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September 15, 2013

The Living Church

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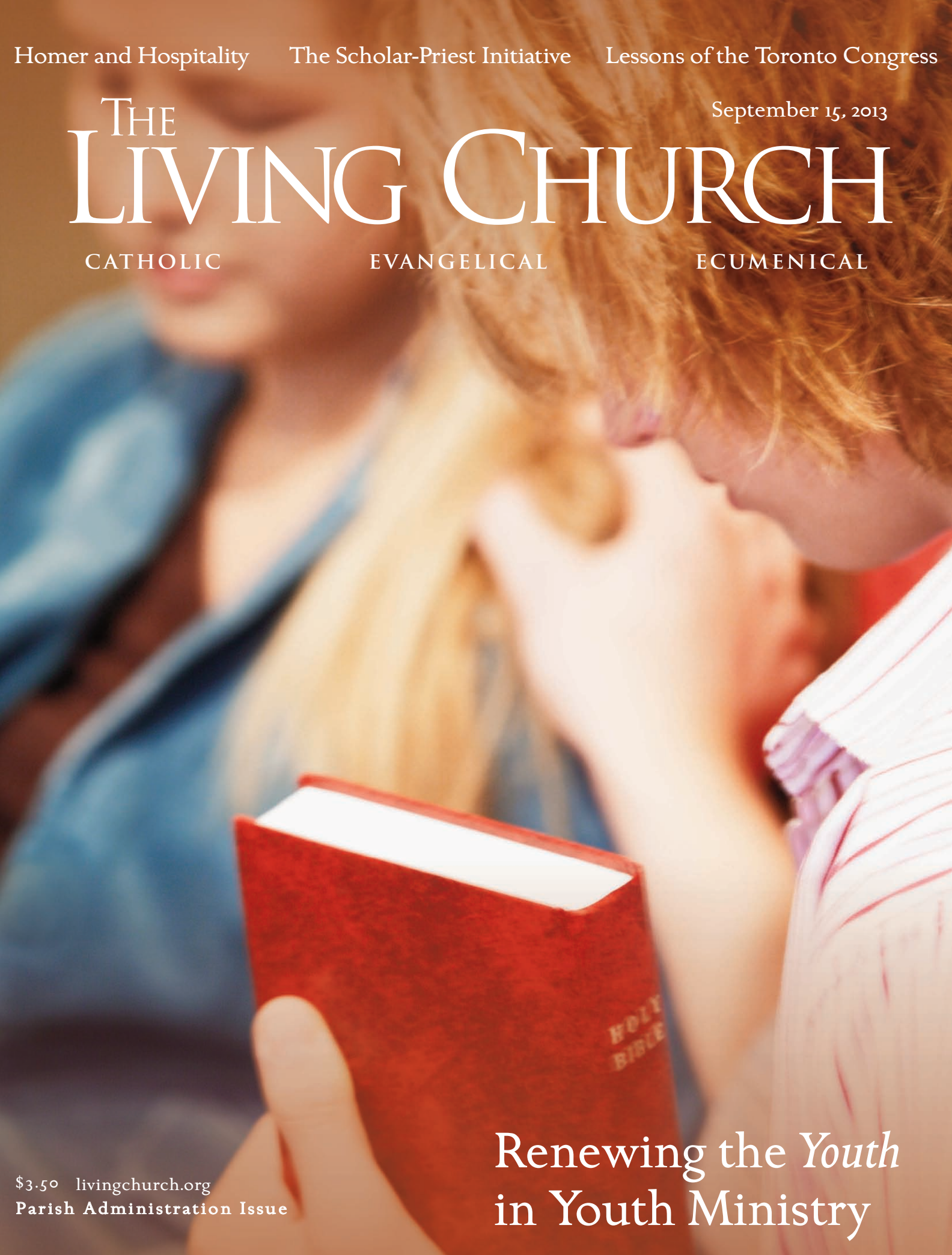

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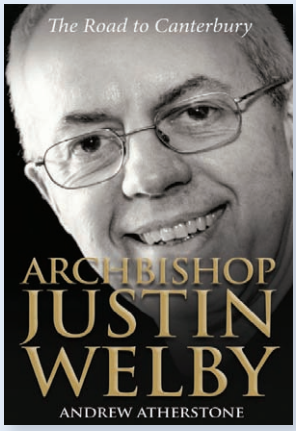

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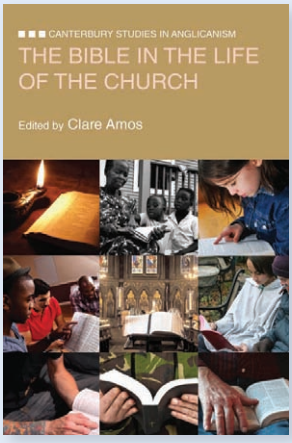

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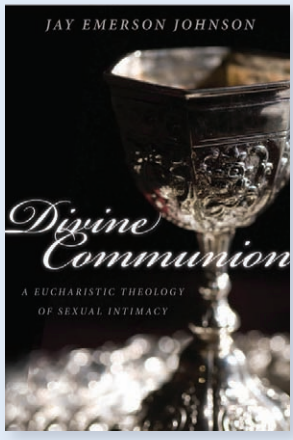

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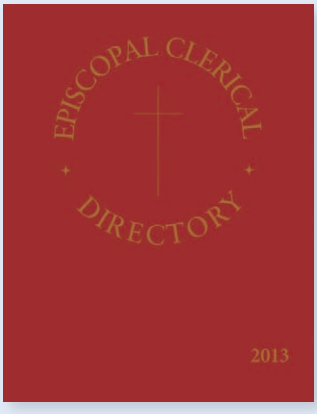

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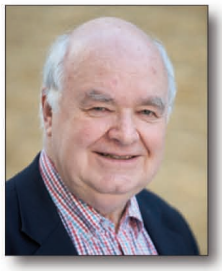

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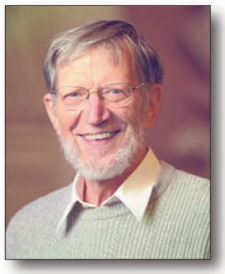

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ON THE COVER

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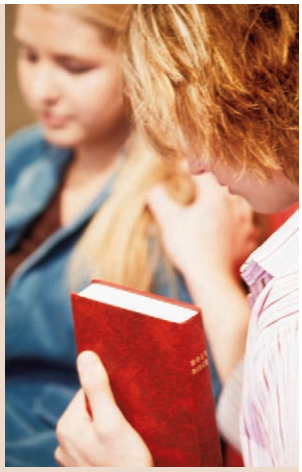
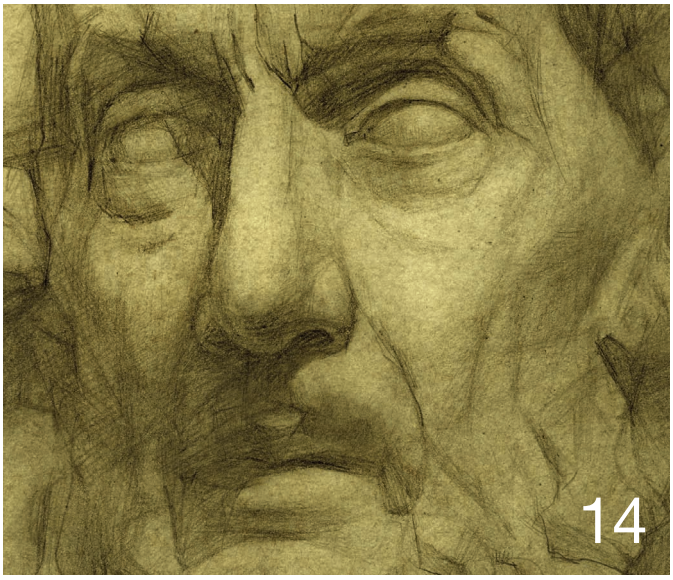
"The 15-year-old of a decade ago is the 25-year-old dropping out of church today" (see "Renewing the *Youth* in Youth Ministry," p. 10).





The Living Church

THIS ISSUE | September 15, 2013

Living Church Partners

We are grateful to All Souls Anglican Foundation [p. 49], and the Diocese of Tennessee [p. 51], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.

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

Bishops Cook Up Joy

In the spirit of Jesus' loaves and fishes miracle, two Texas bishops are proving it's possible to do amazing things with food and serve a spiritual purpose.

Now in its third year, the cooking show *In the Bishops' Kitchen* provides a relaxed venue for members of the Diocese of Dallas to see Bishop James Stanton and Suffragan Bishop Paul Lambert in their aprons rather than their chasubles.

Viewers pick up cooking tips along the way. They've followed their leaders through Lenten recipes, from seared scallops for grownups to tuna noodle casserole with potato-chip crust for the kids.

But the point goes beyond the plate.

"They both *love* to cook," says show creator Bret Williams, who handles communications for the Diocese of Dallas. "So when I presented the idea to them, they ran with it and helped develop the recipes and craft the dialogue for the first episode."

"Our goal with the show," he adds, "is simply to uplift and encourage our diocesan family while allowing our bishops to connect with our members in a fun and lighthearted way."

The Dallas bishops, Stanton (in white) and Lambert, are connecting with the diocese through cooking.

Two new, 20- to 30-minute episodes are posted online each year. In the works for 2013 is one called *Grillin' and Chillin' with the Bishops*. A second episode will serve up seasonal dishes for Christmastide.

The format has hit the spot beyond Dallas. Colleagues who've seen clips at House of Bishops gatherings have asked when they'll be invited on the show, Williams says.

They might not have to wait long. Williams sees possibilities beyond the kitchen and cyberspace. He hopes one day to stage live episodes for studio audiences and charge admission to raise money for missions.

"The audience would receive samples of the food, and the bishops would interact with the crowd throughout the taping," Williams says. "The show would be filled with surprise 'guest chefs.'"

As they say in show business: stay tuned.

G. Jeffrey MacDonald
TLC Correspondent

Communion Partners

Reconciliation at Lambeth

The Rt. Rev. Michael G. Smith, Bishop of North Dakota, has written a brief letter about a meeting between the Archbishop of Canterbury and six bishops representing Communion Partners.

The six bishops met with Archbishop Justin Welby August 19 at Lambeth Palace. Bishop Smith's letter was posted this morning on the Communion Partners website.

The Communion Partners group included Bishop Smith; the Rt. Rev. Gregory O. Brewer, Bishop of Central Florida; the Rt. Rev. Paul E. Lambert, Bishop Suffragan of Dallas; the Rt. Rev. Edward S. Little II, Bishop of Northern Indiana; the Rt. Rev. Daniel H. Martins, Bishop of Springfield; and the Rt. Rev. Edward L. Salmon, Jr., Dean of Nashotah House Theological Seminary.

Smith began his letter with a passage from a sermon Archbishop Welby preached in Monterey, Mexico, August 13: "It is a dangerous place, a narrow path we walk as Anglicans at present. On one side is the steep fall into an absence of any core beliefs, a chasm where we lose touch with God, and thus we rely only on ourselves and our own message. On the other side there is a vast fall into a ravine of intolerance and cruel exclusion. It is for those who claim all truth, and exclude any who question. When we fall into this place, we lose touch with human beings and create a small church, or rather many small churches — divided, ineffective in serving the poor, the hungry and the suffering, incapable of living with each other, and incomprehensible to those outside the church. We struggle with each other at a time when the Anglican Communion's great vocation as bridge builder is more needed than ever."

The Rev. Canon David Porter, the archbishop's director of reconciliation, participated in the meeting, Bishop Smith wrote.

"We believe the opportunity to

Lambeth Palace Jim Forest/Flickr

build relationships and discuss the ministry of reconciliation we share will bear fruit in this season of our common life," Bishop Smith wrote. "We are encouraged by our experience of the Archbishop as a man of faith and prayer, committed to the re-evangelization of increasingly secularized Western cultures."

Tackling Questions on Death and Dignity

No one likes to think about death or how to die. And because churches generally avoid the subjects, elders and their loved ones are increasingly unprepared to make sound decisions amid an ever-growing array of choices.

That's the impetus for *Embrace the Journey: Finishing Life God's Way*, a new eight-week curriculum from Anglicans for Life, a 30-year-old parachurch ministry based in Sewickley, Pennsylvania. Church groups watch eight sessions on DVDs and then discuss issues that often become pressing near the end of life, from biblical teachings on death to when to opt for hospice.

"We tackle all the topics that people are afraid to discuss," said Geor-

(Continued on next page)

Tackling Questions on Death and Dignity

(Continued from previous page)

gette Forney, author of the curriculum and president of Anglicans for Life.

The curriculum aims to help Christians think through big questions before they become urgent in the throes of crisis. They consider, for example, why some advocates for patients' rights recommend forgoing a living will and suggest instead appointing a healthcare advocate with power of attorney to make life-and-death decisions on a patient's behalf.

"Living wills can be interpreted by different people in different ways," Forney said. "You cannot create guidelines for every possible scenario of what might happen to your health. Therefore the better approach is to communicate to your health advocate … your worldview and how you want to live toward the end of your life."

Participants consider principles that Anglicans for Life offers as guidelines. We should not try to stave off death and preserve life artificially at all costs, Forney said, nor should we strive to hasten or accelerate death.

"What we're trying to help people find," Forney said, "is God's natural process."

Even within that framework, questions are often difficult. Because medical technology can keep patients alive even when prognoses are bleak, family members can face wrenching decisions and need tools for thinking through the issues, Forney said.

"We've created a complication by having so much medical ability now to fix so much," Forney said. "The church has got to teach on it."

What's more, as states loosen restrictions on assisted suicide, Forney worries that members of an aging baby boomer generation might opt for a convenient way to control costs — and their destiny — by deciding when to die on their own terms.

Forney at March for Life, 2013: "What we're trying to help people find is God's natural process."

"We're very concerned about the psychological fears that we see exhibited in people about dying," Forney said. She hears a growing sentiment along the lines of, "I'm afraid of it, but I'm going to control it. So I'm going to ask for that lethal injection or that lethal prescription."

First released in August, the curriculum is being used in congregations affiliated with the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church in North America, as well as Lutheran and Baptist churches. The leader's guide with DVDs costs $29.95; guides for participants cost $9.95. These materials may be ordered online at anglicansforlife.org or by calling (800) 707-6635.

G. Jeffrey MacDonald
TLC Correspondent

Egyptian Bishop Asks for Aid

Egypt's Anglican bishop has appealed for help from supporters after a "traumatic week of bloodshed and vandalism."

The Most Rev. Mouneer Anis, President Bishop of Jerusalem and the Middle East and Bishop in Egypt with North Africa and the Horn of Africa, has written to supporters ask-

ing for additional funds for the diocese's range of ministries which includes providing food, healthcare and children's education.

