure, would there be stated grounds for dissolution of a blessed same-sex relationship in the eyes of the Church, or would it just be a matter of what one or both of the parties desire? Then, would a subsequent petition to have another relationship blessed involve permission of the bishop or would it remain strictly a private matter between the couple and the priest?

**5. All priests have vowed to conform to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Episcopal Church. Have we thought about how that promise is affected when those things change?** Priests are not required to marry every couple who comes to us, but we are expected to cite a good reason for declining. Presiding at weddings remains an important part of priestly ministry, according to the Book of Common Prayer, with consequences in civil law. In my experience, I have only refused to marry a man and woman due to their unwillingness to go through the required preparation for marriage.

Many Episcopal priests who have serious reservations about the new teaching of the provisional rite are concerned first and foremost about the church's decision not to honor the requested moratorium of the Windsor Report, thus adding further strain on our communion as Anglicans. We are told that no priest will be asked to violate conscience in this matter, but where does that leave priests whose bishop permits such blessings? Do not such priests automatically become dissenters of sorts, cut off from the mainstream of clergy and likely accused of lacking charity (or worse) by their peers or by the mass media if they become the targets of protests?

Finally, does it follow that a person must believe in blessing same-sex unions in order to apply for postulancy for Holy Orders in a diocese that permits them? Similarly, when a new bishop is elected, will this issue become the litmus test for acceptance by the required number of standing committees? There seems to be a pattern in our church that once something formerly prohibited is permitted it soon becomes expected, and then *de facto* mandatory. ■

*The Very Rev. Jean McCurdy Meade, rector of Mount Olivet Episcopal Church in New Orleans, holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from Tulane University.*



By Steven Horst

*Sic et Non*  
A conversation

Dean Jean McCurdy Meade's essay explores a number of interesting and important issues. Among these, it helps focus three questions which I raised on the floor of the House of Deputies about the "provisional" authorization of rites for same-sex blessing: (1) What, exactly, is it that we were authorizing or approving: just *rites* for blessing or the *relationships* for which the blessings are to be used? (2) Is what is being authorized canonical? (3) Under what "provisions" would it be proper to perform these rites?

These questions are of course inter-connected.

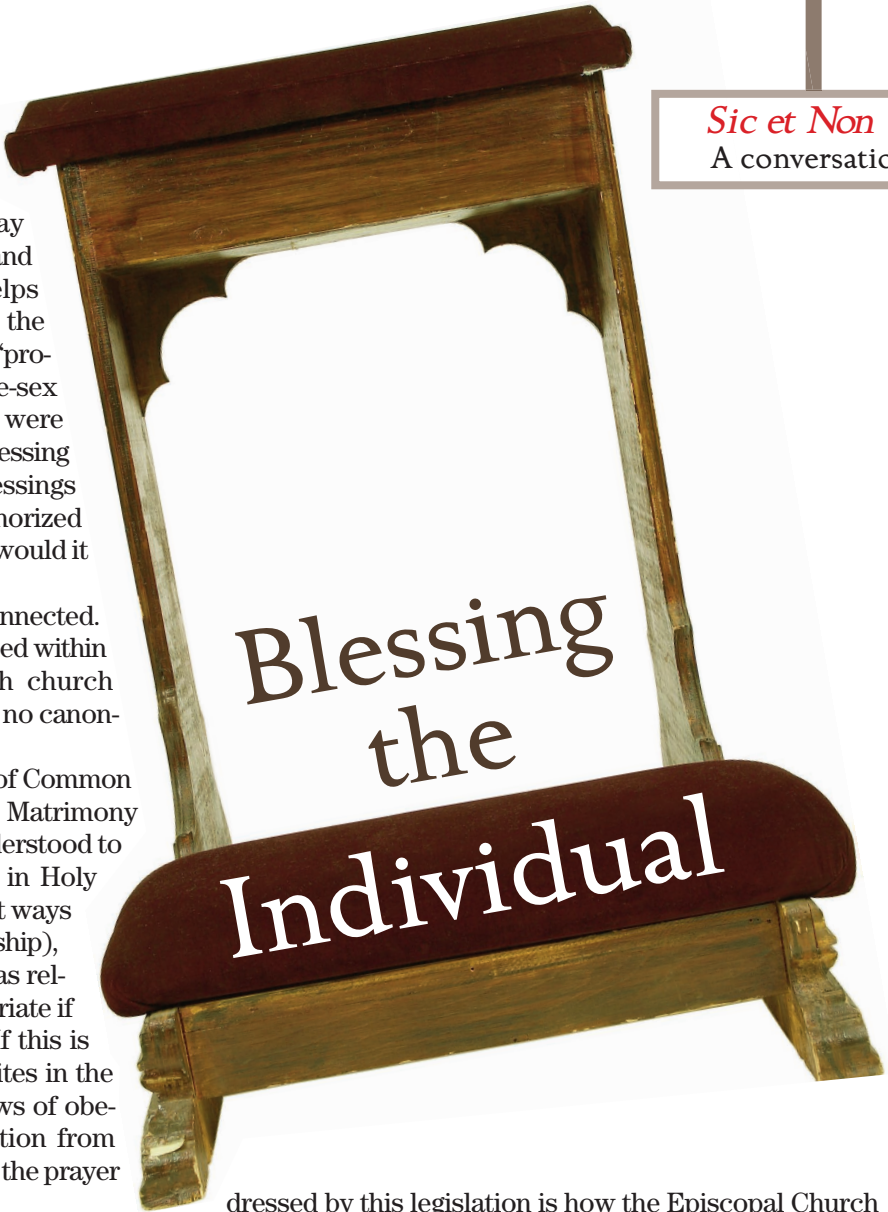
- If the rites and the relationships blessed within them are already in accordance with church canons as they exist today, then there is no canonical barrier to performing the rites.

