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December 21, 2014

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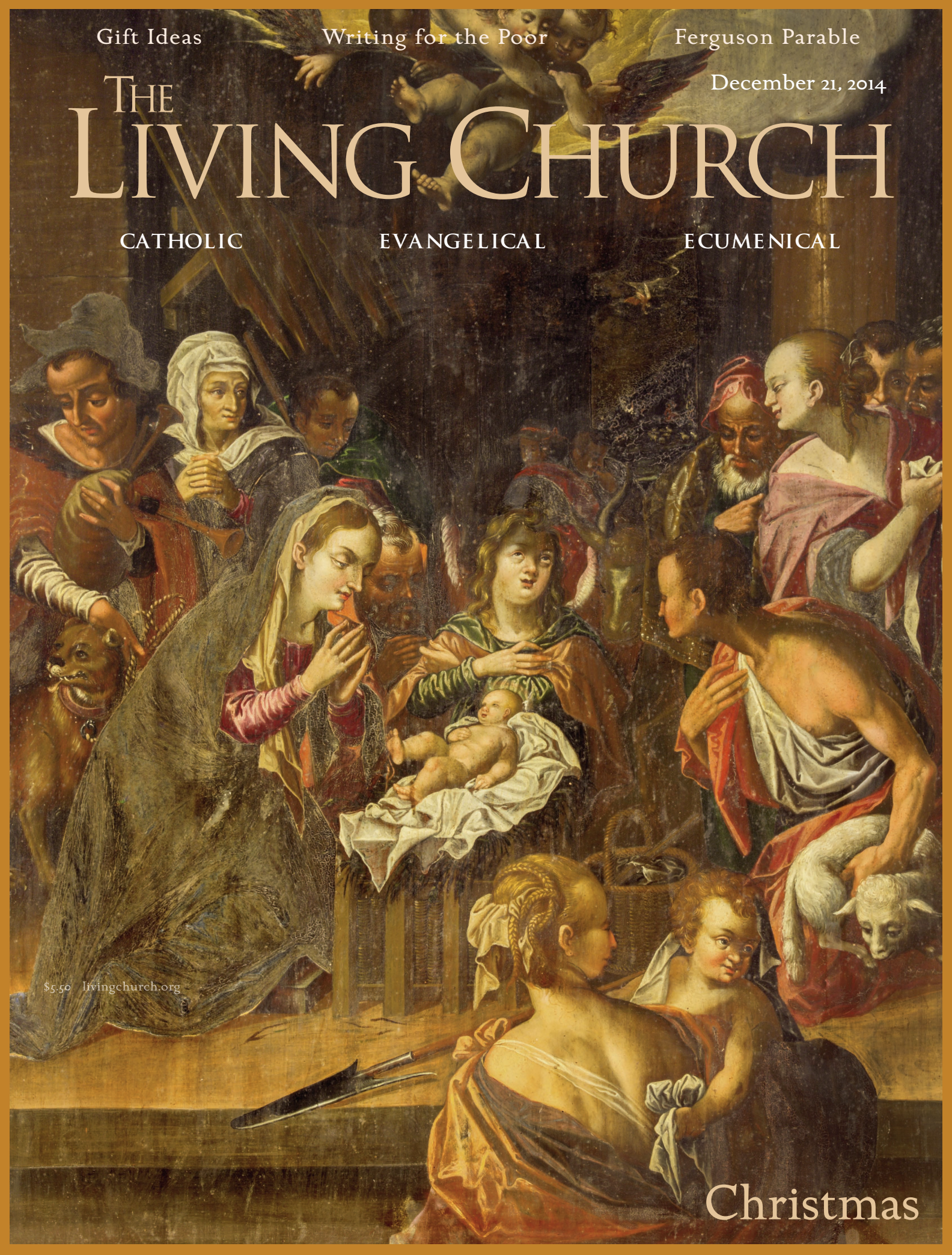
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## ON THE COVER

Hans von Achen's Nativity scene from the Renaissance-Baroque main altar of a church in Stitnik, Slovakia (1636).

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# THE LIVING CHURCH

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### LIVING CHURCH Partners

We are grateful to the Church of the Incarnation, Dallas [p. 27], and the Cathedral Church of All Saints, Milwaukee [p. 28], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.

## CHURCH OF ENGLAND

## It's Now Canon: Women Welcome to Episcopate

It was in July 2000 that the Church of England General Synod called for “a thorough theological study on the question of women in the episcopate.” Fourteen-and-a-half years later, the final legislative process to enable women to be consecrated as bishops in the C of E took just six minutes and 32 seconds at a two-day sitting of the synod in Church House, Westminster.

This final stage was mostly symbolic and ceremonial, but a necessary stage in the legal process. The Most. Rev. John Sentamu, Archbishop of York, confirmed that the Queen had given her assent and licence to the canon; the registrar, Stephen Slack, read the Instrument of Enactment, with its archaic language and form; and the synod voted, by a simple show of hands without debate, that the amending canon should be

“made, promulgated, and executed.”

Then it was duly signed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Prolocutors of the Lower House of the Convocations (the leaders of the House of Clergy for the two provinces), and the chair and vice chair of the House of Laity. And it came to pass that women can now be consecrated as bishops in the Church of England. But not all of it.

Because it is an established church, the C of E's rules are part of the general law of the land; and the measure had to be approved by both Houses of Parliament before it could become law. But the Isle of Man, in the Irish Sea, is an independent country, not part of the U.K., and it has its own legislature, the Tynwald. The Westminster Parliament cannot make law that affects the Isle of Man.

The Rt. Rev. Robert Patterson,

Bishop of Sodor and Man, has already started the ball rolling to get the measure through the Tynwald after a special meeting of the Diocesan Synod on January 13 and says he foresees no problems. “Once it is passed by Tynwald it becomes law and I can be bumped off,” he joked. “Since Tynwald is the oldest continuous parliament in the world [dating from A.D. 970], it is good to give it the respect it is due.”

The Isle of Man is not alone. The Channel Islands of Jersey and Guernsey also have their own legislatures. In this case, however, the additional processes needed to enact the legislation there will affect a diocese in England: the Channel Islands are part of the Diocese of Winchester, which also covers most of Hampshire on the south coast and part of Dorset. Winchester is one of the oldest dioceses in the C of E and its bishop is one of only five to have an automatic seat in the House of Lords.

The secretary general of the synod, Mr. William Fittall, said that “in the case of the Channel Islands, a scheme needs to be drawn up in consultation with the deanery synods of the Islands, communicated to the States General for comment, approved by the General Synod, and then confirmed by order in council.” He said it was “a little too soon to predict the timescale.”

When the C of E admitted women into the priesthood, it took the Channel Islands six years to catch up. The Rev. Rosalind Rutherford, a team vicar in Basingstoke and a Winchester diocesan member of the General Synod, said it was “regrettable” that a specific date could not be given for the Channel Islands and urged that “active and practical encouragement will be given to those responsible for the process.”

Following a pastoral breakdown



The Rev. Robert S. Skirving was ordained and consecrated on November 8 as the eighth Bishop of East Carolina. Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori served as the chief consecrator. The Rt. Rev. Julio Holguin, Bishop of the Dominican Republic, and the Rt. Rev. Graham Rights, Bishop of Moravian Unity, served among the co-consecrators. The dioceses of East Carolina and the Dominican Republic have shared a companion relationship since 2010. While serving as rector of St. John's Church in Midland, Michigan, Skirving led many groups to the Dominican Republic. Gretchen Baugh/Diocese of East Carolina photo



Christopher Wells photo

Archbishop Welby

“Not a day goes by without some report being received of the suffering and persecution of churches around the world.”

—Archbishop Welby

He said that to meet the primates he had made a total of 14 trips lasting 96 days, including 11 days sitting in aeroplanes and two days waiting for his luggage at airport carousels.

“The Anglican Communion exists and is flourishing in roughly 165 countries,” he said. “Within the Communion there are perhaps more than 2,000 languages and perhaps more than 500 distinct cultures and ways of looking at the world. Some of its churches sit in the middle of what are literally the richest parts of the globe, and have within them some of the richest people on earth. The vast majority are poor. Despite appearances here, we are a poor church for the poor.”

Within the Communion, he said, there was “profound unity” despite a “diversity on all sorts of matters including sexuality, marriage and its nature, the use of money, the relations between men and women, the environment, war and peace, distribution of wealth and food, and a million other things.”

And he said that “the potential of

the Communion under God is beyond anything we can imagine or think about. We need to hold on to that. There is a prize, the quest for which it is worth almost anything to achieve. The prize is visible unity in Christ despite functional diversity.”

The archbishop gave a variety of examples of the Anglican Communion in action, including a priest who, at risk to his life, moved into a small community in Mexico that had been “abandoned by all”; a conference in Oklahoma City to discuss the meaning of the Second Amendment, the right to bear arms in the modern-day United States; and the Archbishop of South Sudan, who, after a day spent burying the dead of a great massacre, “stood up with extraordinary courage and called for reconciliation.”

But he warned that the Communion was “under threat” from persecution “in many, many areas.” He continued: “In very many parts of the world, particularly parts of Africa and the Middle East, but also South East Asia, persecution comes from

(Continued on next page)

between some on the islands and the current Bishop of Winchester, the Rt. Rev. Trevor Willmott, Bishop of Dover, is providing episcopal oversight. He told the synod that “letters had already been sent to the deanery synods of Guernsey and Jersey to start the process.”

Speaking to journalists, the Archbishop of Canterbury described the move as the Church of England starting “a completely new phase in our existence as a church.” He continued: “It has taken a very long time but the way is now open to select people for the episcopacy, to nominate them on the basis, simply ... that they are called by God to be in that position without qualification to their gender.”

