Griswold, Jefferts Schori at VTS | Refugee Resettlement | Silence in Iceland

June 12, 2016

The Living Church

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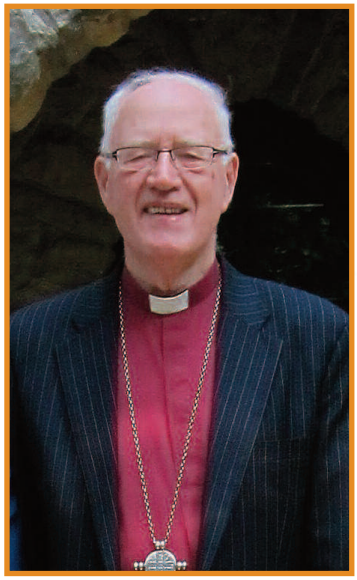
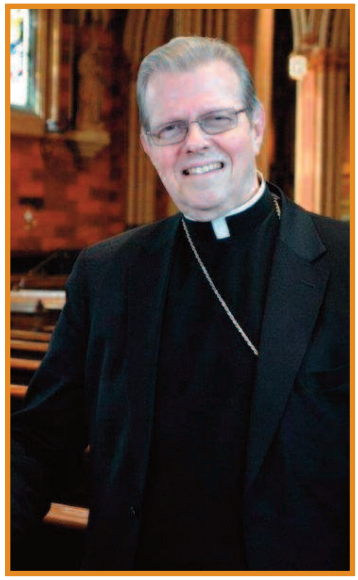
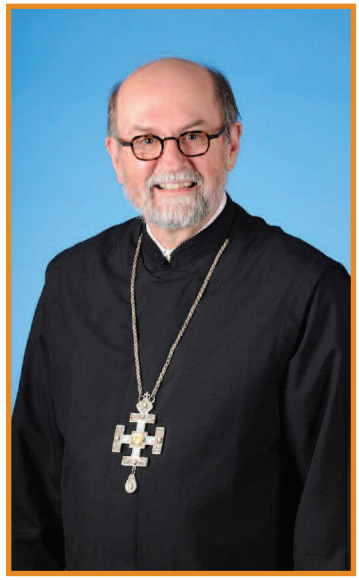


The Most Rev'd George Carey, 103rd Archbishop of Canterbury (ret)



The Rt. Rev'd Edward B. Scharfenberger, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany

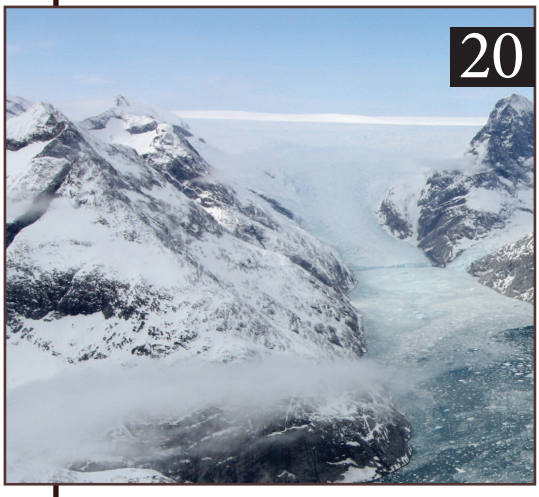


The Very Rev'd Dr. Chad Hatfield, Chancellor of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary

For more information and registration:
http://ctkcenter.org/page/walk_through_the_door_to_holiness_conference

ON THE COVER

Richard J. Mammana: "I make a visual and tactile visit to a time when the vastness of the British Empire, the confidence of the Anglican Communion, and their robust and overlapping cultures were happy, firm, committed to beauty as a vehicle for Christian truth" (see "Mabel Dearmer," p. 16).



The Living Church

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We are grateful to the dioceses of Long Island and Milwaukee [p. 24], the dioceses of Indianapolis and Southwest Florida [p. 25], and S. Stephen's Church, Providence [p. 27], 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.

Former PBs Reflect on Their Ministries

Former presiding bishops Frank T. Griswold and Katharine Jefferts Schori reflected on their tenures during "Looking Back, Dreaming Forward," a conversation held at Virginia Theological Seminary's Immanuel Chapel on May 12.

Griswold described the ministries of the presiding bishops since 1985 (Edmond Browning, Griswold, Jefferts Schori, and Michael Curry) as "a continuum." "No one has been elected to undo or correct what came before, and each one of us has been given a particular moment in history with its challenges and possibilities," he said. "But I think it's interesting that, you know, it's all moved in one direction."

Curtis Prather/VTS photo

Bishops Frank Griswold and Katharine Jefferts Schori with the Rev. James Barney Hawkins

Griswold's remarks focused largely on the way that serving as presiding bishop led him through times of deep spiritual struggle, as he discovered the truth in Brazilian Archbishop Dom Hélder Câmara's description of "the bishop as martyr."

"I found my soul stretched by the role itself," Griswold said. "I really had to pray, open myself to the fact that I cannot embrace this reality without being victim to my fears and prejudices. I found myself needing the grace of the risen Christ mediated by the Spirit.

"Part of the role of the presiding bishop is to connect the pieces and make possible diverse points of view to come together, not only at the level of the mind but at the level of the heart," he said.

Griswold said that he often found himself "suspected on all sides," and had to learn to "pay no attention to what people think about you."

Griswold also said he learned to be suspicious of intra-church arguments that used words like *holiness* and *justice*, because they were often "used to deny the other a point of view." His experience taught him "that we need to be multilingual and multidimensional in our theology."

Jefferts Schori similarly described her ministry as being focused on "bridge-building and developing networks, connecting people across boundaries and borders that often separate us, healing divisions."

"When I came into office, my sense was that the diversity of the church was something to be encouraged and celebrated," she said. "There have to be some limits, but the tent is very wide. How do we encourage and celebrate and promote the ability to deal with diversity and the blessed [multicultural], multilingual, multiperspective realties within this church?"

Jefferts Schori said she rejoiced that the Episcopal Church was growing in a "more expansive direction." She suggested that the next major challenge it would face is moving beyond celebrating human differences to "honor the blessed diversity of all of creation."

The two former presiding bishops fielded questions about children's ministry, achieving a healthy work-life balance, promoting civil discourse in congregations during an election year, and equipping congregations to tackle climate change.

Several audience members posed sharp questions about the future unity of the Anglican Communion and the potential for discipline of the Episcopal Church along the lines of the relational consequences urged by the Primates' Meeting. One listener asked whether the Anglican Church in North America might eventually take the Episcopal Church's place as the Communion-related body in the United States.

Neither bishop saw any serious challenges ahead, and the possibility of expulsion was dismissed out of hand. Jefferts Schori described the Anglican Communion as being in an "adolescent stage," with the current conflicts serving as "a natural process of development and maturation," as member churches become more willing to challenge the Church of England's supremacy. "We are testing one another," she said, "but in healthier ways than we did 25 years ago."

Griswold said he had no real concern about the consequences outlined by the Anglican primates, not-

ing that similar discipline had been imposed on the Episcopal Church after Bishop Gene Robinson's 2003 consecration, "but a few years later that simply faded away."

He described the Primates' Meeting as a body that "has no authority whatsoever to issue these pontifical declarations." He said the consequences may have emerged "for the sake of certain primates needing to go back with something that had a disciplinary feel to it."

"It's intense conflict at some levels of conversation," he said. "It's not intense conflict at the level of congregation-to-congregation and diocese-to-diocese relationship. That's thriving. And ultimately it's those relationships that really define the Communion."

Griswold added that the Communion's networks thrive despite divisions: "That's where the real work of the Communion goes on, and they're unaffected by pontifical goings-on."

The Rev. Mark Michael

Not in Kansas Anymore?

Church-based organizations that resettle refugees in the United States have a message for Kansas and other security-minded states that increasingly want no part of their efforts: we will proceed without you.

Kansas in April became the latest front in the battle when Gov. Sam Brownback ordered an end to state government participation in the federal refugee resettlement program. In an executive order three months earlier, Brownback barred all state agencies, boards, and commissions from assisting the resettlement of refugees who "present a safety and security risk to the state of Kansas."

But the Episcopal Church does not need the state's help to do this work, says the Rt. Rev. Dean Wolfe, Bishop of Kansas. Its resettlement agency, Episcopal Migration Ministries, will continue helping refugees begin new lives in Kansas.

"This action in no way will stop the work of Episcopal Migration Ministries-Wichita … in its ministry of helping refugees," Bishop Wolfe said in a statement after Kansas withdrew from the program. "While the state will be removed from the necessary administrative assistance provided to refugee resettlement agencies, the U.S. government has said it will work with another entity to provide this assistance. Refugee resettlement in Kansas will continue."

Resettlement agencies are apparently unfazed by calls to slow down until refugees are screened more thoroughly. They predict nonprofit agencies will fill administrative voids left by state governments that withdraw, say workers at Church World Service (CWS). CWS and EMM are among the nine approved agencies that implement the federal program with help

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Refugees: Not in Kansas Anymore?

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from affiliates in various states.

CWS does not resettle refugees in Kansas, but the agency operates in New Jersey, another state that, like Kansas, withdrew from the federal program in April. The state's withdrawal means a long-term transition is occurring, said William Haney of the CWS Immigration and Refugee Program, but neither resettlement workers nor refugees have faced new problems to date.

"We haven't seen any change in terms of arriving refugees or in terms of how our office is operating" in New Jersey, Haney said. "It's all been pretty much business as usual."

No state has barred refugees from settling within its borders, but resettlement agencies are nonetheless concerned that signs of unwelcome can affect political debates in ways that might eventually affect resettlement work.

For example, each year the administration feels political pressure as it proposes a refugee limit. The Obama administration faces pushback as it tries to raise the limit from 85,000 to 100,000, including 10,000 from Syria, in the next fiscal year. In state capitals, CWS is tracking 52 pieces of what it calls anti-refugee legislation working its way through 19 state legislatures.

"We take every proposal seriously, even if it is unconstitutional," said Jen Smyers, director of policy and advocacy for the CWS Immigration and Refugee Program. "Even these proposals that might just be political posturing sully the waters in terms of public perception and policymakers' understandings of how refugees contribute to our communities and are very, very tightly vetted in terms of security checks."

Agencies defend refugee rights, and they are willing to sue if necessary. A test case has come in Indiana, where a CWS affiliate, Exodus Refugee Immigration, has teamed up with the American Civil Liberties Union to sue for the rights of refugees to receive public services from the state.

Children at a refugee camp near the Turkish border in Atmeh, Syria Joel Carillet/iStock photo

"Gov. [Mike] Pence was saying they would not provide services to Syrian refugees, which is obviously in violation of the U.S. Constitution and federal law," Smyers said. "He directly contacted the [resettlement] agency and said, 'if you bring them here, they will be barred from services.'"