- If they are in conflict with the Book of Common Prayer and canons' definition of Holy Matrimony (e.g., if the relationships blessed are understood to be the same sort of union recognized in Holy Matrimony, and the two rites as different ways of consecrating the same sort of relationship), then the only "provisionality" I can see as relevant is that they would become appropriate if and when those canons were revised. If this is the case, then anyone performing the rites in the near future would be violating their vows of obedience to church discipline, as legislation from Convention is valid only if it conforms to the prayer book, Constitution and canons.

- But there is also a third possibility: that the blessing rites are to be understood as distinct from the rite of Holy Matrimony *and that the same-sex relationships they are intended to bless are to be understood as distinct from the state of Christian matrimony*. This is the interpretation that Dean Meade urges upon us. And as she points out, it is an interpretation that leads to a snarl of problems that may not fully have been thought out prior to Convention.

The reader may well object that it is pointless to try to pin down the "right" interpretation, as the legislation appears to be deliberately ambiguous, so that bishops, clergy and same-sex couples could interpret it as they see fit, while preserving one or more interpretations that would not be plainly in violation of the prayer book and canons. This may in fact be an accurate assessment of the legislative process; but even if it is, we are still left with both theoretical and practical questions about how to fit the new provisions for blessings within the framework of current canon law.

The most important theological issue that is left unad-



## Blessing the Individual

ressed by this legislation is how the Episcopal Church regards the status of covenanted, monogamous same-sex relationships themselves — that is, the very relationships that fall within the purview of the new rites. On a narrow interpretation, we have approved *rites* for *blessing* such relationships, but have not made any kind of direct statement about whether the relationships themselves are compatible with the theological and moral teachings of the Church. To explain what I mean by analogy, we might very well bless John Smith, who happens to be the state executioner, without thereby endorsing capital punishment. Or, to take an example from prayers that are already in the BCP, we can bless individuals in the armed forces without endorsing the particular wars in which they are deployed, and indeed without repudiating pacifism as an acceptable moral stance for an Episcopalian. (For me, the comparison is quite apt, as I am led to both pacifism and traditional views on sexuality through my interpretation of Scripture, without or even in opposition to my "natural" intuitions.)

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So, here is a sympathetic “conservative” construal of the new rubrics: We recognize that there is no consensus within the Church about the appropriateness of same-sex relationships. And we also recognize that such relationships exist among people who find them to be holy and edifying. Such relationships do not meet the canonical criteria for Holy Matrimony. But they might nonetheless be regarded as a holy state of life, distinct from Holy Matrimony and (arguably) not attested to by Holy Scripture, yet attested to by pious and faithful reflection upon the experience of those involved in such relationships. The legislation of this year’s Convention recognizes the existence of such relationships among pious Christians without either endorsing or condemning them, authorizes rites to bless them, and leaves it to the discernment of bishops, priests, and congregations whether to make use of them.

There is nothing all that radical about recognizing and blessing states of life other than Holy Matrimony. Indeed, the Church has done so for centuries. Membership in a religious order is perhaps the most obvious example, and there are non-monastic covenanted Christian communities as well. Some Christian churches have also recognized pairs of individuals as having special brotherly or sisterly relationships. There are now religious communities that encompass married couples as well as celibates, and I have heard of services blessing the adoption of a child. So the *general* idea of recognizing and blessing covenanted relationships other than Holy Matrimony has long-standing precedent.

In most of these cases, however, there is also a well-developed theological understanding of the relationships that are being blessed, and their place in Christian life and community. But in the present case, we have put off canonical or legislative action concerning the theological and moral status of same-sex covenanted relationships until a later date, even though we have authorized the blessing of the same. And this puts us in a peculiar position. We have voted to allow rites that bless such relationships without taking a position on whether the relationships themselves are compatible with the discipline and moral teaching of the Church. To make matters worse, there *are* older statements by the Church that treat same-sex *sexual* relations as contrary to the teachings of Scripture. There are, of course, covenants without sex and sex without covenant. But presumably one of the assumptions about same-sex covenants is that

they would be a state of life within which sexual relations are lawful.

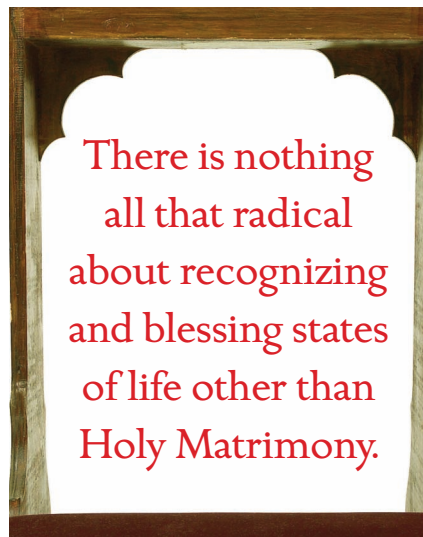
Yet there is also long-standing precedent of the Church praying for God to bless individuals whose station or way of life were considered sinful. The earliest Christians prayed for the Roman Emperor, even though they refused to offer sacrifice to him, and thus rejected the Roman legal and religious understanding of both Emperor and Empire. We might understand this as a decision to pray for the soul of an individual (the Emperor), and perhaps for God to work his providence through the Imperium, problematic though the latter might be. In the same spirit, even conservatives in the contemporary Church might pray that God work his blessings through covenanted same-sex partnerships, even if they

believe that the relationships themselves, or at least any sexual activity taking place within them, are contrary to God’s will as revealed in Holy Scripture. (Similarly, Christian pacifists might pray that God’s will be wrought in the lives of members of the armed services, and even that their performance of their duties as such might be in accordance with God’s will and lead them to deeper relationship with him.)

