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ON THE COVER

Fr. Damian McElroy: “I’m delighted that the daylight is shining on the Christian faith in Cuba. But a lot of that life is still lived in the shadows” (see “Beyond Plastic Cuba,” p. 13).

Matthew Townsend photo

THE LIVING CHURCH

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LIVING CHURCH Partners

We are grateful to Grace Church Broadway, New York City, and Grace Church, Grand Rapids [p. 24], All Souls Anglican Foundation, Oklahoma City [p. 25], and St. Martin’s Church, Houston [p. 27], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.



A Christian militia member guards a sparse site in Qaraqosh.

Photos courtesy of Aid to the Church in Need

A Marshall Plan for Iraq

Aid to the Church in Need and other agencies help exiled Christians return, rebuild.

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald

Videos and photos from Rowaid Hesa's hometown of Qaraqosh, Iraq, give him no comfort these days in central Massachusetts, where he landed after fleeing Iraq four years ago. The images depict only devastation left by Islamic State militants, who forced all remaining Christians to leave town in a caravan in 2014.

Still, he watches them because they show his family's plight. Massive hurdles lie ahead as an international campaign begins this summer to return 70,000 Christians to their homes on the Nineveh Plains outside Mosul.

A video streaming on an iPad brings Hesa close to tears. Filmed on Feb. 2, five months after Qaraqosh was liberated from IS, the clip shows his uncle, Hani, and brother, Roni, returning to Hani's ransacked, burned-out home for the first time. They find gapping holes blown through concrete

walls, smashed fixtures, dangling wires, shattered ceramic floor tiles, and charred remains. Around town, human waste pools up next to damaged sewer pipes. Rubble lines the streets.

"My brother, he's saying, *How can we fix it? We have to take out everything: floors, walls, ceiling. Everything has to go in the garbage and start new,*" said Hesa, a Syriac Catholic, translating from the Syriac language spoken by Iraqi Christians.

For more than two years, 120,000 Christians exiled from the Nineveh Plains have been surviving with humanitarian assistance in and around Erbil, a Kurdish city defended by Peshmerga forces. Another 180,000 have already left Iraq, according to figures from Aid to the Church in Need (ACN), a New York-based nonprofit agency with Roman Catholic ties and a mission to assist persecuted Christians around the world.

Last fall, Iraqi forces and Nineveh police drove out ISIS from nine towns where followers of Christ have lived since ancient times. Going back is now a possibility. Some might be ghost towns or dotted with squatters, but at least ISIS is gone. Under pressure that included U.S. airpower, Islamic State fighters have retreated to a handful of urban strongholds, including West Mosul (20 miles northwest of Qaraqosh) and Kirkuk.

To make returning feasible, ACN is embarking on its largest project since the aftermath of World War II, when the group brought essential supplies to suffering Germans. The Nineveh Reconstruction Project aims to raise \$250 million to rebuild nearly 13,000 Christian homes that were destroyed, burned out, or partially damaged by ISIS. Never before has ACN sought to raise such a sum or focus so many resources on a region where Christians are a minority. The first recon-

struction site opened in May.

The Nineveh Reconstruction Project brings together ACN, the Chaldean Catholic Church, the Syriac Catholic Church, and the Syriac Orthodox Church. (Syriac and Chaldean Catholics are under Vatican jurisdiction and follow the Eastern rite.) But the effort is global in scope. Organizers are calling on “every political, religious, and humanitarian organization” to support the effort.

Americans arguably have a particular moral duty to help since the region’s instability traces to the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, said Edward Clancy, ACN’s director of outreach.

“It’s time for us to clean up our mess,” Clancy said. “This is similar to what the Marshall Plan did in Europe. ... If there’s a stable society in the Nineveh Plain and normalcy returns to Mosul, then Iraq becomes a more stable country. We theoretically don’t have to worry about another ISIS.”

Reconstruction is just beginning, but the need is already becoming urgent. In the Erbil region, displaced Christians have been living temporarily in unfinished buildings with no doors, windows, or flooring, said Hani El-Mahdi, who oversees Catholic Relief Services operations in Iraq.