Not all state governments have played an active role in refugee resettlement in recent years. A minority of about nine states have long left that coordinating work to the nonprofit sector, which has settled refugees in those states without help or interference from state governments.

Governors wary of resettling certain refugees say they are heeding a duty to protect state populations from terrorism. In explaining his executive order, Brownback directed state agencies to consider which nations are regarded as state sponsors of terror when assessing whether a particular refugee might pose a security risk. He cited a State Department list that names Iran, Sudan, and Syria.

But Kansas agencies say they are not blocking refugees from obtaining services, such as welfare benefits, even if they come from countries identified as sponsors of terrorism.

"We are not offering any refugee services, but if a refugee is otherwise eligible for welfare benefits, we [are] processing applications as we would any other individual," said Theresa Freed, communications director for the Kansas Department for Children and Families, via email. "We would not ask where someone is from. We would administer our programs as required by federal and state law."

Last year, Episcopal Migration Ministries resettled 4,874 refugees in the United States. They came from Iran, Sudan, Syria, and 29 other countries, according to data from the Episcopal Church. Among the 100 refugees EMM settled in Kansas last year, none came from any of the three nations labeled state sponsors of terror. Those settled in Kansas came from four other countries: Iraq,

Burma, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, and Iraq.

Neva Rae Fox, the Episcopal Church's officer of public affairs, emphasized that refugees undergo strict screening by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Homeland Security, among other agencies, no matter which countries they come from.

"Refugees are the most scrutinized individuals in the United States," she said via email. "For a state to claim that refugees do not undergo thorough checks before resettlement is not true."

For all their resolve to keep resettling refugees as acts of mission, church-based agencies do not have war chests for litigation on behalf of refugees. While they are confident they would prevail if a state ever refused to provide services — such as housing vouchers or Medicaid — to a refugee on the basis of nationality or status, they hope costly court cases will be unnecessary.

"A lot of the agencies are fairly small administrative affiliates and local organizations," Haney said. "Their ability to fund other things that aren't their day-to-day work is limited."

Meanwhile, advocates are hoping Brownback will return to his roots as a refugee advocate when he represented Kansas in the U.S. Senate. Eager to offer sanctuary for persecuted Christians overseas, Brownback was for years a reliable ally of CWS and others calling for the United States to be a welcoming country for refugees, Smyers said. She believes Brownback has carved out a very different stance as governor of Kansas, and she hopes he will rethink it.

"He was very active in supporting refugee protection overseas, humanitarian assistance overseas, and refugee resettlement here in the United States" during his time as Senator, Smyers said. "He was a strong champion specifically for vulnerable women and children, for religious minorities, and ethnic minorities who were being persecuted in their countries of origin. Maybe he feels like it's a different time now."

G. Jeffrey MacDonald

Stevenson Named to EMM Post

The refugee resettlement program of the Episcopal Church has a new director to lead the agency at a time when mass migration and heightened security concerns have made refugee assistance a hot-button issue.

The Rev. Canon E. Mark Stevenson, vice president of the Living Church Foundation's board of directors, has been appointed director of Episcopal Migration Ministries, which will settle about 5,000 refugees in the United States this year. He replaces Deborah Stein, who directed the agency for more than 15 years and stepped down in May to pursue other interests.


Stevenson

"Mark Stevenson is a demonstrated leader, an able and effective administrator, and a faithful and

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Stevenson Named to EMM Post

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compassionate priest," said Presiding Bishop Michael Curry in a May 23 statement announcing the appointment. Canon Stevenson comes to the job after serving as domestic poverty missioner. In that role, he oversaw Jubilee Ministries, which brings together 700 ministries to help people in poverty.

"As with the related issues of economic poverty ministry, the work of welcoming the stranger can bring systemic, transformative change to our world," Stevenson said in a statement. "I am looking forward to my new ministry alongside the professional staff of Episcopal Migration Ministries, its affiliates, and partners as the Church lives into this calling."

As Stevenson takes the helm, the work of resettling refugees is increasingly scrutinized as policymakers at the state and national levels question whether refugees are sufficiently vetted before they are resettled in the United States.

Of particular concern are refugees from Syria, where the Islamic State is headquartered. Inside Syria, 7.6 million people — more than 40 percent of the population — fled their homes as civil war raged in 2014, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

EMM resettles refugees from Syria, Iraq, and 30 other countries.

The UNHCR estimates that 19 million people worldwide are refugees. More than a quarter of them are Palestinians. Another 53 percent come from three countries: Afghanistan, Somalia, and Syria.

Stevenson is no stranger to working with displaced people. After serving as rector of parishes in Florida and Louisiana, he accepted a call as canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Louisiana, where he worked closely with Bishop Charles Jenkins to develop relief services for victims of Hurricane Katrina. That work laid the foundation for what has become Episcopal Community Services of Louisiana, which provides assistance to people in need across the diocese.

G. Jeffrey MacDonald

Domestic Briefs

Cathedral Calls Richmond Rector: Washington National Cathedral has announced that the Rev. Randolph Marshall Hollerith, rector of St. James's Church in Richmond, will become its next dean in August.


Hollerith

"I'm not an issue-driven person. I'm a gospel-driven person," he told *The Washington Post*. "Of course, the gospel at times is

prophetic and has things to say to the world. But I don't approach things from the point of view of hot-button issues, so to speak."

Interim Dean in Ambridge: Trinity School for Ministry's board of trustees has appointed the Rev. Henry "Laurie" Thompson III as interim dean and president. He will take office July 1. The dean and president is the senior administrator and chief academic officer of the seminary and is responsible for all daily operations and fundraising.

"Laurie Thompson is a superb leader and pastor and he has been an important senior administrator at Trinity for many years," said Douglas Wicker, board chairman. "He is intimately familiar with all aspects of the operation of the school and he will be able to take the reins without missing a beat."

"I feel called to lead the seminary through this transition, but ultimately Trinity will need a younger dean and president to reach the next generation of leaders," Thompson said. "I trust that the Lord will lead us to that person in due course."

Kentucky Calls Provisional Bishop: At a special convention May 14, clergy and deputies agreed to place the Diocese of Lexington under the provisional charge and authority of the Rt. Rev. Bruce Caldwell, retired Bishop of Wyoming.

The diocese has been under the ecclesiastical authority of its standing committee since March 9, following the suspension of the Rt. Rev. Doug Hahn as its bishop. The convention's decision confirmed the standing committee's nomination of Caldwell to serve provisionally.

Caldwell served in Wyoming for 13 years, ending his tenure in 2010. Since then, he has served as interim spiritual leader of St. Mark's Cathedral in Minneapolis.

Caldwell will begin his new duties June 1 and "will continue until Convention acts otherwise," the diocese reported in its release.

Global News

Edited by John Martin

Same-sex Marriage Postponed: The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand, and Polynesia has postponed a decision on whether to permit blessings of same-sex marriage until 2018, "with a firm expectation that a decision to move forward will be made."

Synod's motion also "establishes and commits to pray for a working group to be appointed by the primates [of the province] to consider possible structural arrangements … to safeguard both theological convictions concerning the blessing of same-gender relationships."

The three primates of the Province, Archbishops Brown Turei, Philip Richardson, and Winston Halapua, said in a statement to *Anglican Taonga*: "We are aware of the considerable pain that this decision will cause to those most affected, but we are confident that our determination to work together across our differences will bring us to a place of dignity and justice for everyone."

"We called this motion 'A Way Forward,' but I have come to think of it as something more like the 'Land of Promise,'" said the Rev. Richard Bonifant of Auckland. "Once more, we find we cannot go into that land. This time in the wilderness comes at great cost to us."

"For conservatives the 'A Way Forward' report left us feeling unprotected in our theological position," said the Ven. Tim Mora, Archdeacon of Nelson. "The new working group needs to constantly come back to the conservatives, to be sure that the recommendations are acceptable to them, before they bring it back to the next General Synod."

He said that there was "a definite will from the conservatives to look for a way that will protect our integrity and allow us to stay together."

Gavin Drake, ACNS

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ARCIC Meets in Toronto: The third Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission resumed its work May 11 in Toronto with a service of evening prayer followed by discussion of the ecumenical future.

ARCIC members were joined by their counterparts in the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada, co-chaired by the Rt. Rev. Donald Bolen, Bishop of Saskatoon, and the Rt. Rev. Linda Nichols, Bishop of Huron.

Bolen and Nichols joined ARCIC's co-chairs, the Rt. Rev. David Moxon of the Anglican Centre in Rome and Archbishop Bernard Longley of Birmingham, for a panel discussion. Panelists discussed human sexuality only briefly.

Bolen said the Anglican Church of Canada invited the Canadian ARC to respond to a proposed change to the doctrine of marriage at this summer's General Synod. The vulnerability implied by one church opening itself to the other in its decision-making is an example of what ARCIC has called "receptive ecumenism," an approach that "seeks to make ecumenical progress by learning from our partner, rather than simply asking our partner to learn from us."

The challenge, as Bishop Nichols said, was to bring the high-minded ideals of the international dialogue down to the local level. The fruit of this vision is a video series (*Did You Ever Wonder?*) addressing common questions people have about belief (*Why is the world the way it is?*, *What is my mission in life?*, *Is suffering good for anything?*, and *What good is the church?*).

Jeff Boldt

Turmoil in Uganda: Uganda remains restless after February's disputed general elections. Opposition leaders say President Yoweri Museveni, who has been in power more than 30 years, rigged the election.

In the latest development, main opposition leader Kizza Besigye has been imprisoned on charges of treason, and was arrested May 11 when he swore himself into office before Museveni's swearing-in ceremony. He made a court appearance in the northeast of the country.

Besigye, 60, leads the Forum for Democratic Change. He has insisted he won the election with 52 percent of the votes, despite a government announcement that declared Museveni winner with 61 percent.

When the British ceded independence in Uganda in 1962, colonial authorities said they thought the former colony was one of the best prepared for self-government. That has proved wide of the mark.

Uganda suffered terribly under the regime of Idi Amin, who displaced the first president, Milton Obote, in a coup. Amin was responsible for the murder of Archbishop Janani Luwum.

Museveni finally brought an end to a protracted civil war and many atrocities. Criticism is widespread after 30 years of his rule.

A court challenge to Museveni's claimed victory found in his favor, much to the surprise of informed observers. Opponents claimed there was ample evidence of electoral malpractice.

The Forum for Democratic Change has adopted a strategy of nonviolent protest, including prayers at party headquarters and wearing black clothing every Thursday as symbolic mourning for the death of democracy in Uganda. The government in turn has tried to ban all forms of protest, including prayers deemed to have political undertones.

One of the key architects of these protests is the Rt. Rev. David Zac Niringiye, retired Assistant Bishop of Kampala, who for several years has been a vocal critic of Museveni's regime.

Niringiye is a former regional director for Africa with the Church Mission Society, and spent 20 years in student ministry with the International Fel-

lowship of Evangelical Students. He is now a fellow at Uganda Christian University, leading a project on religion, culture, and public life.