Conversely, when the early Christians prayed for the Emperor, they surely did *not* thereby endorse such things as his godhood or the appropriateness of sacrifice to his genius. They regarded the latter as something to be

avoided even at the cost of martyrdom. In the current context, one might similarly be willing to pray not only for individuals involved in same-sex relationships but also that those relationships themselves might lead to such benefits as God wishes to confer without holding such relationships to be holy or godly.

**I**t seems to me that Christians thus inclined might regard the blessings legislation of the Episcopal Church’s 77th General Convention in much the same way that early Christians regarded prayers for the Emperor: as a hope that God might bless not only individuals doing things prohibited by Scripture but also same-sex relationships themselves as a circumstance through which grace might operate. One hopes that a pagan Roman Emperor (or a contemporary head of state) will govern in such a fashion as to confer blessings upon the governed, and also will be brought to salvation, whether through the Imperial office or in spite of it. Likewise, one who considers same-sex relationships to be contrary to Scripture might hope that a person in such a relationship be brought to salvation and sanctification, either through the relationship or in spite of





# Expanding



# Marriage

it. In this sense, one might regard rites for the blessing of same-sex unions as no less appropriate than prayers for a secular power the nature of whose office is theologically or morally problematic.

Unfortunately, the details of the rites suggest something beyond this, namely, that same-sex covenant relationships are or can be holy in precisely the same way as Holy Matrimony. To put the issue differently: we have long had rites that celebrate Holy Matrimony as a sacrament. Now we also have rites for blessing of same-sex relationships. And these do not take the form of simply wishing the parties to the relationship well, but share many of the elements of the rite of Holy Matrimony. Moreover, many (though not all) advocates of same-sex covenants clearly regard those covenanted relationships as enacting the same state of union between two people recognized in Holy Matrimony.

And so it seems to me that we have put off the essential question, which is this: Is the state of life involved in a covenanted, monogamous same-sex Christian union between two individuals of the same sex to be regarded as the same as that celebrated in the rite of Holy Matrimony, or as something different? If the former, then we now have two rites to celebrate the self-same state — which state our Prayer Book and Canons restrict to a man and a woman, a conflict that can be avoided only by the rather strained interpretation that the restriction applies only to the *rite* and not to the *state of life*. If they are understood to be distinct states ... then we still have a lot of issues to address. Dean Meade's essay brings a number of these to our attention, and I hope that it will provide the basis for more conversation and discernment. ■

*Steven Horst, a deputy to the 77th General Convention, is a professor of philosophy at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut.*

By R. William Carroll

In her series of “logical questions,” Dean Jean McCurdy Meade has raised a number of issues that I have heard raised in seminary classrooms and diocesan meetings, as well as less formal settings.

There are two main ways to interpret these kinds of questions. One could read them as slippery-slope arguments meant to insinuate that same-sex blessings inevitably lead to unacceptable consequences. I don't think this is Meade's intention, and so I construe her questions more charitably, as inviting further conversation about what we mean by marriage and how, if at all, same-sex blessings might be related to that particular form of covenanted, sacramental union.

Now, we should admit that, at times, proponents of same-sex blessings have given laughably thin theological rationales for a major development in Christian doctrine, often appealing to little more than vague notions of rights, tolerance, and inclusion. In my judgment, there have been better cases made, most notably by Professor Eugene Rogers and Bishop Thomas Breidenthal. But, to the extent that the case is weak, we may still wind up down the slippery slope.

As a supporter of blessings, I would argue that they involve a covenanted, sacramental union identical to or at least analogous to and in no sense inferior to Holy Matrimony as defined by the Book of Common Prayer. (For a more complete statement, which draws on the purposes as well as the vows of Holy Matrimony, see the “theological rationale for same-gender unions” adopted by the Diocese of Southern Ohio, which I helped draft: <http://is.gd/SacredUnions>.)

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As I take up Meade's questions one by one, I hope that this perspective will inform my response and give us grounds for hope that same-sex blessings may expand our concept of marriage and root it more firmly in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, instead of deforming it beyond recognition.

When it comes to Meade's first question, which concerns the apparent denial in the Episcopal Church's provisional rite that same-sex blessings are "marriage," I think the ambiguities involved can be resolved by admitting that legal realities and political expediency have given birth to misleading rhetoric. On the legal side, according to canon, no member of the clergy can perform a marriage that is not legal in a given jurisdiction. Since few states explicitly permit civil marriage for same-sex couples, and some have prohibited it by statute or constitutional amendment, one could not (arguably) call a same-sex blessing a marriage without the risk of violating civil law in at least some jurisdictions. Furthermore, barring an amendment to the canons, one would risk violating canon law as well. On the political side, a separate liturgy of blessings seems to be a legislative measure intended to garner broader support than one framed as "same-sex marriage." This lack of candor is lamentable, a failure of the frank and honest speech that ought to prevail among Christians. I think we need to be far more forthright that our refusal to use the word *marriage* is intended to avoid legal problems rather than to create any kind of two-tiered system for blessing relationships. At least I hope so. If, to the contrary, a two-tiered system is intended, Meade's first question has considerable purchase, and, in my view, we have hopelessly muddled the question of marriage. In other words, either the same-sex unions we are talking about are sacramental, Christian marriages, or the Church has no business blessing them.

The answer to Meade's second question, which concerns whether opposite-sex couples might seek a blessing instead of a marriage, follows as a corollary. The Church ought not to bless relationships that aim at different ends or are enacted by means of substantially different vows from those contained in the


Book of Common Prayer. There must be an unconditional commitment, lifelong in intent, for exclusive fidelity to a single partner, intended as a means of sanctification in Christ. If it is not a marriage that the couple wants, to say the least their relationship poses interesting questions for Christian ethics, but they ought not to seek and the Church ought not to invoke God's blessing. A couple seeking a blessing where marriage is an available option apparently believes that a blessing is a second-class rite, and is either aiming at something less than marriage or acting out of a misguided desire for solidarity with same-sex couples.