A four-bedroom space typically accommodates four families, one in each room. Some also live in small apartments with rent paid by a Catholic congregation, but those subsidies will discontinue this fall. For many, returning to charred and pillaged homes could be the only option before the winter.

“Living in camps is not easy, but the church can no longer pay the rent



Icons were heavily damaged but not destroyed by Islamic State forces.

of the families staying outside of camps,” said Bruno Geddo, Iraq representative for the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees, overseeing 52 camps for more than 3.2 million displaced people in Iraq. “That’s why many families will be hard-pressed to return.”

Like most of the world’s 65 million displaced persons, Christians in Iraq generally hope they can return home, El-Mahdi said. He observed some families returning this spring, and he expects the pace to pick up this summer before schools reopen in the fall.

Displaced Christians might not be ready to return immediately, but they could if reconstruction increases, said Kevin Appleby, senior director of international migration policy for the Center for Migration Studies, a New York think tank. When he visited in March with a Roman Catholic cardinal and an archbishop, he found Christians doing whatever they could to maintain dignity in their current exile.

“They’ve lost what they knew before,” Appleby said. “There was this salon where some of the women would come and get their hair done. I was like, *Well, is this a luxury?* Their response was that they’re very proud. The salon didn’t charge much, if anything. It was more for some of the women to keep their dignity. Having

their hair done was a sign of how they lived before.”

Those hopeful to return to their villages soon include Hesa’s father, Sami, who lives in a temporary, church-funded rental unit and lacks \$60,000 for necessary repairs to his Qaraqosh home. But Rowaid Hesa wants to see more protections in place before his parents and other relatives return.

Neither the Iraqi army nor Nineveh police can be trusted to protect Christians, Rowaid Hesa said, and the Christian militia is too small to be effective. He does not trust Muslim neighbors who turned on them and sided with ISIS.

“They burned our history,” Hesa said, pointing to a photo of a priest holding a small number of salvaged Syriac history books. “How can you trust them after that?”

Hesa said the only effective peacekeepers would be U.S. troops or the United Nations. But neither has announced any plans to provide local security. Geddo said it’s not an option for the U.N. Hesa would sooner send his father \$600 a month for rent than have him return to Qaraqosh soon.

Reconstruction organizers hope other factors can motivate Christians to return en masse. Donors have pledged \$2 million to rebuild the first 105 homes, Clancy said. Once that

(Continued on next page)



Priests survey the damage at St. Mary the Virgin Syriac Catholic Church.

Iraq

(Continued from previous page)

work is done, the priority will shift to rebuilding 296 church structures, including worship spaces, schools, convents, and rectories that were destroyed, burned, or partially damaged. (At the burned-out Church of the Virgin Mary in Qaraqosh, crosses were torn off the spire. “Islamic State will stay forever,” a painted slogan says.) Home reconstruction will resume after church infrastructure is in place.

“For the Iraqi Christians, the presence of the church is very important, as shown by what happened when ISIS came in,” Clancy said. “Any [church] group that they might be part of, that’s who took them in and took care of them all this time in Erbil. So they understand that the church is the bedrock upon which they build their families and their communities.”

Returning home will mean confronting a traumatic recent past. ISIS used threats, vandalism, and gratuitous violence to rid the region of Christians, Yazidis, and Shia Muslims in a bid to establish a caliphate with severe Islamist codes. Hesa fled with his family after receiving a note under the door with an ultimatum: leave within 24 hours or die.

Now that ISIS is gone from these villages, restoring a Christian presence in northern Iraq is a priority, and

not just for Christians with roots in towns such as Teleskuf, Batnaya, and Bartella. Relief workers say coexistence with a Christian minority helps preserve the interfaith character of Iraq. It reinforces both an ethic of tolerance and a cultural richness.

If Christians vanish, the country will lose more than the traditional wine produced locally.

“It is these minorities who guarantee an injection of diversity in society,” Geddo said. “If it is just between Sunni and Shia, it will be an enormous loss for the country. ... It is an unqualified bonus if the minorities can be persuaded to return and to trust again their neighbors, by of course trusting the security forces who will protect them.”