## State of the Communion

Archbishop Justin Welby used his presidential address to deliver a State of the Union-style update on the Anglican Communion. The archbishop had just concluded a gruelling series of international visits for private meetings with 36 primates. He told synod members that the future of the Communion was secure, but it may not keep its same shape and structures.

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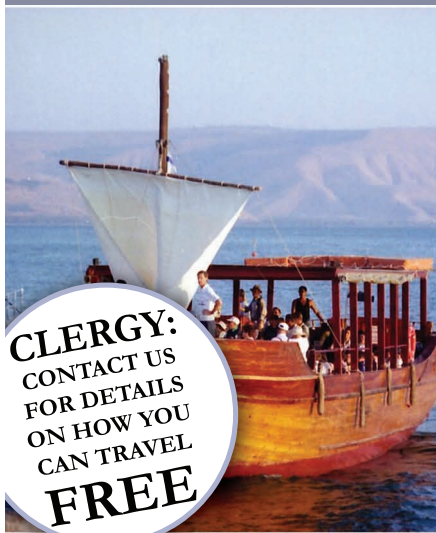
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## Archbishop Addresses State of the Communion

(Continued from previous page)

jihadi attacks which have killed many, many Anglicans, other Christians and in largest number Muslims, over the last few years.

“Not a day goes by without some report being received of the suffering and persecution of churches around the world, and of cries for help and requests for support. Not a day goes by without something which should break one’s heart at the courage and the difficulties involved.

“There is immense suffering in the Communion. The terrible spread of Ebola, indescribable, a Black Death sweeping through three Dioceses of West Africa, is by itself a catastrophe of historic proportions. ... The suffering of people in the afflicted countries makes the blood run cold. We must help, pray, and call for more help.”

On the future shape of the Anglican Communion, Archbishop Welby signalled a potential change of approach in its leadership. He said that although he could call a Primates Meeting, he was not going to do so on his own authority.

“I feel that it is necessary for the Anglican Communion to develop a collegial model of leadership, as much as it is necessary in the Church of England, and I have therefore waited for the end of the visits to provinces.

“If the majority view of the primates is that such a meeting would be a good thing, one will be called in response. The agenda for that meeting will not be set centrally, but from around the primates of the Communion.

“One issue that needs to be decided on, ideally by the Primates’ Meeting, is whether and if so when there is another Lambeth Conference. It is certainly achievable, but the decision is better made together carefully.”

He said that Lambeth Conferences

were “so expensive and so complex that we have to be sure that it is worthwhile. It will not be imposed, but part of a collective decision.”

Later, speaking to journalists, the archbishop said that he was “not overwhelmed with the need to remain having the principle role in the Communion.” He added that in his meetings with primates he had picked up the message that “Canterbury matters.”

“One of the primates,” he said, “in the nicest way, gave me a really pretty strong telling off for suggesting anything else.”

He also said that while the initialism IASCUFO (the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith and Order) did “not come up in every conversation” he had held, its “underlying issues” are “of huge importance.”

He continued: “The issue of faith and order in the Communion, and particularly the direction of how they emerge; what is a right and godly way of being the Anglican Communion in the 21st Century, is something that is of major, major concern.”

*Gavin Drake*

## Growth Takes Heart

Storytelling is central to every congregation’s life. And in the digital age, congregations grow as they learn to tell their stories well online, especially on social-media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

That was the premise for a November 8 workshop at First Unitarian Church of Providence, Rhode Island, where 60 lay and ordained leaders — mostly middle-aged and older — gathered to learn how surfing and scrolling can lead to meaningful involvement in a worshipping community.

As it turns out, people are sometimes screening themselves for mem-

bership when they follow a church's feed, so messengers need to keep it interesting and engaging.

"Every one of our congregations really needs to be in the media and social media business," said Peter Bowden, a Boston-based consultant with Leading Congregations, which advises churches on outreach strategy. "We need to really have that be a core part of our ministry if we hope to minister to people who are of the world, where this is increasingly the norm."

More and more, surveys show, online is where stories of faith are told. One in five Americans share their religious faith in an average week, according to a November report from the Pew Research Center. Half of all Americans see someone else share their faith online in a typical week.

Among Episcopal congregations, membership tends to grow when parishioners recruit newcomers, whether online or in person. Forty percent of congregations that recruit "quite a bit" or "a lot" are increasing

attendance, versus less than 10 percent of those that do no recruiting at all, according to the 2014 Survey of Episcopal Congregations, released in November.

At the workshop, most participants were from New England churches of the Unitarian Universalist Association, a small liberal denomination (161,500 members) that has bucked national trends by adding members in 28 of the past 32 years. Several said their congregations and small groups already have Facebook pages, but confessed they need to be wiser about how to foster steady engagement.

"We get new members all the time, and we have members disappear all the time," said John Wilhelm, co-chair of the membership committee at First Unitarian of Providence, where upward of 200 worship on an average Sunday. "To keep people here is another challenge."

It's a problem felt especially with young adults, who can be quick to break ties when they're not satisfied.

"Looking at the trends across denominations, we see religious organizations are losing youth once they reach a certain age," said Kali Fyre, membership chair at Unitarian Universalist Church of Manchester, New Hampshire. "Is there something we can do through social media to help with retention of youth and young adults?"

Bowden said that social media is indeed the water in which many young and middle-aged adults swim, stay in touch, and forge new connections. He cited Trinity Church Boston as a model in managing online reviews, saying that Trinity inspires numerous young adults to write positive comments on Yelp.

Bowden spelled out why this matters: churches that do not generate good reviews (either from members or visitors) can be tarred by one or two critical comments that pop up every time someone searches online for churches in a given area.

In terms of outreach, social media

(Continued on page 24)

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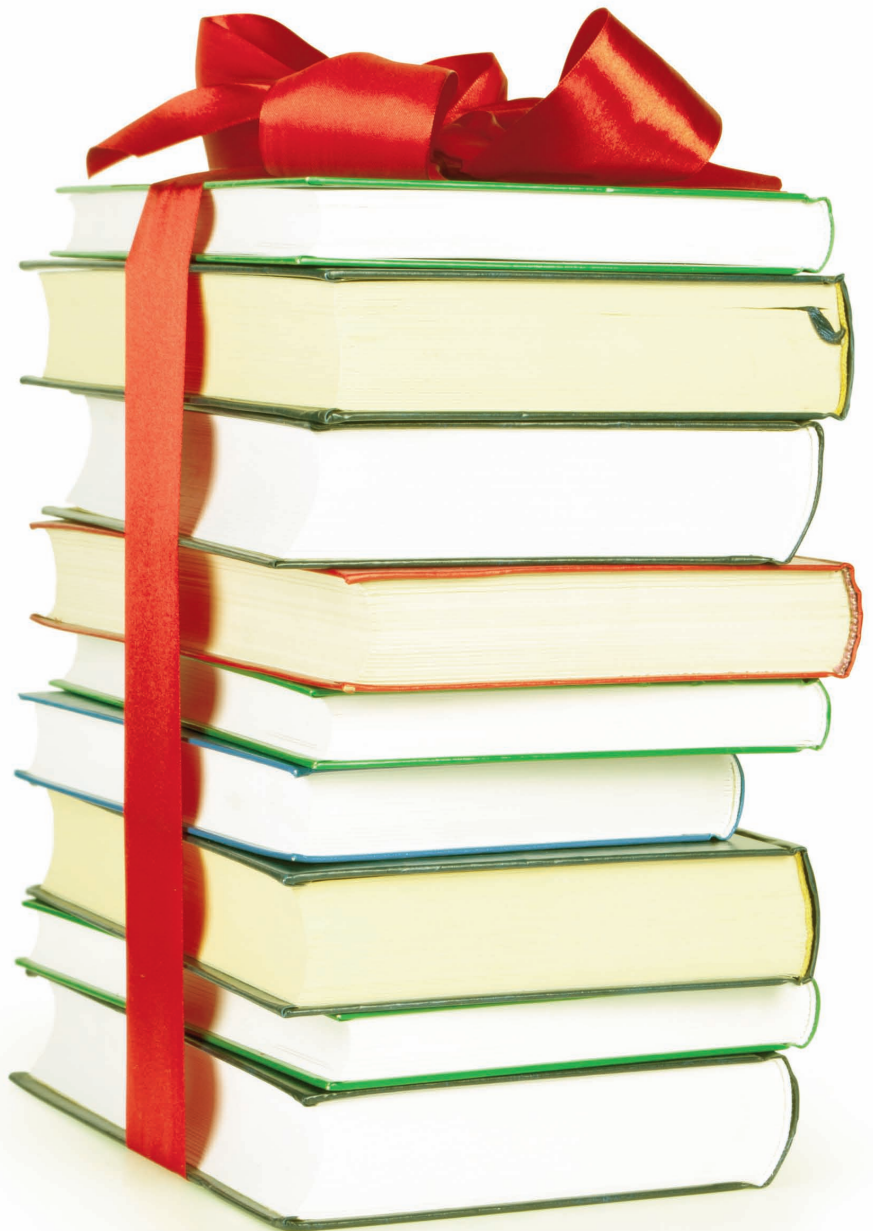
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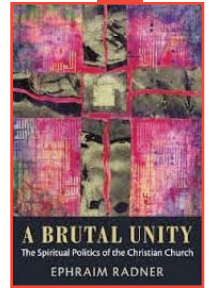




## stephen andrews

A book that I could give to very few and yet wish that everyone in the Church would read is *A Brutal Unity: The Spiritual Politics of the Christian Church* by professor Ephraim Radner (Baylor, 2012). An erudite and occasionally eccentric work (do theologians normally read “second language acquisition” theory?), the book takes us not just to the heart of the political and spiritual dynamics of division in the Church but to the broken heart of Jesus. Ephraim’s fluid but dense prose requires effort on the part of the reader, but we are rewarded with luminous and moving insights. This book has intensified my own commitment to the Church in its muddled, compromised, and often-blasphemous search for unity.