This is evidence of a deeply mistaken viewpoint, since the rite in question is in no way a second-class rite.

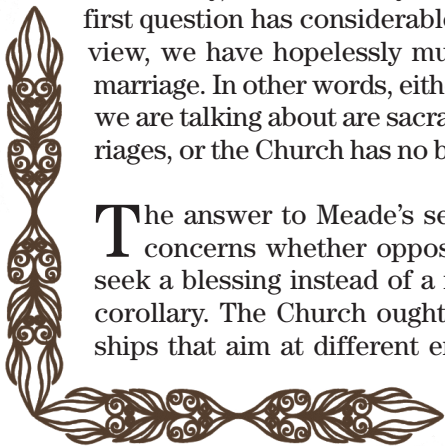
Furthermore, the oft-heard claim that the Church ought not to act as an agent of the state (in other words that we all ought to let civil magistrates solemnize the legal contract and then be blessed) seems to me a further logical question that we ought to explore at length, rather than simply assuming that this would be good for the Church or for society. The uncoupling of the two in the case of same-sex marriage is an unfortunate response to current, discriminatory reali-

ties. The Church has made, however haltingly, the first steps of a discernment that same-sex couples can be married, and we cannot be bound by the state's judgment in deciding this question in sacramental and moral theology. At the same time, we do intend for the marriages that we bless to be honored and recognized according to civil law. Whether they are will ultimately be decided by society as a whole.

With regard to Meade's third question, it is an empirical matter whether any three-way relationship could embody the ends of Christian marriage. I don't think so, and I certainly hope not. I'm not sure what is to be gained here. Once we have a partner who can love us with the steadfast love of Christ for the Church, why a third? Wouldn't the third defeat the exclusive, monogamous focus of Christian marriage? About the only thing I could say for it is that it is probably "better" in some sense than open marriage, which is even more out of the question for Christians. Here we enter the domain of liberal theories of preference and tolerance without limit that have nothing to do with the Gospel or the Church Catholic.



I think the ambiguities involved can be resolved by admitting that legal realities and political expediency have given birth to misleading rhetoric.





That brings me to the fourth question, which concerns divorce. So long as we are in the situation in which many of the same-sex marriages that we bless will have no legal status, the Church must have a way to record and acknowledge the ending of such a relationship. It may also be necessary to pay some attention, at the pastoral level, to helping the couple untangle their finances, as well as any other legal arrangements they may have made, and the other consequences of divorce. With regard to remarriage after divorce, I should think that the same standards of seeking a Godly judgment from the bishop (with all the criteria, especially absence of malice toward the former partner and support for their children) would be mandatory. The union of a couple in heart, body, and mind is not simply cancelled, and, in those tragic cases where divorce is the least bad option, we need to help people work through the dissolution of a real sacramental relationship — emotionally, materially, and spiritually.

With respect to the fifth question, which concerns conscience and obedience and the potential discipline of priests who may not be willing, for reasons of conscience, to bless same-sex marriages, I think that we should admit that the Episcopal Church's discernment is more of an emerging consensus (however unlikely to be reversed) than a settled doctrine. I should hope that we have as much leeway for conscientious dissent as we are apparently willing to give to people who deny the Virgin Birth, the Real Presence, or the doctrine of the Trinity, to say nothing of the need for Holy Baptism prior to receiving Holy Communion. Persons in discernment and parish clergy should not have to live in fear that they will be disciplined for following their consciences.

At the same time, without becoming

(Continued on next page)



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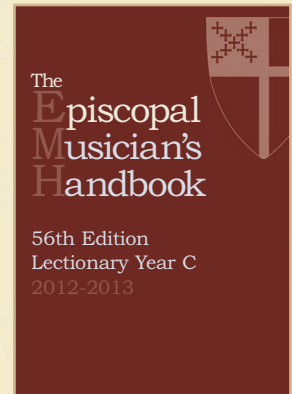
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*Sic et Non*

A conversation

(Continued from previous page)

ing a rigid group of heresy hunters, we do have standards. The Episcopal Church (and our bishops in particular) need to become far better about upholding the standards for doctrine, discipline, and worship that we already have. There's nothing to preclude an emerging consensus from becoming a well-established doctrine, but we aren't there yet. My hope here — really — is that we can struggle with one another in charity, so that, when we say that the Episcopal Church is a “comprehensive Church” open to “all sorts and conditions” of people, we do not mean only the ones who agree with us. I say this as a person who believes in the unity and reality of Truth. I say it

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as a parish priest who is convinced that our witness is compromised by division and that same-sex unions are not only permitted but (ultimately) required by the Gospel, but who also knows that the distinctive charism of Anglican Christianity has often been to live with tensions, even over things that matter. Effective witness to Christ here and now demands nothing less, indeed far more. ■

*The Rev. R. William Carroll is rector of Emmanuel Church, Shawnee, in the Diocese of Oklahoma. He is a life-professed Third Order Franciscan and the current convener of the North American Province of the Society of Catholic Priests. Until recently, he served as a college chaplain and parish priest in the Diocese of Southern Ohio, where he was part of the task force to implement Bishop Breidenthal's policy permitting the blessing of same-gender unions.*



## BOOKS

(Continued from page 14)

Raymond Chapman and David Loades, respectively. Some treatment of the last 200 years of the Book of Common Prayer would have marked a welcome addition.

The language section includes two highly devotional essays by P.D. James and David Curry, demonstrating the power of words to form the soul and community, followed by perhaps the most scholarly chapter in the volume, a study by Ian Robinson of the prose and poetry of the prayer book.