Sisters Welcome Companions: The Anglican Church of Canada's largest religious order invites women ages 22 to 40 to "spend a year living in God's rhythm." The Sisterhood of St. John the Divine will welcome the first class of its Companions on the Way program (which it has also called Companions on an Ancient Path) to the Toronto convent in September.


Gefvert

Up to ten companions will participate in the community's four daily services, eat meals together, and share recreation time with the sisters. They will spend time in study each day, participating in classes in monastic spirituality and the missional church at nearby Wycliffe College. For part of each week the companions will serve others in the community, especially the residents of St. John's Rehab, which the order founded. Once a month they will meet with a spiritual director.

The Rev. Canon Sister Constance Joanna Gefvert, coordinator of the program, hopes participants will be equipped by the experience to serve God in various ways: "We feel this program answers a need that is expressed by young people in our church: how to be more grounded in their spiritual life and also to develop skills that will be useful in pioneering ministries that they may be involved in."

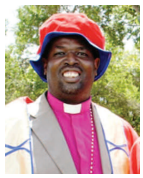
Companions will receive free room and board as well as a small stipend, and they will have one day off each week. The program is open to women in the body of Christ who participate regularly in a spiritual community, and non-Canadians may apply if they provide proof of health insurance.

Sister Constance Joanna said several participants have already been admitted and are planning to join the community in the fall. Applications are due June 15.

The Rev. Mark Michael

Kenya's New Archbishop: The Rt. Rev. Jackson Ole Sapit, Bishop of Kericho, has been elected the next Archbishop of Kenya.

The 52-year-old bishop was baptized in 1977 and confirmed eight years later. He was ordained a deacon in July 1991 and a priest a year later.


Sapit

He served as suffragan bishop of the Kericho area and became diocesan bishop when the area was carved out of the Diocese of Nakuru.

The Most Rev. Eliud Wabukala, Archbishop of Kenya, will retire June 26.

Makerere Expands Chapel: Makerere University in Kampala has appealed for 1,185,681,731 Ugandan shillings (about U.S. $350,000) to expand its 74-year-old St. Francis Chapel. The plan is to expand its capacity from 300 to 1,200 seats.

The Most Rev. Stanley Ntagali, Archbishop of Uganda, asked all Christians in the country, irrespective of their church affiliation, to support the chapel's expansion.

"Let's join hands to expand the house of worship so these students get saved," Ntagali said at a groundbreaking ceremony.

St. Francis Chapel plays an important part in Makerere's strong Christian culture. It has built a reputation for lively charismatic worship, and groups of worshipers often gather under trees because the chapel lacks space for them.

Liberia University's Chancellor: The Rev. Herman B. Browne, dean of Trinity Cathedral in Monrovia, Liberia, has been chosen as the new chancellor of Cuttington University, the Liberian Episcopal Church's highest institution of learning.

Browne, 50, has served at the cathedral since April 2010. He studied at King's College, London, where he earned a B.D. and Ph.D. in systematic theology. He then served on the staff of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

He is the son of the late Most Rev. George Browne, who became Bishop of Liberia in 1970 and was Archbishop of West Africa from 1982 to 1989.

Welby Defends President: Two chance pick-ups by television cameras have recently embarrassed the British government. In one instance, Queen Elizabeth II was heard criticizing Chinese diplomats for "rudeness."

In another, Prime Minister David Cameron said to the Queen, in the presence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev. Justin Welby, that Nigeria and Afghanistan are "possibly the two most corrupt countries in the world."

Archbishop Welby has said he prays often for Nigeria and President Muhammadu Buhari. He said this as Buhari paid him a visit at Lambeth Palace in London.

"This particular president is actu-

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ally not corrupt," Welby said, adding that Buhari is "trying to stamp out corruption."

"Nigeria is a country which has more promise, more opportunity, more potential than anywhere else that I know in many continents, not just in Africa. Its people are so intelligent, so full of energy, so full of commitment, that when Nigerians work together, the world — not just Africa — is affected by that beneficially."

Archbishop Welby visited Nigeria many times as an oil-company executive and later in a role as mediator and peacemaker in the country's troubled delta region.

Midwives Divided on Abortion: The Royal College of Midwives (RCM) became the center of a huge row after its chief executive professor, Cathy Warwick, backed a campaign to allow abortion up to full term. More than 38,000 people have signed a petition denouncing the prospect of abortion without limits; Warwick did not consult the RCM's 30,000 members to gain their support.

Opponents say moreover that Warwick has a conflict of interest because she leads the board of the British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS), which conducts 65,000 abortions every year. They say she should resign from one group or the other.

"Medical unions been taken over by socialist fanatics," Conservative MP Nadine Dorries tweeted. "What kind of midwife supports aborting a baby at full term?"

In a 2012 survey of U.K. women, 98 percent said they opposed any rise in the abortion limit above 24 weeks. Furthermore, the RCM in the 1980s actually supported lowering the upper limit for abortion from 28 weeks to 24 weeks.

RCM said it believes "this is not about being for or against abortion; it is about being for women and respecting their choices about their bodies."

Honor for Pioneer Missionaries: Anglican faithful in Malawi are celebrating the spirit of pioneer missionaries who brought the gospel to their country and opposed slavery. In late April the church celebrates the arrival of the first Anglican missionaries to Malawi.

The annual event is held at the Village of Julius near Kamuzu Bridge, Chikwawa, where the Rev. Henry Carter Scudamore and John Dickson died in January and March 1863, respectively. These missionaries, sent by the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, settled in the area just a year earlier but succumbed to malaria.

Scudamore and Dickson came to Malawi in 1861 in the company of Charles Mackenzie following a request by pioneer explorer David Livingstone to liberate Malawi from a roving slave trade. They first settled in Magomero, Chiradzulu, but moved on to Chikwawa after Mackenzie died of malaria in 1862.

Zimbabwean Court Pauses: Zimbabwe's Supreme Court has postponed its ruling as the Anglican Province of Central Africa seeks to recover U.S. $428,000 from Nolbert Kunonga, the former Bishop of Harare.

Kunonga, a fervent supporter of President Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF Party, tried to stay in office after his appointment ended in 2008, and he tried to form a breakaway church. An audit authorized by the province showed that Kunonga and four of his lieutenants had sold church shares unlawfully.

In November 2012, Zimbabwe Supreme Court Deputy Chief Justice Luke Malaba ruled that Kunonga and his followers were no longer part of the Church of the Province of Central Africa and that he must surrender everything that belongs to the CPCA, including the value of shares he sold.

Reminder: Entries are due June 15 for The Living Church's Student Essays in Christian Wisdom Competition. Send to: essaycontest@livingchurch.org

Sacrifice, Gift, and Giving

The dean of Berkeley Divinity School critiques 'sacrificial ideology.'

In two lectures at Episcopal Divinity School, the Very Rev. Andrew McGowan criticized the common modern conflation of biblical sacrifice with violence and offered an alternative vision rooted in gift-giving and feasting.

McGowan, a scholar of Biblical liturgy and dean of Berkeley Divinity School at Yale, delivered the 2016 Kellogg Lectures — "Sacrifices No More: Ideologies of Sacrifice in Modernity" and "Making Sacrifices to God: Toward a Theology of Gift and Giving" — May 6.

In both lectures, he sought to deconstruct what he called "sacrificial ideology" or "deadly altruism," a belief that violent death and altruistic intention comprise the essence of all sacrifice. Those who assume this belief, he said, tend to find sacrifice's deepest exemplars in animal and human victims and stories of primeval violence.

McGowan traced the presence of this "sacrificial ideology" in concepts as wide-ranging as baseball's sacrifice fly, the language of military commemoration, and the professedly secular investigations of early anthropologists. He described René Girard's concept of the scapegoat mechanism as the "high point of this general confusion." But he noted that it also is assumed by theologians like Stanley Hauerwas and Nancy Jay in their objections to the ways that sacrificial language is used by Christians to justify violence.

While acknowledging that the concept of "deadly altruism" has some affinity with how Jesus' death is described in Hebrews, McGowan argued that the concept of deadly altruism simply cannot summarize the variety of ritual activities discussed in the Bible.

"A single idea, sacrificial ideology, has often been substituted for what really constitutes a diversity of rituals and meanings in the ancient texts and practices," he said. "The positive possibility that goes with that recognition is the retrieval of the ancient diversity of rituals and meanings which offers a more nuanced and more fruitful means to read and address the texts, acknowledging diversity in ancient contexts, as in modern."

McGowan said the Book of Leviticus attempts to join the various kinds of religious rituals practiced in ancient Israel, to "invent sacrifice." It does so by classifying five different kinds of offerings under a category of *qurban*, a concept linked to their performance by authorized priests at the Jerusalem temple. Only two of the five sacrificial categories in Leviticus, McGowan said, necessarily require the death of an animal, and none requires altruistic intention.

The real shift in sacrificial understanding, McGowan said, came with an attempt to interpret the violence experienced by Jews under their Greek oppressors in the intertestamental period. He focused on an account of four brothers' martyrdom in 4 Maccabees, written at about the time of Jesus. The author describes how their deaths, which occur outside any cultic context, function as a kind of sacrifice, a sin offering, which McGowan described as "a remarkable interpretive move."

St. Paul makes a similar move in Romans, in which "the unjust death of Jesus is retrieved as a positive symbol through cultic metaphor."

Ken Kotch photo

McGowan: Gift is "the most fundamental and fruitful category" to interpret biblical sacrifice.

This was, McGowan asserts, "a borrowing from a symbolic system, not a claim about what sacrifice is." He said that Ephesians 5:2, cited by the Book of Common Prayer at the offertory ("Walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God"), speaks most clearly of Christ's gift of himself and of the feast he shares with his followers, and not necessarily of his violent death.

The closing portion of McGowan's second lecture focused on what might be reclaimed for fruitful use by contemporary Christians if "deadly altruism" is set aside as sacrifice's primary meaning. Gift, he urged, was "the most fundamental and fruitful category" to interpret biblical sacrifice, "the most basic grammar of sacrifice."

Drawing on the work of French sociologist Marcel Mauss, McGowan

(Continued on next page)

Sacrifice, Gift, and Giving

(Continued from previous page)

said that theological reflection could recover the central place that gift-giving plays in strengthening social bonds, in relationship with God and with one another. The theme is also fruitful for ethical reflection, he said, and could pose useful questions about wealth inequality and the ways that "property and debt are becoming a debilitating weight on the social fabric itself."

An emphasis on feasting, which was an important (if often forgotten) element in ancient sacrifices, allows for a healthy way to "rework the relationship between Eucharist and sacrifice." McGowan noted that Irenaeus, the first Christian theologian to discuss the Eucharist at length, frames the sacramental ritual in continuity with Israelite sacrifice, as "Christians gather to share food in the presence of God."