Christians have a lot to lose or return to, depending on which path they take. In towns like Qaraqosh, they once enjoyed relatively high standards of living, including utilities, maintained roads, and neighborhoods where “there are many newly built and large houses,” Geddo said.

Since Christians’ exile in 2014, however, personal resources have been drained, and families have relied largely on outside charity from Roman Catholics and Syriac Orthodox abroad. Sustaining the 120,000 displaced Christians around Erbil since 2014 has cost about \$31 million, Clancy said, including \$13.5 million from Aid to the Church in Need.

Nineveh Reconstruction brings ecumenism to a new level in the region. Seldom do Orthodox and Catholic



Building a new cross in Qaraqosh was an important gesture in reclaiming territory from Islamic State.

churches join forces in the region to champion a common cause, observers say, but they are doing so on a giant scale in a bid to reclaim their homelands.

Rallying assistance specifically for Christians can be a difficult sell in the United States, which usually directs its humanitarian support based on need and not religion. But Hesa and relief workers explained that in Iraq, help is distributed along religious lines. Religious institutions serve as channels for aid and make sure their adherents receive what they need. Iraqi Christians therefore look to fellow Christians, both at home and abroad, for support.

Reconstruction will likely take years, but organizers say it is important to begin, even before all security and infrastructure issues are settled. If several years were to pass, the window of opportunity for reintegration would likely close, observers said. CRS is among those encouraging Christians to go back as soon as this summer, as long as they feel safe enough to do so voluntarily.

“Iraqi Christians are typically people with the means, the dignity, and the human capital to go back and reinhabit their communities,” El-Mahdi said. “For many people, if the right conditions exist in their houses, they will return.”



Very little remains of a structure in Nineveh Plains.

‘I’m Going to Trust Him’

The Rev. Jacob Worley called a diocesan synod “an amazing experience of the Holy Spirit” when he was elected Bishop of Caledonia. He still sees it that way after a majority of bishops in his province rejected his election.

“I still believe that the Holy Spirit moved at the election, as do others who were there,” he told TLC. “And I believe that I am the Lord’s choice to be bishop. It’s clear that the House of Bishops didn’t think so. I’m not sure what the end result will be, where the Holy Spirit is ultimately moving, but I know that the Lord is orchestrating all of this. I’m going to trust him, because what is most important is that he has all the glory.”

A majority of bishops in the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and Yukon rejected Worley’s election, citing his past work on behalf of the Anglican Mission in America.

Worley, an American-born priest, was elected bishop on the eighth ballot April 22 in Prince Rupert. Worley is rector of Bulkley Valley Regional Parish, which includes three congregations in the northern interior of British Columbia.

The synod met to elect the successor to the Rt. Rev. William Anderson, who retired in December after serving as Bishop of Caledonia for 15 years. The diocese stretches across the upper half of British Columbia, and includes Haida Gwaii (the Queen Charlotte Islands). The Anglican Church of Canada is divided into 30 dioceses within four provinces. British Columbia and Yukon is the most westerly province.

The Provincial College’s objection, made public May 15, is grounded in Canon 4 (b) vi, which prohibits a bishop who has, within the past five years, “taught or held anything contrary to the Doctrine or Discipline of the Anglican Church of Canada.”

A press release from the college said the bishops had met several times as a Provincial House of Bishops since the election. The bishops reviewed Worley’s past actions, what he has written directly to the House, and what he said

when meeting in person with the Provincial House of Bishops.

“After many open and prayerful conversations, the majority of the House concluded that within the past five years the Rev. Worley has held — and continues to hold — views contrary to the discipline of the Anglican Church of Canada,” said the Most Rev. John Privett, archbishop and metropolitan for the province. “The view he held and holds is that it is acceptable and permissible for a priest of one church of the Anglican Communion to exercise priestly ministry in the geographical jurisdiction of a second church of the Anglican Communion without the permission of the Ecclesiastical Authority of that second church.”

Worley served as a priest in the Anglican Mission in America under license from the Province of Rwanda in the geographical jurisdiction of the Episcopal Church without permission of the Episcopal Church.

Born in Alabama, Worley grew up in New Mexico and worked first in an environmental consulting firm. He later felt called to the priesthood, and was ordained a priest of the Episcopal Church in 2005.