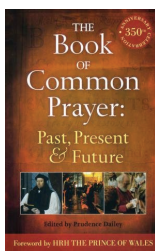
The four chapters on worship take up in turn Holy Communion (Gavin Dunbar), Scripture (Roger Beckwith), lectionaries (David Phillips), and the place of the classic prayer book in a world with an increasingly dizzying array of liturgical options (Peter Moger). This section succeeds in reflecting on the prayer book as a *living* instrument for our journey of salvation.

The section on mission looks up and out to the future, specifically to the youth in our midst. Those who doubt classical Anglicanism's power in the contemporary post-everything world will do well to consider carefully these three essays by C. Peter Molloy, George Sumner, and Fredrik Arvidsson.

Terry Waite's postscript, "A Very Present Help in Trouble," and an afterword by the Bishop of London, provide a fitting blessing to the celebration, with some recognition of the current struggles of the Anglican Communion.

In all, the volume provides a most accessible and well-written introduction to the Book of Common Prayer that is both interesting and spiritually invigorating. Several essays would provide an excellent addition to adult confirmation, inquirers, or formation classes. Others, such as Ian Robinson's chapter, may interest only the most committed of Anglican liturgical aficionados.

*Jason Ballard, an aspiring priest in Austin, Texas, keeps a blog at [atribecalledanglican.wordpress.com](http://atribecalledanglican.wordpress.com).*



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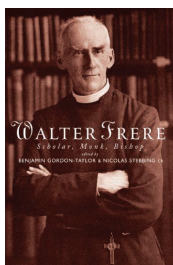
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## BOOKS

### Walter Frere

Scholar, Monk, Bishop  
Edited by **Benjamin Gordon-Taylor**  
and **Nicolas Stebbing, CR.**  
Canterbury Press Norwich. Pp. 255.  
\$28.99, paper



In the surprisingly vast field of 20th-century Anglican liturgical studies, only a handful of figures still loom large: Gregory Dix and Percy Dearmer have their devotees and biographies, but few others remain in churchly awareness. Englishmen with sonorous names like W. Jardine Grisbrooke, F.C. Eeles, G.W.O. Addleshaw, Basil Minchin, and Frederick Etchells are more or less forgotten. From their place in eternity, Americans like H. Boone Porter, William Palmer Ladd, Leonel Mitchell, Massey Shepherd, and Marion Hatchett await their proper attention with close scholarly studies and biographies.

In this fine collection of ten essays, scholars begin to enrich our

understanding of one modern Anglican liturgist whose significance for 20th-century church life has been overlooked until now. Walter Howard Frere (1863-1938) was a cofounder with Charles Gore of the Community of the Resurrection, a widely published scholar of Christian liturgy and history, a pioneering ecumenist, and toward the end of his life Bishop of Truro in the Church of England.

Alan Wilkinson begins the book with a fine biographical sketch, offering historical context for many of the essays. John Davies writes on Frere's spirituality of "intense simplicity." Bernard Barlow examines Frere's major role in the Anglican-Roman Catholic "Malines Conversations" between 1921 and 1927. Philip Corbett and John Livesley look into Frere's major contributions to liturgical reform in the early 20th century, and other essays focus on

Frere as an educator, as a critical scholar, and his legacy at the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield in West Yorkshire.

Benjamin Gordon-Taylor rounds out the collection with what he calls a "representative but not exhaustive" bibliography of Frere's writings. (While this is very useful, the opportunity of an entire volume on Frere's life and work would have been an ideal time to compile and publish such a bibliography.) And an especially rich addition is the foreword by William Ind, one of Frere's successors as Bishop of Truro. Bishop Ind retells a handful of anecdotes about Frere by people who knew him as children in the 1930s and are still living in Cornwall. This opportunity to see the pastor-bishop Frere through the eyes of those to whom he ministered is truly remarkable, and came as a delightful surprise.

*Richard J. Mammama, Jr.*  
*New Haven, Conn.*



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## Remember Repentance

The nature and function of the Church is a complex topic. While Matthew Dallman makes some good points in “Spiritual but Not Religious” [TLC, Sept. 8], he does not handle this topic with sufficient nuance or self-critical analysis.

After the introductory section in which, with apparently unconscious irony, he defends SBNR by citing religious notables, along with the Nicene Creed and Book of Common Prayer (!), he gets to his main thesis: SBNR is “a step along the road toward Catholicism.” No doubt, this is surely sometimes true; but the pattern is hardly new (see St. Augustine’s *Confessions*, for example). Indeed, with some exaggeration, such a defense could be made of virtually any path that led anyone into the Church. Furthermore, it avoids the real point of SBNR, which is that SBNR is the defining context for the practice of spiritual life and not merely a step on the way to something else, something “religious.”

Apart from this confusion, the glaring omission in his (and SBNR’s) account of the life of faith is that of repentance. He notes the “seamless and natural” way that he moved from his previous spiritual practices into the life of intentional Christian faith. Again, he has a point: there is continuity between

creation and redemption, for example — it is the creation that is being redeemed — but there is also a profound discontinuity between the fallen creation and its redemption.

This abyss is bridged from God’s side by the cross and walked from our side by repentance. Perhaps Mr. Dallman needs to return to his Lutheran roots, for from the beginning of his career as a reformer Luther characterized the whole of Christian life as being one of repentance. Indeed, as Mr. Dallman concludes his essay with the words of the angelic beings before God as seen by Isaiah, it is worth considering that the prophet did not compare the experience to the “taste of coffee” (à la Martin Thornton), but exclaimed, “Woe is me! I am a man of unclean lips and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.”

*The Rev. Patrick Barker  
Trinity Episcopal Church  
Searcy, Arkansas*

*Matthew Dallman replies:*

Father Barker’s point about repentance is well-taken, and I welcome this dialogue. I have, like all Christians, a supply of biographical material from which to draw had I intended to write about repentance. Yet my topic was *evangelization* — that is, bringing all people to accept, worship, and obey Jesus Christ as Lord within the fellowship of the Church Catholic.