McGowan's lecture closed with a reflection on the apse mosaic from the Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna, which represents Abel and Melchizedek bringing gifts to the eucharistic table. He described the image as a helpful point of departure for a "eucharistic theology of sacrifice," and an illustration of continuity between Israelite and Christian sacrificial practice.

"These two offer thanks to God, who is the giver of all," he said. "Giving back what God has given, they will receive it again bound in a community of love where gift is offered, and life is not taken but affirmed."

The Kellogg Lectures were established by the Rev. Frederic Brainerd Kellogg, a 1937 graduate of Philadelphia Divinity School, in memory of his father, Frederic Rogers Kellogg. Past Kellogg lecturers have included Kenneth Leech, Marcus Borg, Cornel West, and Karen Armstrong.

The Rev. Mark Michael

Beeson Divinity School photo

Gerald McDermott prays with Beeson Divinity School students during commencement.

Beeson Heartened by ACNA Approval

Standing out from the crowd can be difficult for the dozens of theological schools offering new tracks in Anglican studies to those exploring a ministerial vocation. Even bishops have had trouble keeping up with a quickly expanding landscape.

"What we're facing is a fascinating movement around the country with all these schools developing Anglican tracks," said Archbishop Foley Beach of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA). "But none of them were sanctioned or approved. Among a lot of the bishops, we didn't even know what they were teaching."

To win trust and gain an edge, schools are now vying for endorsement from the ACNA, which has 110,000 members across nearly 1,000 congregations and seeks provincial status in the Anglican Communion. The seminaries hope the ACNA's blessing can help them become go-to institutions, whether their students plan to serve in the ACNA or the Episcopal Church.

In May, Beeson Divinity School at Samford University became the sixth North American institution to receive ACNA approval. With that distinction, Beeson joins two non-Anglican seminaries with evangelical ties: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, Massachusetts, and Regent College in Vancouver. Also on the approved list are two Episcopal Church seminaries: Trinity School for Ministry and Nashotah House. Rounding out the six is Reformed Episcopal Seminary in Blue Bell, Pennsylvania.

Other schools, including Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky, are applying for the same ACNA distinction. Applicants hope a stamp of approval from a church with high standards can help attract applicants who want a rigorous program, often at a lower total cost than they might pay at an Episcopal seminary.

Beeson's acceptance marks a step in a process to create a nationwide network of ACNA-approved seminaries. Established in 2009, the

ACNA has no official seminary of its own, yet church leaders want to know schools are properly forming priests intellectually and spiritually.

"We live in a time when you can go online and get all kinds of education and intellectual knowledge, but there's the formative process that we feel is very important as well," Beach said. "Having some kind of uniform standard is very important to us."

For Beeson, ACNA approval comes as a welcome affirmation of a program more rigorous than most. All Master of Divinity students at Beeson must complete two years of biblical Hebrew, two years of biblical Greek, and five semesters of doctrinal history. Part of students' spiritual formation involves gathering every day to say the Daily Office.

The ACNA guided Beeson in how to make its program meet the church's standards. The result is one that the ACNA says is fit to deliver Anglican spiritual formation; teach orthodox theology; instruct in the cure of souls and mission; and equip with "proper understanding" of the Scriptures, leadership, order, polity, and Anglican worship.

"ACNA has really raised the bar," said Gerald McDermott, who oversees Beeson's Anglican Studies program in his role as Anglican chair of divinity. "And I think ACNA recognizes that at Beeson we have a rigorous program."

Having the ACNA's blessing gives Beeson a new platform for drawing students not just regionally but also nationally, McDermott said. It helps clarify for prospective students that they do not have to attend a church-affiliated seminary in order to gain the training and experience that the church encourages. He hopes some Episcopal bishops will regard ACNA approval as a badge of merit and begin sending aspirants to Beeson.

"We at Beeson regard ourselves as orthodox, but we want to minister to orthodox students no matter where they are — the Episcopal Church or ACNA," McDermott said.

The push to add Anglican tracks in graduate theological education in the past decade stems from two significant forces. On a theological and ethical level, Anglican tracks fill a void created after hundreds of congregations left the Episcopal Church for the ACNA. And the ACNA needs like-minded institutions to train its priests.

Cost has been another significant driver. The average Episcopal seminarian graduates with about $45,000 in debt, according to the Society for the Increase of the Ministry, which helps fund seminary education. If seminarians can engage an Anglican track at a school near home and avoid relocating to an expensive city, such as New York, Chicago, or Berkeley, they are more likely to graduate with manageable debt levels.

Beeson aims to attract students with scholarships that keep tuition under $6,300 for at least half of its 150 students every year. But even with financial advantages, standing out as a go-to place for Anglican studies can still be a challenge for a school housed, as Beeson is, on a Southern Baptist campus.

McDermott takes pains to explain that Beeson has always been an ecumenical school. Its natural constituency is not necessarily cradle Episcopalians, but perhaps those who are serious about the faith and want to experience more of the tradition than they did in low-church Protestantism.

While many students enter Beeson as Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians, "a healthy percentage of them are leaving as Anglicans," McDermott said. "Many evangelicals are wanting more than what the non-denoms have to offer. They're wanting sacraments. They're wanting liturgy. They're wanting connection to the early Church, beauty, and mystery."

Consider 23-year-old Tyler Kerley, a Benton, Illinois, native who just finished his first year at Beeson. He had a conversion experience at 18, began his Christian life among Southern Baptists, and followed a sense of ministerial call to Beeson after graduation from Judson University.

At Beeson, Kerley discovered a welcoming Anglican community that has shaped the arc of his vocation. He has attended monthly Anglican theology nights at McDermott's home. As an intern at Christ the King Church, an eight-year-old congregation that worships in Beeson's chapel, he's been learning to set up for Eucharist and otherwise prepare a space for worship.

Within a few months, Kerley was on Beeson's Anglican track, in which only one of his fellow students is a lifelong Episcopalian. The other 12 or so are like him: they come from non-Anglican backgrounds and have found a home on the Canterbury Trail. Beeson's approval from ACNA makes him feel more certain he's in the right place.

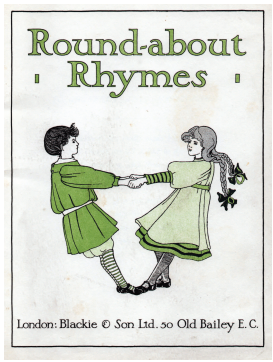
"It does show that a Beeson education is practical in terms of my employability, and it's a vote of confidence from the ACNA," Kerley said. "Hopefully it will give bishops in other dioceses confidence in people who come from Beeson."

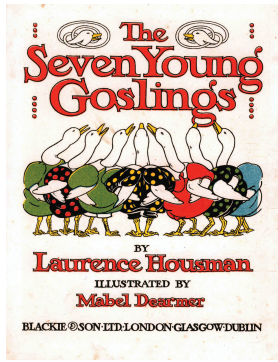
With ACNA's blessing on its program, Beeson aims to keep building its Anglican connections. Seven of Beeson's 15 faculty members have ties to Anglicanism through either the ACNA or the Episcopal Church. Beeson students find internship opportunities at the Diocese of Alabama's Cathedral Church of the Advent and four local ACNA congregations.

Such infrastructure bodes well, at least for exposing evangelicals to some orthodox strains of Anglicanism. But in the future, the ACNA hopes to draw from a wider pool and approve Anglican studies tracks at other types of schools, including Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic seminaries.

An approved program "doesn't necessarily have to be evangelical, although those [on the approved list] are all evangelical schools," Beach said. "They hold to the orthodox faith of the church, the faith that was delivered to the saints and has been handed down to us."

G. Jeffrey MacDonald





Mabel Dearmer

The artist, writer, and pacifist gave her life in caring for the wounded of World War I.

By Richard J. Mammana

Anglicans around the world know the name of Percy Dearmer (1867-1936), author of *The Parson's Handbook* (1899), earnest Christian socialist, vicar of St. Mary the Virgin, Primrose Hill, prime mover of the Warham Guild, and ultimately canon of Westminster Abbey. His work is a landmark in Anglican liturgical method and attitude: a happy, deliberate, and gentle effort at establishing a definite course in the late 19th-century battles over following pre-Reformation models or continental Roman Catholic patterns in Anglican worship enrichment and elaboration. He remains an arbiter of taste and practice even 80 years after his death.

Very few know the name of Percy's first wife, Mabel Dearmer (1872-1915), a Welsh-born graphic artist, dramatist, novelist, war nurse, translator, women's suffrage supporter, pacifist, and Christian educator.

In the course of looking in recent years for illustrated Anglican children's books for my daughters, I have discovered Mabel Dearmer as an overlooked and delightful figure in the history of Anglicanism. Her illustrations are bright, striking, and clear. She integrates her work in creative ways into the texts she is illuminating in color, combining her knowledge of church doctrine, nursery rhymes, English culture, and graphic design in ways that have been subsequently overlooked despite their original widespread influence. Mabel Dearmer's novels are close character studies of domestic life in small quarters with meager finances, rooted in her experience of life as a Bohemian woman in *fin de siècle* London, married to a clergyman of limited resources and highly developed taste. Her plays imitate the medieval Mystery Play genre, inviting young persons to experience the shapes of the Paschal cycle and the Nativity as living participants.

Mabel Dearmer (born Jessie Mabel Pritchard White) was a minor figure in the Bloomsbury Group of London-based writers, trendsetters, and esthetes, working as an illustrator for playwright Laurence Housman, and decorating her first home with William Morris Arts and Crafts wallpaper. A telling anecdote about the early Dearmer household notes that so much money had been spent on exquisite wallpapers and drapery that funds for furniture were insufficient, meaning that visitors sometimes had to sit on luggage or their own bags instead of chairs and couches.

Mabel undertook a career of commercial illustration and dramatic writing to support her husband after their 1892 marriage, when she was a 20-year-old art student and he was a penniless 25-year-old deacon who had yet to establish his abilities as an author, organizer, and lecturer. She rose in the next decade and a half in European prominence as a poster illustrator, children's book author, designer, and author. Her work found its way into epoch-defining Art Nouveau/Decadent publications like *The Yellow Book* (1894-97), *The Savoy* (1896 only), and *The Studio* (1893-1964). In 1896, Mabel was the first woman to have an illustration on the cover of *The Yellow Book*, situating her well within the circle of Aubrey Beardsley (her illustrations are often reminiscent of his work) and Oscar Wilde.

The great tragedy of Mabel's life was her unnecessary but sacrificial decision to follow her two sons and husband into the Great War. Mabel offered herself for service on the Front after learning that her sons had

volunteered, and finding out in a sermon that her husband had been appointed as a chaplain. Her first and only major biographer — her friend Stephen Gwynn — describes the paradox of her pacifism and her volunteering to support the British forces in a Serbian field hospital:

> That permeation of common sense by Christianity, and of Christianity by common sense, which she describes was well illustrated in the fact that her attitude to the war alienated no friend. Yet there was another reason for this. She who condemned war loved courage and loved self-devotion. The war was there, and with it the call to action and to sacrifice … [and] the courage she most valued — the courage to die but not to kill. … [I]f the world had enough of this courage, then, she thought, there would be no wars.