"The past week has been traumatic for Egyptians," he wrote. "We witnessed bloodshed on our streets, vandalism and the deliberate destruction of churches and government buildings in lawless acts of revenge.

"One of our Anglican churches was attacked, and other ministries received threats. We praise God that our churches and congregations are safe, but we grieve for the loss of life and for the churches which were burnt over the past week in Egypt.

"The Anglican Church in Egypt serves all Egyptians, especially the disadvantaged and marginalized, through our educational, medical and community development ministries. We seek to be a light in our society, and we continue to serve our neighbours in the difficult situation which surrounds us.


Anis

"Unemployment is at a record high, there is a lack of security on the streets, the economy is in decline, and poverty is crushing for many people in Egypt."

In his letter, Bishop Anis lists a range of ways people can financially support the work of the diocese (see goo.gl/l4RNA7).

The diocese supports around two dozen churches and has a range of ministries including providing support and education for children with hearing impairments, community development, theological education, and a prison ministry.

Massachusetts Seeks Coadjutor

The Diocese of Massachusetts accepted nominations until August 26 in its search for a bishop coadjutor, but a nomination is not required, and qualified clergy have until September 23 to apply.

The bishop coadjutor will succeed the Rt. Rev. M. Thomas Shaw, who in January announced his intention to retire and called for the election. In late May Bishop Shaw had surgery to remove a cancerous brain tumor. He returned to work a month later.

David Urion, a member of St. Anne's in-the-Fields, Lincoln, and chairman of the discernment committee, wrote in a letter soliciting nominations:

"We very much appreciate the

(Continued on page 44)

Renewing the *Youth* in Youth Ministry

What is next, church services for 30-somethings?

When do we expect people to become mature Christians, participating in and leading the body of Christ?

By Matt Marino

It is now axiomatic among church researchers that young adults are leaving church in unprecedented numbers (see Luis Lugo, "The Decline of Institutional Religion and Implications for American Civic Life," goo.gl/DiR6A). In 2008, the Pew Forum reported that those in their 20s and 30s attend church at one half the rate of their parents and one quarter the rate of their grandparents. Brett Kunkle listed seven other such research reports in 2009 (goo.gl/s1vnv). Depending on the researcher, between 60 percent and 88 percent of *churched* youth will not attend church in their 20s. Books are being published, conferences held, and churches are going to great lengths to address the issue of young adults "distancing" themselves from the Church. Often these efforts result in appeals for market-driven changes to the worship and theology of the Church. There is a danger here: If we start where people are without first knowing how they got there we will perpetuate our problem.

The issues we face with our young adults are a result of what we did with them in the last ministry they were a part of: youth ministry. After all, the 15-year-

old of a decade ago *is* the 25-year-old dropping out of church today. Could what we have done in youth ministry in the last two decades and today's problems with young adult retention result in a predictable picture? Is the abandonment of church by young adults the natural and logical outcome of youth ministry as commonly practiced?

In mainline churches, many of our young families have trickled away in the last two decades as we became distracted with sexuality arguments and defunded leadership for youth. When I went to work for our diocese six years ago, only three of 62 churches had a full-time youth director. The director of the local youth ministry network told me that 25 percent of Protestant churches have a full-time youth director. We had 5 percent. In any organization *priorities predict outcomes*. Show a decent consultant your church budget and you will hear a fairly accurate estimate of your church's demographics. What are our priorities? I know of churches that *can* afford a full-time *assistant* organist but not a youth minister. I know of an Episcopal Church in which the choir's discretionary budget is *100 times* the youth budget.

The years from birth to 19 comprise 25 percent of our life expectancy. According to researchers, 77 percent of those who choose to follow Christ do so before turning 21 (goo.gl/mxVT9J). Here is a question to ask your church treasurer: What percentage of our budget is dedicated to the 25 percent of our lives in which four-fifths of us make decisions to follow Christ? Is yours anywhere near 25 percent?

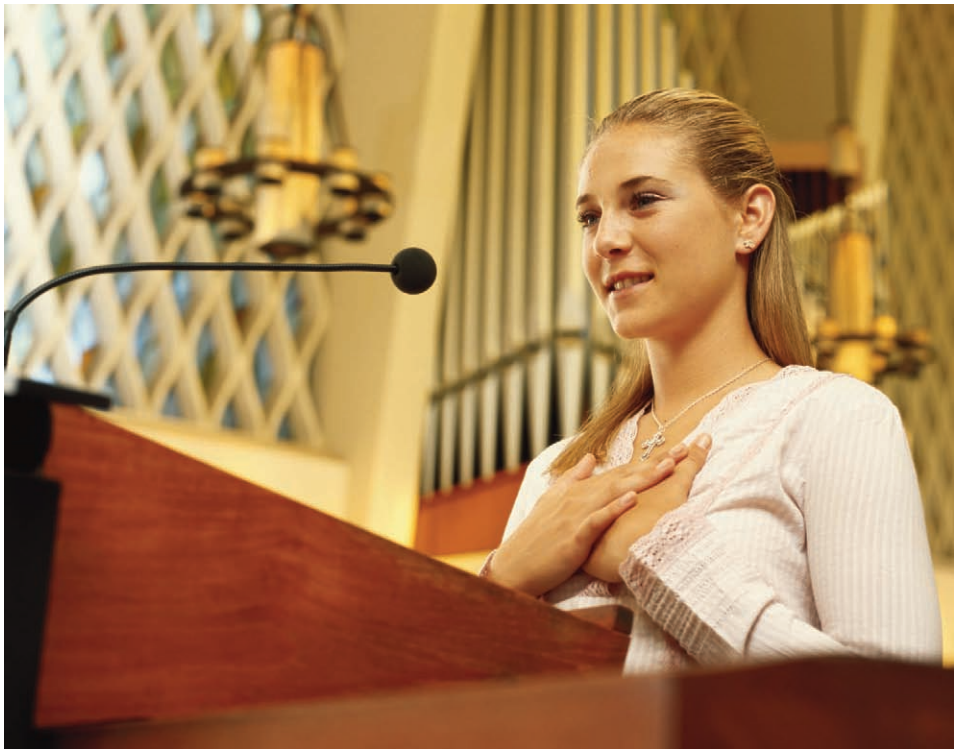
How Do Churches Grow?

In fast-growing churches (regardless of theological tradition) the first full-time hiring a church usually makes after senior pastor is the youth pastor. In many Episcopal churches youth director is our *last* hire. In the majority of churches in our diocese we spend more money on our trash than on our children. In many we spend more on our coffee than on our kids.

Why do fast-growing churches hire a youth pastor first? It is a strategic decision. The largest age cohort is 35-54 (26%). What are these people interested in? Their children, who make up the second-largest age cohort. Infancy-19 accounts for another 25.5 percent of the population. So when an ambitious church wants to grow, it draws in the emerging tither's children. Captivate the child and you have more than half the population. I am told the average age of Episcopalians is nearing 60. Even in a state like Arizona, loaded with retirement communities, only 20 percent of people are older than 60 (www.missioninsite.com).

I know of an Episcopal Church that spends the same amount on children, youth, and music as the evangelical church up the street. The evangelical church spends 80 percent of that money on an army of children, youth, and young-adult workers. Our church directs 80 percent to paid singers, choirmasters, and a six-figure salary for an organist. Results: In the past five years our church shrunk from 600 to 400 per week. Their church grew from 600 to 1,400. I am not arguing against organs or choirs. I am arguing against leaving our young people without leadership or investment.

In the evangelical world, when a church reaches 150 in Sunday attendance people begin expecting a full-time youth pastor. We have churches with 600 in Sunday attendance that lack youth ministers. It's possible to invest in the wrong *sort* of youth ministry, but what's worse is not caring enough about young people to invest in them at all. *Priorities predict outcomes.*



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Where we do still give students leadership, we tend to give them community built around fun without much spiritual formation and a strong commitment to progressive political causes. Many students tell us

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that they want to "know God" and leave us for churches that are unapologetic in their Christian message and willing to give answers rather than endlessly "embracing questions." Others, realizing that they don't need the church in order to have community based around political causes, leave to the political cause.

We lost students when we defunded leadership for them, organized them around social and political goals, and did not give them a gospel to orient their lives around and articulate to others.

While we underinvested in our young people, evangelicals invested heavily in youth-ministry's equivalent of junk bonds: Easy returns, but little long-term staying power. Imitating successful parachurch ministries in the 1980s and '90s, evangelical churches began attracting students with games and activities. But what the parachurch did in neighborhood living rooms with careful evangelistic purpose was a train wreck in the youth room. All across America, evangelism without much content was in, rigorous discipleship was out. Youth ministry without content often produced youth rooms full of empty students.

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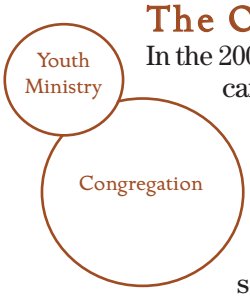
The One-Eared Mickey Mouse



In the 2000s, bands, fog machines, and light shows became the rage in evangelical youth ministry. Tim Elmore, in his book *Generation iY*, called today's young adults "the overindulged generation." Evangelicals overindulged kids with abandon, "wowing" them with noise, technology, and millions of pizzas. Students were segregated away from the adults in "youth services." What Stuart Cummings-Bond has called "The One-Eared Mickey Mouse" essentially turned "student ministry" into a parachurch ministry within the Church: Christ-centered in its message and developmentally appropriate, but segregated from the congregation in order to make programs attractive to students (*YouthWorker Journal*, Fall 1989, p. 76).

The entire congregation embraced this paradigm shift. It was the drug everyone wanted: Parents wanted their kids to *like* church. Pastors wanted undistracted parents listening to their sermons. Worship leaders wanted to avoid the complexity of pleasing multiple generations. Youth pastors liked the numbers and accolades. Kids liked the band, fog machine, and shorter message. Donors were excited to write large checks to build expensive facilities to reach lost and hurting kids. And if your metrics are filled seats and satisfaction surveys, it looked like it was working. But what are the long-term effects of a segregated, program-driven youth group?

It starts with the affiliation bond. In a segregated group, students grow relationally bonded to youth pastors. Because youth pastors have high turnover, new youth pastors have continually to win over the last youth pastor's group. Students become used to adults catering to their desires and preferences. The One-Eared Mickey Mouse, led by theologically untrained entrepreneurs, becomes what the market demands: the great show kids desire and the teaching parents require — just enough God to motivate kids to avoid the risky behaviors that parents fear, like drug abuse and sex.

Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton, in their groundbreaking book *Soul Searching* (Oxford, 2005), call this Moralistic Therapeutic Deism. In this model, students graduate from high school and, whether or not they may have had a real spiritual transformation, they have never been connected to the larger Church that will sustain their faith in the course of their life. Now, too often, older adults have no real investment in the young, parents oppose transformational "radical" faith, and the young have no interest in taking their place in the concerns and councils of the

Church. And so students graduate from the youth group into something that will cater to their preferences, like the local Starbucks.

The Church's Response?

How would the church respond to young adult departures? More innovative programming, of course! This time in the form of youth group-style worship services for young adults. The "big box" church moves its young from the nursery to the children's program, then to the "youth service." It graduates them to college groups, and now, increasingly, moves them to separate young adult programs. No one seems to see what is happening: young adults are not actually leaving church at all — they were never in church to begin with!

What is next, church services for 30-somethings? Will the future of the Church consist of unraveling theological traditions for age-affinity groups? When do we expect people to become mature Christians, participating in and leading the body of Christ? This is the antithesis of St. Paul's teaching in Ephesians 4 on equipping the saints. This is the infantilization of the saints. And our young people are increasingly saying "Buh-bye."

Conclusion

The emptying of young adults from churches, both evangelical and mainline, is a reality caused not primarily by cultural change but by Christian leaders: youth ministers, senior pastors, and church boards. We did this to ourselves, either by failing to invest in our youth or by investing in the wrong outcomes. What can we do in response? Surely the answer has more to do with repenting of where we failed them as youth than pandering to where we left them as young adults.

Next: Building Faith that Will Last

The Rev. Matt Marino is the Diocese of Arizona's canon for youth and young adults, architect of a summer youth camp program at Chapel Rock, and vicar of a multiethnic church plant, St. Jude's, Phoenix. He blogs at thegospelside.com.

The author with his family

Tell Me Your Story: Homer and Hospitality

By Carla Arnell

"We're never the ones to say whether we are welcoming" — so a fellow parishioner recently remarked. That humble acknowledgement of uncertainty about our congregation's hospitality caught our rector's attention and prompted her to reflect on what it means for a congregation to be welcoming, a matter of theological importance but also practical concern in these days of dwindling numbers for mainline congregations.

In a subsequent weekly letter, our rector concluded: "Being radically welcoming means embracing the Other and allowing ourselves to be changed, mutually transformed, in the process." Her answer reminded us that accepting the Other is central to a church's practice of hospitality, but her response also opened as many questions as it answered. What does it mean to *embrace* the Other? *Embrace*, after all, is a term of intimacy. By what means will that embracing happen and transform us?

As I think back to a Protestant church I attended for 20-plus years during the first half of my life and its example of hospitality, I remember a parish that was home to men and women, children and elderly, professors and factory workers, divorced, married, and single people, and people of different races and classes. It was a place where people were *welcome* to assemble alongside each other, regardless of the superficial differences that might otherwise divide them. Yet, true hospitality — radical welcoming — goes beyond the kindly tolerance of otherness that I fear we sometimes mistake for hospitality. In its fullest sense, true hospitality presses us not only to worship alongside, but also to embrace, the Other. And it's the mysterious mechanism behind "embracing" the stranger that I find more clearly illustrated in the hospitality stories of an ancient Greek epic than in the welcoming practices of many contemporary Christian congregations.

Since those 20 years rooted in one particular church home, I've moved geographically and been either blessed or cursed to be something of a religious wanderer, visiting church after church in my quest for a new ecclesial home. As a result of that wandering, I've had a chance to see what it means to be a stranger in different places. In almost every church, I've encountered congregations sincerely committed to hospitality — to making the stranger welcome. Parishioners wear nametags or ask newcomers to do so. Parishioners invite newcomers to sign a guest book. Parishioners flock to newcomers with hearty handshakes and words of welcome at the Peace. And, above all, parishioners direct newcomers to reception areas replete with donut and pastry treats, fruits, crackers, cheeses, coffee, lemonade, and other painstakingly prepared refreshments. Yet, amid all that hospitality, there's one key ingredient of welcoming that has so often seemed to be missing, an element that was central to hospitality as the ancient Greek poet Homer envisioned it in *The Odyssey*, which I teach every year in my literature classes.

As a student, I remember dismissing Homer's epic poem as just a story of extraordinary heroes, struggles with mythical creatures like the Cyclopes, and romantic encounters with glamorous seductresses such as Calypso or Circe — in other words, as a story very distant from my everyday life and moral concerns. But during the many years I've taught that text I've been increasingly impressed by it as a work of wisdom literature, with much to teach me as a Christian.