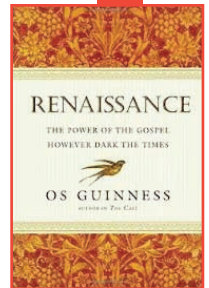
*The Rt. Rev. Stephen Andrews is Bishop of Algoma.*



## ἡγουμένη ἀνῆς

In *Renaissance: The Power of the Gospel However Dark the Times* (IVP), Os Guinness analyzes the reasons behind the decline of contemporary Western powers. He writes that Christians need a “constructive overarching vision of Christian engagement in today’s advanced modern world, one that is shaped by faith in God and a Christian perspective rather than by current wisdom, and one that can inspire Christians to move out with courage to confront the best and worst that we may encounter.”

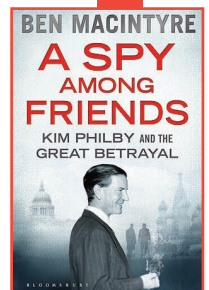
*The Most Rev. Mouneer Hanna Anis is Archbishop of the Episcopal/Anglican Diocese of Egypt with North Africa and the Horn of Africa, and Primate of the Episcopal/Anglican Province of Jerusalem and Middle East.*



## andrew archie

One of the most fascinating books I encountered this year is *A Spy among Friends: Kim Philby and the Great Betrayal* (Crown). Ben MacIntyre notes that “Philby enjoyed deception. Like secrecy, the erotic charge of infidelity can be hard to renounce.” That thrill was baked into him from the start. “Philby tasted the drug of deception as a youth and remained addicted to infidelity for the rest of his life.” In a sense, the book is an extended meditation on integrity.

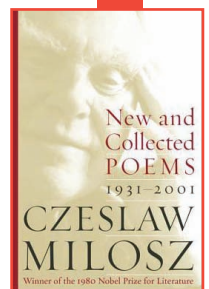
*The Rev. Andrew Archie is rector of the Church of St. Michael and St. George in Clayton, Missouri.*



## john c. bauerschmidt

Finishing Czesław Miłosz’s *New and Collected Poems 1931-2001* this summer was a bittersweet experience: thanksgiving for the poet’s gift coupled with the knowledge that the collection is finite. The Nobel laureate’s career spanned eight decades, and one of his distinguishing marks is his keen historical sense, as well as an abiding interest in the relationship between the universal and the particular, and the possibility of transcendence. Miłosz is a man for all seasons.

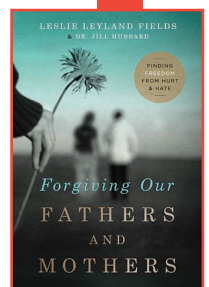
*The Rt. Rev. John C. Bauerschmidt is Bishop of Tennessee.*



## katelyn beaty

All of us are born into families that bring with them both blessings and curses. How do we forgive our parents, who carry wounds from their own childhoods? This is the question essayist Leslie Leyland Fields asks in *Forgiving Our Fathers and Mothers* (Thomas Nelson). She offers a framework for forgiveness that takes Jesus’ commands seriously and literally, without kowtowing to either self-help or emotionless duty. This is a prime example of practical theology done well.

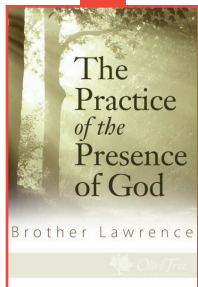
*Katelyn Beaty is managing editor of Christianity Today.*



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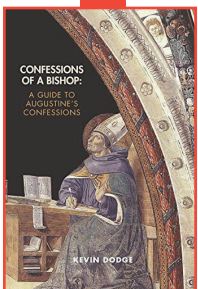
# gift ideas from friends of the

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## patrick e. bright

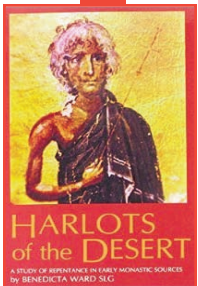
*The Practice of the Presence of God*, the classic of Christian devotion from the 17th-century French Carmelite Brother Lawrence, is a small collection of his letters and conversations and his simplicity of thought and expression. Brother Lawrence teaches us that in the most mundane and menial of activities we can dedicate ourselves to God's love and thus live every moment in an awareness of his presence and grace. *The Rev. Patrick E. Bright is rector of All Souls' Church, Oklahoma City.*



## anthony j. burton

Kevin Dodge, Wall Street whiz turned theologian, has written *Confessions of a Bishop: A Guide to Augustine's Confessions* (Incarnation Classics Press), a lucid and engaging text for parish groups. If you don't know what *tolle lege* means, buy a dozen from Incarnation Bookstore [call (214) 522-2815] and invite your friends over to find out. For Christmas giving, you can't go wrong with *Elizabeth I and Her People* by Tarnya Cooper with Jane Eade (National Portrait Gallery Publications), a gorgeous companion to last fall's exhibition at London's National Portrait Gallery.

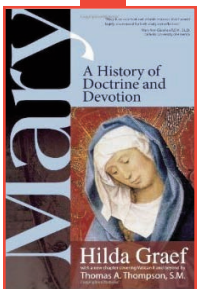
*The Rt. Rev. Anthony J. Burton is rector of Church of the Incarnation, Dallas.*



## john c. cavadini

Here are two suggestions, both of them classics, each in their own way: *Harlots of the Desert: A Study of Repentance in Early Monastic Sources* (Cistercian Publications, 1987) by Benedicta Ward, SLG; and Hilda Graef's *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion*, originally published in 1963 (part 1) and 1965 (part 2), but now reissued by Ave Maria Press (2009) with a new chapter covering Vatican II and beyond. The former contains some of the most beautiful stories from the Desert Christians, in particular the Life of Mary of Egypt, read in Eastern churches at the Office of Readings on the Thursday of the fifth week of Lent. Ward's introductions are priceless. The latter book, especially appropriate for Christmas, is a scholarly classic accessible to everyone, a study of Mary through the centuries with a Catholic heart and an ecumenical sensitivity, now updated with a new chapter. Both are available in paperback.

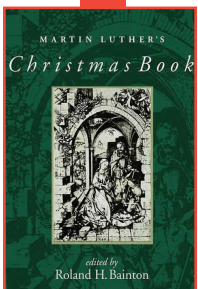
*John C. Cavadini is professor of theology and director of the Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame.*



## timothy george

*Martin Luther's Christmas Book* (Augsburg, 1997) contains the story told by the great theologian of the Incarnation to children in his Wittenberg congregation. Also excellent for Christmas gift-giving: *Johnny Cornflakes: Learning to Love the Unloved* by my wife, Denise (Christian Focus Publishers; amzn.to/1vfiReOZ). It is based on a true story from our days when I was a student at Harvard and we were serving in a small inner-city church. A beautiful, heart-warming account of God's love in action in an unlikely place.

*Timothy George is dean of Beeson Divinity School at Samford University in Birmingham.*

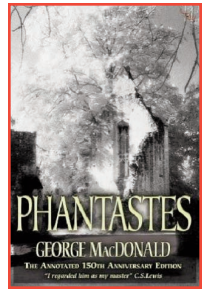




## zachary guiliano

Devotees of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien will be delighted by George MacDonald’s *Phantastes: A Faerie Romance for Men and Women* (Paternoster, 2008), the romance that inspired many of the Inklings. *Phantastes* is admittedly from the Victorian fringe, but it is a necessary baptism into the allegorical imagination. It is a tale also of the transformative power of stories, of their ability to heal and renew us and to act as a mirror for truth, however dimly viewed.

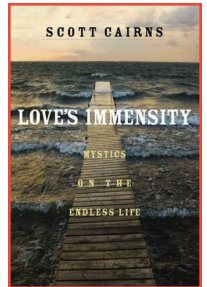
*Zachary Guiliano is a doctoral candidate in medieval history at St. John’s College (University of Cambridge) and editor of TLC’s weblog, COVENANT.*



## matthew a. gunter

Scott Cairns is a poet and a convert to Orthodoxy. His *Compass of Affection* is a collection of faith-shaped poetry that expresses refreshing depth, breadth, and honesty. In *Love’s Immensity*, Cairns adapts the words of Christian mystics from St. Paul to St. Thérèse of Lisieux. In doing so, he reminds us that “the words of the mystics sacramentally partake of the Word Himself, and as such are inexhaustible, generative powers.”

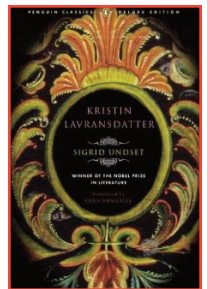
*The Rt. Rev. Matthew A. Gunter is Bishop of Fond du Lac.*



## wesley hill

Part eerily spiritual medieval thriller, part unsentimental romance, part diagnostic goad to spiritual self-examination, Sigrid Undset’s epic trilogy *Kristin Lavransdatter* was the best fiction I read this year. Undset, who won the Nobel Prize in 1928, tells the story of a whole Christian life: from her Norwegian heroine’s pious girlhood through her stormy marriage and season of motherhood to her latter years in a time of cultural upheaval. Be sure to read the newer translation by Tiina Nunnally, and be prepared for late-night page-turning.

*Wesley Hill is assistant professor of biblical studies at Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania.*

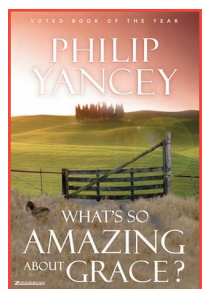


## josiah idowu-fearon

I recommend Philip Yancey’s *What’s So Amazing about Grace?* (Zondervan, 1997) to all Anglicans. “Some Christians I know have taken on the task of ‘moral exterminators’ for the evil-infested society around them,” Yancey writes. “Jesus never countenanced evil, but he did stand ready to forgive it. Somehow, he gained the reputation as a lover of sinners, a reputation that his followers are in danger of losing today.”