Without medical qualifications or training, Dearmer's lot as a volunteer was as a hospital orderly. Her duties included sorting and packing clothing bales and linen used in an English Red Cross field hospital. Her letters and telegrams to friends are highly evocative of daily life:

> I am sitting in Percy's little tent with a lamp I have stolen from the dining tent. […] It is like being at school — a very happy and delightful school, but still school — and one's virtues are school virtues, and one's sins are the sins of school girls.
>
> I am sitting in the little green tent in a sea of mud, with my trench full of rivers of water, the water pouring all around me.
>
> The night nurses are now coming in for their midnight meal. We have got a tin of turtle soup which we are heating up — and then to bed. Good-night. Oh — I am *so* sleepy and my feet feel like jelly. I was up at five — so my day to-day has been one of twenty hours. — There has also been a dog-fight.

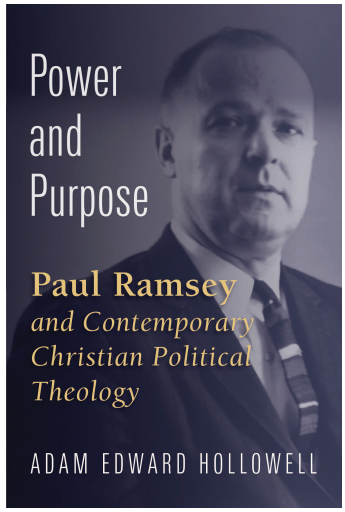
An illustration from The Seven Young Goslings, Mabel Dearmer's collaboration with Laurence Housman (Blackie and Son, 1899)

Mabel continued writing, struggling with an injured knee, and assisting the wounded until she succumbed to typhoid fever and eventually pneumonia. She died at Kragujevac, Serbia, on July 11, 1915, at 43, in the prime of her professional productivity as a playwright, Christian author, and illustrator. Her son Christopher died in 1915 from wounds he received in the Gallipoli Campaign. Percy survived the war, remarrying in 1920 and dying of natural causes in mid-1936. Mabel and Percy's elder son, Geoffrey, died in 1996 at the age of 103 as one of the last surviving poets of the Great War.

When I discover each fresh page of Mabel's work, my eyes drink glimpses of a world before the great and cold wars of the 20th century. I make a visual and tactile visit to a time when the vastness of the British Empire, the confidence of the Anglican Communion, and their robust and overlapping cultures were happy, firm, committed to beauty as a vehicle for Christian truth. There is a cheerfulness and a sweetness I know in few other 20th-century authors and illustrators. As a dedicated student of *The Parson's Handbook* in its many editions, I learn in my periodic meetings with Mabel Dearmer that there was someone else in the room with Percy as he was writing his liturgical treatises and creating his "British Museum Religion": a woman kind and good and imaginative, perhaps better than he at the necessary project of Christian joy, and definitely more inventive than he at writing popular fiction. I am thankful to know them both.

Richard J. Mammana is the archivist of the Living Church Foundation and a member of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences. He is a parishioner and vestry member at Trinity Church, New Haven, Connecticut.

Power and Purpose
Paul Ramsey and Contemporary Christian Political Theology
By **Adam Edward Hollowell**
Eerdmans. Pp. 240. $28



Paul Ramsey's Enduring Importance

Review by Andrew R.H. Thompson

Paul Ramsey is arguably known as much for his flaws as for his contributions to theological ethics and political theology. His writing is dense and difficult, often overly technical and at times seemingly confused or inconsistent. Some of his ideas, such as "deferred repentance" for political agents or his obstinate defense of the moral legitimacy of U.S. intervention in Vietnam, appear poorly conceived at best and dangerous at worst. Much of his opus addresses major themes in ethics, such as just war and medical ethics, but with a time-bound specificity that now vitiates their relevance. As Adam Edward Hollowell laments, Ramsey is mainly remembered as an ethical casuist with little to offer in the way of substantive theological contributions.

Hollowell is not overly charitable to Ramsey in this respect; he acknowledges his subject's shortcomings throughout *Power and Purpose: Paul Ramsey and Contemporary Christian Political Theology*, even to the point of distracting from his otherwise positive assessment. This critical edge notwithstanding, Hollowell's careful study nonetheless succeeds in its stated goal of demonstrating Ramsey's lasting importance as a political theologian. Of particular value are Hollowell's ability to integrate the various strands of Ramsey's work, tracing their development through his career and revealing continuity where others had seen contradiction, and his invitation to read Ramsey's thought as a comprehensive political theology as opposed to a limited and somewhat dated applied ethic.

Hollowell undertakes this task in three sections. The first establishes key theological themes in Ramsey's work that underlie his political theology; the second begins to trace these themes in his political arguments; and the third continues to clarify his political theology and its influence on contemporary theological ethics, in particular virtue ethics.

The first theological theme, one that would persist throughout Ramsey's career, is his emphasis on covenant. Influenced by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Karl Barth, Ramsey understood covenant as the primary category within which all concepts of moral obligation make sense. Throughout the book, Hollowell returns to this theme to clarify other aspects of Ramsey's work, such as his rejection of moral exceptions and his concern for contingency in human moral action.

Next Hollowell considers Ramsey's complicated commitment to repentance. Ramsey's obscure idea of "deferred repentance" for magistrates has hounded his legacy; without defending the idea or denying Ramsey's sometimes poor explanation of it, Hollowell shows how Ramsey's notion of repentance, which became clearer throughout his career, was tied to his concern for political judgment in ambiguous situations. The chapter on repentance is followed by one on Ramsey's use of Scripture that continues to trace the motifs of covenant, contingency, and judgment while refuting the charge that Ramsey was an unscriptural thinker.

Hollowell's second section develops these major theological themes into the basic elements of Ramsey's political theology. Covenant informs Ramsey's disputed claim, in response to statements from the World Council of Churches' 1966 Geneva Convention opposing intervention in Vietnam (and more generally to the situation ethics of the time), that the Church should abstain from discussion of particular policies and instead take the "exceedingly limited" role of "theoretician," insisting on abiding

Influenced by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Karl Barth, Ramsey understood covenant as the primary category within which all concepts of moral obligation make sense.

principles for political decision-making.

Next, Hollowell shows how Ramsey's notion of tragedy is influenced not only by Reinhold Niebuhr's account but also by the Pauline prohibition on doing evil for the sake of good. The tension between the absoluteness of the latter and Ramsey's abiding concern for contingency and ambiguity leads him to a view of tragedy very different from Niebuhr's. The final chapter of this section transitions into Hollowell's third section by demonstrating how Ramsey's criticism of situation ethics and moral exceptions set the stage for the turn to virtue that succeeded him, and examines his direct influence on the virtue ethicists Oliver O'Donovan and Jean Porter.

After considering these overt links, Hollowell continues in this vein by showing the various ways other contemporary thinkers in virtue ethics and political theology have implicitly built on Ramsey's thinking. Virtue ethicists John Bowlin and Jennifer Herdt take up and clarify ideas about contingency and the need for prudence in order to act in ambiguous situations. Augustinian theologians Charles Mathewes and Eric Gregory affirm Ramsey's conviction, reflecting the influence of his teacher H. Richard Niebuhr, that political decision-making takes place in a realm of responsibility, strategy, and judgment. Postliberal political theologian Daniel M. Bell's approach to just war within the context of discipleship provides an opportunity to defend the theological depth of Ramsey's political theology, a depth he achieves while nonetheless affirming the value of secular reasoning.

This final section succeeds, in my view, in confirming Ramsey's continuing relevance, although Hollowell's approach places the onus on the reader to connect theoretical debates in political theology to current ethical issues. In particular, the chapter on Bowlin's and Herdt's virtue ethics, like the preceding chapter on Ramsey's rejection of moral exceptions, represents the kind of careful phenomenological analysis of moral psychology and agency that typified many ethicists of Ramsey's era but that is largely lost in contemporary ethics. Ramsey's juxtaposition of Augustine's *City of God* with H. Richard Niebuhr's *Responsible Self* expands the latter into political theology in ways that, while they may stretch Niebuhr's meaning, are nonetheless promising. And Ramsey's constant concern with the ambiguity and contingency of political decision-making in the real world makes the realist political theology Hollowell discerns in his writing quite practical, even as it introduces very real risks of relativism or cynical rationalization.

Hollowell makes his case thoroughly and carefully. His use of private correspondence to clarify Ramsey's often inscrutable prose — for example, letters to ethicist James Childress and editor Knut Knudsen elaborating his understanding of repentance — is illuminating. His ability to demonstrate the coherence and continuity of Ramsey's thought as it developed does his subject a great service. His gratuitous acknowledgment of Ramsey's faults as a writer and thinker does make Hollowell seem wary of associating too closely with his subject, and distracts at times from the overall argument. Hollowell's own writing, too, can be vague — as when, for instance, he frequently commends authors for having "rich" theologies without specifying what that means or why it is commendable; and his tripartite structure makes it difficult to keep the overall argument in view, until his conclusion where he sums up nicely.

Finally, though, Hollowell's assiduous study and sympathetic appraisal overcome these minor shortcomings. The text presumes some familiarity with Ramsey's thought and the work of his historical and contemporary interlocutors, and for this reason will be of most interest to educators and scholars of ethics. That said, it certainly merits consideration by any reader of political theology and ethics interested in exploring this influential thinker's place in those discourses beyond his customary role as medical ethicist or just-war theorist.

Andrew R.H. Thompson is a postdoctoral fellow in environmental ethics and assistant director of the Center for Religion and Environment at the University of the South's School of Theology.

CULTURES

The Sounds of Silence

A glacier in Greenland flows through a fjord carved by the movement of ice. NASA Earth Observatory/Wikimedia

By Steven R. Ford

I spent some time last summer in eastern Greenland. The landing strip (such as it was) and the barracks-turned-hotel (such as it was) were relics of a long-abandoned U.S. Distant Early Warning base. It's where tiny bands of freezing American airmen used to watch the skies for Soviet missiles. Nobody does that much anymore.

Kulusuk is a tiny fishing village of 200 hardy souls, and there's precious little there to attract outsiders. Even Brother Sun does not turn up much for months at a time in the winter. What passes for a store multitasks as a Royal Danish post office and an informal community center. Stamps and stale junk food (both brought in from Denmark) are on offer, and it's open about four hours a day. There's no electricity or plumbing in town. Buildings are not regularly heated, since there's frequently nothing to burn. And sea fishing can only be done during the very brief summer thaw. If the world were flat, this place would be somewhere close to the edge.