Despite SBNR’s problems (which I acknowledged), some of its proponents demonstrate a “hunger and thirst for righteousness” recognizable as, at least, “proto-Catholic.” What is pastorally appropriate? Some in the body of Christ might mock, others might dismiss, still others might preach a message of repentance.

Certainly any genuine walking with Christ involves substantial self-reflection, difficult-to-bear honesty, and profound contrition — a turning of the *whole person* toward God. How do we set the stage? Each generation must answer that question anew.

Perhaps Gethsemane is particularly appropriate for spiritual direction, for as John Macquarrie writes, “in this moment of inward anguish lies . . . ‘moral and spiritual expiation’” (*Principles of Christian Theology*, p. 322). Can we relate Christ’s “moment of choice” to the SBNR sensibility without dishonoring its nascent perception of the abundance of God’s prevenient grace?

Are SBNR travelers not already partially into the Icon? In my case, no priest preached repentance *per se*; nor did one need to. But the Spirit most certainly did (and does), for within the same eucharistic liturgy that hymns “heaven and earth . . . full of your glory” we also confess: “We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.” I suspect most SBNR acolytes would not say those words easily.

## Defending Ramsey

The Rev. Mark Chapman writes that the late Archbishop Michael Ramsey “had virtually no parochial experience” [TLC, Aug. 26]. Of course he had! After his ordination in 1929, he served curacies in Liverpool, St. Botolph’s, Boston, and St. Bene’t’s, Cambridge. His work became mostly academic when he was named professor of divinity at Durham in the 1940s.

In the same issue, T.L. Holtzen’s uncontested quoting of Chapman’s use of “fudge” to refer to Ramsey’s theology deserves a response. Perhaps “fudge” could be used by those unable to discern that there is in the Anglican heritage a general patristic sensibility, as found in English theologians, musicians, and writers noted frequently by Ramsey. The great attempt of Elizabeth I and then Hooker and the Caroline Divines was to restore the church rightly to the claims or “canons” found in the early Church. These are summed up in the Lambeth Quadrilateral.

And there was a general reserve in this heritage, a restraining of the “Peter envy” affecting certainly the Papists but the Calvinists as well. The wisdom of this can be seen in contrast with the epistemologies of Roman Catholicism (“when the Pope speaks *ex cathedra*”), of extreme Protestant biblicism (“the Bible says”), or even the pietism found in many traditions (“I feel this more strongly than any of you”).

When theologians and Church leaders seek for certainty beyond that probability given us in our faith in Christ, there is always bound to be trouble. Michael Ramsey knew this. And so does Rowan Williams.

*The Rev. Canon Dale Coleman  
St. George’s Episcopal Church  
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## NEWS | September 23, 2012

(Continued from page 7)

Domestic Policy Council in Washington, D.C. Finberg commended the Wisconsin faith leaders who will promote curriculum on children's health.

"What better way to engage obesity than through faith leaders partnering to educate families about children's nutrition," said Stoner, president and executive director of Living Compass, a spiritual and personal fitness coaching organization based in Glendale.

Stoner, an Episcopal priest who left parish ministry about four years ago, entered his first marathon in Chicago in 1980 while a student at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary. He recently completed his 48th, although he was nearly killed four years ago when an automobile crashed head on into his bicycle.

"To me running is a spiritual discipline," he said. "Most people would say that I am a pretty high-energy guy. Running forces me to take time to reflect and focus my mind. It is a bit like centering prayer in that it can be very meditative. Sometimes I find myself repeating Taizé chants."

Ellis first met Stoner last May at NEHM's annual meeting in Milwaukee. NEHM's purpose is "to promote health ministry in Episcopal congregations, assisting them to reclaim the Gospel imperative of health and wholeness."

About four years ago Ellis was an administrator in charge of distributing child abuse prevention grants for the state of Indiana. A colleague in the next cubicle suggested that he apply with NEHM. Ellis, who grew up Roman Catholic, said he had become disillusioned and had stopped attending church.

"I did not know about the Episcopal Church all that well," Ellis said, but his research led him back to church. "I decided to join whether I got the job or not."

Ellis believes churches are excellent vehicles for health screening, education and disease detection.

"We really all have to be well in order to serve God and each other," he said. "I personally suffer from migraines. When I have one I'm not much good to anyone else. Someone with chronic problems will probably not be able to minister as effectively as if they felt better. Many chronic adult conditions begin with unhealthy choices made in childhood. We can impact their health by teaching a healthy lifestyle. That is a powerful gift for future generations."

Faith leaders bring a moral authority to the battle against childhood obesity, said the Rev. Beth Abbott, pastor of St. Luke's United Church of Christ in South Milwaukee. She said the UCC has condemned the "caloric mountains of food that marketers are shoving at children."

The Rev. Ernest J. Garrison, pastor of Wayman African Methodist Episcopal Church in Racine, said that efforts to offer children healthy food choices should begin with what the church feeds its own flock.

"Some of the worst food is church food," he said. "I know they mean well, but my goodness. Have you looked at what most churches offer? There is a real opportunity right there to begin educating members."

Acknowledging her own faith's issues with food, Rabbi Dena Feingold of Beth Hillel [Reform] Temple in Kenosha likened ending the childhood obesity epidemic to "a new form of dietary kosher laws."

Vincent DeMarco, president of the Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative and adjunct assistant professor at The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, said that 20 years ago local faith councils helped lead to bans on smoking in public areas. He said the intention is to create a number of volunteer councils throughout the country. Each council will have an opportunity to contribute toward a healthy-eating curriculum which would then be available for faith communities to implement.

"Wisconsin is an important place to start," he said.

Ellis said some of the members



appointed to the council have worked together for a number of years. He praised the Rev. Mary Jane Misner, a retired Episcopal deacon, for her dedicated service.