For those who are unfamiliar with the story or foggy about its details, the basic plot concerns the Greek hero Odysseus, who has been away fighting in the Trojan War for ten years and, for another ten years, trying desperately to return to his home in Ithaca. The story is one of wandering and estrangement in a number of ways: Odysseus must travel through many foreign lands during his journey, and his son, Telemachus, travels a parallel path through strange places in order to obtain news of his father. Through those quests of father and son, we learn what it means to be a good guest and hospitable host, for time and again Odysseus and Telemachus find themselves as guests at the mercy of a stranger's hospitality.

Of course, the ancient Greeks supremely valued good hospitality, expressed particularly through the host-guest relationship. Because this early Greek world was

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Bust of Homer, thinkstockphotos.com

Tell Me Your Story: Homer and Hospitality

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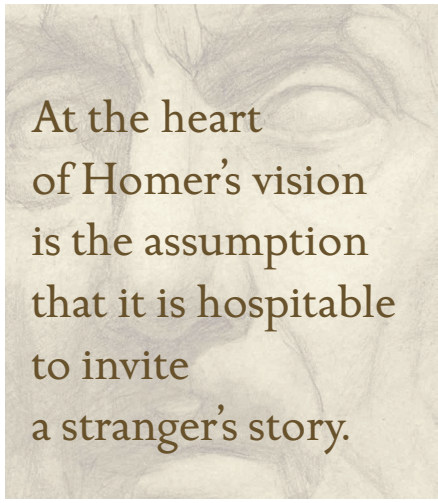
a perilous one for travelers, the ancient Greeks placed great importance on the ability to establish a bond between host and guest, which would ensure the host's safety if he were ever a stranger in the guest's land. So sacred was the host-guest relationship that it even trumped political allegiances, as illustrated by the famous encounter between Glaucos and Diomedes in Homer's *Iliad*, when the two men, respectively a Trojan and Greek warrior, share the stories of their lineages and agree to lay aside arms because of the host-guest ties that, they discover, united their grandfathers in a special bond.

The host's special obligations to a stranger are memorably illustrated in a number of episodes in *The Odyssey*. When Odysseus is washed ashore in the beautiful, refined kingdom of Phaeacia after having been finally released from imprisonment by the nymph Calypso, he appears like a mountain lion — grizzled, scruffy, and terrifying. With that animalistic image, Homer emphasizes how war has transformed Odysseus into something Other, barely recognizable as human to the princess and her ladies-in-waiting who discover him on the shore.

Even in the face of that bedraggled appearance, Princess Nausicaa invites him back to the palace as her guest. There, the king of the realm, Alcinous, orders him to be bathed, reclothed, and treated to an elaborate banquet, where he is fed with the finest foods and regaled with stories told by a blind bard, Demodocus. Most importantly, though, King Alcinous pauses at a key moment during the evening banqueting and turns to Odysseus with a special request. "Tell me your story, stranger," he asks.

It is this deceptively simple moment that is the heart of the epic poem both structurally and morally. Structurally, it prompts the shift from third-person to first-person narration and precipitates the seminal story of how Odysseus came to be stranded on Calypso's island, the essential information readers have been yearning to learn. Morally, it places *the desire to know another person's story* at the heart of true hospitality. In Homer's culture, it is the height of courtesy to ask for a stranger's life story.



Herein lies the central lesson for Christian congregations. During my many years of being both a visitor and a congregational host, I've noticed that congregations tend to think of welcoming in terms of wearing name badges, shaking a visitor's hand, and offering a generous reception feast. Indeed, I was recently part of a congregation that was seemingly expert at such congregational welcoming. At the start of every service, the rector would ask those who considered themselves members of the congregation to rise in order to identify those who were strangers — those worshipers still seated. That ingenious process of identification led to hand-shaking and exchanges of names or good mornings. And yet, even after a year of being warmly greeted in that way, I still felt like an outsider in a sea of strangers, for beyond those morning pleasantries, few people asked for my story, nor was I courageous enough to seek out the stories of others.

What was missing there and in other congregational initiatives to be welcoming is a willingness to cross boundaries of privacy and invite the stranger's story. My guess is that this reluctance to invite stories stems from a few different causes: our natural solipsism, our work culture, and our modern sense of politeness. Too often we are so caught up in our own thoughts and concerns that we don't push ourselves to be genuinely curious about other people, for real curiosity demands that we transcend our self-enclosed worlds and try to enter into someone else's world with empathy and interest.

Moreover, in the work world, for obvious legal reasons, we are typically trained *not* to ask strangers — job candidates, for instance — certain questions: Are you married? Do you have any children? What is your current salary? Perhaps we carry that workplace taboo about questioning the stranger to other contexts, including congregational ones. And last, I think we too frequently fear inviting the stranger's story because we don't want to intrude upon the person's privacy and ask things it's not polite to ask, given how politeness in contemporary culture has come to mean (when it means more than please and thank you) self-restraint and respect for other people's boundaries — a weak modern substitute for the richer sense of courtesy found in Homer's stories.

In that context, then, I suggest that Homer offers a welcome challenge to our Christian views about what it means to be hospitable. At the heart of Homer's vision is the assumption that it is hospitable to invite a stranger's story. Although this commitment to learning the stranger's story can happen informally in the op-

portunities for conversation before and after a worship service, it can happen in more formal ways as well. For instance, the church I attend has taken seriously this challenge to build a welcoming community by inviting the stories of its parishioners.

To that end, the traditional Bible study or topic-centered adult forums have, for a season, been replaced by a storytelling hour. Yes, every week during the season of Easter, a different parishioner holds court much as Odysseus did, as we gather in a circle and listen to that person's story — stories about the person's spiritual journey but also about the prosaic details. I have never found an adult forum to be time so well spent because those forums have taught me much that I didn't know about people I see every Sunday and know by name but otherwise don't really know. And in a sense I have found these adult forums to be "hospitality training," preparing us for those more informal congregational moments when we might invite the stranger's story or share ours.

As I think back to the innumerable parish coffee hours during which I've found myself looking across at strangers as if across an abyss, I realize that those empty moments of feeling not welcome transpired because no one (including me) posed the basic question: What is your story? If radical welcoming really means "embracing the Other and allowing ourselves to be changed, mutually transformed, in the process," the mechanism for that transformation is story. Through story, we are brought into deeper relationship with each other. Only through this exchange of stories will we know and be known — and fulfill what it means to be a community of welcome.

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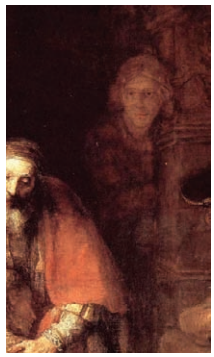
Prepare the Feast: The Scholar-Priest Initiative

By Jason Ingalls and Joseph Wolyniak

Rembrandt painted his iconic *The Return of the Prodigal Son* only a few years before he died in 1669. The returning son kneels before his welcoming father. The elder brother, robed in crimson, stands to the right. A wealthy man sits, a servant stands, the mother watches from the background; but the painting highlights the returner and the receiver. The Prodigal has come home.

Many have mourned theology's separation from the Church, but in the last 30 years we have witnessed resurgent efforts to reconnect academic theology to its ecclesial roots. The Scholar-Priest Initiative (www.scholarpriests.org) stands in this vein, endeavoring to be the servant in the background of Rembrandt's picture: to do everything in our power to reintegrate theology back into the life of the parish; to rekindle theological vocation and imagination; in short, to welcome theology home.



The Context

The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada face three intractable and seemingly unrelated problems: the double bind of ordained parochial leadership, the diminishment of theological discourse in parish life, and the overall decline of North American theological education.

First, while debates rage on whether and to what extent North American Anglicanism is in decline (and what to do about it), we suffer from an undeniable and debilitating double bind in our parochial leadership. In the Episcopal Church nearly 40 percent of congregations operate without full-time, permanent ordained ministers. Our churches — ever increasingly, it seems — simply cannot afford full-time clergy. Many dioceses have accordingly found themselves with a glut of ordained ministers. Several have suspended their discernment processes because they already have too many unemployed and underemployed priests. We have an overabundance of well-trained, capable priests. We have too many congregations in need of priests. We need to somehow connect the dots.

Second, there is a disconnect between theological discourse and parish life. While there is much worthwhile theological scholarship being pursued in the academy, it is often only the headline-grabbing stuff that trickles down to the parish roots. The faithful are far more likely to have read about the Jesus Seminar than they are narrative theology. While teaching figures prominently in the ordination of a priest (Scripture readings, Examination, Consecration) and in the canonical definition of priestly ministry ("Of the Life and Work of Priests," *Constitution & Canons*, Title III, Canon IX, Sec. 5), rarely is the charism exercised. Priests are often forced into a managerial role when faced with parochial demands — feeling pinched to function as a CEO rather than the "pastor and teacher" (Eph. 4) they aspired to be. Priests vow to "be diligent in the reading and study of the Holy Scriptures, and in seeking the knowledge of such things as may make one a stronger and more able minister in Christ" (BCP, p. 532), but often find it an uphill battle to crack open a commentary. Compounding matters further, as Fr. Robert Hendrickson has noted, our discernment processes regularly turn away ordinands who feel a call both to parochial ministry and theological scholarship (see "The Consolation of Theology: Or Why We Need Scholar Priests," *thecuratesdesk.org*, March 1, 2013). There is a suspicion of those who want to pursue both, and many people have been offered a forced choice: professor *or* priest. In many dioceses, you can be a priest or you can be a scholar, but you cannot aspire to be both.

For those who, when forced, choose the academic track, a third problem emerges: the overall decline of theological education in North America. In academe, there has been a steady decline in the number of full-time positions in the last few decades, with the fields

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The Return of the Prodigal Son (Rembrandt)

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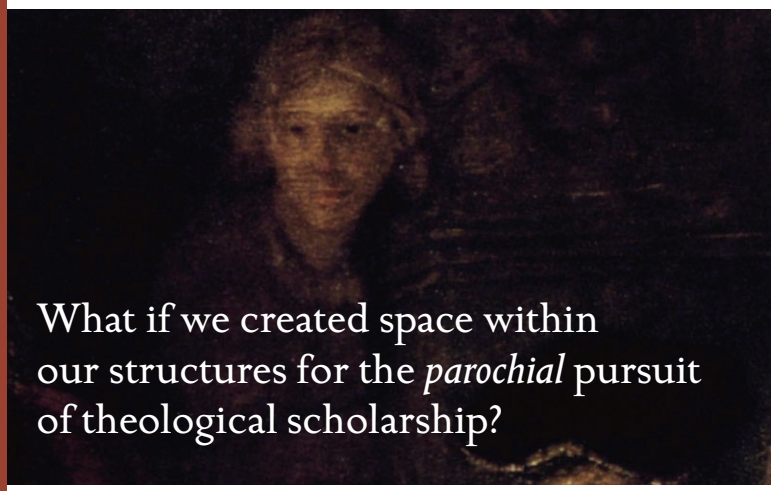
of biblical and theological studies being especially hard-hit. As a result, many of those who choose professorial vocations struggle to find academic work, often taking adjunct teaching positions for less than minimum wage and spending their family's income to travel to conferences, publish, and pursue opportunities for an academic career. We force potential theological educators to make an ill-fated choice, one which helps neither aspirants nor the churches that sent them away.

Towards a Solution

But what if we did not force the choice? What if we created space within our structures for the *parochial* pursuit of theological scholarship? What if we encouraged and nurtured the vocation of scholar-priests?

First, it might make smaller, out-of-the-way, and under-resourced congregations *attractive* to those who would normally feel the need to stay near university centers. Such places could offer both the time and space to pursue theological scholarship, while also fostering a connection to the people on the ground for whom such scholarly edification is ultimately intended. Perhaps such places could allow for ten hours a week to pursue academic reading and writing. Perhaps both congregation and priest would be better for it.



Second, it might mean that theology *for* the Church would be done *in* the Church. We often hear complaints about the "ivory tower" nature of academic theology. What if we nurtured priests who pursued theological scholarship within the context of congregational ministry? What if theological jargon ceased to be an end in itself, aimed only at communicating with the guild, but instead became a part of the disciplined speech of scholar-priests aimed at communicating with a parochial audience? What if we fostered a network of pastoral mentors committed to helping fellow scholar-priests stabilize and expand the congregations they serve? Perhaps it would help bridge the gap between purportedly disconnected worlds, reminding the Church why scholarship matters and reminding scholars why the Church matters.

Third, it might mean that a new generation of theological scholars could pursue their craft without the (often deleterious) forced choices we are setting up. Instead of struggling to make ends meet and hoping against hope in the exploitive adjunct market, theological educators could pursue their vocation of research and teaching from within congregations. As such, they could serve as a resource to their congregation and diocese: equipping the faithful (lay and ordained) to pursue the ministry that is theirs, drawing on scholarship to illumine the issues of the day, and bearing fruits in the councils of the Church. It might mean that the theology of our Church would be marked by intense local engagement with global theological issues. It might mean that congregations once struggling to make it with non- and low-stipendiary priests would once again flourish with fresh vision and vigor. It might mean a generation of pastor-theologians who do what they love and love what they do.

Welcoming Theology Home

Little of this will come as a surprise. Many have already named these problems; some have suggested creative solutions. What is needed, however, is a coordinated effort to address these issues at once. That is where the Scholar-Priest Initiative comes in.

Attempting to address problems of the present with a hopeful foresight for the future and a deep commitment to the Church, SPI is working with bishops, seminary professors and deans, and other leaders in the Episcopal Church and Anglican Church of Canada to connect priestless congregations with capable and committed scholar-priests. The burgeoning effort has been bolstered by a gracious cast of patrons and sponsors. The Rt. Rev. John C. Bauerschmidt of Tennessee, the Rt. Rev. Wayne Smith of Missouri, and the Rt. Rev. Stephen Andrews of Algoma are serving as patron bishops, while a diverse

network of sponsors have given their counsel and support. The network of interested congregations and priests is growing daily.

In June 2014, SPI will host its first gathering to establish and further foster a network of support and mentorship: the Society of Scholar-Priests. The society — open to all who support SPI's parish-enabling model of centered, open, and hands-on scholar-priesthood — will promote both high-quality theological scholarship and professional enrichment for its members. In the years ahead, we hope to launch small parish grants that will help connect scholar-priests with congregations that cannot afford a full-time priest of their own. We also aspire to identify future scholar-priests and support their theological education and formation through a fellowship program. And that is just the beginning.

Rembrandt's painting is about returning, welcoming, hurt feelings, squandered opportunities, hoped-for reconciliation, and new beginnings. Whether you're the son, mother, father, or brother, we invite you to welcome theology home. We invite you to nurture the great tradition of scholar-priests — from Irenaeus, Augustine, and Aquinas, through Richard Hooker, the Caroline Divines, and William Temple, to Sarah Coakley, Sam Wells, and Rowan Williams. We invite you to help prepare the feast.