In 2007, Worley founded a new

church in Las Cruces, New Mexico, as a missionary for the Anglican province of Rwanda. (The church would later, under another priest, join the Anglican Church in North America.)

After an interim term in 2013 as rector at St. Martin’s Anglican Church in Fort St. John, B.C., then a year serving in the Church of Ireland, Worley returned with his family to Bulkley Valley.

As outlined in Canon 4 of the province’s constitution and canons, “the decision of the [Provincial] House of Bishops shall be final” in these matters.

The Provincial House included five episcopal members: Larry Robinson (Yukon), Logan McMenemy (British Columbia), Melissa Skelton (New Westminster), John Privett (Kootenay) and Barbara Andrews (Territory of the People, formerly Cariboo). Because Anderson had retired, Caledonia did not have a vote.

In 2013 the Provincial College was required to confirm or deny the election of Melissa Skelton as Bishop of New Westminster. It was “concurring by majority,” meaning that some bishops voted against her.

The Diocese of Caledonia is ex-

(Continued on next page)

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Caledonia

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pected to hold a new electoral synod.

Founded in 1879, Caledonia is part of the Council of the North and depends on the generosity of Anglicans across the country. Two-thirds of the diocesan budget comes from beyond diocesan borders.

There are only ten active priests serving 19 churches and 23 congregations. There are many First Nations in the diocese, including Haida, Nisga'a, Gitksan, and Sekani.

Sue Careless

Fuller Communion

The Episcopal and United Methodist bishops who oversee the ecumenical dialogue between their churches have jointly released *A Gift to the World: Co-Laborers for the Healing of Brokenness*, a draft document that proposes full communion.

"*A Gift to the World* is the product of a long and mutually enriching dialogue that took on new life with the formation of a bi-lateral dialogue committee in 2002," says a letter from United Methodist Bishop Gregory V. Palmer of Ohio and Episcopal Bishop C. Franklin Brookhart, Jr., of Montana.

The bishops' letter, a summary document from the United Methodists' Council of Bishops, and the draft proposal all follow in full.

Mutual Forgiveness

A May 23 sermon by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry marked the signing of a covenant of reconciliation with the Diocese of Haiti. The covenant resolved Title III and Title IV charges brought against Suffragan Bishop Ogé Beauvoir and Bishop Jean Zache Duracin, respectively.

"Mutual forgiveness and repentance, healing, and reconciliation are hard work and they often take time," Curry said in Port-au-Prince. "Healing and reconciliation do not happen quickly.

But it happens, if we are willing, to allow God's grace to work in us, for God's grace is sufficient. God is able.

"And through this covenant, we — Bishop Duracin, Bishop Beauvoir, the Standing Committee, the Reverend Clergy, and I, as your Presiding Bishop — all of us together, we take this step in which we each repent for any way we have hurt each other, we take a step toward mutual forgiveness, a step toward God's healing, a step toward reconciliation through the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross."

Lost in the Ruins

The 225-member synod of the Diocese of Christchurch will vote in September on the future of its earthquake-stricken cathedral, Bishop Victoria Matthews said.

There has been a six-year impasse about the future of the city-center landmark. During an earthquake in 2011 that registered 6.5 on the Richter scale, the spire and tower of the building collapsed and rendered it unusable. Campaigners and heritage authorities like UNESCO want it restored. Anglicans are deeply divided about its future, not least because of costs.

Bishop Matthews is known to support demolition and building a new structure because the alternative would leave the church with an unserviceable debt. Her announcement preceded deliberations of a government-appointed commission, due to report shortly, that was expected to support restoration.

Any vote by the synod to demolish and build a new cathedral will undoubtedly be met by efforts to block it.

"I think the key here is that we know that Christ Church Cathedral is a symbol of the Anglican church, but it's also the symbol of the city," said Nicky Wagner, a minister of the national government's Greater Christchurch Regeneration. "Seeing it broken and neglected ... I don't think it's good for anyone."

Bishop Matthews said, in contrast, "As the Christ Church Cathedral is a church building above all else, and a place of worship, the decision on its future should be made by the members

of the synod comprising the gathered clergy and laity of the Diocese who will be using the cathedral forever."