Yet Kulusuk has one thing in abundance: silence. Local folks are not even aware of it; for them, it's just the way the world is. No humming motors or engines. With the exception of one plane a day, which comes from and returns to Iceland, there is no aircraft noise. No birds, no rustling leaves. No sounds at all, at least away from the store. Pretty creepy, it seemed to me at first.

Ours is a culture of unceasing sound. There are muffler-less motorcycles and semi-muffled trucks on the highways and constantly blaring commercials from speakers in malls and at gas stations. Our homes are chock full of TVs and DVD players, and a car simply is incomplete unless it sports an impressive sound system. Most of us are not even aware of the noise that permeates our lives. For us, it's just the way the world is.

Our Judeo-Christian tradition, itself the result of urban cultures besieged by noise, has long affirmed the pursuit of silence as a worthy spiritual discipline. "For God alone my soul in silence waits," says the Psalmist; in stillness and quiet the Lord of creation is encountered (Ps. 61:1; 46:10a). "When I am silent," wrote Thomas Merton, the great 20th-century Trappist monk, "I hear my true self and reach my soul. When I am silent, I hear with a caring heart. Silence teaches us to know reality by respecting it where words have defiled it." And that's not very creepy at all.

So where do we look for this "sound of sheer silence" through which God is often known in the Scriptures (1 Kgs. 19:12)? One place is Kulusuk, of course. But it's easier to follow the Psalmist's advice: to "think of [God] on my bed, and meditate on [him] in the watches of the night" (Ps. 63:6). Or to follow Jesus' example of finding a quiet place in the desert, or in a meadow or up a mountain or at a lakeside or next to a river, depending on where we live. We might even spend time in the stillness of an empty church (some are actually unlocked during the week and are places of welcome). We can even make a silent retreat at an Episcopal convent or monastery, in many of which stillness and quiet are only interrupted by the singing of God's praises five (or more) times a day in worship.

God is indeed encountered in an intimate way through stillness and quiet. To the extent that our prayer is a dialogue with the Divine, we frequently need to be in places in which God's still small voice is not drowned out by constant noise. As Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel once put it so well, "The words of the prophets *are* … whispered in the sounds of silence." So, sometime, are God's words.

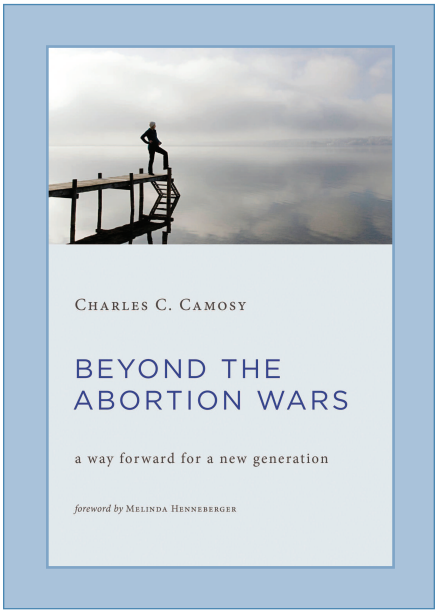
The Rev. Steven R. Ford assists at St. Mark's, Mesa, Arizona.

Living Organisms Develop

I am quite gratified to note the generally irenic and appreciative tone of Ian Markham's review of *Beyond the Abortion Wars* [May 22]. There has for some time appeared to be a burgeoning consensus in our country that Christian compassion applies both to suffering women and their unborn children. Pro-life Christians have long understood this and sought to practice it.

I am puzzled by Dean Markham's adherence to gradualism, which seems to deny scientific reality. A fertilized egg is a biologically unique, self-directed, and active organism that can only reasonably be described as alive. It is genetically human and in but not of the mother's body. That it may die as a result of a failure to implant, or due to any number of natural events, does nothing to change this fact. That it may in part become placenta or otherwise disposable seems no more significant than that it will in part develop into hair or baby teeth to be shed as the individual develops. The possibility of twinning is interesting but hardly relevant. The ontological continuity of the person or persons from fertilized egg to adulthood is the same.

I honestly do not understand Markham's theological objection, which seems an odd inversion of Lewis's Screwtape Letter XXVIII, in which Screwtape laments that only a small fraction of humanity survives to the point in which temptation is possible. I do not see any possible basis for objecting to the peopling of heaven with those who lived no earthly life, nor do I see any means by which to weigh the significance of the minority's three score and ten years on any theoretical scales of eternity. What measure could one possibly use? As creatures bound by time, we have no means for determining how a given duration may be judged from the standpoint of God's eternity. Better to bow before mystery.



Gradualism depends on development, but only living organisms develop. Gradualism can therefore only apply to the philosophical question of what is owed to this undeniably human living organism at this stage. Given that, thus far, every attempt to sunder personhood from bodily life has ended in unspeakable barbarisms, it's hard for me to be particularly sanguine about gradualism's prospects.

If Dean Markham wishes to grasp the nettle, he will need to explain how a developmental approach can be made consonant with the on-off nature of killing. He has no choice but to say that up to such-and-such a point, the individual may be killed and afterward may not be. And he needs to be prepared to explain this to a rape victim. Perhaps he can clarify.

Daniel Muth
Leland, North Carolina

Dean Ian Markham replies:
I am grateful for the question and the thoughtful way in which it has been framed. In my judgment, gradualism remains a helpful tool in analyzing the status of the initial zygote. This miniscule entity does not share any characteristics that we identify with the Imago Dei; it has no self-consciousness or awareness. As it becomes many things, it is not a unique soul. I don't think the placenta is analogous to hair because the latter is part of a human outside the womb, the former is not.

The theological difficulty of zygotes populating heaven is a greater difficulty than Muth concedes. Almost all forms of theodicy want to argue that God allows pain and suffering in the world as the only way that free human agency can be exercised and in that setting that certain qualities and virtues are cultivated. Given that free agency and the cultivation of virtue matters eternally, God needed to allow pain and suffering to be part of the creation. Now if the overwhelming majority of humans consists of zygotes, then this theodicy is made redundant because free agency and the cultivation of certain virtues are only possible for a very small number of "unlucky" humans who survive and implant. Therefore, in what sense can one claim that human freedom and the cultivation of these virtues matters eternally?

It was only in the 19th century that the Church took the view that human life starts at conception. The older view is that human life starts when God implants the soul into the embryo. Traditionally, this was associated with quickening. My own position is that the embryo accumulates status and rights as it grows and develops. And by the point of viability, one is for all intents and purposes handling a human life.

I concede that this lacks the precision that many would like about exactly when a human becomes present. But the alternative has, in my judgment, even greater difficulties.

Appointments

The Rev. **Tom Discavage** is an administrative assistant for formation and transition ministry at the Cathedral Center of St. Paul, 840 Echo Park Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90026.

The Rev. **Bur Dobbins** is assistant rector at St. Barnabas, 601 W. Creek St., Fredericksburg, TX 78624.

The Rev. **Rachel Endicott** is priest-in-charge of Christ Church, 210 5th St., S.W., Puyallup, WA 98371.

The Rev. **Ted Gaiser** is rector of Grace Church, 1100 Washington St., Bath, ME 04530.

The Rev. Canon **Michael Gilton** is canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Dallas, 1630 N. Garrett Ave., Dallas, TX 75206.

The Rev. **Bob Gross** is priest-in-charge at St. Stephen's, 463 W. Harwood Rd., Hurst, TX 76054.

The Rev. **Matthew Hanisian** is rector of St. Martin's-in-the-Field, 375 Benfield Rd., Severna Park, MD 21146.

Christian Hansen is coordinator of children's and youth ministry at St. Michael's, 8706 Quaker Ln., Bon Air, VA 23235, and chaplain and religion and values teacher at the parish school.

The Rev. **Edmund Harris** is rector of St. Peter's, 1610 S. King St., Seattle, WA 98144.

The Rev. **James Harrison** is rector of All Saints, 100 N. Drew St., Appleton, WI 54911.

The Rev. **Michael Hurst** is vicar of Church of the Savior, 110 S. Alma Dr., Allen, TX 75013.

The Rev. **Marlene Jacobs** is rector of St. Luke's, 3615 N. Gove St, Tacoma, WA 98407.

The Rev. **Gabriel Lamazares** is vicar of All Saints, 43-12 46th St., Long Island City, NY 11104.

The Rev. Deacon **Ian Lasch** is curate of St. Peter's, 110 N. Warson Rd., St. Louis, MO 63124.

The Rev. **Loren Lasch** is youth missioner for the Diocese of Missouri, 1210 Locust St., St. Louis MO 63103.

The Rev. **Jesse Lebus** is curate at St. John's, 1670 Rte. 25A, Cold Spring Harbor, NY 11724.

Awards and Honors

Nashotah House Leadership Awards — The Rt. Rev. **Francis C. Gra**y, the Rev. Canon **H.W. Herrmann**n, SSC, the Rt. Rev. **Harold Mille**r, The Rev. Canon **Edward R. Mon**k, and the Rev. Canon **Nelson W. Pinder**

University of the South's School of Theology — The Rt. Rev. James Russell Kendrick, Bruce Eldon Neswick, and **Richard Webster**

Ordinations

Deacons

Central Florida — Cameron Patrick MacMillan

East Carolina — Pamela Tarler Hayes

Egypt — Don Collett, associate professor of Old Testament at Trinity School for Ministry, who will also serve as a visiting scholar at the Alexandria School of Theology

Georgia — Donald Holland, **Ian Lasch**, **Tommy Townsend**, and **Ray Whiting**

Los Angeles — Lisa Anne Jacoby

South Carolina — Robertson Carr Donehue; he will serve as Episcopal campus minister for Coastal Carolina University and at St. Anne's, P.O. Box 752 Conway, SC 29578.

Southwestern Virginia — Becky McDaniel; she will serve as missional curate at Trinity, 214 W. Beverley St., Staunton, VA 24401, and Stuart Hall School, 235 W. Frederick St., Staunton, VA 24401.

Priests

Alabama — John "Trey" Kennedy, **Pamela Payne**, **Tyler Richards**, and **Tommie Watkins**

Albany — David Radzik

Georgia — Guillermo Arboleda, **Dale Jones**, and **Kelly Steele**

Nebraska — Pamela M. Williams

Rio Grande — Sarah St. John Guck

Springfield — David Wells

Tennessee — Jason S. Terhune, **Robert Rhea**

Virginia — William Bradley "Bill" Roberts

Received

Louisiana — John Pitzer, as a priest

Retirements

The Rev. **Mark Asman**, as rector of Trinity, Santa Barbara, CA

The Very Rev. **Torrence Harmon**, as rector of Trinity, Lancaster, and St. Mary's Whitechapel, Lancaster, VA

The Very Rev. **Mark Holland**, as rector of St. James, Baton Rouge

The Rev. **Ty Jones**, as deacon at St. John's, Beltsville, MD

Kathryn Weathersby McCormick, as canon for administration and finance in the Diocese of Mississippi

The Rev. **John Miller**, as rector of St. Mary's, Goochland, VA

The Rev. **Earl Mullins**, as interim rector of All Saints', Frederick, MD

The Rev. **Larry Packard**, as rector of Good Shepherd, Burke, VA

The Rev. **William Rontani**, as rector of St. James, Lincoln, CA

Deaths

The Rev. **Everett Francis**, whose ministry was shaped by a passion for justice, died March 19 at Buckingham's Choice, a retirement community in Adamstown, Maryland. Francis led the Episcopal Church's Office of Public Affairs during a time of great activism sparked by the ministry of Presiding Bishop John Hines.