The Rev. Jason Ingalls is a priest of the Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee working as development assistant at Ridley Hall, Cambridge, and assistant curate in two Church of England parishes. Joseph Wolyniak is a D.Phil candidate at the University of Oxford, visiting scholar at the University of Denver, and a 2012 Fellow of the Episcopal Church Foundation.

Deconstruction Runs Amok

Review by Leonard Freeman

In returning to those thrilling days of yesteryear do we have to turn them upside down? In deconstructing the dominant culture, do we have to dump basic heroism, or intentionally lose faith in heroic leaders and Christian-based virtues? These questions arose after I watched this year's version of *The Lone Ranger*.

The title character is arguably *the* personification of the highest reaches of what were American values in the mid-20th century. Born as a radio character in the Great Depression, living on into the mid-1950s via film and television, the "lone ranger" was specifically designed to be a real person, with a scripted creed of *not* overcoming incredible odds, or using untoward force, or special powers, but based on character, good speech, justice, shooting not to kill, standing for law and order in a lawless time — and even racial equality. Clearly he and Tonto dealt with each other pretty much as equals, or at least much more so than the usual stooge-sidekick standard of the day. He was in the best sense of the term an intentional role model we bought into, at least as an ideal.

The Lone Ranger
Directed by Gore Verbenski
Walt Disney Pictures

To stand that icon on its head, as this film does, raises some interesting questions about where we are. Actor Armie Hammer's Lone Ranger is stiff and dorkish (as was the 1950s Ranger, Clayton Moore, if we're honest), and the film has him violate the basic creed. He, with Tonto's leading, engages in things the Lone Ranger creed never would have countenanced: robbing a bank, blowing up a bridge — for good causes, yes, but essentially a terrorist approach to problem-solving. And in the end he dons the mask not to establish law and order in the early West but because "if they [the villains] represent the law, then I must wear the mask to be an outlaw."

Many of the villains are overtly Christian — saying prayers, wearing crosses, acting like bigots.

Not that it's a bad film. Tonto (Johnny Depp) as the lead character is intriguing, and for $215-plus million you can obviously put pretty pictures and big bang spectacle on the

screen. The backstories of the Lone Ranger and Tonto are interesting. But older generations who grew up with the Lone Ranger will not like it, and families with children will probably stay away because of the overdone violence. Which leaves the question: just who was supposed to love this enough at the box office, anyway?

Hollywood has been going down this deconstructing-yesterday's-icons route for a while now. *The Green Hornet* (2011) turned its hero into a functional boob, with the sidekick Kato as the real brains and hero. Giving Tonto and Kato new status could be applauded as interesting takes on the rise of minorities, and a more realistic look at the mixed nature of heroism; but together they seem to revel in, and celebrate, a loss of faith in basic cultural underpinnings.

A biblical take could be that dominant cultures are never as good as we trumpet them; Jews and Christians alike were clearly minorities critiquing the dominant Egyptian and Roman cultures of their day, after all. But in that regard, the fact that supposedly middle-American, family-oriented outfits like Disney are backing this kind of film raises some flags.

Are character and nobility and a quest for personal piety *really* lost causes? If not, what can we Christians do to enable them over against a culture apparently going down a different path?

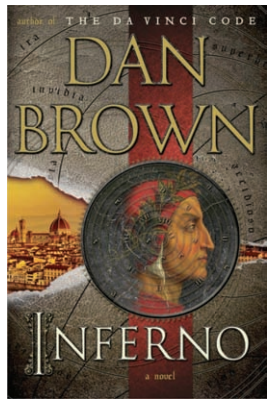
"Return with us now to those thrilling days of yesteryear" may not be our best option. Then again, faith, hope, and charity never go out of style.

The Rev. Leonard Freeman writes at the weblog poemsperday.com.

Dan Brown's Depraved Malthusianism

By Ian S. Markham

Dan Brown of *The Da Vinci Code* fame has just produced his latest offering. *Inferno* has all the classic Brown features: some great descriptions of Florence, Venice, and Istanbul; a well-delivered and intriguing plot; and a sophisticated encounter with Dante's *Divine Comedy*. It is going to be widely read, and is sure to be a bestseller.



Yet it is now clear that Brown is a depraved secularist. This is not meant as a term of abuse, but, simply and literally, as descriptive of his worldview. For the Christian tradition, sin can so corrupt us that we are unable to see the presence and providence of God; and in this novel, Brown exposes his total blindness to the possibility of the world being held within the providence of God.

The plot is driven by a movement that believes populations must be reduced to ensure the survival of humanity. It was Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834) who originally suggested that human populations need to be checked from time to time by catastrophe because agricultural production cannot keep up with human reproduction. Strangely Malthus was worrying about this issue when the population of the world was less than a billion. At least when Paul Ehrlich wrote *The Population Bomb* in 1968, the world's population was three and a half billion. In both cases, their apocalyptic predictions have not materialized. Instead the population of the world today is approximately seven

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billion people and there is little evidence of an imminent population correction.

Fear-mongerers about population growth make several fundamental mistakes. First, they ignore the rich human capacity for innovation and development. We are really good at discovering a technique that can transform agricultural production; we are producing more food now more cheaply than ever before. Second, there is a complex relationship between economic growth and population growth.

Brown's protagonists tend to assume that a smaller population means more resources to go around; the truth is that a smaller population means much less economic activity. In a world where there are only small rural communities, everyone struggles. The careers of most TLC readers depend on significant and major populations, which enable a high degree of specialization and a significant number of people needing their wares or services. Many of the problems in Africa are not due to population growth but to the lack of population and therefore the lack of infrastructure. And the fine balance between the working and retired populations depends on not declining and at least replacing the population overall.

It is of course true that population growth can create local difficulties. A sudden surge in population in a region (for example, through displaced refugees in a war zone) puts enormous pressure on clean water supplies and waste disposal. And sometimes we are not sufficiently considerate towards other forms of animal and plant life in our environment. But a gradual increase in population density, if carefully managed, can be absorbed fairly easily by our globe and can lead to increasing wealth.

Brown's book is not simply misleading about the nature of the "problem," but entertains shocking and depraved solutions. For future readers of this enjoyable novel, I will avoid being specific. Suffice to say, calls for a dramatic population reduction or for

enforced sterilization of certain groups in society are, in a proper and literal sense, depraved from a Christian perspective. Christians believe that every human being is an extraordinary gift; every human life is infinitely precious. Accordingly, growth in population is a good: we are living into this extraordinary world that God has created.

One might object that surely at some point there must be a limit to the sheer number of people that the finite resources of the world can support. The response comes in two parts. First, on the economic level, it is amazing how the extraordinary gift of the Imago Dei, which expresses itself in our capacity to think and innovate, means that the limit for natural resources is always further away than we expect. In the 1970s, we believed that our oil-based society was unsustainable; now in 2013 we can see an energy-independent America for decades to come. Second, on the faith level, the miracle of human life is not a freak accident but an expression of a divinely guided intention. We trust that the process of the big bang and evolution was providentially guided. And we trust that human development and growth will continually be held in the hands of God.

Brown has done a service in reminding us of how fundamentally different the secular worldview is from the one of faith. He has firmly planted his flag in the secular camp. The challenge of faith is to offer a response that affirms the intrinsic value of humanity and to trust in the hope grounded in God.

The Rev. Ian S. Markham is dean of Virginia Theological Seminary.

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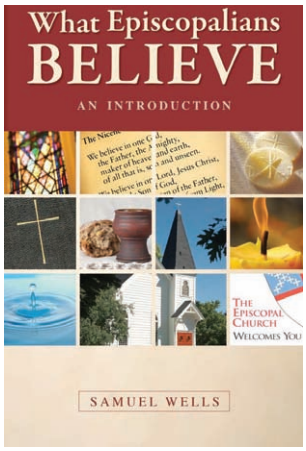

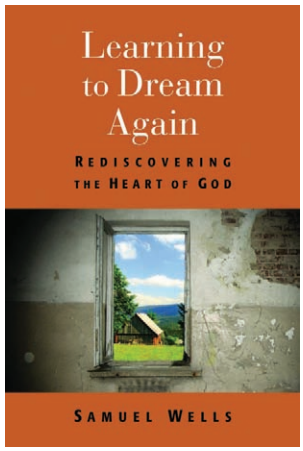

What Episcopalians Believe
An Introduction
By **Samuel Wells**. Morehouse. Pp. 112. $14

Learning to Dream Again
By **Samuel Wells**. Eerdmans. Pp. 233. $18

An Insider-Outsider's Gifts

Review by Andrew Petiprin

In 2012 Samuel Wells left his position as dean of Duke University Chapel and research professor of Christian ethics at Duke Divinity School to return to England, where he is now vicar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields in London. After seven years in the American academy and the Episcopal Church, Wells developed a unique insider-outsider perspective from which those he leaves behind have much to learn. As parting gifts he offers two books with wide-ranging interest for American readers: *What Episcopalians Believe* and *Learning to Dream Again*.

What Episcopalians Believe, the American companion to Wells's *What Anglicans Believe*, begins in a defiantly prudent place. Amid all of the controversy in the Episcopal Church, Wells "is not arguing that we live in especially momentous times" (p. xii). What interests Wells in this introductory work is not primarily to analyze positions on women's ordination or same-sex blessings, but to understand and celebrate what God has done for the world in Jesus Christ. For Episcopalians, what matters is how God uses us to play our part in his work, and for the most part Wells articulates this dream effectively. He brings a fresh perspective to classical Anglican topics in the American context, using the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-Nine Articles as guideposts on a journey to "speak *to*" the Episcopal Church rather than "*for* it" (p. xiv). With a few reservations, this is a good book to put into the hands of someone asking the question Wells attempts to answer.

Wells organizes his thoughts into four sections: The Faith, the Sources of Faith, the Order of the Faith, and the Character of the Faith. The most enriching and exciting part is the first chapter — a 28-page sweep through salvation history. Wells puts first things first, telling with rhetorical flourishes the story that centers on the Messiah, "the centripetal goal to which all searches for truth must look … and the centrifugal force from which all goodness flows" (p. 1). He is inclusive in scope while never wavering from the uniqueness of salvation through Christ from the Garden of Eden to the eschaton. Simply put, being an Episcopalian should be all about Jesus. Any no-

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Processional cross at Grace Church, Lopez Island, Washington (Robert Riggins photo)

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tion of an "Episcopal faith" or any broadly labeled "Anglican" way of doing things is a valuable but subordinate subset of the timeless truth of the one Gospel of Christ.

Throughout the book there is helpful material on history, liturgy, and mission; but Wells's primary task is to argue that Episcopalians possess valuable doctrine, which is "never simply a series of propositions" (p. xiii). Indeed, liturgy, mission, and finally history are best understood through the lens of the content of the Christian faith, about which Episcopalians, as part of the Anglican tradition, tell the world in a special way. Sin, repentance, and forgiveness are understood in the Episcopal Church as "less about being set apart and more about attaining a rhythm of life in accord with the rhythm of the saints" (p. 15). He describes different theories of the atonement while ultimately concluding that we ought to think *primarily* of justification and salvation in terms of the work of Christ, our justifier. On this and other matters there are strong, welcome echoes of F.D. Maurice.

The book also tackles popular, misunderstood manifestations of the Christian faith as received by the Episcopal Church, including the infamous three-legged stool of Scripture, Tradition, and Reason. Wells astutely dismisses the notion of three separate strands of revelation that function as a system of checks and balances; but he does not smash the whole schema to bits and offer something different. This is disappointing. The stage is set for a presentation of a fully evangelical faith poured into immutable Catholic structures, but Wells chooses not to make the case, relying instead on a familiar but uninspiring nod to "a searching, meditating, embodied, and biblically formed encounter with the ways of God in Christ" (p. 48).

One reason for the lack of a fully articulated ecclesial vision may lie in

the book's surprising omission of specific influences beloved by Episcopalians, Anglicans worldwide, and Christians of many traditions, chief among them C.S. Lewis. Likewise, N.T. Wright is completely missing from the bibliography, as is Michael Ramsey's *Gospel and the Catholic Church* and anything of major significance by Rowan Williams. The book also contains a study guide by Sharon Ely Pearson that is useful for checking reading comprehension but too heavy on questions such as "What do you believe?" and "Do you agree?"

Learning to Dream Again is a much different book, which better displays Wells's greatest gifts. If *What Episcopalians Believe* succeeds in user-friendly analysis, *Learning to Dream Again* adds layers of both winsomeness and heartache. Wells sets out to talk about the faith on multiple levels: the head, the gut, the heart, and the hand. It is a collection of reflections from a scholar-preacher, who is able to connect the stories of the Bible to the story of each person's life.

"Who are you?" he asks, encouraging his reader to conclude, "I can't answer that question except in relation to Jesus" (p. 45). Likewise, he wants to know whether his readers' commitment to and participation in the body of Christ is so profound that they would "be among those … worth torturing" to bring the whole system down (p. 90). These and other questions provide a welcome challenge and kindle the fire of imagination.

In the fourth and best chapter, "Learning to Read Again," Wells encourages "reading the Bible and letting the Bible read you" (p. 117). He uses the stories of Moses, Elijah, David, Jonah, Jacob, and Esau to make a variety of provocative and faithful points. He writes: "Where are you? Where is your brother? These are the two most important questions you will ever be asked" (p. 134). There is profound insight about underdogs and overlords, transformation and healing, and a breathtaking perspective on the beatitudes called "Dwelling in the Comma." Here Wells argues that the pause in between "Blessed are" and what follows *is* the Christian life, the "valley between the horror of the cross and the wonder of the resurrection" (p. 140). That will preach anywhere.

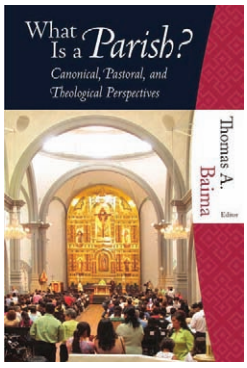
There are weak moments in this volume as well. The obvious homiletic origin of many of the essays makes reading them tedious at times. He writes "I wonder if" on several occasions — perhaps a good transition when emanating from the pulpit once a week, but less effective in print. His references to films are sometimes misplaced, and his personal stories occasionally seem too tailor-made for the situation to be entirely true. Does it matter? He addresses some hot ethical topics, including abortion, but is so balanced in his presentation that it becomes difficult to find an edifying angle. On the other hand, he makes some generalizations that are both clear and heartfelt: medicine should be about caring first, then curing; decisions about our food are intimately bound up in Christian morality; obsession with taxes and state control gives too much power to Caesar.