*The Most Rev. Josiah Idowu-Fearon is Bishop of Kaduna, Nigeria, and former Archbishop of Kaduna Province.*

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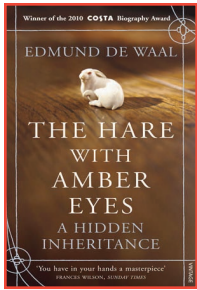
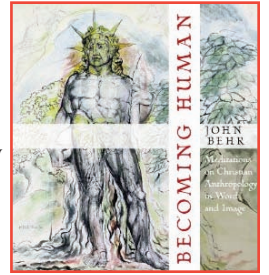
# gift ideas

from Friends of the

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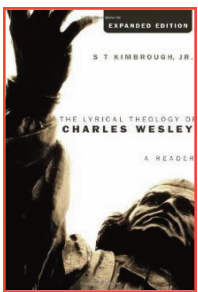
## andrew irving

John Behr's *Becoming Human: Meditations on Christian Anthropology in Word and Image* (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2013) makes a beautiful gift in the fullest sense of that word. This small hardback by the dean of St. Vladimir's Seminary is presented in a contemplative manner, and its meditation on what Behr calls God's "lengthy project to create human beings" is profound and profoundly moving. It's perfect for all who desire to attend to their spiritual life, and to meditate on how Christ's end helps us understand who we are and who we are called to become. *Andrew Irving is assistant professor of Church history at General Theological Seminary.*



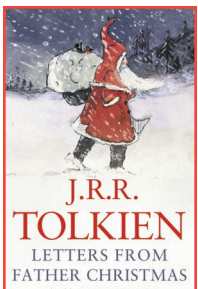
## kenneth kearon

*The Hare with Amber Eyes* by Edmund De Waal (Vintage, 2011) is the true story of a European family told from the perspective of 264 Japanese *netsuke* — small wood and ivory carvings. From Odessa to Paris, from Vienna to Tokyo, through the fall of empires and the rise of Nazism, the author tells of his own family's journey of adaptation and survival through a period of remarkable change. It's beautifully written by a genuine storyteller and a treasure you won't want to put down. *The Rev. Canon Kenneth Kearon is Bishop-elect of Limerick.*



## timothy e. kimbrough

For those who have given themselves to the understanding of Prosper of Aquitaine's maxim on prayer/belief, *The Lyrical Theology of Charles Wesley: A Reader* by S.T. Kimbrough, Jr. (Cascade, 2011), will amplify the role of Christian hymn as the embodiment of the sung Faith. The first five chapters present lyrical theology as a category for study and appreciation, suggesting *lex cantandi lex credendi*. The remainder of the book is devoted to an anthology of Charles Wesley's hymns, organized under broad credal and eschatological headings. *The Very Rev. Timothy E. Kimbrough is dean of Christ Church Cathedral in Nashville.*



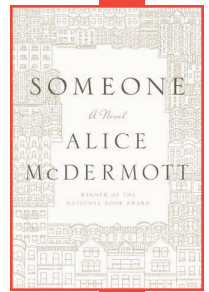
## elisabeth rain kincaid

In *Letters from Father Christmas*, a collection J.R.R. Tolkien wrote for his children, readers explore the delightful and whimsical North Pole. The beautifully illustrated letters tell the saga of Father Christmas, his polar bear helper, and their adventures with reindeer, goblins, and elves. Some of my favorite childhood Christmas memories involve my father reading these letters to our family. This would be an ideal gift for those of any age who retain childlike wonder at Christmas. *Elisabeth Rain Kincaid is a doctoral student in moral theology at the University of Notre Dame.*

## cynthia briggs kittredge

*Someone* by Alice McDermott (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013) is narrated by Marie, recounting her life in Brooklyn between the wars, centering in her childhood neighborhood, and tracing the stories of her parents and friends. Every sentence is luminous. Realism and reverence for life and death suffuse the story. When I finished it, I turned to the beginning and read it through again.

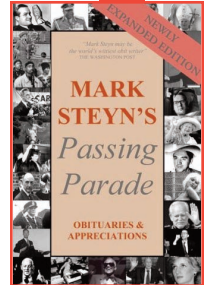
*The Very Rev. Cynthia Briggs Kittredge is dean and president of Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, Texas.*



## douglas leblanc

I return often to *Mark Steyn's Passing Parade: Obituaries and Appreciations* (Stockade Books, 2006). Steyn, a busy pundit, writes obituaries on the side. His wide range includes Ray Charles, Katharine Graham, Evel Knievel, Eugene McCarthy, Arthur Miller, and Karol Wojtyła; this year's ebook adds a few fresher items. He mentions the dead's rough edges, sometimes roughly, but also with disarming humor.

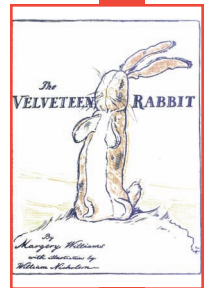
*Douglas LeBlanc is associate editor of The Living Church.*



## richard geoffrey leggett

I read *The Velveteen Rabbit* for the first time in seminary, as I was babysitting the children of a faculty member. What intrigued me about the story was its focus on the challenge of becoming “real,” which I believe is at the center of Christian spiritual practice. The key, as the story goes, is “being loved.” So many people today, young and old, do not believe they are loved, but the gospel tells us that we are. That gospel is present in this wonderful story for all ages.

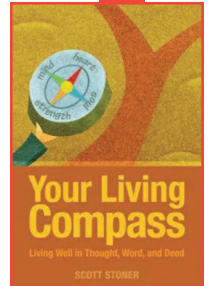
*The Rev. Richard Geoffrey Leggett is editor in chief of Anglican Theological Review.*



## jeffrey d. lee

Scott Stoner's *Your Living Compass* (Morehouse) is essentially an outline for a personal retreat. The focus of the retreat is wellness, wholeness; you might even say *holiness*. In a format useful for individuals or small groups, Scott invites readers to pay attention to their lives and the abundant life God wants to give us.

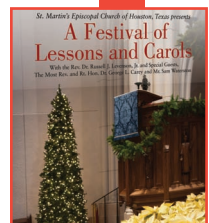
*The Rt. Rev. Jeffrey D. Lee is Bishop of Chicago.*



## russell levenson, jr.

*An Untraditional Collection of Lessons and Carols for the Advent and Christmas Season* includes a collection of hymns, carols, and lessons from my congregation. This CD is a reflection and gift to the listener and not a replacement for a traditional Advent service. The 103rd Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord George Carey, and award-winning actor Sam Waterston read the lessons. The recording also features our 4,600-rank Gloria Dei Organ and 106-voice choir.

*The Rev. Russell Levenson, Jr., is rector of St. Martin's Church, Houston.*

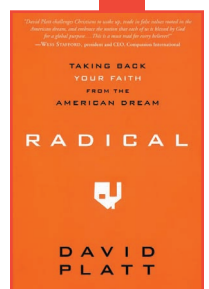


## g. jeffrey macdonald

Stockpiling riches and creature comforts might be as American as apple pie, but that's not what Jesus had in mind for his followers. In *Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream* (Multnomah, 2010), David Platt persuasively argues for U.S. Christians to follow a costlier, spiritually richer way. It's refreshing, inspiring reading for American adults and teens who intuitively know Christian coziness with consumerism to be a sham and yearn to be disciples with integrity.

*G. Jeffrey MacDonald is a TLC correspondent and author of Thieves in the Temple: The Christian Church and the Selling of the American Soul.*

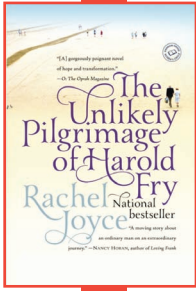
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# gift ideas from friends of the

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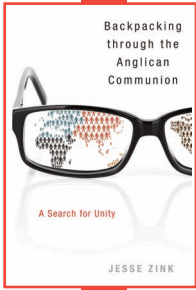
## ian markham



*The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry: A Novel* by Rachel Joyce (Random House, 2012) is one of the few books that has reduced me to tears. Human life in all its raggedness and brokenness, yet underpinned by tragic routine, is taken on a remarkable journey. God and grace are never named but found everywhere. A man facing the hurt and pain of his retirement starts walking to reach a friend who has cancer. It is a truly great novel.

*The Very Rev. Ian Markham is dean and president of Virginia Theological Seminary.*

## david marshall



Jesse Zink has written an engaging account in *Backpacking through the Anglican Communion: A Search for Unity* (Morehouse). Especially in Africa he frequently faced a barrage of questions about the policies of his own province, but he clearly handled these conversations with grace and wisdom, developing trusting friendships that are an encouragement in difficult times for the Communion and a model for how Christians might seek the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

*The Rev. David Marshall is director of the Anglican Episcopal House of Studies at Duke Divinity School and associate professor of the practice of Christian-Muslim relations.*

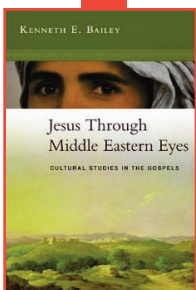
## richard j. mouw



I knew nothing about Hannah More before reading *Fierce Convictions: The Extraordinary Life of Hannah More — Poet, Reformer, Abolitionist* (Thomas Nelson) by Karen Swallow Prior, a Liberty University professor. More was acclaimed as a talented poet and playwright in 19th-century Great Britain, but she put it all on the line in fighting for the abolition of slavery, out of her deep commitment to the gospel. She is now one of my heroines in the faith.