The Wisconsin council includes representatives from 23 religious groups.

*Steve Waring*

## Bishop White Dies at 71

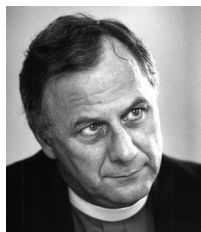
The Rt. Rev. Roger J. White, Bishop of Milwaukee from 1985 to 2003, died Aug. 28 at Froedtert Memorial Lutheran Hospital in Milwaukee. He was 71, and had suffered a ruptured brain aneurysm Aug. 9.

Among the Episcopal Church's bishops in Wisconsin, White was the first to ordain women to the priesthood. As an ecumenist he was a liaison to the Russian Orthodox Church, both before

and after the fall of the Soviet Union. He was a member of the Court for the Trial of a Bishop when it ruled that ordaining openly gay or lesbian people was not a matter of what the court called core doctrine. As coauthor with the Rev. Richard Kew of the popular book *New Millennium, New Church* (Cowley, 1992), White was mentioned among the bishops who might succeed the Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning as presiding bishop. White declined consideration by the nominating committee.

Born in Yorkshire in 1941, White was a graduate of Eden Theological Seminary. He transferred to the Episcopal Church from the Church of England in 1969. Before being elected Milwaukee's bishop coadjutor in 1984, he was vicar of St. Alban's Church, Olney, Illinois, 1969-81; rector, St. Paul's/Trinity Chapel, Alton, Illinois, 1971-80; and rector, Trinity Church, Indianapolis, 1980-84.

The bishop is survived by his wife of 46 years, Prudence; sons Marcus White of Milwaukee and Charles White of Racine; daughter Suzannah Fischer of Colorado Springs, Colorado; four grandchildren; and sister, Joselyn Klare of Dortmund, Germany.



White

"Roger served the Diocese of Milwaukee at a critical time in the life of the Episcopal Church," said the Rt. Rev. Steven Andrew Miller, 11th Bishop of Milwaukee. "His focus on the ministry of all the baptized and the Church's mission to know, love, and serve Jesus in the world were manifested by the ministries begun during his tenure as bishop. We give thanks for his life and ministry, and hold his wife, Pru, and their family in our prayers."

The Rev. Peter Rogness of St. Paul, Minnesota, a bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, said that White helped escort Lutheran Bishop Medardo Gomez to the war-torn nation of El Salvador in 1989.

"Roger was very courageous. I'm not talking simply about moral courage, which he had, but the courage to put himself in physical danger," Bishop Rogness told Anyssa Johnson of the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. "Roger said, 'That's part of my calling, and I'm going.'"

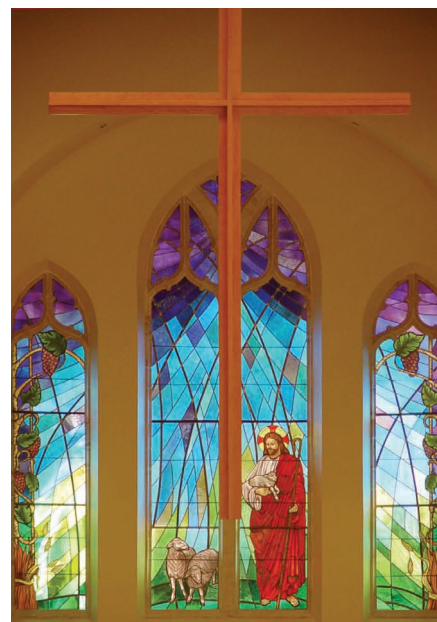
## West Africans Consider Partition

The Church of the Province of West Africa plans to vote on a constitutional change that creates two provinces with two archbishops. The Rev. Canon Anthony Eiwuley, provincial secretary, said that the church will meet in special synod at Cuttington University Sept. 27-29.

"At this synod, we shall be adopting an amendment to our constitution to give room for the establishment of two administrative provinces: one to contain all the dioceses in Ghana, and the other the rest of the six dioceses in Gambia, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cameroon," he said. "Each of the smaller provinces will then elect an administrative archbishop and, out of the two, one will be elected the primate of the province."

The Most Rev. Justice Akrofi, West Africa's current primate, will retire Oct. 29 at age 70.

*Adapted from ACNS*



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## Radiant Love Creates the Church

The abandonment of Wisdom may begin with indifference to the good, but it becomes in time a bitter attack against the “righteous one.” The fool cannot help but sense that “he is inconvenient to us and opposes our actions.” “He became to us a reproof of our thoughts; the very sight of him is a burden to us.” Thus, the ungodly turn against “God’s child.” Indifferent to the good, the fool is now indifferent to torture and murder. “Let us test him with insult and torture.” “Let us condemn him to a shameful death” (Wisdom). Let his memory perish. “Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, let us cut him off from the land of the living, so that his name will no longer be remembered” (Jeremiah).

The photons of the warm sun, when concentrated to a fine point, emit blazing heat, as every survivalist knows. Jesus is a blazing sun of righteousness, all goodness, all truth, all beauty. He is “spiritual food and drink, rock and water, the foundation of faith, the cornerstone, the image of the invisible God, the great God, the head of the Church, the first born of a new creation ... the only begotten Son crowned with glory and honor” (Gregory of Nyssa, *Concerning the perfect form of a Christian*). His blazing goodness, truth, and beauty are an affront to a fallen and depraved humanity. He is love. He comes to his own whom he created and holds in being by love. “And yet his own received him not.”

Jesus foreknew his mortal end. “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of evil men, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again” (Mark 9:31). They kill him not because he is good, but because he is utterly good, not because he is truth with compromise, but truth itself, not because he seems beautiful, but is beauty itself. Such perfection draws out the vicious venom of

a contorted humanity. “For the arrogant have risen up against me, and the ruthless have sought my life, those who have no regard for God” (Ps. 54:3).