On the whole, both books invite seekers and longtime Christians alike to explore a relationship with a loving God, whose call on our lives as individuals and as a Church is never easy. And although Wells may no longer call the Episcopal Church or the United States his home, we who remain in both may give thanks for his time among us, build on the good work he has begun in these creative and highly accessible volumes, and dream of the future for ourselves.

The Rev. Andrew Petiprin is rector of St. Mary of the Angels Church in Orlando, Florida.

Lumen Gentium for Today

Reviewed by Daniel H. Martins



What Is a Parish?
Canonical, Theological, and Pastoral Perspectives
Edited by **Thomas A. Baima** and **Lawrence Hennessey**.
Hillenbrand Books. Pp. 208. $20

While I made casual conversation with a priest of the Church of England at a conference some years ago, he asked me, "How large is your parish?" I was serving as a rector in California at the time, and replied readily with the membership and attendance statistics of the flock over which I was the pastor. I could tell immediately from my interlocutor's expression that I had completely misunderstood his question. He wanted to know the geographic bounds of my parish, and how many souls lived within those bounds, which is precisely the information he would have supplied about his own parish. So the question forming the principal title of this collection of essays is no mere abstraction. I approached it with one set of assumptions, my English friend approached it with another, and the 14 authors represented here (11 ordained, three lay, 13 male, all Roman Catholic) each bring another still.

These papers were originally presented at a conference in 2006 held at Loyola University in Chicago and sponsored by the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology in Berkeley, California. Three of the authors are Dominican priests, three are priests of the Archdiocese of Chicago (the two editors teach at the seminary of that diocese), and one is indeed the cardinal archbishop, Francis George. One of the lay authors is legal counsel to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the two other lay contributors both have active full-time parachurch ministries. It is not altogether surprising, then, that the tone of the symposium seems unselfconsciously self-referential. Ecclesiology is a subject that teems with opportunities for ecumenical gestures. For whatever combination of reasons, those gathered at Loyola in 2006 chose not to exploit very many of those opportunities.

Nonetheless, this book is significantly interesting for a thoughtful Anglican, both directly (we also have institutions that we label as parishes; the word is ubiquitous in our vocabulary) and tangentially (many of the legal and constitutional issues raised in the essay by Mark Chopko, Esq., have a direct bearing on the property disputes that have lately plagued Anglican jurisdictions not only in the United States but in other countries as well).

It seems safe to say that a typical Episcopalian thinks of a parish as something like "a community of people who habitually worship together in a particular place." Diocesan canons may make a distinction between "parishes" and "missions," but both entities are generally thought of as part of a single genre. In other Anglican provinces, as I discovered, a parish is very much defined by geography, and "parishioners" are those who happen to live in the parish bounds, regardless of their relationship with the church. In the Roman Catholic 1983 Code of Canon Law, a parish is defined as "a certain community of Christ's faithful, stably established within a particular Church [a technical designation for a diocese], whose pastoral care, under the authority of the diocesan bishop, is entrusted to a parish priest as its proper pastor" (Canon 515). This definition contains elements that are compatible with both the colloquial American usage and the formal English sense of the word.

Cardinal George ("The Parish in the Mission of the Church") takes note of the decreasing importance attached to geographic parish boundaries by ordinary lay Catholics, blaming the long arm of American consumer-oriented culture, which encourages "shopping" for a particular homiletical or liturgical style, as well as the influence of various Protestant polities that are more congregationally oriented. Still, Roman canon law does not rigidly demand territoriality as essential to parish identity. A bishop has the power to erect a parish based on some other consideration — culture, language, ethnicity, and now, apparently, per *Anglicanorum coetibus*, something as ephemeral as "Anglican patrimony." In theory, of course, Episcopalians are equally averse to congregationalism. With virtually all the authors in this collection, we would tend to affirm the importance of a vital connection between the parish and its diocese, and the bishop in particular. Yet we cannot deny the extent to which we have long ago made our peace with *de facto* congregationalism; it is much more a part of our na-

(Continued on page 32)

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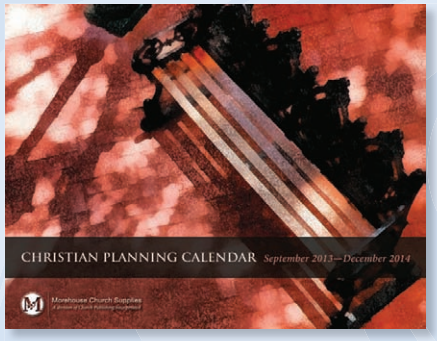

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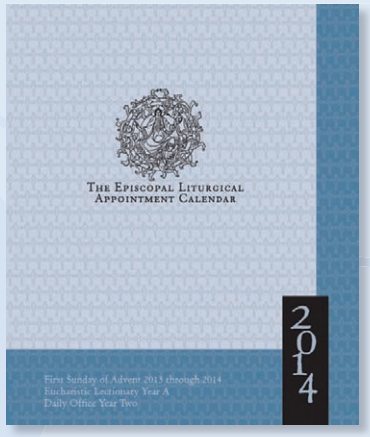

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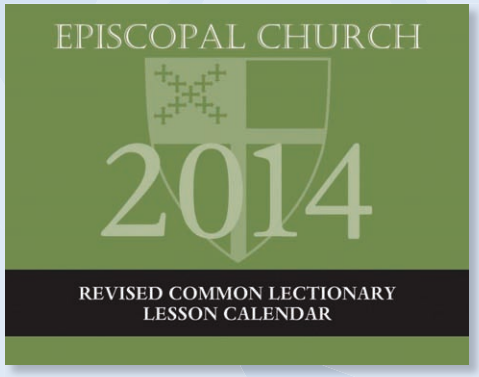

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tive environment than with either our Roman cousins or our Church of England siblings.

I found the contribution by Robert Christian, OP ("Bonds of Communion among Parishes and among Pastors"), to be the richest item on this particular banquet table. It challenges the common popular image of the Roman Catholic Church as a pyramidal monolith with the thoroughly biblical notion of communion, which keeps universal horizontal and local vertical forces in a fruitful dynamic tension. The role of the bishop is pivotal in making this tension productive and cohesive:

> Since he is the visible source and foundation of unity in his own particular church, out of which is formed the one Catholic Church, he re-presents (sacramentally) that Church. That is, he re-presents the universal Church to the particular church and his particular church to the universal Church. By the same token, all the bishops together represent the whole Church; the individual bishop thus represents the totality of bishops and churches to his own diocese. (p.133)

It gets even sharper: "The universal Church is both in the particular churches and formed out of them, and the particular churches are in the universal Church and formed out of her." One must bear in mind here that "particular church" is jargon for "diocese," so the author's argument is that the diocese, and the ministry of the bishop, is the only proper context for thinking about what a parish is.

In every major respect, this represents the lofty ecclesial vision of *Lumen Gentium*, Vatican II's landmark dogmatic constitution on the Church. This vision has been widely applauded, both inside and outside Roman Catholic circles, even as its implementation has been widely critiqued. How can a vision of a communion of "particular churches" in mutual interdependence be squared with a system that behaves as a pyramidal monolith? This is the point where many Anglicans, especially American Episcopalians, might be wont to extol the virtues of democratic polity and lay participation in church governance. But the same onus of accountability would be attached to such a move: the vision of *Lumen Gentium* is echoed in any number of Lambeth Conference statements and other Anglican documents. How can such an ideal of communion in mutual interdependence be squared with an apparent lack of centripetal forces to restrain local idiosyncrasy and increasing fragmentation? Anglicans are in no position to cast stones here.

In this context, the observations of priest and seminary professor Ron Lewinski in his response to Robert Christian's presentation are apt (p. 146). The parish priest is not his own *magisterium*. There is a strong sense of accountability to a larger whole — first to the ministry of the diocesan bishop, and through that link to the entire Church. But this is not a robotic process; the priest must actually *teach* the faith. He "must take the Tradition and break it open so that the faithful can understand and own that Tradition." There is certainly nothing here that an Anglican would argue with.

Another impressively strong thread that runs through the collection is a fearless willingness to name evangelization as the principal component of mission at any level, including that of the parish. Daniel Barnett (a priest of the Diocese of Spokane), in his response to Anthony Oelrich's essay ("Trinity and the Parish"), unabashedly equates mission and evangelization (p. 178), making a compelling case that parish mission needs to be resourced by robust efforts in Christian formation and discipleship.

Principal editor Thomas Baima, in his afterword, channels the late Pope John Paul II in his encyclical on mission, *Ecclesiam Suam*, taking on the now popular refrain, "God's Church doesn't have a mission, God's mission has a Church." Yes, Father Baima argues, God's mission has a Church, but that mission cannot in any substantive way be distinguished from the Great Commission: "Mission and evangelization are the reason there needs to be a church. The church is the sacrament … of mission."

Another impressively strong thread that runs through the collection is a fearless willingness to name evangelization as the principal component of mission at any level, including that of the parish.

He drives his point home with eloquent directness: "The error which Pope John Paul has tried to counteract in his teaching on mission is the attempt by some Christians to replace proclamation with dialogue or to substitute service for evangelization. He has steadfastly resisted any attempt to partition the evangelizing mission. Witness to Christ is a seamless whole. There are parts to it, but they form a progression, leading nat-

urally toward the full observance of the command present in the Great Commission. A true encounter with Christ causes conversion. We do not present the gospel as one option among many" (p. 196). To make such a claim in a North American Anglican environment would at the very least raise a few eyebrows.

As I mentioned at the outset, this is a heavily clerical group of contributors. To Anglican sensibilities, even Anglican sensibilities that are skeptical of an overwrought adulation-trending-toward-idolization of democratic process and the role of laity in church governance, the tone of some of the remarks is unsettling. At times it is not difficult to see where the stereotype of the Roman Church's attitude toward laity as "pray, pay, and obey" comes from. Several times the point is made that the parish is not defined as the aggregation of the lay faithful who comprise it, under the pastoral care of their priest, but as a "juridic entity" in its own right, not arising from below, but imposed from above. To say that some of these comments seem to infantilize the laity may be too strong, but not by much.

In any case, "the parish is the particular place where Christianity happens" (per Karl Rahner, quoted in Oelrich's essay). This is, in fact, a truism — it is in the parish and usually only in the parish that the normal elements of Christian discipleship reside: sacraments, teaching, community, and mission. To say this seems to state the obvious. Yet, in a great deal of ecclesiological discourse, the parish is easily and often marginalized. The very existence of this volume, and the conference that produced it, is itself a potential corrective.

The Rt. Rev. Daniel H. Martins is Bishop of Springfield and serves on the Living Church Foundation's board.

Let's Do Our Homework

Review by Joseph B. Howard

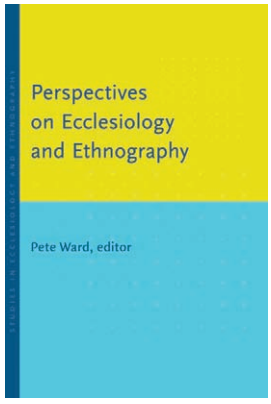
It would almost seem too basic to say that it helps to know what is *actually* happening in any given circumstance before writing either about what *is* or about what *could* or *should* be. *Almost* too basic.

The assumption that ecclesiology is naturally and faithfully grounded in the experience of Christian communities is not universally held. Indeed, even where the idea is in favor, it is often not adhered to in practice. *Perspectives on Ecclesiology and Ethnography* and the series to which it serves as an introduction, Studies in Ecclesiology and Ethnography, is designed to address this underlying issue.

Essays edited by Pete Ward of Kings College, London, argue for theologians to take more seriously the tools of the social sciences as exemplified by ethnographic research. From the other direction, Ward proposes that those conducting ethnographic research should be more aware of the particularity of faith communities.

For those who have come of age in the era of cross-disciplinary research this may seem reasonable, but there are still those for whom the academic disciplines are separate silos; long-held professional bias, as well as simple habit, can be difficult to overcome.

The book is divided into two sections. The first, called "The Proposal," includes chapters written by four of the series' editors: Paul Fiddes, John Swinton, Christian Scharen, and Ward. These lay the foundation for the argument. As Ward notes, we live in a time when theologians "appear to be more and more interested in practice, culture, and the embodied social nature of doctrine and the Church. Yet … theologians have tended to avoid fieldwork" (p. 1). As a result, theologians sometimes idealize empirical research, yet this is "very often divorced from any real or sustained engagement with actual churches and communities" (p. 2). It is precisely such engagement that this volume aims to promote.



Perspectives on Ecclesiology and Ethnography
Edited by **Pete Ward**. Eerdmans. Pp. 262. $50

The Church is perennially challenged to separate the gospel from cultural accretions; that which, while not necessarily harmful, is not intrinsic to the gospel. Ward provides strong medicine for this problem. "Put simply," he writes, "the proposal is that to understand the church, we should view it as being simultaneously theological and social/cultural" (p. 2). In examining the Church as a social and cultural reality, we can better distinguish those aspects of the institution's culture which emerge from the gospel (and so in some sense are universal) from those which mark an aspect of inculturation (and so are variable).

Ward articulates a way for observers to take in the life of the community while letting go of the myth of the disinterested observer.

In defining ethnography, Ward articulates a way for observers to take in the life of the community while letting go of the myth of the disinterested observer. By pushing against this myth, Ward lays a foundation upon which theologians might construct an ethnographic study out of local "materials" from the particular body they serve. And they may thereby empower the Church to speak about social realities in credible ways.

Fundamentally, the authors of the proposal are arguing that we in the Church must look at what *is* rather than what is *assumed* or *hoped* for. In the second section of the book this idea receives its first feedback, criticism, and nuancing. This section is rightly labeled "The Conversation," as it contains essays by eight able commentators who engage thoughtfully with the issues raised in section one. Some of these commentators will be familiar to readers of THE LIVING CHURCH.

Alister McGrath importantly suggests that an appropriate theological attentiveness "leads to — not away from — empirical investigation of ecclesial structures, attitudes, and practices" (p. 123). His articulation is demonstrated by Mary McClintock Fulkerson in her chapter, "Interpreting a Situation: When is 'Empirical' also 'Theological'?"

Fulkerson highlights the importance of the ethnographic turn, as she discusses the jarring juxtaposition between the profession of a particular diverse Christian community and how its tenets were, and were not, lived out. Her point, as she says, is not so much to demonstrate a "disjuncture between what we say and believe and what we do," which is "old news," but rather to ask "how a theologian can display the life of a

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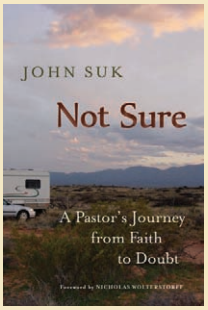
Faith through Doubt

There lives more faith in honest doubt / Believe me, than in half the creeds.
—Tennyson



Not Sure

A Pastor's Journey from Faith to Doubt

By **John Suk**. Eerdmans. Pp. 224. $18

John Suk writes an honest, intelligent account of his journey and relates it to cultural shifts that impede faith. The author grew up in a conservative ethnic Calvinist "ghetto" (not meant disparagingly) but now questions the tenets of his tradition. Eventually he came to trust that his doubt is "covered by the love of Jesus" and that God can work with faith that does not measure up to the catechism. He calls himself a "Christian agnostic," quoting the 1960s theologian Leslie Weatherhead.