*Richard J. Mouw is professor of faith and public life at Fuller Theological Seminary.*

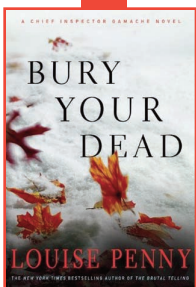
## david moxon



*Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels* by Kenneth E. Bailey (SPCK, 2008) is for thoughtful Christians who want to deepen their experience of Luke's parables and draw close to the real mind of Jesus of Nazareth. The book is a thorough literary and cultural analysis of Jesus' words, informed by the Aramaic-speaking peoples of the Middle East. Kenneth has lived with them, studied with them, and been transformed by them. A must for the serious reader of the New Testament.

*The Most Rev. David Moxon is the Archbishop of Canterbury's Representative to the Holy See and director of the Anglican Centre in Rome.*

## mark noll



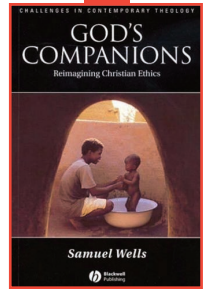
I have recently discovered the mystery novels of the Canadian author Louise Penny. They feature Inspector Gamache, who is assigned to homicide duties in Quebec and who brings an unusually humane sensibility to his tasks. The plots — along with the portrayals of the inspector, his colleagues, and suspects — push toward human understanding, empathy, and even love. *Bury Your Dead* (Little, Brown, 2010), with three intricately interwoven narratives and what looks like a providential intervention, might be a good place to start.

*Mark Noll is the author of From Every Tribe and Nation: A Historian's Discovery of the Global Christian Story (Baker).*

## steven peay

*God's Companions: Reimagining Christian Ethics* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2006) won the Michael Ramsey Prize in 2007 and certainly deserved it, because Sam Wells reflects Ramsey's thought in this book. His argument is that God gives us everything that we need to be his friends and to worship him. Because God is abundant, we can live in an abundant manner, even in the midst of a world that sees scarcity all around it. Life is a gift and it's good to remind ourselves of that — and of our own giftedness.

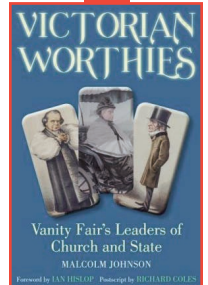
*The Rev. Steven A. Peay is Nashotah House Theological Seminary's dean for academic affairs and professor of homiletics and Church history. He will become its dean and president in May.*



## colin podmore

Between 1868 and 1914 the English magazine *Vanity Fair* published 2,362 full-page coloured caricatures of prominent figures, each with a short biographical commentary (some kind, some caustic). In *Victorian Worthies* (Darton, Longman and Todd) Malcolm Johnson presents 50 that are of ecclesiastical interest: 30 clergy, plus monarchs, politicians, and other laypeople — most of them Anglicans. To the cartoon and commentary he adds a biographical pen-portrait, making about four pages for each: ideal bedtime reading.

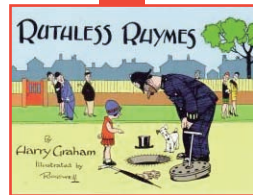
*Colin Podmore is the director of Forward in Faith (UK).*



## ephrain radner

For people who are tired of obnoxiously serious and sentimental Christmas books, try Harry Graham's *Ruthless Rhymes for Heartless Homes* (R.H. Russell, 1902). These little poems, including many gems, not only enjoy wonderful wordplay, but are cheerfully vicious to boot, as only the upper-class English can be. "In the drinking well / (which the plumber built her) / Aunt Eliza fell,— / We must buy a filter." Of course, read them as iconic spurs to a better spirit!

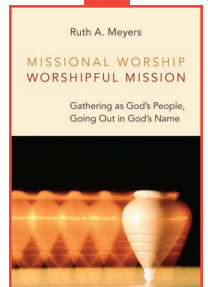
*The Rev. Ephraim Radner is professor of historical theology at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto.*



## mark richardson

I recommend the wonderful *Missional Worship, Worshipful Mission: Gathering as God's People, Going Out in God's Name* (Eerdmans) by Ruth A. Meyers, dean of academic affairs and Hodges-Haynes Professor of Liturgics at Church Divinity School of the Pacific.

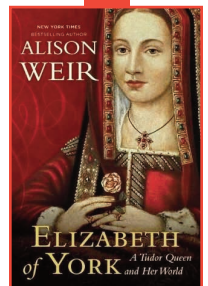
*The Very Rev. Mark Richardson is dean and president of Church Divinity School of the Pacific.*



## fredrick a. robinson

Alison Weir's *Elizabeth of York: A Tudor Queen and Her World* (Vintage, 2013) contains much useful information, as well as some fairly arcane bits of trivia. Did you know that there is "an old tradition, probably apocryphal, that the image of the Queen of Hearts in a pack of playing cards represents Elizabeth of York"? Weir's scholarly portrait of this remarkable, influential, and pious woman is must reading for any serious student of English history.

*The Very Rev. Fredrick A. Robinson is rector of Church of the Redeemer in Sarasota, Florida.*

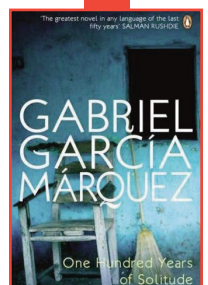


## donald romanik

During my sabbatical in Mexico last summer, I read *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (*Cien Años de Soledad*) by Gabriel García Márquez, the great Colombian novelist who died in April. The story chronicles several generations of the Buendía family in the fictional village of Macondo who are dysfunctional, profound, magical, spiritual, contemptible, yet full of passion and life. While García Márquez described the novel as somewhat of a joke, it is truly transformational and a masterpiece.

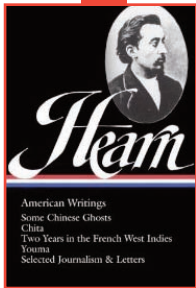
*Donald V. Romanik is president of the Episcopal Church Foundation.*

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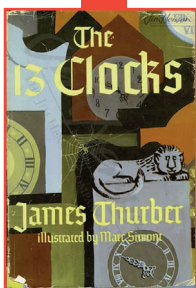
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## michael root

An Irish-Greek wanderer who ended up teaching English literature in Japan, Lafcadio Hearn spent the 1870s and 1880s in the United States and the Caribbean writing newspaper pieces, short fiction, and accounts of local life. He had an eye for the exotic and a writing style that matched his content. His *American Writings* (Library of America, 2009) is not to be read straight through, but is wonderful to dip into when one feels a need for a slight tilt off balance.

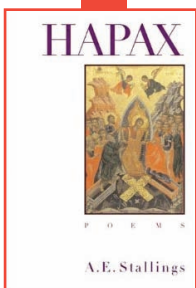
*Michael Root is ordinary professor of systematic theology and director of the historical/systematic theology area at Catholic University of America.*



## grace sears

James Thurber's gothic fairy tale, *The 13 Clocks* (Simon & Schuster, 1950), begs to be read aloud. Thurber's classic has a terrifying villain, yet his threats provoke laughter with invented words: the dreadful Todal "gleeps," while jewels turn to "thlup." Existential questions glimmer throughout: why do jewels of sorrow endure, while jewels of laughter melt? Why is the good wizard so undependable? Golux tells the prince, "Remember laughter. You'll need it even in the blessed isles of Ever After."

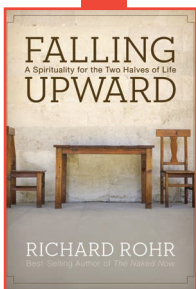
*Grace Sears is a longtime leader of Daughters of the King and a TLC board member.*



## r. leigh spruill

*Hapax: Poems* by A.E. Stallings (Triquarterly Books, 2006) is elegantly satisfying for those whose taste in poetry tends toward more traditional forms. A native of Athens, Georgia, Stallings now lives in Athens, Greece. Her scholarship in ancient mythology and obvious familiarity with the Christian tradition inform many of her poems, often dealing with questions about life and death aroused from attentive watchfulness of the ordinary ("lives accrue with interest, the smallest things we do"). Deep, beautiful, and accessible.

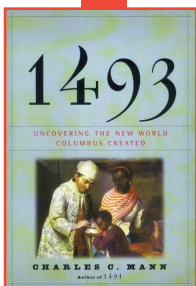
*The Rev. R. Leigh Spruill is rector of St. George's Church in Nashville.*



## scott stoner

I recommend Richard Rohr's *Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life* (Wiley, 2011) almost weekly to people who are looking for a profound guide to spiritual growth. For Rohr, a priest in the Franciscan order, the key to resiliency and spiritual maturity is learning to accept loss and disappointment as an opportunity for growth. You can read this book in a couple of days, but you will spend the rest of your life integrating and applying Rohr's wisdom.

*The Rev. Scott Stoner is the creator of Living Compass and director of the Nicholas Center in the Diocese of Chicago.*



## george sumner

Charles C. Mann's *1493: Uncovering the New World Columbus Created* (Vintage, 2012) is as untheological as a book can be. Mann shows how the "Columbian exchange" dramatically changed the world. After the exchange, malarial plantations need African slaves with resistant antibodies, Europeans have the calories to launch an industrial revolution, and all the world can waste its disposable income on sugar, chocolate, and tobacco. The book is a riveting story of contingency, corruption, and global interdependence: grist for the theological mill after all.

*The Very Rev. George Sumner is principal and Helliwell Professor of World Mission at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto.*



## justyn terry

Anyone confused by the late modern world may welcome James K.A. Smith's *Who's Afraid of Relativism? Community, Contingency, and Creaturehood* (Baker Academic) as a Christmas gift. Smith lays out some of the main issues of relativism with clarity and grace, making contemporary philosophy accessible to non-philosophers without oversimplifying it. He concludes with an intriguing epilogue on "How to be a conservative relativist," which is a great summary of his argument. This is refreshing reading for this season of joy.