Packs of dogs bite and devour. Gangs surround him. They stare and gloat. Devils roar and strike. Yet the circumference of this central point shows an image of hope and love. “There were women looking on from afar” (Mark 15:40). These women anticipate the espoused Church, the bride of Christ. How women loved him and protected him! “He came of woman so, as that he came of nothing but woman; of woman, and not of man. Neither do we read of any woman in the Gospel that assisted the persecutors of Christ or furthered his afflictions; even Pilate’s wife dissuaded it” (John Donne, preached at St. Paul’s on Easter Day, 1630).

The Church is the bride in all her beauty. “She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life.” “She opens her hand to the poor, and reaches out her hand to the needy.” She is a witness to her love. “Her husband is known in the city gates.” She is confident, hopeful, and of a light spirit. “Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come.” She is what she is by the love he has poured into her.

### Look It Up

Read Proverbs 31. Speak well of the Church. “She looks well to the ways of her household.”

### Think About It

Let love break your feminine heart. Hang upon him who hung upon the cross.



## Just Such a Time as This

Divine election presupposes an inescapable responsibility. A story is told. "This happened in the days of Ahasuerus, who ruled over one hundred twenty-seven provinces from India to Ethiopia" (Esther 1:1). Ahasuerus called Queen Vashti, "but Queen Vashti refused the king's command" (1:12). Her refusal, if allowed, "would cause all women to look with contempt on their husbands" (1:17). Thus Vashti was never again to come before the king (1:19). Among the women in the king's harem, a young virgin named Esther was brought before the king, and immediately "the king loved Esther more than all the other women" (2:17). The king did not know, however, that Esther and her cousin Mordecai, both of whom lived in the citadel of Susa, were descendants of those Jews whom King Nebuchadnezzar had carried away.

It came to pass that the king promoted Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite to the highest position, and all the people "bowed down and did obeisance to Haman" but "Mordecai did not bow down or do obeisance" (3:2). Mordecai's punishment would not be enough! "Haman thought it beneath him to lay hands on Mordecai alone. So, having been told who Mordecai's people were, Haman plotted to destroy all the Jews" (3:6). With the king's consent, an edict went forth to all the provinces, written in all the languages of the people, "giving orders to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all Jews, young and old, women and children" (3:13). "When Mordecai learned all that had been done, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went throughout the city, wailing with a loud and bitter cry" (4:1).

Queen Esther, hearing that Mordecai wore sackcloth and cried before the king's gate, sent royal garments to Mordecai. But Mordecai refused

all consolation, and reported to Esther, through Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs, all that had happened. Finally, in the midpoint of this tale, a fearful providence shone directly upon Queen Esther. "Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this" (4:14). Finally, through the brave intervention of Queen Esther, "the Jews gained relief from their enemies" (9:22).

The queen's question must give us pause, a query at the center of any responsibility, great or small. Perhaps we have been placed where we are placed for just such a time as this!

Occasionally the burden of authority is shared. "Gather for me seventy of the elders of Israel" (Num. 11:16). "Are any among you sick? They should call the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord" (James 5:14). Even shared authority, however, will feel at times as if one is "salted with fire" (Mark 9:49). For there is no escaping the obligation to do what the occasion and providence require.

The call may be clear and welcome. It may be clear and fearful. It may not be clear at all, which is only to say that we are not always in a position to see and know with absolute certainty the moral and spiritual claims set upon us. Finally, we must trust that he who elects us calls us to an inescapable task.

### Look It Up

Read Esther in a single sitting.

### Think About It

Augustine: What is man that thou art mindful of him? A mere particle of creation! And yet you call out to each, and give to each an irrevocable gift. Ours is to take it and live up to it, God being our helper. Providence has placed us.



## Reaching Out to Others

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### Appointments

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The Rev. **Lynn Bailey Norman** is rector of Trinity, 1900 Dauphin St., Mobile, AL 36606.

### Retirements

The Rev. **Pat Halverson**, as pastor of St. Paul's/Peace, Las Vegas, NM, an Episcopal/Lutheran congregation

### Deaths

The Ven. **Thomas Frank Winslow**, chaplain to the Bishop of Milwaukee since 2006, died Aug. 23 at the University of Wisconsin Hospital in Madison. He was 68. Archdeacon Winslow was a division chaplain for the FBI's Milwaukee office and worked at Ground Zero in New York for a week after the terrorist strikes of Sept. 11, 2001.

Born in 1944, he was a graduate of Cardinal Stritch University and of Nashotah House Theological Seminary. He was ordained deacon in 1983 and priest in 2006, and served all of his vocation in the Diocese of Milwaukee.

He was deacon at St. Philip's Church, Waukesha, 1983-85; St. David of Wales Church, New Berlin, 1983-95; and St. Alban's Church, Sussex, 1996-2002. He served as archdeacon of the diocese from 2001 to 2006.

He is survived by Margaret "Peg" Winslow, his wife of 48 years; daughters Catherine Cassidy and Cynthia Pokorny; grandsons Joseph A.W. Cassidy, John T. Cassidy and Benjamin H. Pokorny; a brother, Gerald Winslow; and a sister, Nancy Bean.

Doug Erickson of the *Wisconsin State Journal* wrote that Archdeacon Winslow was convinced that his working at Ground Zero "triggered serious sinus and bronchial problems, then pneumonia, gastric reflux disease and, ultimately, lung failure."

"He was confident he'd done God's work, and that was enough for him," Peg Winslow told Erickson. "Others will have to decide if he was a victim of 9/11."

### Send your clergy changes to People and Places:

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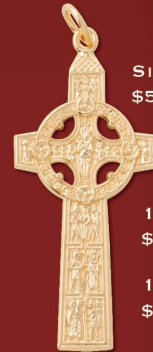
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