The author and I come at faith from opposite directions. Suk has spent his life in a confessional church where "faith" means intellectual assent to propositional doctrines. Claiming liberty of conscience has been a struggle for him, and he has paid a price in personal attacks. I was an unbeliever who tried on Christianity as an experiment. My journey has been toward believing more and more, sometimes embarrassing my skeptical friends. Moreover, I found faith in a church that is fundamentally relational and creedal, but not confessional. Episcopalians have failings, but the precise doctrinal rigidity against which Suk is kicking is not among them. So, naturally, I am compelled to argue with *Not Sure*, but with genuine respect and appreciation.

Suk sees his story as a recapitulation of Christian history moving from enchanted faith (c. 30-1500/childhood) to literate faith (c. 1500-1970/young adulthood) to postmodern faith (today/maturity). But history is more complex than biography. *Not Sure* sometimes treats Christian history in a simplistic and dismissive way. The first 1,500 years of Christianity were not so naïve as Suk suggests and literate faith was not so exclusively literal and propositional. The enchanted faith era had Athanasius, Augustine, and Aquinas. The literate faith era had George Herbert and Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

Suk embraces a postmodern critique of Christianity as a "co-conspirator in much of the world's problems." But he is frustrated by the subjectivity and emotionalism in "secondary oral" culture (Walter Ong's term for our time when we watch screens instead of reading books). As contemporary culture dismisses the Church, Suk is conflicted about who is right, perhaps because he sees both sides.

Suk doubts the doctrines that denominations disagree over. He is right to do so. It is arrogant and partisan to try to pin down God's truth too precisely. Ancient faith knew that. He doubts based on "moral rejection of injustice and suffering," which indeed should make us doubt a God who would impose such things (as some Calvinists hold) instead of offering hope for deliverance from them. He doubts Christianity because of our historic complicity in so many wrongs. I hope Suk will write more about this, not as a mere armchair doubt on whether Christians are fallen people but as a passionate call for our repentance individually and as an institution.

I commend Suk's courage and integrity in *Not Sure*. At times his description of doubt is mixed up with the anti-institutional subjectivist doubt currently fashionable. But, Suk is smarter and deeper than that. *Not Sure* is a Calvinist's version of *Dark Night of the Soul* by John of the Cross. In the end, Suk latches onto a faith that is deeper than either his thoughts or his feelings. It is not our faith but God's faithfulness that saves.

The Rt. Rev. Dan Edwards
Las Vegas, Nevada

(Continued from previous page)

faithful community in a way that takes the disparity seriously" (p. 125).

For Fulkerson, empirical studies were essential to explain a disjuncture that theology could not explain adequately. The tools of ethnography proved essential to understand this community, and to speak comprehensibly about and to it.

But *how* should theology be shaped by empirical studies? As Fulkerson notes, the ethnographic model does not lend itself to the sort of generalizations that we often desire and have become accustomed to as diagnosticians of The Problem with The Church. Ethnographic study goes deeper than some quantitative methods of data-gathering, and that depth reveals complexity and particularity that makes universal prescriptions impossible. But, as she adds, "a case study can provide important contextualization of belief in the instance of Christian faith and open to view important questions" (p. 130).

These questions, fed by ethnographic research, should be connected by theologians to other sorts of inquiry and church development practices. As series co-editor Paul Fiddes notes in the first chapter: "One of the outcomes of an empirical-ecclesiological study should be transformed practice" (p. 35).

Ethnography, in other words, helps us to recognize and respond to the challenges we face as the People of God in our time and place, and to transform our practice to better conform with the way the gospel ought to be lived here and now. It may be an academic challenge, but it is also a challenge of faithfulness.

The Rev. Joseph B. Howard II is rector of St. Joseph of Arimathea Church, Hendersonville, Tennessee (stjosephofarimathea.org).

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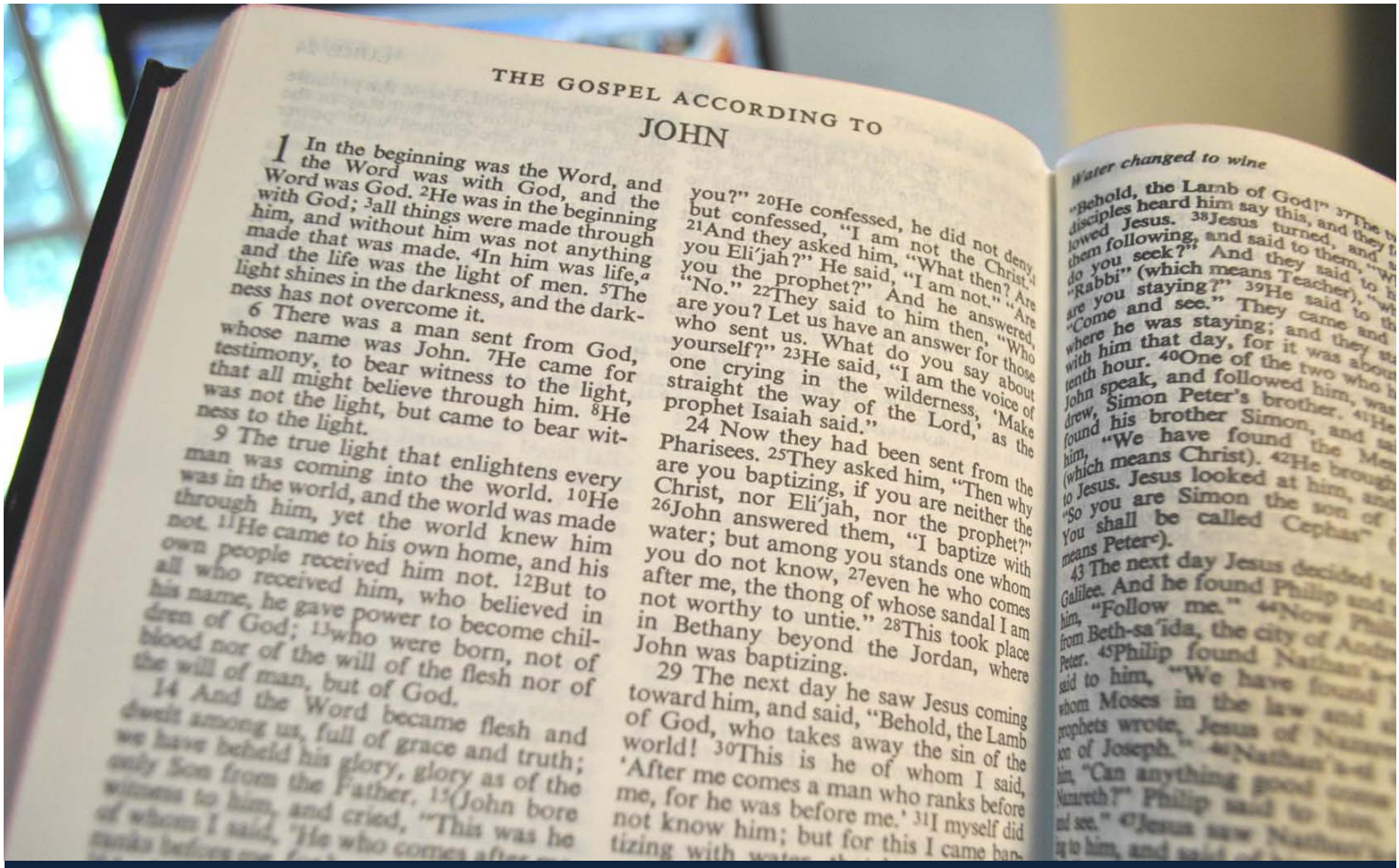

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The Reverend Marek P. Zabriskie
Rector, St. Thomas' Church
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Founder and Executive Director,
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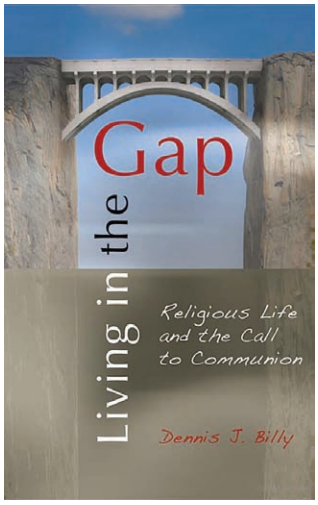
Microcosm of the Church

Review by Mother Miriam

More than 500 souls visit our convent in Greenwich, New York, every year. For many, this is their first experience with a long-standing community of Christians. Often they are hesitant about where to go, what to say, but are also very curious about the sisters' life together. Some have very romantic ideas, thanks to *The Sound of Music*. Few convent visitors see nuns as ordinary Christian disciples with the accompanying difficulties of trying to live the Gospel life full time.

Father Dennis J. Billy, the author of *Living in the Gap: Religious Life and the Call to Communion*, has counseled many Roman Catholic religious communities similar to our Anglican one. His message has consistently been one of encouragement in the post-Vatican II call for renewed mission among all religious communities. *Living in the Gap* is primarily a revision and expansion of four articles he wrote in the 1990s for the American Jesuit publication *Review for Religious*.



Living in the Gap
Religious Life and the Call to Communion
By **Dennis J. Billy**, CSsR.
New City Press. Pp. 109. $12.95

While the vision of the religious life is the community life of Acts 2:44, the modern actuality of many religious congregations often depressingly misses the mark. Father Billy calls the tension between this chosen vision and actuality in life "living in the gap." He argues that Pope John Paul II's "spirituality of communion" is "one of the most vibrant and visible expressions" of Roman Catholic spirituality in the post-Vatican II era and, when adopted as a community's vision, opens community life to a fuller participation in God's grace and healing of the Church.

John Paul defines a spirituality of communion as "the heart's contemplation of the mystery of the Trinity dwelling in us, and whose light we must also be able to see shining on the face of the brothers and sisters around us" (p. 11). Father Billy's thesis is that "the key question is not whether the gap between vision and experience exists in the lives of religious men and women, but whether they recognize it and assume responsibility for making it smaller and smaller" (p. 14).

Having lived for more than 30 years in multiple communities of Redemptorist brethren, Father Billy shares practical knowledge of the problems of individuality, personality, intimacy, and mixed motivations for communal living. His training as a moral theologian sensitizes him to the need for striving for virtuous living in community for discipleship to thrive. That calls for structure and organization of prayer, work, and study within the community, but he is careful to affirm that "'Spirit' and 'structure' are not opposites. The two stand at odds with one another from time to time, but a close examination of the history of religious life shows that more often than not, structure and Spirit have worked together to do great things for the Church and the world it serves" (p. 81).

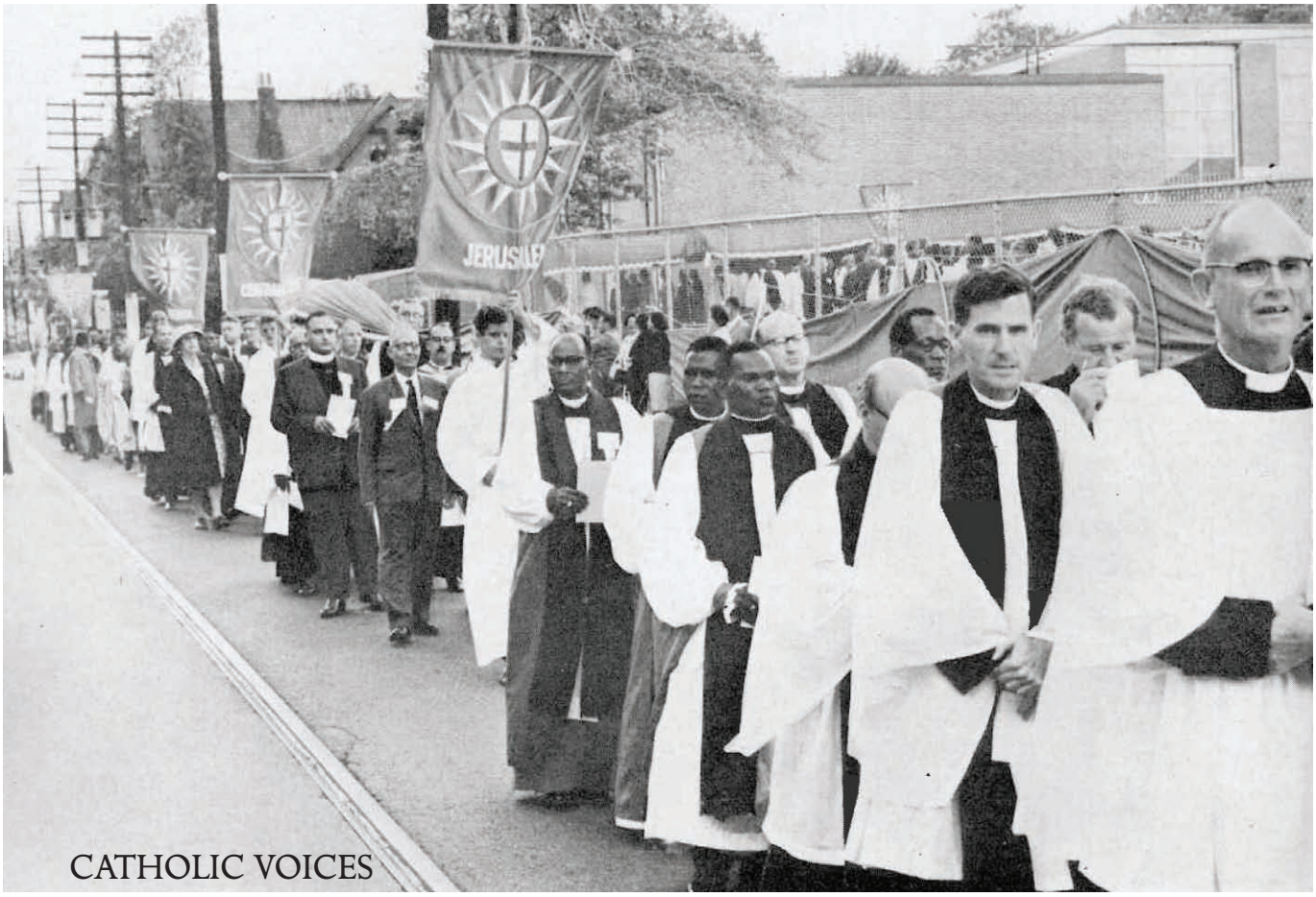
Beginning with the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience, he shows how elements of a rule of life, self-reflection, petitionary prayer, daily formational practices (the sacraments, spiritual reading, acts of charity), genuine friendships, community charism, mission, activities, and even relationships beyond community all contribute to building a life of perseverance. It is no different in parish life, if lived fully and enthusiastically.