*The Very Rev. Justyn Terry is dean and president of Trinity School for Ministry.*

## catherine waynick

In *Ordinary Grace* (Thorndike Press, 2013), William Kent Krueger's writing is beautiful, his characters well-formed and believable, and the story line captivating. Best of all, Krueger conveys the real tensions that arise when vengeance and grace vie for privilege of place in human hearts and actions. There is nothing ordinary about grace, and wherever it is bestowed it is squandered — sometimes making rather small things enormous and miraculous, sometimes healing the deepest of wounds. The reader will not be disappointed.

*The Rt. Rev. Catherine Waynick is Bishop of Indianapolis.*

## christopher wells

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux (1873-97) joined her three older sisters at the local Carmelite convent at age 15 and died of tuberculosis at 24. Her charmingly accessible *Story of a Soul*, written under obedience on her deathbed and published posthumously, recounts the gradual renunciation of her childhood selfishness in favor of a most practical and simple, sacrificial love. All of the counsels of perfection are set forth and pursued in scriptural terms with God to the fore. Meet this inspiring Doctor of the Church and share her with others!

*Christopher Wells is editor of TLC and executive director of the Living Church Foundation.*

## rowan williams

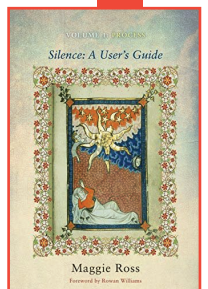
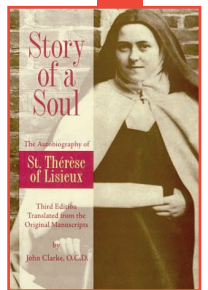
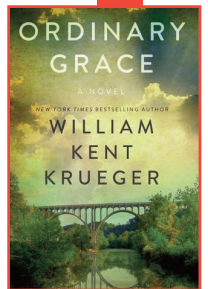
I would like to nominate *Silence: A User's Guide* by Maggie Ross (Wipf and Stock, 2013). It is full of learning but always comes back to the central questions of how we open ourselves to the unutterable God — and how we find great quantities of ingenious ways to stop ourselves doing this. This book is soaked in the tradition of Christian teaching but constantly critical and fresh.

*The Rt. Rev. Rowan Williams is master of Magdalene College at Cambridge University.*

## william willoughby iii

At the top of my list for every visit to Rome is at least one pilgrimage to a work by Caravaggio. *Michelangelo da Caravaggio* by Felix Witting and M.L. Patrizi (Parkstone International, 2012) does an excellent job of introducing his work without overwhelming the reader with its breadth. It also explores the tension between Caravaggio's pursuit of tender and realistic portrayals of important religious iconography and the violent reality of his life.

*The Very Rev. William Willoughby III is dean of Savannah, Georgia.*





— TWENTY MINUTES WITH ELIZABETH STOKER BRUENIG —

## ‘Poor People Are Bruised Reeds’

*Elizabeth Stoker Bruenig has attracted a lot of attention lately with a mixture of orthodox theology and left-wing politics that is highly underrepresented in American discourse. Though only 23, she has already written for a wide range of publications including First Things, The Atlantic, Salon, America, The American Conservative, The Daily Beast, and The New Republic. Her work centers on the intersection of Christian faith and public policy, particularly on how society approaches poverty and issues of economic justice. She is a PhD student at Brown University, and earned an MPhil at Cambridge. She grew up Methodist, and was confirmed into the Roman Catholic Church last Easter.*

By Jonathan Mitchican

### **Why are you so passionate about issues of economic inequality?**

I feel called to it. I have for a long time. It's hard to explain how a calling comes about, but I knew by the time I got to college that I felt I was performing the right role when I was working on issues of hunger, homelessness, and poverty. My heart is at home when I am working for the poor, who I understand to belong to God in a unique and meaningful way. I feel so lucky, so blessed, so fortunate to have had the opportunities and gifts that I've been given, and I think that each of them is on "loan," so to speak — that if I've been given something special, it has to be used for good. And this is the good I feel called to put all my gifts toward.

**Why is it important for Christians in particular to engage with issues of poverty?**

I think it's important to recognize that Christianity is fundamentally concerned with justice, and that many of our very beautiful Scriptures about the nature of the Messiah (Isa. 42, echoed in Matt. 12, for example) emphasize his mission is one of establishing justice. And in both those Scriptures we see that justice has a special relation to concern for the vulnerable — a bruised reed, we find, he will not break.

So our mission as Christians in the example of Christ has to be one of justice, and we have to understand justice to mean bearing a special concern for the weak, the vulnerable, the oppressed. And for us, in our world, this means turning our eyes toward the poor. Poor people are bruised reeds — compared to their wealthy counterparts, they have little share in economic power, little share in political power, worse health, shorter life expectancies, and less ability to participate in the life of society. I think it's important for Christians to recognize this as a situation of injustice, and to respond accordingly.

**If you could wave a magic wand and have American Christians understand one thing about public policy that they do not, what would it be?**

Market income is not the only way to reduce poverty, and market solutions to poverty aren't necessarily the most effective ones. When we think about poverty and how to reduce it, we always seem to come back to how to increase market incomes — that is, how to get people better jobs, or higher-paying jobs, or more skilled jobs. We end up talking about education, job training, and so forth. Or we end up talking about, say, long-term birth control — the goal of which is to delay childbirth until the mother's market income is higher.

But a great many of those solutions are just not going to be particularly effective unless poverty is reduced first. Low educational attainment, young/unwed pregnancy, lower marriage rates — all of these are conditions that are usually understood to create poverty, when really they are results of poverty. Therefore I wish we could take an approach to them that didn't rely on us somehow boosting market income alone, and let us solve the poverty first to allow for greater development in all these areas.

**You are someone who is not easily classified within the typical left/right, Republican/Democ-**

**rat spread of American politics. Do you think that the narrowness of American political discourse has affected the way we talk about God?**

In American politics I see a paradoxical thing: the arena is very polarized, but the spread is relatively small. So we have two extremes, but neither of them is that far from the other. Thus our way of talking about politics is, compared to nations with more diverse political landscapes, pretty narrow. And I do believe our understanding of what role religion can play in our reasoning is therefore narrowed. God is rarely



Market income is not the only way to reduce poverty, and market solutions to poverty aren't necessarily the most effective ones.



understood in American politics to be a radical force — he's usually stuck with convention, platitude, establishment. And to me that's madness! I hope it has not caused us to view God as essentially commonsensical and moderate, because the God of the Bible is not a milquetoast figure, not whatsoever.

**You have been very critical of Catholics who embrace libertarianism. What about libertarianism makes it a problematic political philosophy for Christians? Or is it only problematic for Roman Catholics?**

It's a problem for all Christians in my view. It's especially troublesome for Roman Catholics, who have many decades of social teaching and centuries of tradition militating against a libertarian anthropology and a libertarian account of property and ownership. But even if you don't put much stock in tradition or Catholic social teaching, libertarianism is an ideology that seeks to absolutize the import of the individ-

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# ‘Poor People Are Bruised Reeds’

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ual and to extend that import to property, to the point that it conflates the privileges of individuals with their property.

For Christians this can't be our frame — we can't see the world in terms of *What am I getting out of this?* and we can't imagine God to relate to humanity purely on the individual level. For us, the corporate person matters, the family, the community, the society: at all of these levels, we'll be held to ac-

I loved the sacramental theology Augustine articulated, and that's what turned my heart.

count. And we can't understand property to have in any sense similar privileges to persons, because we see in creation that human beings are very different than the remainder of material creation, and that the world has a purpose apart from the intentions of human beings. In these ways I believe libertarianism sharply departs from Christian understandings of the person and the world.

**Was Catholic social teaching a big part of what eventually led you to become Roman Catholic?**

Strangely enough, no. I really did come to Catholicism through Augustine alone. It was the strength and clarity of the arguments that did it for me, and the beauty of the prose. I loved the sacramental theology Augustine articulated, and that's what turned my heart. And, of course, the social teaching is the natural conclusion of all of those arguments, so I love it all too — but it wasn't the starting point.

**As you have begun to be published and read in more and more places, what kind of impact do you hope that your writing has?**

In my mind there's only one mainstream Christian political vocabulary, one set of phrases and ideas that are identified by most people as “Christian politics.” It's a conservative, right-wing vocabulary. My hope is to popularize a left-wing Christian vocabulary that's not only faithful to gospel and doctrine, theologically rigorous, and politically astute, but also understood widely to be all those things. I hope I can give Christians a way of

thinking about politics in relation to our faith that is strong, intelligent, and not bound up with right-wing political pathologies. That's my hope: that in a few years, Christian leftist politics will be broadly seen as authentically Christian and as politically viable as Christian right politics.

**A lot of people hear “left-wing” and assume that means being liberal on social and cultural issues, but that's not what you mean, is it?**

No, not at all. I use “left-wing” especially to refer to economics, the sort of state structures of wealth. I use it in the old guard, coal mine, labor way, to mean the involvement of government in pursuing avenues for the elimination of poverty. Having spent time in England, I

find it to be a peculiarity of American politics that we assume “left-wing” is a statement about how we identify on sex and family issues.

**You and I share a love of comics. You mentioned to me that Dick Grayson has always been a really important character for you.**

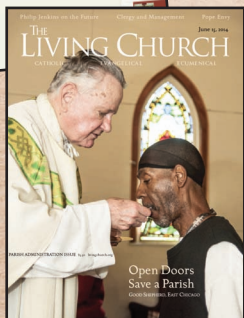
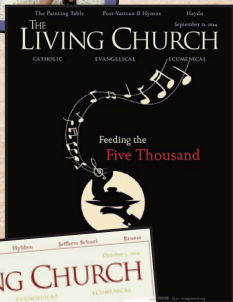
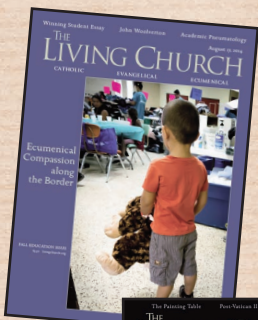
We do share a love of comics! Yes, Dick Grayson has always meant a lot to me. When I started reading Batman comics as a kid, he was the one who stuck with me, the one I followed. You cycle through writers and artists in comics, so you get variations on your characters, but for me Dick has always retained his sense of optimism, his dedication to goodness, his love of life. And there's something about his grace.