He later renewed St. Luke's Church in urban Scranton, Pennsylvania, transforming the struggling congregation into a community center, active in work among the poor and in the arts.

Francis was born in 1927 in Taylor, Pennsylvania, and was a graduate of Duke University. Following service in the U.S. Navy, Francis studied at General Theological Seminary. He was ordained in 1955, serving his first parish in Dearborn Heights, Michigan. Nine years later, he began working on the staff of the Rt. Rev. Richard Emrich, Bishop of Michigan.

In 1965, responding to a call from newly elected Presiding Bishop John Hines, Francis went to Selma, Alabama, to support Rev. Martin Luther King's efforts to lead a protest march to Montgomery. After Bloody Sunday, when an initial group of marchers was turned back by the Alabama State Police with whips, nightsticks and tear gas, King appealed for Christians from across the nation to come to Selma to support the struggle. Francis joined 450 white clergy from across the nation in a show of solidarity and support.

The night he arrived in Selma, two days

after Bloody Sunday, Francis attended a three-hour mass meeting at Brown's Meeting House, where King spoke. Reflecting on the experience later, Francis said of the message King delivered, "Never have I heard the gospel preached so straightforwardly, powerfully, and practically. Never have I heard such understanding, commitment and love for the principles of our country than that night."

Shaped deeply by his experience in Selma two years later, Francis became the Episcopal Church's public affairs officer, working as a lobbyist in Washington during sessions of Congress. As the church took an increasingly progressive stance on civil rights and peace issues under Hines's leadership, Francis played an important role in advocating for legislative change. He played a significant supporting role in the 1969 Special Convention, which focused on racial injustice and the need for increased development of African American communities.

Francis also served as chairman of the Ecumenical Task Force for the Religious Observance of the Nation's Bicentennial. One of the task force's major projects was the production of *Echoes of the Revolution*, a provocative film which interviewed Ohio mine and factory workers, asking "whether, 200 years after the American Revolution, freedom and justice are realities in their lives and in the life of America?"

As part of staff changes after the arrival of Presiding Bishop John Allin, Francis left Episcopal Church Center in 1977 to become rector of St. Luke's Church in downtown Scranton. Francis renovated the historic Upjohn church to match the more egalitarian worship style envisioned by prayer-book revision, and helped to found the Community Bread Basket and Safety Net program, which responded to the city's industrial decline by providing support for those in need. His wife, Gale, founded a thrift store, the Senior Craftsmen Center.

Francis also established the Lucan Center, an arts ministry that operated out of the congregation's rambling and underused parish house. At its height in the late 1980s, the Lucan Center hosted community theater groups, a chorale, children's art workshops, and a series of art films, recitals and jazz concerts. It also maintained an apartment for local artists.

Following his retirement from St. Luke's in 1992, Francis served as interim rector in several congregations in central and eastern Pennsylvania and devoted more time to his lifelong hobby of fly-fishing. He later moved to Buckingham's Choice, where he took an active role in community life and assisted at several local churches.

peopleandplaces@livingchurch.org

The Rev. **Elijah "Lige" Brockenbrough White III**, a learned and colorful priest who transformed a sleepy rural parish into a center of traditional Anglicanism, died March 26 at his home in Purcellville, Virginia. White served as rector of Our Savior's Church in Oatlands for 34 years, and led the congregation out of the Diocese of Virginia in 2007. His successor, the Rev. James Basinger, praised him as "a holder of the orthodox Anglican faith in a time of confusion and disagreement."

White was born into a prominent Leesburg, Virginia, family, the descendant of Lt. Col. Elijah V. White, a legendary Confederate cavalry officer who organized a band of guerilla fighters who harassed Union lines in the Shenandoah Valley. White spent much of his childhood at Selma, the family's rural estate, where his father, a lawyer and economist, kept an unabridged dictionary on a rolling stand at the dinner table to consult during erudite mealtime conversations.

White earned degrees in literature from Haverford College and the University of California at Berkeley, and had a lifelong love of poetry and drama. His brother, the Rev. Nicholson "Nick" White, said he was still reciting long passages of Kipling from memory just days before his death. White spent several years studying Medieval Latin at Kings' College, London, and worked for a time as a newspaper editor in Leesburg before entering Virginia Theological Seminary to train for the priesthood.

White began his ministry in 1968 as a missionary in Fiji, where he taught Greek and Hebrew and served as the warden of St. John the Baptist Theological College in Suva. He wrote his parents, asking them to send golf shoes, so he could scamper up the muddy banks when venturing out to lead services in rural missions. He later returned to his native Virginia, where he served several parishes in rural Fauquier County.

In 1977, he became rector of Our Savior's Church in Oatlands, a rural community south of Leesburg. White was the first priest to serve the parish full time since its founding in 1878, and made the congregation a center of traditional Anglican teaching and worship. With the assistance of his wife, Anita, a horsewoman and preservationist, he drew together a congregation united by a devotion to faithful Bible teaching and the 1928 Book of Common Prayer.

His people remembered him as an attentive and congenial pastor, spirited but loving. D.L. Bell, a longtime parishioner, said the congregation remembers White as "a great man, a powerful and eloquent preacher and servant of the Lord. Lije brought many people to Christ and brought back many others who had drifted away."

Basinger said he believed White's ministry was marked by "a burning zeal to see the Gospel proclaimed, so that people might believe and live a Christian life."

A member of Forward in Faith, White served on the board of the Prayer Book Society and, in Bell's words, "resolutely defended and pressed the case for orthodox Anglican Christianity." In 2007, under his leadership, in a nearly unanimous decision, Our Savior's voted to disaffiliate from the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia. It was one of nine departing Northern Virginia congregations that formed the Anglican District of Virginia, a group that eventually became part of the Anglican Church in North America's Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic.

In 2011, Our Savior's negotiated a settlement with the Diocese of Virginia, disaffiliating from the Anglican District and renouncing all claims to the church property in exchange for a five-year lease. Basinger said the Oatlands congregation finds that the historic church is too small for its growing membership, and is building a new church on a property White helped to purchase nearby.

The Diocese of Long Island
36 Cathedral Ave., Garden City, NY 11530
516.248.4800 • dioceselongisland.org

The Diocese of Long Island, also known as the "Dominion in the Sea," is an ethnically and culturally diverse communion that stretches from the East River to the furthest reaches of

The Episcopal Diocese of Long Island

Montauk Point. It encompasses the New York City boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens, and Nassau and Suffolk Counties. The Rt. Rev. Lawrence C. Provenzano is the 8th Bishop of Long Island, overseeing 133 congregations and missions, and the several institutions and agencies that constitute the diocese's broader ministry structure.

A Living Church Partner

The Diocese of Milwaukee
804 E. Juneau Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53202
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The Diocese of Milwaukee is a Christian community of 55 congregations with an active witness in the southern third of Wisconsin. In local congregations and communities across the diocese, our 11,000 communicants and nearly 200 clergy are bringing about God's kingdom in food pantries, meals, caregiving for our elders, youth and children programs, relief and development programs, partnerships with other Christian and other faith communities, and outreach to the homeless.

A Living Church Partner

SUNDAY'S READINGS | 4 Pentecost, June 12

First reading and psalm: 1 Kgs. 21:1-10 (11-14), 15-21a • Ps. 5:1-8
Alternate: 2 Sam. 11:26-12:10,13-15 • Ps. 32 • Gal. 2:15-21 • Luke 7:36-8:3

Two Kings

The story is simple and short. Ahab, the king, wants Naboth's vineyard, which sits adjacent to the palace. The king promises Naboth either a better garden or money. Naboth, however, feels obliged to keep his family's land, saying, "The Lord forbid that I should give you my ancestral inheritance" (1 Kgs. 21:3). At Naboth's refusal, the king becomes resentful, sullen, and falls into a depression. Jezebel, the king's wife, is outraged. She writes a letter in the king's name making false accusations against Naboth.

What Jezebel orders is like the crucifixion. "[S]eat two scoundrels opposite him, and have them bring a charge against him, saying, 'You have cursed God and the king.' Then take him out, and stone him to death" (1 Kgs. 21:10). Across a synopsis of the four gospels, in nearly identical words, the death of Jesus is recorded: *they crucified him*. The stoning of Naboth is not, to be sure, the redeeming death of Christ, but it shows no less the cruelty of human pettiness and greed. One human discards another as if disposing of trash. Always and everywhere such instances may be found.

Ahab feels justified. His house is now in order. His rights have been vindicated. But God is not mocked. The earth and dogs will drink the blood of the king.

Another king, the King of Glory, Christ our Lord, wants nothing, demands nothing, seizes nothing. He is himself content and full. He is peace and love and truth. Entering the home of a Pharisee, he takes his place. A woman, hearing that he is present, comes with an alabaster jar of ointment. For a moment she stands behind him, hopeful and apprehensive. Then, she falls to her knees, washes his feet with her tears, dries them with her hair, kisses his feet, and anoints them. Her devotion is deep and unhurried: "from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet" (Luke 7:45). In all this "she has shown great love" (Luke 7:47). Her love is given not to win or plead for forgiveness. Rather, her sins have been forgiven, and thus she pours out love.

Behold a woman in whom there is no guile. She loves the source of love, she senses love's redeeming and forgiving presence in Christ, she pours out a love that is more than her own. "[I]t is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). Her gift and tears and unbound hair and continual kisses are signs that the kingdom is here. Love alone reigns. Christ is all in all.

In worship, though with order and rules, and more freely in private devotion, we are called to love Christ from the heart. "King of glory, King of peace, I will love Thee: And that love may never cease, I will move Thee. … Wherefore with my utmost art, I will sing Thee, And the cream of all my heart, I will bring Thee. … Seven whole days, not one in seven, I will praise Thee. In my heart, though not in heaven, I can raise Thee. … E'en eternity's too short to extoll thee" (George Herbert).

Are we embarrassed? Jesus has not come to steal our inheritance. His kingship does not require our subjugation. He does not lift his voice, or bruise a broken reed, or extinguish a dimly burning wick. He is love outpouring and redeeming, our beginning, middle, and end. Stand at the gate of love. Your knees will weaken, tears will come, and you will caress Being's beautiful Son.

Look It Up

Read Gal. 20:21.

Think About It

Think less about yourself. Fall toward love.