Why should the clergy and the laity of the Episcopal Church be interested in reading about this challenge of discipleship of religious in the Roman Catholic Church? Everyone who partakes of the sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord is part of a community reaching out for God's grace. The stretch — the bridge building — to fill the gap between the vision of discipleship and living its actuality is universal. He reminds us all that perseverance is a biblical virtue (Gal. 6:9).

This book offers thought-provoking topics for discussion on discipleship, continual conversion, and the sacramentality of building godly relationships. Reading a little book like *Living in the Gap* could be an interesting introduction to a healthy vision for our parishes and church, and help fill the gap between our vision and actual practices in parish life.

Mother Miriam, CSM, has been Superior of the Community of St. Mary, Eastern Province, since 1996.

The first of two articles commemorating the 50th anniversary of the 1963 Anglican Congress in Toronto



CATHOLIC VOICES

Delegations from throughout the Anglican Communion in Toronto, 1963 *RNS photo*

Returning to the Body

By Jesse Zink

The second post-war Anglican Congress convened in August 1963 in Toronto. It was a gathering designed to allow Anglicans of all orders to reflect on what the future held for them. The Congress came at a time of rapid social change. An empire on which the sun never set had been rapidly dismantled. New communications technologies were bringing people around the world closer together. These changes and others prompted Anglicans who gathered in Toronto to ask new questions about what makes for Anglicanism and what it means to be a worldwide church. Their response, in part, was "Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ" (MRI), a manifesto issued at the congress that called for a new way of being Anglican. Now, 50 years later, as Anglicans continue to struggle with what it means to be a worldwide church, MRI offers an unmet vision for authentic global communion.

MRI originated in pre-Congress meetings of mission executives and Communion primates in southwestern Ontario in the summer of 1963. As they gathered, they sensed that not all was well with their Communion. The end of the British Empire meant that it was no longer clear what held Anglicans together. The growing significance of the church in sub-Saharan Africa, parts of Asia, and elsewhere forced them to recognize that Anglicanism was no longer an exclusively Western church. Many saw this as an exciting new development, but there was concern that the church was unable to move beyond old patterns of relationship. "Mission" was still seen as "older" churches in Europe and North America sending money and the occasional person to "younger" churches in other parts of the world. It more often seemed motivated by charity and pity than any sense of genuine fellow feeling and common purpose.

Through late nights of meetings and drafting sessions, the pre-Congress meetings produced MRI, which declared: "It is now irrelevant to talk of 'giving' and 'receiving' churches. The keynotes of our time are equality, interdependence, [and] mutual responsibility." MRI was a vision of a mission-oriented collection of churches, bound together by their common membership in the body of Christ. The Pauline undergirding of

MRI is self-evident. In the same way that St. Paul had seen that individual Christians in Corinth or Rome were members of the same body, the constituent members of the Anglican Communion were also joined together. One church could not say to another, "I have no need of you," because, as MRI recognized, each member church brought unique gifts and talents that others needed to receive. St. Paul had not written, "You should be members of the body of Christ," but "You are members of the body of Christ." The challenge for Anglicans, MRI saw, was to recognize these relationships that already knit them together around the world — and then live fully into them.

The New York Times reported that MRI "electrified" delegates at Toronto, and it was widely hailed for the way it showed Anglicans honestly grappling with their future. But the vision set forth in the document languished in the years after the Congress.

More recently, Anglicans have shifted their thinking about unity and now root their ecclesiology in the Trinity. *The Virginia Report* (1997) set forth this view: "the unity of the Anglican Communion derives from the unity given it in the Triune God, whose inner personal nature and relational nature is communion" (1.11). Subsequent documents, including *The Windsor Report* and the Anglican Communion Covenant, reflect this emphasis, as each discusses the Trinity far more than the body of Christ as organizing imagery for thinking about unity. There may be good reasons to link unity and the Trinity — Jesus' prayer for unity among his followers in John 17 does this — but by emphasizing the Trinity, Anglicans have lost the insights that the body of Christ might bring to us, insights highlighted in MRI.

"Mutual responsibility" appears, at first glance, to be uncontroversial. But the challenge of putting this into practice reveals some of its hard truth. One of the reasons MRI foundered in the years after the Toronto Congress is that churches interpreted its call for greater relationship as a call for financial transfers. But money has a way of undermining mutuality, particularly when some parts of the world have so much of it and others so little. Money, moreover, undermines responsibility — both for oneself and for others. If funding for projects in a diocese comes from elsewhere, church leaders have little incentive to take responsibility for them. If a church feels it can buy its way out of true relationship by writing a check, it has lost any sense of responsibility to its sisters and brothers. Mature relations in the body of Christ depend on individuals and congregations that can take responsibility for their obligation to honestly engage others in the body.

"Interdependence" seems equally anodyne. But it is loaded with meaning. In the last decade, many Anglican leaders have announced, effectively, "I have no need of you." Yet the body cannot function as it was meant to without all its members, a fact St. Paul made the basis of his theology. It is a fact that is equally true of a worldwide Communion of churches. "It takes the whole world to know the whole Gospel," said Max Warren, former general secretary of the Church Missionary Society and a key figure at the Toronto Congress. In spite of the ways in which it can sometimes be challenging to see what others have to offer, the central insight of the body of Christ remains correct. Each Christian sees through a glass darkly. As unlikely as it may seem at times, we need those with whom we are joined in baptism to help us see fully.

The Anglican Communion is again in a challenging position.

The Anglican Communion is again in a challenging position, one in which it is unclear how this worldwide collection of churches is to stay together. But the significance of the Toronto Congress should not be ignored. MRI reminds Anglicans that the body of Christ brings important insights to our search for unity, a unity that can only be revealed through the hard work of true mutuality and interdependence. In a near-exclusive emphasis on the Trinity, Anglicans have neglected the vision set forth by the body of Christ. Our life together has been impoverished.

It is no mistake that Paul moves from his most extended discussion of the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12 to his famous passage about agape in chapter 13. Agape is the ethic of the body of Christ, the actual, concrete life of those who are united by baptism with Christ and one another. Fifty years after MRI, returning to the body might remind us that what Anglicans need more than anything else in their relationships with one another is a little more agape.

The Rev. Jesse Zink is a doctoral student in African Christianity at Cambridge University and author of Backpacking through the Anglican Communion: A Search for Unity *(Church Publishing, 2014).*

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Stressing Church Growth

The interview with the Very Rev. Kurt H. Dunkle [TLC, June 9] was a breath of fresh air. For too long our Episcopal Church has muted the clarion call of Archbishop William Temple: "The Church is the only society that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members." Whether one calls it evangelism, church growing, or "effective Christian marketing," congregations need leadership that enthusiastically allocates high priority to such activity.

Dunkle believes "the school must educate clergy who can help congregations grow." What of prospective clergy who can't or who lack certain necessary attributes? The dean can only educate those the dioceses send to him. Therein lies the greater dimension of the church's challenge.

To complete the dean's first point: "that requires teaching what works." Clearly, the existing massive syllabus of seminary's three years does little to help congregations grow. Requiring seminarian attendance at evangelism conferences, visits to exemplary churches, and study of published texts on church growing would help, however.

"Teaching what works" seems to be more a case of telling the hungry person where to find bread. The seminary's task is to learn to point the way. The seminary would profoundly assist church growth if, with syllabus-pruning, it introduced course studies in communication, team-building, motivation, delegation, and management skills, i.e., leadership generally.

Dunkle also said: "It's important that we look around in the Episcopal Church and see what is working." Why just in the Episcopal Church? Why not learn from denominations that have broadly demonstrated skills in church growing? Likewise, let's hope ecumenism is reflected in those campus visits of experienced church leaders. It's not a time for insularity.

That said, I applaud Dean Dunkle's appointment and approach, a most encouraging trend for our church.

The Rev. Norman F. Somes
Jacksonville, Oregon

Cursillo and Ecumenism

I am pleased with the Episcopal Church's continued participation in the Cursillo [TLC, Aug. 4]. It is one of the best renewal programs available.

In 1963 I was invited by Roman Catholic clergy friends to make a Cursillo in San Francisco. So far as anyone knew I was the first non-Roman Catholic to do so. Everyone felt some kind of breakthrough. It was in the warm days of Pope John XXIII's ecumenicity.

I still recall the silence during the morning Mass when all the priests would come to the rail but not receive, supporting me, unable to receive. It was truly an ecumenical moment.

The Rev. David A. Crump
Montara, California

That's *Mr.* Spock to You

The title for TLC's review of *Star Trek: Into Darkness* [July 7] assigned the wrong courtesy title to Mr. Spock. We hope that actors Leonard Nimoy and Zachary Quinto will be amused or flattered, should they ever see TLC.

Massachusetts Seeks Coadjutor

(Continued from page 9)

challenge presented by opening this process in the summertime, when perhaps so many are away on vacation, but we hope and pray that you may have anticipated this letter following Bishop Shaw's announcement of his intention to retire, and have in mind whom you would invite into our process."

The profile is available at mabishopsearch.org.

Bishop Fights Casino Measures

Massachusetts Christians have lost their battle to keep casinos out of the commonwealth, but the Rt. Rev. Douglas Fisher continues to fight against a gambling resort opening in his region's largest city, where he is based.

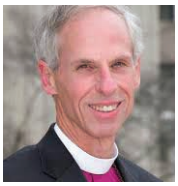
Fisher, Bishop of Western Massachusetts since December, remains undaunted in his campaign, although Springfield voters threw their support behind a casino in July.

Their vote cleared the way for the Massachusetts Gaming Commission to consider an $800 million MGM Resorts International proposal and potentially award the western region's only casino license to an economically depressed urban center at the intersection of two interstate highways.

"Casinos have never improved the quality of life in areas where many economically vulnerable people live," Bishop Fisher wrote after the July 17 vote. "We hope the Gaming Commission will look beyond this vote to the whole picture and seek to serve the common good."

Fisher has joined other clergy from Lutheran, evangelical, Hispanic, and African-American congregations to press the case that a casino would be an economic disaster for Springfield. He warns that high-paying construction jobs would

quickly give way to minimum-wage service jobs. He cautions that social ills, from gambling addictions to domestic violence and suicide, can be expected to proliferate if a casino comes to town.


Fisher

"For those who have little, the illusory chance that they can gain much, even in a game stacked against them, is tempting and ultimately destructive," Fisher said in a June 24 blog post, recalling what he told a local TV reporter. "Our churches stand with the economically poor of our society, and that always means taking a stand against gambling establishments in our cities."

That a casino will locate in the Springfield area is not a fait accompli, although two major proposals are focused there. Even if the commission rejects MGM's plan for Springfield, it could potentially approve a rival Hard Rock Café proposal to open an $800 million casino next door in West Springfield. That depends on whether West Springfield voters approve the plan Sept. 10.

The best option for local casino opponents would be for the commission to approve a third competing proposal from the small town of Palmer, which lies 20 miles east of Springfield. But first, Palmer voters would have to approve a $1 billion Mohegan Sun proposal for their town. A Palmer vote could be scheduled for as soon as September.

G. Jeffrey MacDonald
TLC Correspondent

Mark Stevenson Joins DFMS Staff

The Rt. Rev. Stacy Sauls, chief operating officer of the Episcopal Church, has announced the appointment of the Rev. Canon Mark Stevenson as domestic poverty missioner on the staff of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (DFMS).

In this position, Stevenson will be responsible for work related to the fourth Anglican Mark of Mission — transformation of unjust structures of society — which the 77th General Convention designated as a budget priority and structured with a focus on the alleviation of poverty in the United States. Stevenson will begin his new work September 16 and will be based in Dallas.


Stevenson

In addition to the newly created work of Mission Mark 4, Stevenson will be responsible for several of the church's longstanding domestic-poverty engagements, including support for the Jubilee Ministry program and liaising with networks of Episcopalians working to address poverty in their communities.

Stevenson has served as Canon to the Ordinary in the Diocese of Louisiana since August 2005. His responsibilities included oversight of the bishop's staff, budget management, coordination of clergy and congregation transitional ministry, and various pastoral and administrative concerns throughout the diocese. He is a member of the Living Church Foundation's board.

When Hurricane Katrina made landfall just days before Stevenson took his post, the scope of his ministry expanded dramatically to include working closely with the Rt. Rev. Charles Jenkins, as well as local, regional, national, and international leaders and groups to achieve effective relief ministry.

In partnership with Episcopal Relief & Development, the diocese instituted an Office of Disaster Response that evolved over the years into Episcopal Community Services of Louisiana, a ministry focused not only on immediate disaster relief but also on the transformation of lives by building a community of care and respect for all human beings.

Before joining the diocese's staff, Stevenson was rector of Church of the Annunciation in New Orleans and Church of the Good Shepherd in Maitland, Florida (Diocese of Central Florida). He served as a deputy to the 2012 General Convention and as an alternate at the 2009 General Convention.

"I believe that Mark's ability to jump into the midst, to listen to the people's stories as well as to their needs, and to provide succor and leadership when Hurricane Katrina hit shortly before he began as Canon to the Ordinary in Louisiana, is an indicator of how he will approach his role as domestic poverty missioner," said Executive Council

(Continued on next page)

Mark Stevenson Joins DFMS Staff

(Continued from previous page)

member Lelanda Lee. "Listening, and then discerning how to act quickly, will be essential as he engages a very full portfolio of responsibilities."

"It has been my pleasure to work with Mark Stevenson since he and I met in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina," said Robert W. Radtke, president of ER&D. "He played a vital role in building the Diocese of Louisiana's ministries in response to that terrible tragedy."

Learn Faith Online

Forward Movement, a publishing arm of the Episcopal Church, has worked with the Rev. Chris Yaw to create ChurchNext, which offers an online learning version of what Christians usually have learned in Sunday school and forums.

Yaw, rector of St. David's Church in Southfield, Michigan, is the author of *Jesus Was an Episcopalian (And You Can Be One Too!)*, a lighthearted "newcomer's guide to the Episcopal Church."

Individuals may sign up at $10 per course, or $15 monthly for unlimited access; congregations may build their own private schools for $59 monthly. ChurchNext.tv launched with 28 courses and plans to launch a new course weekly.

ChurchNext teachers represent a variety of church backgrounds, including Baptist, Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic. Topics include Scripture, congregational life, and everyday questions.

The courses are designed "for Christians who want to deepen their faith and may not want to go to church to learn" but who "want to hear from trusted experts and learn at their own pace, on their own time," Yaw said. "As a pastor I have found there are a lot of people who want to go deeper in their faith, but don't have the time or resources to do so."

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Appointments

The Rev. **Cricket Cooper** is rector of St. Stephen's, 67 East St, Pittsfield, MA 01201.