Dick is probably the most acrobatically gifted character in the DC Universe, and you can always see that in his style of fighting and motion. And though it's a gift, it's also something he cultivates; in that way it's a lot like his disposition, the “grace” that keeps him upbeat and committed to the good, even when circumstances are terrible. There's also something beautiful, to me, about his ability to forgive, and about a certain faith he has — not explicitly religious, but this is a guy who spends a lot of his time in free fall over pavement, and yet he never seems to doubt himself or his mission very severely for very long.

*The Rev. Jonathan A. Mitchican is rector of the Church of the Holy Comforter in Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania, and blogs at [conciliaranglican.org](http://conciliaranglican.org).*

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Protesters at the Ferguson Police Department Jamelle Bouie/Wikimedia Commons

# The Parable of Ferguson

By Gerardo James de Jesus

**T**he city of Ferguson, Missouri, erupted again on November 24, and nothing prevented it: not the pleas by Michael Brown's parents for protests to be peaceful, not the diligent intervention of clergy, and not a more subdued presence of law enforcement. As a priest who practices psychoanalysis, I am keen on exploring what evokes such behavior. It's not just about reversing destructiveness but of learning how the behavior might, as odd as this may seem, benefit an enraged soul. After all, we repeat actions if they make us feel better or attract attention.

To understand this rage, we cannot dismiss what underlies the behavior. Embedded in the African American story is a deep sense of alienation that shapes the psychology of a people. In the words of the late novelist James Baldwin: "Negros in America are always enraged." Jesus got it right, sooner than any social psychologist deciphering the core of rage. Jesus often recited parables to awaken truths that others avoided, and he granted Peter's request to clarify a parable about the source of evil in human hearts (Matt. 15:13-20). Can we find in Ferguson's tragic story a truth that broadens our understanding of multicultural ministry and race relations? Will Ferguson become a modern parable for the church?

When relationships have lost the bond of trust, enemies emerge. When we no longer feel like we belong, or have never felt like we belonged despite being told otherwise, a dissonance occurs: a felt experience, at times expressed in rage, that can appear to others as self-pity or playing the race card. A woman in a domestically abusive relationship knows such rage. When the heart changes, twisting rules and lying to survive become the new normal. Moral virtues begin to contort. It's all about survival.

What prompts enraged souls to destroy their own surroundings? The answer lies in how we treat one another. As Jesus described the two great commandments: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind" and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:36-40). When a people's perspective is suppressed, love is scant. What we believe does not coalesce with what we experience. Anger escalates, it finds an outlet, and there goes the community.

Yes, when the "heart becomes really deceitful above all things," it truly becomes "desperately wicked." People have trouble understanding this if they have not experienced profiling or the inability to find a job. But the Church must understand. It must understand how our core relations affect everything, for better and for worse. With this recognition will come new opportunities for healing alienation and mistrust.

First, we need to think incarnationally by placing ourselves on the side of the alienated, just as Jesus did. Jesus comes to us as a circumcised Jew, a member of a politically disenfranchised class in a land occupied by Romans, a man from a ghetto known as Nazareth (see John 1:46). Jesus knew alienation through and through, but responded in a transformative mode. He affirmed the humanity of the non-Jew, the uncircumcised, the despised Samaritan, the slave, the woman of ill repute, the foreigner or immigrant with his unfamiliar language and Greek culture, and even the hated Roman soldier who represented the occupier. As theologian Ray S. Anderson wrote in *The Shape of Practical Theology* (IVP Academic, 2001): “Jesus penetrated through these social and cultural forms of humanity and addressed the true humanity of each person, and so revealed his own humanity as the touchstone of divine grace.”

Second, incarnational thinking opens us to what we would rather avoid in ourselves, and it calls us to community. Why do I feel uncomfortable around you? Do I focus on another’s rage to hide my complicity in it? Am I afraid of losing popularity? Church leaders should cultivate human souls (see Heb. 13:17) by teaching them to build community. The incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, is the model. He comes not as the doctor diagnosing and exacting a cure but as one who suffers with us. The poor and marginalized trust Jesus because he becomes them (Phil. 2:7; Matt. 25:40). Intentionally hearing one another’s stories is essential to “breaking down the dividing wall” that fosters alienation (Eph. 2:14).

To see ourselves less as members of an ethnic group, political persuasion, or ideological bent and more as the body of Christ is a matter of conversion. We cannot care about what we choose not to see; or, as St. Augustine put it, you can’t love what you don’t know. Jesus came under unjust legal proceedings that led to his death. But Christians today, all over the world, live among people who fear being profiled, deported, and jailed.

Finally, the Ferguson parable is about more than just a white cop killing an African American teenager amid a tense confrontation. It is symptomatic of human brokenness that can only be met by a radical, incarnated love that

is willing to go with Jesus “outside the camp and bear the abuse he endured” (Heb. 13:13). In this communion of solidarity, we can find purpose in the rage of our brothers and sisters. The Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., once said that “a riot is the language of the unheard.” The parable of Ferguson provides another opportunity for us to listen in loving surrender.

*The Rev. Gerardo James de Jesus is assistant priest at St. Mary of the Angels Church in Orlando.*



**Top:** Sgt. Bret Barnum hugs 12-year-old Devonte Hart in Portland on November 25. Johnny Nguyen/chambersvisuals.com

**Bottom:** A street protest in St. Louis Shawn Semmler/Flickr

## Growth Takes Heart: Congregations Learn to Tell Stories Online

(Continued from page 7)

places the introverted masses within reach. It gives congregations channels to reach thousands who find it far easier to watch a video clip or listen to a sermon podcast than visit a church for the first time. Some will visit eventually, but only after they're certain what to expect.

"Because it's often such an anxious experience to visit a church, people do everything they humanly can to make sure it's the right match before they visit," Bowden said. "They're using all these communication channels to prequalify themselves for membership. ... This means we have an increasingly small number of visits from them to help finalize that this is the place for them."

Bowden prescribed a few core steps for congregations on the way to social-media success. He said lots of platforms are worth exploring and using, from Pinterest to Google+, but four are essential: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and a blogging platform such as Tumblr or Blogger.

He urged churches to experiment without assuming that all platforms are alike. Sending out 140-character tweets every hour or two can be effective, but posting hourly on Facebook would grow annoying fast. Posting a couple of times a day on Facebook is plenty.

Like gadgets in a workshop or kitchen cupboard, different media serve different functions. Because full-length homilies usually work better in audio than video format, it's wise to use YouTube for other purposes, such as a short, fun teaching moment on a specific topic. Rules of thumb for YouTube: use a tripod, attend to lighting, keep it lively, and edit to one minute or less. Shooting video with a smartphone is fine, as is editing with software that's standard on a desktop computer.

In deciding what and how to post, congregations need to remember the overarching goal: share who they are



Bowden

in ways that make others want to engage with them. Whatever they post should deliver inspiration, information, or conversation because those are the benefits viewers expect and need from a church feed.

What if a church is in transition or unclear about its mission? That's no reason to put off diving into social media, Bowden said. Such churches still have stories to tell about what they're doing week to week, and they should be sharing it.

When posting, think: we're unfolding a story here in stages with emotionally resonant touchstones. As events are coming up, a church might post a sequence over several days. Followers would see photos of people getting ready, announcements of new developments and friendly, open-ended questions like *How will you observe Advent this year?*

The importance of photos cannot be overstated, Bowden said. But congregations often forget to develop images or graphics, relying instead on layers of text that scanning eyes might not read.

"Congregations are not usually in the visual business," he said. "It's a real learning curve to figure out how the things we're sharing [can be] beautiful, interesting, engaging, cute,

whatever. ... Because if your stuff looks like it's going to be boring, I'm going to assume it is boring."

Outreach isn't finished when posts are online. After worship, trained greeters should make sure newcomers are neither ignored nor smothered, Bowden said. With first-time visitors, he said, the goal is to confirm that what they have learned online is true — is there really ample parking, and a clean, comfortable child-care area? — and keep anxiety levels low. A second visit should lay groundwork for new friendships and meaningful ties with the congregation and its initiatives.

"This has nothing to do with technology and gadgets," Bowden said. "This has to do with relationship and making it easier for people to find their ways into your congregation's life and heart."

G. Jeffrey MacDonald

## Marriage Protests Flip

For many years clergy declined to sign marriage licenses as a protest on behalf of same-sex marriage. Other clergy now decline to sign marriage licenses as a protest on behalf of lifelong male-female marriage.

The new protests, as the Rev. Ephraim Radner and the Rev. Christopher Seitz write in *First Things*, argue that Christians must resist state efforts to redefine marriage: "The new definition of marriage no longer coincides with the Christian understanding of marriage between a man and woman. Our biblical faith is committed to upholding, celebrating, and furthering this understanding, which is stated many times within the Scriptures and has been repeatedly restated in our wedding ceremonies, church laws, and doctrinal standards for centuries. To continue with church practices that intertwine government marriage with Christian marriage will implicate the Church in a



false definition of marriage.”

The pledge has attracted several hundred signatures, both within the Christian Church and beyond it.

## Bexley Seabury Expands to Minnesota

The Diocese of Minnesota and the Bexley Seabury Theological Seminary Federation have formed a partnership that will focus on Christian formation and leadership development in numerous Minnesota communities.

Bexley Seabury will work with the diocese’s formation and leadership development initiatives among the Ojibwe and Dakota communities, and provide several scholarships to the Bexley Seabury Leadership Institute, a three-day summer program.