SUNDAY'S READINGS | 5 Pentecost, June 19

First reading and psalm: 1 Kgs. 19:1-4, (5-7), 8-15a • Ps. 42 and 43
Alternate: Isa. 65:1-9 • Ps. 22:18-27 • Gal. 3:23-29 • Luke 8:26-39

A Passive Joy, True Easter

Because Naboth refuses to forfeit his ancestral inheritance, King Ahab, sullen and resentful, turns his face to the wall. Depressed and weak, he falls upon his bed. Often, the prophets of God also endure a depressive spirit. Elijah, having summoned God to consume an offering in the presence of the prophets of Baal and Asherah, witnesses a devouring fire from heaven. God consumes the bull and the wood and stone, and licks up the water in the trench. Then, without divine command or invocation, Elijah forces 850 prophets down to the Wadi Kishon and murders them there. On one level, though disturbing and horrific, this is a great success. The prophet of God wins, apparently.

The story resumes, however, with Elijah running for his life. He is, as one scholarly update to the Latin Bible suggests, frantic and erratic. "Rising, he went out wherever his will carried him" (1 Kgs. 19:3; *Württembergische Bibelanstalt Stuttgart*, 1969). Afraid, running in panic, he finally stops in the wilderness, falls beside a solitary broom tree, and pleads for death. Twice he says to the voice of God, "I alone am left" (1 Kgs. 19:10, 14). He is cast down, disquieted, and mournful (Ps. 42-43). He feels an ancient question: "Why have you cast me off?" (Ps. 43:2).

Leaping ahead to our time, the mood is called *depression*, and it is nearly epidemic among Christian clergy and widespread in parishes. With fewer social props supporting a religious infrastructure, with a public mood cautious of clergy and Christian commitment generally, the tendency today is to assert religious conviction with a notable stridency, a bellicose certitude, the sound system set always to reverberate. This new conviction (intentionality) tries but fails to hide evidence of anxiety, depression, and anger. Again and again, one senses the claim, "I alone."

With this trial, there is a way out. The winds slice through the mountains and break the rocks, the earth trembles, and fire bursts forth, and yet the Lord is mute. Standing at the door of the cave, Elijah hears something like the whistle of thin air, the sound of a gentle quietness, the murmur of divine speech. There is no such thing as "sheer silence" (NRSV). The middle ear and other bones of the body continuously transmit vibration, even if only the body's workings or the whisper of nature's rest. Standing in the cleft of the rock, God comes and talks and consoles and strengthens. Whispering, God says, "Go, return on your way" (1 Kgs. 19:15). That is, God gives grace.

Try this purely passive exercise. "As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (Gal. 3:27). You belong to Christ and are heirs of the promise to Abraham. Abraham did not first make a promise to God, but God made a promise to Abraham. And the promise is sure. Do not move a muscle or agitate the will. Let promise and election do its hidden work. You did not choose Christ, but he chose you (John 15:16). One more exercise. Imagine that you have lost your mind, lost your way, and are wandering at the impulse of undirected emotion and thought. Who will save? At the sheer power of Christ's healing love, the legions living in the Geresene demoniac plunged into the abyss. The man, once naked and living among tombs, is found clothed and in his right mind. He sits with Jesus. He just sits there clothed and well.

Look It Up

Read 1 Kings 19:15 and Luke 8:39. Go and return, but go in peace and joy.

Think About It

Sit there with your clothes on (Christ) and your conscience free. And smile.

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SUNDAY'S READINGS | 6 Pentecost, June 26

First reading and psalm: 2 Kgs. 2:1-2, 6-14 • Ps. 77:1-2, 11-20
Alternate reading: 1 Kgs. 19:15-16,19-21 • Ps. 16 • Gal. 5:1,13-25 • Luke 9:51-62

The Mantle

Elijah and his protégé Elisha trek toward Bethel, then Jericho, and then the bank of the River Jordon. During this journey, a chorus of prophets chants, "Do you know that today *the Lord will take your master away from you*?" (2 Kgs. 2:3, 5). Something bitter is about to happen: the loss of a deep communion, the end of a shared life. Elijah tries to blunt the pain, saying to Elisha three times, "Stay here" (2 Kgs. 2:2, 4, 6). But love is deep, and love remains.

When Elijah first passed by Elisha and touched him with his mantle, Elisha disposed of his property, killed his oxen, boiled their flesh, fed the people, and then, with no bread, no bag, and no money for his belt, "set out and became the servant of Elijah" (1 Kgs. 19:21). The soul of Elisha was knit with the soul of Elijah. Thus, the impending end of Elijah's presence could only evoke pain. "As the Lord lives and you yourself live, I will not leave you" (2 Kgs. 2:2, 4, 6). Where you go, I will go, says the pure heart of Elisha. Still, the end is coming.

"What may I do for you, *before I am taken from you*?" Elijah asks (2 Kgs. 2:9). A void opens. What is to replace the space and body, face and touch, of Elijah? Elisha says he wants a double portion of the spirit of Elijah, and as a token of it, after the whirlwind carries Elijah up and out of sight, Elijah's mantle falls from the heavens. Elisha takes it, holds it, and instantly feels the sacramental sorrow that loss gives to things. Like the weeping widows of another story, he has only the consolation of an outward and visible sign. "All the widows stood, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them" (Acts 9:39).

Just before the crucial moment of Elijah's departure, the two men are walking and talking. What do they say? Perhaps Elisha repeats his promise of "I will not leave you." Perhaps Elijah the prophet, foreshadowing the One who is more than a prophet, says, "I am with you always" (Matt. 28:20). Finally, after the whirlwind, Elisha stands alone, holding Elijah's mantle, pausing on the bank of the Jordon. "Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?" he cries. The question is an invocation, and God is pleased to act. "Your way is through the sea, your path through the mighty waters" (Ps. 77:19).

Jesus calls like Elijah. He walks by and gladly gives his mantle, even the hem of his garment, to any who would touch him. At his calling, a disciple drops everything, boils the oxen, feeds the people, buries the dead, says goodbye, and then, impoverished, walks out to Jesus, or perhaps not. Being more than a prophet, he calls for a yet greater commitment. "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of heaven" (Luke 9:62). Indeed, no one looking back or forward or side to side is fit for the kingdom of heaven. The Spirit of Christ alone makes fit the unfit, makes worthy the unworthy, forgives the sinner, and raises the dead. The only good reason for going with Jesus is that he is the way, the truth, and the life.

It is difficult to see Jesus set his face to Jerusalem. He is leaving. He is gone. And yet he is always here, alive in the home of the heart and the touch of things.

Look It Up

Read Ps. 16:8. The invisible Lord is so near.

Think About It

My peace/piece I leave with you. Take the mantle.

SUNDAY'S READINGS | 7 Pentecost, July 3

First reading and psalm: 2 Kgs. 5:1-14 • Ps. 30
Alternate: Isa. 66:10-14 • Ps. 66:1-8

Simplicity

Marauding Arameans push into Israel. As they kick dust and wail in warlike glee, they are, to anyone along their path, a terrifying enemy. The Vulgate suggests: *a troop*, *crowd*, *throng*, *band*, *body* (*turma*). Another witness in the Latin tradition: *robbers*, *freebooters*, *brigands* (*latrunculi*). A thundering stampede, they take booty for enrichment and thrill. They seize a child, whose age we guess because she is only a little girl (*parvulam puellam*). Her capture is horrific.

Having survived abduction, this little child speaks the saving word. Naaman, commander of the army of Aram, although a great and mighty man, suffers from skin lesions. The girl, now a slave to Naaman's wife, reports to her mistress that a healing prophet lives in Israel. In stately procession, then, Naaman goes forth carrying letters of recommendation and gifts of silver, gold, and fine garments. The king of Israel, however, suspects "he is trying to pick a quarrel with me" (2 Kgs. 5:7). Elisha intervenes, announcing that this is an opportunity to show that "there is a prophet in Israel" (5:8). Elisha, evincing authority and power, communicates through a messenger, commanding Naaman to wash in the Jordan seven times. Naaman is offended on three counts: the prophet does not come out to greet him, fails to wave his hand over the wound and heal him instantly, and tells him to wash in waters no different from the rivers of Damascus. Sometimes the question must be asked: "Do you want to be made well?" (John 5:6).

Go down to the river. Go down to the river and pray. Dip your body and the wounds of your flesh into the water seven times, which is to say, wash fully and completely. Then, come up from the water with the new flesh of a young boy. Is this not a baptism and a sign of the new age? With the flesh of a child, will Naaman, upon his return, think of the little girl who told of a prophet in Israel? Baptism is a new infancy, a new life, a small and precious human.

A different prophet and a different time, to be sure; and yet Isaiah 66 is the perfect supplement to the story of Naaman. Looking for the restoration of Israel, Isaiah imagines the nation as a mother. Again, noticing the Vulgate: "that you may nurse and be satisfied from her consoling breast; that you may drink deeply with delight from her glorious bosom" (Isa. 66:11). Is this not a sign of the Supper of the Lamb? Is not the Old Testament also New? Only an infant feeds this way, only the newly baptized.

"I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants" (Matt. 11:25). "God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong" (1 Cor. 1:27). Discipleship is a divine regression, a return to the water of birth, nourishment from a mother's love, and a few small steps taken in trust. "You don't need anything," Jesus seems to say. You have life and nourishment evermore. Go where I am about to go; go with the trust of a child. In the world there are wolves, but take no defensive action. Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals. Move along the way that I am. Give peace to the house and the city. Care for the sick. Announce the nearness of God's reign. Watch the demons fall.

But remain simple. I am alive, I am fed, I am sent, and my name is written in heaven. I am a mere child.

Look It Up

Read 2 Kings 5:14.

Think About It

Begun (Baptism), continued (Eucharist and Sanctification), and ended (Glory) in thee.

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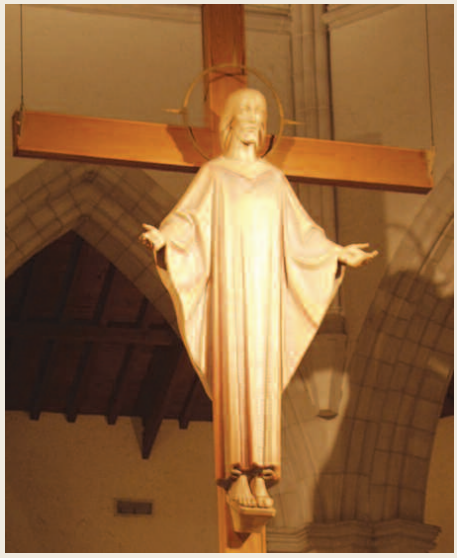

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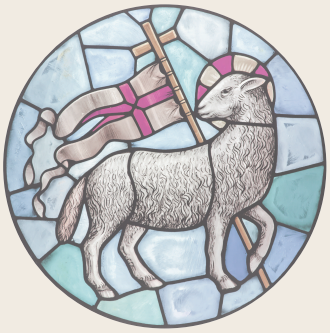

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