The Rev. **Mark Delcuze** is priest-in-charge of Christ Church, Kent Island, 830 Romancoke Rd, Stevensville, MD 21666.

The Rev. **Patricia Drost** is priest-in-charge of St. Mark's, 175 St. Mark's Church Rd., Perryville, MD 21903-0337.

The Rev. **Stephen Kidd** is priest-in-charge of St. Mark's, 11322 E Taylor Rd, Gulfport, MS 39503.

The Rev. **Todd Kissam** is priest-in-charge of St. Luke's, 403 Main St, Church Hill, MD 21623.

The Rev. **Jack Mason** is rector of St. Paul's, 3936 Main St., Trappe, MD 21673-0141.

The Rev. **Adrian Robbins-Cole** is rector of St. Andrew's, 79 Denton Rd, Wellesley, MA 02482.

The Rev. **Nicholas Sichangi** is priest-in-charge of Trinity, 105 Bridge St., Elkton, MD 21921.

Ordinations

Priests

Easton — **Darcy Williams**, curate at Emmanuel, 101 N Cross St, Chestertown, MD 21620.

New Hampshire — **Steve Blackmer**.

Retirements

The Very Rev. **Samuel Hartman**, as rector of St. Mary Anne's, North East, MD.

The Rev. **Betty Latham**, as rector of Church of the Nativity, Fort Oglethorpe, GA.

The Rev. **William R. White**, as rector of St. Thomas, Diamondhead, MS.

Deaths

The Rev. **Hébert W. Bolles**, who served as a U.S. Navy chaplain during World War II and the Vietnam War, died April 6. He was 88.

Born in New York City, he was a graduate of Brown University and General Theological Seminary. He was ordained deacon and priest in 1951.

Graduating from college in 1944 as a commissioned ensign in the Naval ROTC program, he served in the South Pacific during World War II. In 1962 he returned to active duty as a chaplain for a destroyer squadron. In 1966-67 he was battalion chaplain of the 2/26 Marines in Vietnam and was awarded the Bronze Star with a combat "V." He retired from the Navy as a captain in 1979.

He served as curate, St. Stephen's, Providence, RI, 1951-52; rector, Church of the Ascension, Wakefield, RI, 1953-57; canon pastor, Christ Church Cathedral, Indianapolis, 1957-62; on staff with the Office of the Bishop for Armed Forces, 1962-69; interim rector, St. Paul's, Portsmouth, RI, 1985-86; interim rector, St. Luke's, Greenwich, RI, 1986-87; and vicar, St Andrew's By the Sea, Little Compton, RI, 1989-94.

Fr. Bolles is survived by Elizabeth, his wife of 57 years; sons Elliot Foster Bolles of Stafford, VA, and Paul Hébert Bolles of New York City; daughters the Rev. Anne Elizabeth Bolles-Beaven of Maplewood, NJ, and M. Katherine Bragan of Portsmouth, RI; and nine grandchildren.

The Rev. **Rebecca Lynn Willoughby Dinan**, a priest known for her preaching and spiritual guidance, died April 11 at her home in Northport, ME.

Born in Appalachia, VA, she was a graduate of Radford University, the Ecumenical Institute of St. Mary's Seminary, and Virginia Theological Seminary.

She served as assistant priest at Grace Church, Elkdridge, MD, 1982-83; assistant, Trinity, Towson, MD, 1983; chaplain at Goucher College and the Johns Hopkins University Hospital; and adjunct professor of preaching at VTS.

She is survived by her mother, Ruth Willoughby of Suffolk, VA; a brother, Ron Willoughby of Riner, VA; a niece, Kathy Willoughby, of West Palm Beach, FL; and a nephew, Rick Willoughby, of Floyd, VA.

The Rev. **Stanley H. Gregory**, a veteran of World War II and the Korean War, died July 25. He was 95.

Born in Johnson City, NY, he was a graduate of Gordon College, the University of New Hampshire, and Virginia Theological Seminary. Gregory was ordained in the American Baptist Church and then served as a chaplain in the U.S. Army. He was an advocate for racial equality, both in his military and his civilian life.

He attended VTS while serving in the Army Reserves and was ordained an Episcopal deacon and priest in 1959. He served as rector, St. Mark's, Pratt, KS, and rector, All Saints, Pratt, 1959-61; associate, Grace Church, Madison, WI, 1961-65; rector, Church of St. John the Baptist, Wausau, WI, 1965-81; and at Church of St. Francis-in-the-Valley, Green Valley, AZ, 1992-93.

Fr. Gregory is survived by his wife, Barbara Pryor Gregory; daughters Anna May

Dickson and Victoria J. Ash; four grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and a brother, Walter Gregory.

The Rev. **Stephen Hale Gushée**, a U.S. Navy veteran and dean of Christ Church Cathedral in Hartford, CT, for 13 years, died April 6. He was 76.

Born in Detroit, he was a graduate of Brown University and Episcopal Theological School. He was ordained deacon in 1966 and 1967. He served for three years as a line officer aboard the USS Shelldrake.

He served as curate, St. Peter's, Cheshire, CT, 1966-70; rector, Trinity, Newtown, CT, 1970-78; dean, Christ Church Cathedral, Hartford, CT, 1978-91; senior associate, Church of Bethesda By-the-Sea, Palm Beach, FL, 1991-94; and assistant, Grace, West Palm Beach, 1995-96.

For five years, beginning in 1994, he was the religion writer for the Palm Beach Post and contributed a weekly opinion column, On Religion, until 2008. He moderated Viewpoint on WPTV in Miami for 13 years.

Fr. Gushée is survived by his wife, Mary; daughters Allison Gushée Molkenthin and Andrea Bordley Mayfield; a son, Gregory Hale Gushée; and eight granddaughters.

The Rev. **Robert L. Powers**, a licensed clinical psychologist and longtime faculty member at the Alfred Adler Institute, died April 23 in Seattle. He was 83.

Born in Buffalo, NY, he was a graduate of Capital University and Yale Divinity School. He was ordained deacon in 1956 and priest in 1957. He served as curate at St. John the Evangelist, Elkhart, IN, 1957-60; assisting priest, St. Paul and the Redeemer, Chicago, 1963-67; and assisting priest, St. Chrysostom's, Chicago, 1994-98.

In Chicago, Powers began his studies in psychology at the Alfred Adler Institute, where he earned a certificate in psychotherapy. Continuing at the University of Chicago, he completed a master's degree in religion and personality. In 1972 he was licensed in Illinois as a clinical psychologist. He joined the faculty of the Adler School, taught at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL, counseled former prisoners at St. Leonard's House, and for 15 years counseled families monthly in a public setting at the Adler School. In 1995 he was designated Distinguished Service Professor by the school. He retired as professor emeritus.

He is survived by his wife of 34 years, Jane Serrill Griffith, a licensed clinical counselor. Together, they conducted a private practice in Chicago, taught at the Adler School, and coauthored articles and texts in the psychology of Alfred Adler.

The Rev. **Gerald K.G. Shaw**, who began his vocation in the Anglican Church of Canada, died April 6. He was 80.

Born in Victoria, British Columbia, he was a graduate of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants and St. John's College. He was ordained by the Anglican Church of Canada and transferred into the Episcopal Church in 1980.

He served as rector, Transfiguration Church, Bat Cave, NC, 1980-83; assistant, St. Gregory's, Boca Raton, FL, 1983-88; rector, St. Alban's, Syracuse, NY, 1988-90; and assistant, Church of the Incarnation, Gainesville, FL, 2000-03.

Fr. Shaw is survived by his wife, Margaret Hutchon; two daughters, Laura and Margaret; a son, Brian; and eight grandchildren.

The Rev. **Adele Goodwyn Arant Stockham**, a deacon with a ministry among homeless people and the working poor, died April 20. She was 81.

Born in Birmingham, AL, attended in Bryn Mawr College. She was ordained deacon in 2002. She served at Christ Church, Fairfield, and at Grace Church,Woodlawn. Deacon Stockham is survived by a sister, Fairlie Maginnes, of Chevy Chase, MD; a daughter, Adele Culp; sons Douglas and Richard Stockham; and seven grandchildren.

The Rev. **Jack H. Thorn**, who served as rector at one parish for 33 years, died April 7. He was 83.

Born in Beacon, NY, he was a graduate of Hobart College and Pacific Divinity School. He was ordained deacon and priest in 1955. He was curate at Grace Church, Middletown, NY, 1955-57; vicar, Holy Nativity, Pahokee, FL, 1957-58; vicar, Church of Our Savior, Okeechobee, FL, 1957-58; rector, St. Paul's and Trinity, Tivoli, NY, 1958-63; and rector, St. John's, Boonton, 1963-96. After retiring he was a priest associate at St. Paul's, Morris Plains, and long-term supply priest at St. Paul's, North Arlington.

He is survived by a son, John Thorn of Portland, PA; daughters Lisa Thorn, MD, of Averill Park, NY, and Joanne Thorn of Clinton, NJ; a sister, Shirley Lucas; a brother, Gordon Thorn; and seven granddaughters.

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First reading and psalm: Jer. 4:11-12, 22-28 • Ps. 14
Alternate: Ex. 32:7-14 • Ps. 51:1-11 • 1 Tim. 1:12-17 • Luke 15:1-10

Joy in Heaven

This is a long repentance, and it is well that we should go on and on in admitting our fault and failings — not to abuse what is good in us, but to see with new eyes the corruption that cuts through every human heart. "They are skilled in doing evil, but do not know how to do good" (Jer. 4:22). "Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely" (Ex. 32:7). "The Lord looks down from heaven upon us all, to see if there is any who is wise, if there is one who seeks after God. Everyone has proved faithless; all alike have turned bad; there is none who does good; no, not one" (Ps. 14:2-3). Behold the man walking about, carrying the witness of his own mortality, dragging the weight of his sin, the testimony that God resists the proud (Augustine, *Confessio*, Ii). This man, or his sister, this woman, is awakened to a desperate truth.

Now, in this desperation, draw the breath in deep and then allow words to come out, words which you have waited to say for so long. Do not stiffen the neck; keep the muscles soft, let a light breath say from the center of your being, "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; in your great compassion blot out my offenses" (Ps. 51:1). God draws out these good words, and hears them. And God comes in the Spirit of his beloved Son to the blasphemer, the persecutor, the man of violence, thus showing that God will wait and wait with utmost patience (1 Tim. 1:13,16).

From this desperate cry for mercy comes something unexpected, a gift exceeding pardon. Imputed innocence is not the point. The point is joy in heaven that spills all over the earth. "I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance" (Luke 15:7). "I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10). While heaven is happy, the earthbound sinner, set free, sees his own life as something new and astounding. He is lighter; his mortality is swallowed by immortality; his sin purged by a pristine river of dark blood. He steps into Christ as Christ walks into him. He ceases to know himself as only in the flesh, but in the Lord.

Like a hiker on a long trail, he stops, finds his footing, and then looks at the world. It isn't the same; it isn't what it once was. Christ awakens every sense and reveals the world again as the object of God's creating, redeeming, and exalting love. Surprised by joy, the sinner sings a new song for he is a new being.

Just as God must often remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (Ex. 32:13), the sinner must often remember that he is *simul iustus et peccator*, at the same time justified and a sinner. The sinner stands ever before the one Christ who died for the unrighteous. God's grace is a perpetual cleansing, but the river is also cool and jubilant; nature sings, as do the angels in heaven, because one sinner is shining with happiness. God wants this.

God looks down from heaven upon us all. Sin is in full view, and yet his property is always to have mercy and his goal your joy on earth as in heaven, for the glory of God is a human being fully alive (Ireneaus).

Look It Up

Read Ps. 151:11. You are clean. Take notice of how it feels to be clean.

Think About It

Zeal is often a mask for anger. Let love rule in your heart.

First reading and psalm: Jer. 8:18-9:1 • Ps. 79:1-9
Alternate: Amos 8:4-7 • Ps. 113 • 1 Tim. 2:1-7 • Luke 16:1-13

The Poor

The eyes of faith will see the Incarnation encoded in all of holy writ. It is simply impossible, once awakened and pulled from the water of baptism, to read rightly without the attending Spirit of the one who came to be among us, who was as we are in all things but sin, who forgave us, healed us, died for us, broke the gates that held the ancient captives, appeared, commissioned, ascended.

Jesus is another "I" from which the baptized live. "It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). "Who is like the LORD our God, who sits enthroned on high, but stoops to behold the heavens and the earth? He takes up the weak out of the dust and lifts up the poor from the ashes. He sets them with the princes, with the princes of his people. He makes the woman of a childless house to be a joyful mother of children" (Ps. 113:5-8).

Chide not the Christian for seeing Jesus in the Hebrew Bible, and not only there, for Jesus is wherever the cry of the poor ascends from the earth. As the mediator between heaven and earth, he is the open ear and the most tender heart: "For the hurt of my poor people I am hurt, I mourn, and dismay has taken hold of me" (Jer. 8:21). Then, the gift of tears: "O that my head were a spring of water, and my eyes a fountain of tears, so that I might weep day and night for the slain of my poor people" (Jer. 9:1).

Jesus spoke in the time of the prophets, for he was coming to them and he has come to us. Jesus speaks: "Hear this, you that trample on the needy, and bring to ruin the poor of the land … and practice deceit with false balances, buying the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals, and selling the sweepings of the wheat" (Amos 8:4-6). These thunderous words are not truly heard until the heart is cut and contrite, seasoned with the hot truth of judgment.

"We will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Rom. 14:10). Judgment is simply the truth openly exposed. Imagine the evils we would avoid if we felt, even slightly, the dread of something after death. Imagine the compassion we would feel if our hearts were wedded more deeply to human need as was and is the heart of Jesus. Imagine that we had, as many saints once did, the gift of tears. It is a fearful and beautiful thing to stand before the living God who announces that our neighbor is our flesh, our blood, our nature.

But it is not to the poor alone that Christ comes. "I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity" (1 Tim. 2:1-7). How, precisely, shall the humble and poor live quiet and peaceable lives if the rich and powerful trample on the needy? The moral is more than clear. Wealth garnered from the community, no matter how real and diligent the labor of the one in high position, implies a responsibility to the community. The Bible has linked personal good with common good, though a stiff-necked people may deny this.

Look It Up

Read Luke 16:1-13. Shrewdness is not dishonesty, but the prudent management of a financial crisis.

Think About It

"Do you want to honor the Body of Christ? Do not despise him naked. Do not honor him here with silk vestments while you deny him outside, afflicted with cold and nakedness" (John Chrysostom, Hom. 50, 3-4). Uneasy?

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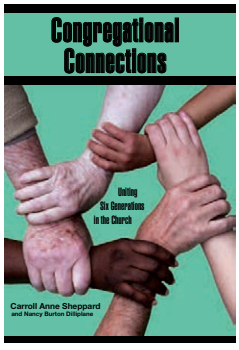

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