A cooperative “incubator initiative” will gather young adults to visit emergent congregations in the Episcopal Church and bring the best wisdom from those faith communities back to Minnesota.

The diocese is “committed to assisting every faith community to acquire the resources they need to engage God’s mission in their context,” said the Rt. Rev. Brian N. Prior, Bishop of Minnesota. “This emerging partnership with Bexley Seabury has the potential of offering significant faith formation opportunities.”

The Rev. Roger A. Ferlo, president of Bexley Seabury, said the diocese and the seminary federation are well matched.

“Episcopalians in Minnesota have understood since the days of Bishop Henry Whipple in the mid-19th century that it is essential to root theological education in the context and culture of local communities of faith,” he said. “Bexley Seabury shares this historic willingness to work collaboratively, to try new approaches, and to find ways to ensure that the best in Christian formation and training are available to people and communities that are sometimes overlooked.

“My hope is that this joint commitment to excellence in contextual formation will become a model for the church at a time when such models are keenly needed.”

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The king reclines in his cedar castle, reflecting on the distribution of resources in relation to status and influence. “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent” (2 Sam. 7:2). This, the king considers, ought not to be so. Let the Lord live like me, better than me, in a house of glory, of stone, brick, and gold. The king’s wish is granted by the prophet, and then rescinded after the Lord speaks. “Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain” (Ps. 127:1).

The Lord confesses an affinity to the open air and a lightweight pack for the Divine: “I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle” (2 Sam. 7:6). The time comes, of course, when “the Lord will make you a house” (2 Sam. 7:11), and the time has come when the Lord permits to his glory the construction of basilicas and cathedrals and parish churches. Still, God is not mocked, nor should we be fooled. There are no sacred places and there is no holy land that locks, contains, or otherwise constrains the divine presence.

Jesus walks along the Sea of Galilee. So, in union with him, we walk. John Wycliffe, in his early Bible translation and in many of his sermons, rendered the Latin *ambulare* as *wander*. “Jhesu seith to him, ryse vp taak thi bed and wander, and a non the man is maad hool, and took vp his bed and wandride” (John 5:8; 1380 trans., OED). “The Lord will keep your going out and coming in from this time on and forevermore” (Ps. 121:8). We move and the Lord moves with us. This we know and confess in the consummate mystery of the angel’s visit to Mary: “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you” (Luke 1:28). The Lord is, of course, with her in a special sense: “you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus” (Luke 1:31). Mary’s story recapitulates Old Testament types and establishes a model for all future Christians.

We are Christ-bearers. So it is fitting that Mary’s story can be anyone’s story, in some measure. And a story I have.

While the future mother of Thomas Aquinas was minding her own business, an angel appeared to her and said, “Rejoice, Domina, because you are with child, and you will bear a son whom you will call Thomas.” The pregnancy and birth were miraculous and immediate. One day, while Thomas’s mother, Theodora, was in Napoli at the public bath with other women, Thomas being carried by his nurse, the nurse noticed a piece of paper in the boy’s hand. “The boy, by divine providence, found a small piece of paper and grabbed it. ... When the nurse tried to open his hand, he screamed. So she bathed and scrubbed and clothed the boy, and carried him to his mother while he held his hand tightly closed. When his mother opened his fist, he cried out. There she found a little scrap of paper containing nothing other than the Ave Maria. ... No one could quiet his tears until he was holding the paper, which, as soon as he had it again, he put in his mouth [indicating] deep rumination and that he would, in time, know the taste of sweetness (scriptural interpretation)” (*Hystoria beati Thomae de Aquino* by Guglielmo di Tocco).

“The word is very near you, on your lips and in your heart” (Rom. 10:8).

### Look It Up

Read Luke 1:38.

### Think About It

“Think of the Lord as being in the very inmost part of the Soul” (Teresa of Ávila).

## A Beautiful Righteousness

“The law was our disciplinarian until Christ came” (Gal. 3:24). The suggestion, now that faith has come, that discipline and obedience are summarily cast out is seriously and dangerously mistaken. Is not faith the *obedience of faith*? “So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good” (Rom. 7:12). Although variously interpreted in the time of Jesus, the sanctity of divine law was not in question. Rather, the One who was and is the fulfillment of the law has come, and thus the law’s fulfillment comes to Christ’s followers, most profoundly, through the efficacy, force, and virtue of his life. Christ the new law is new life, whereas the old disciplinarian tells an old and troubling truth: “I cannot do it” (Rom. 7:18). Who, then, will rescue me from this body of death, this flesh that consents to the good and yet so easily succumbs to petty wrongs and even vile and utter depravity? Who, we ask?

“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive the adoption as children” (Gal. 4:4-5). Although born under the law, he remained sinless with respect to the law. And yet his obedience was not slavish, but the free consent of a Son to a loving Father. “I seek to do not my own will but the will of him who sent me” (John 5:30). It is precisely the Son’s willing consent that constitutes our redemption, for we are caught up into his life, and the righteousness intrinsic to his role as the natural Son of the Father is imputed, by grace, to us. “We receive adoption as children” (Gal. 4:4). Giving himself as a ransom for many, he makes many sons and daughters.

Who does this work? Christ. How? I do not know. Twenty-nine years of preaching and yet I cannot unravel the mystery and wonder of how we become children of God in union with Christ. All theories of the atonement are, in the end, no more than a glim-

mer, a view from a cleft in the rock.

The righteousness of Christ, his perfect obedience to the law and his loving consent to the Father’s will, may be compared to a garment. He is vested as the Son of the Father, and we are gathered under the shadow of the Son’s flowing robes. “My whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland and a bride adorns herself with jewels” (Isa. 61:10). How is the young man so noble? He decks himself with a garland. How is she a beauty to behold? She adorns herself with jewels.

Having put on Christ, we have put on his righteousness. We draw, moment by moment, from the well of his fullness, grace upon grace (John 1:16). And yet we fall and stumble and have much to learn from law and wisdom and good counsel. We repent and return and realize again that we are sons and daughters of God. Equally important, and difficult to admit, we are made not only righteous but beautiful.

Christ is the garment of our salvation. He is the water in the garden of human life that causes righteousness to spring forth. He is the light that enlightens everyone. The eye of faith can see that the perfect law of Christ accomplishes not only a moral and spiritual transformation but an aptness and integration, a new form of Christ’s beauty.

### Look It Up

Read Isa. 61:10. He clothed me.

### Think About It

Take your garlands and jewels.

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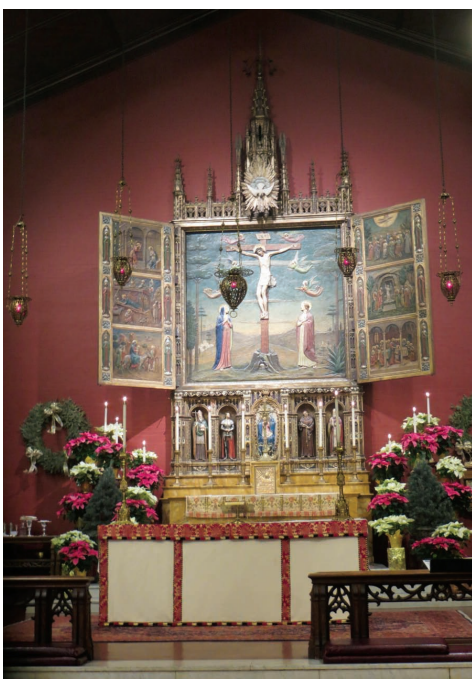
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## PEOPLE & PLACES

### Deaths

**Laura Allen**, a longtime leader in the Diocese of Dallas, died December 3. She was 86.

Allen was one of the first women elected to the vestry of St. Michael and All Angels Church in 1971. She served for nearly 40 years as a delegate to diocesan conventions, was a deputy to General Convention, and once chaired its constitution committee. She created vestments used by the Rt. Rev. James Stanton between 1993 and 2010, including those for his consecration as bishop.

Her son, the Rev. Frank Allen, is rector of St. David's Church in Wayne, PA.

The Rev. **Barbara Bloxom** died at her home in Topeka, KS, November 11. She was 73.

A native of Evanston, IL, she was a graduate of Chatham College and Seminary of the Southwest. She was ordained deacon and priest in 1990.

"Barbara was a friend and pastor to many in our diocese," the Rt. Rev. Dean E. Wolfe, Bishop of Kansas, wrote in announcing her death. "Her contributions to building community and collegiality among the clergy were appreciated by everyone. She was one of the first people I met in the Diocese of Kansas when she was a member of the Bishop Search Committee, and Ellen and I found her joy and spirit to be very inviting. A joyous light has gone out in the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas."

Bloxom is survived by a sister, Harriet; a daughter, Jennifer; sons Raymond III and Christopher; and six grandchildren.

The Rev. **Nicholas Radelmiller**, OHC, died at Sarah House Hospice in Santa Barbara, CA, on September 27. He was 74.

A native of Pasco, WA, he was a graduate of the University of Washington and Nashotah House. He was ordained deacon in 1965 and priest in 1966.

He joined the Order of the Holy Cross in 1970 and made his life profession in 1975. He was a missionary priest in Quito, Ecuador, for two years, and then moved to Holy Saviour Priory in 1985. He returned to Mt. Calvary in the early 1990s, and remained in residence there for the rest of his life.

Radelmiller was prior of Mt. Calvary Monastery in Santa Barbara from 2008 until June of this year. He led the community during the years following the November 2008 Tea Fire that destroyed the original Mt. Calvary Retreat House, and presided over the 2013 acquisition of the current site, located next to the Old Mission in Santa Barbara.



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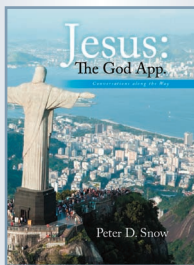
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