Bishop Matthews announced in March 2012 that the building would be demolished. The decision was supported by 70 local Christchurch churches and Christian groups. Heritage groups opposed the plan, although they made no proposals on how to pay the bill.

Several sources could help pay for the repairs: a \$42 million insurance payout, a \$10 million government grant, a \$15 million government loan, and a \$15 million funding pledge from the Great Christchurch Buildings Trust. But that's still \$22 million short of the estimated \$104 million restoration cost.

At one stage, Bishop Matthews suggested sharing a church with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Christchurch. Nothing came of the idea.

The Christchurch City Council is dealing with disputes regarding 30 landmarks damaged by the earthquake.

John Martin

Dorm Idea on Hold

The Diocese of Atlanta has withdrawn a rezoning proposal necessary to build a 106-bedroom private dormitory that would replace its small campus chapel at the University of Georgia in Athens.

Online Athens reports that the withdrawal followed a meeting of the Athens-Clarke County commissioners in which developers heard serious concerns about traffic and congestion that the "Episcopal House" project might create.

The university also expressed concerns about the project in a letter, saying its classification as a dormitory "could create confusion by suggesting an affiliation with the university's residential life program." Like official UGA dorms, it would be in the middle of campus; unlike UGA dorms, Episcopal House's undergraduate and graduate residents would lack access to supervision and support provided in university-run housing, the letter said.

Don Plummer, media relations coordinator for the diocese, told TLC that Episcopal House residents would

live in an environment that differs from traditional dormitories. He described the project as a residential community in which support is present but different. "We will have an assigned chaplain, and there will be regular opportunities for students or others to be in contact with our chaplain, to have the opportunity for counselling, to have the opportunity for inclusion in group activities."

The decision to withdraw the proposal now, before a vote, allows the diocese to submit a revised proposal at any time. If the proposal were rejected by commissioners, the diocese would need to wait a year before resubmitting, according to *Online Athens*.

"We definitely plan to continue the project," Plummer said. "What we want to do is make it a good neighbor with both the city and the university. We think that the plan that we presented does that; however, because of certain concerns that were raised during the review process, we felt like it was appropriate for us to pull back for a moment and continue to solicit input."

Plummer said the Diocese of Atlanta hopes to become a permanent part of the university community with this project, and to create a space where students, regardless of their religious affiliation, can find a spiritual and social alternative to traditional dorms. "That's really been our goal from the very beginning."

Matthew Townsend

Minya and Manchester

A week of terrorist violence in Egypt and the United Kingdom prompted prayers and comment from Anglican and Episcopal officials.

The Rt. Rev. David Walker, Bishop of Manchester, issued a statement after the May 22 attack at a concert venue in Manchester in northern England in which 22 people were killed and 59 injured.

"Today is a day to mourn the dead, to pray with their families and with the injured, and to reaffirm our determination that those who murder and maim will never defeat us," Walker said.

"But today is also a day to begin our

response. A response that will crush terrorism not by violence but by the power of love. A love which Christians celebrate especially now in Eastertide."

The May 26 slaughter of 28 Coptic Christians Minya, Egypt, followed the attack in Manchester.

"[W]e won't be riveted to stories from Minya for days on end the way in which we have followed the news from Manchester," wrote the Rev. Frederick Schmidt, Jr., author and Rueben P. Job Chair in Spiritual Formation at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois.

"[T]he moral values that we hold dear should leave us ever restless and discontent with human definitions of compassion, mercy, and justice. Those values are not grounded in our politics or systems, but in the nature of God who, alone, is perfect justice and compassion," he said. "Which is why we should be as obsessed with Minya as we are with Manchester."

Anglican Communion News Service

Dawani Made Primate

Archbishop Suheil Dawani of the Diocese of Jerusalem has been elected as the next Primate of the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East. He succeeds Archbishop Mouneer Hanna Anis, who has held the post since 2007.

Archbishop Dawani will serve for two and a half years, to be followed by the Rt. Rev. Michael Lewis of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf. Bishop Lewis will serve until May 2022.

The Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East's synod made these decisions during a two-day meeting in

Amman, Jordan.

"We congratulate both Archbishop Suheil and Bishop Michael on their appointments, and we give thanks for Archbishop Mouneer's service as our Primate since 2007," the synod said in a written statement. "Please uphold the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East in your prayers."

Philippines Election

The Rt. Rev. Joel A. Pachao was elected May 10 as the sixth prime bishop of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines.

Pachao, 61, is currently the bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of North Central Philippines, based in Baguio City in Benguet Province. He was one of three nominees.

In order to be elected, a candidate needed to receive a simple majority of votes from both clergy and the lay delegates, voting separately on the same balloting round. Pachao was elected on the second ballot, receiving 44 clergy votes and 39 lay votes, with 36 and 32 needed, respectively, for election.

The election took place during the church's 10th Regular Synod being held May 9-12 at the church's national compound in Cathedral Heights, Quezon City.

ACNS

Kondo to Lead Sudan Province

The Most Rev. Ezekiel Kumir Kondo has been appointed as the first primate of the new Province of Sudan. He cur-

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Sudan

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rently serves as Bishop of Khartoum and Archbishop of the Internal Province of Sudan.

The Anglican Communion announced the creation of the new province earlier this year and the Archbishop of Canterbury will travel to the region for the primate's inauguration at the end of July.

South Sudan gained independence from Sudan in 2011, which left the Primate of Sudan and South Sudan, Archbishop Daniel Deng, with the challenge of overseeing two countries. The 4.5 million members of the church are based mainly in South Sudan.

"It's a welcome development that we now have another Anglican province in a predominantly Muslim country," said the Most Rev. Josiah Idoru-Fearon, general secretary, when the province was announced. "We hope the province will stand and proclaim Christ in a way that will be meaningful in that context. Having Sudan as a separate province of the Communion will benefit Christians in Sudan. Now they will know they are not alone, that they are a part of the worldwide Anglican family."

Bound for Chautauqua

The Rt. Rev. Gene Robinson, retired Bishop of New Hampshire, will become vice president and senior pastor of the Chautauqua Institution on Sept. 1. Robinson will provide executive

leadership for the Department of Religion and will oversee a new volunteer advisory group, the President's Advisory Council on Faith in Society.

"I am delighted to welcome Bishop Robinson to the Diocese of Western New York," said the Rt. Rev. R. William Franklin, Bishop of Western New York. "He will bring his gifts as a teacher, preacher, and pastor to this important position. Chautauqua Institution is fortunate to add such a gifted leader to their team."

Currently a fellow at the Center for American Progress, Robinson is among the inaugural group of 13 Senior Fellows at Auburn Seminary. Auburn is the first leadership development and research institute in the country to launch a fellowship program to cultivate the skills of interfaith leaders working for justice.

Chautauqua Institution

EDS Lives On at Union

Episcopal Divinity School and Union Theological Seminary have signed an agreement that will allow EDS to continue as an Episcopal seminary at Union's campus in New York City beginning in the fall of 2018.

"We had three goals when we began to plan this news phase in EDS's life," said the Rev. Gary Hall, chairman of the EDS board. "We wanted to continue providing Episcopal theological education within an accredited, degree-granting program, deepen our historic commitment to gospel-centered justice, and provide financial strength and stability for EDS's future.

Today, I am delighted to say that we have achieved all three."

"This is an historic moment," said the Rev. Serene Jones, president of the Union faculty and Johnston Family Professor for Religion and Democracy at Union. "We are honored that EDS has chosen to partner with us and are certain that the stewardship of our deepest commitments will be fulfilled in the years ahead."

EDS appointed the Rev. Kelly Brown Douglas, Susan D. Morgan Professor of Religion at Goucher College in Maryland and canon theologian at Washington National Cathedral, as the first dean of EDS at Union. Douglas will also join the Union faculty as a professor. She is the author of many articles and five books, including *Stand Your Ground: Black Bodies and the Justice of God*.

Beginning in 2018, students who enroll in the EDS program at Union will earn graduate degrees from Union and fulfill requirements for ordination in the Episcopal Church. In addition to Douglas, EDS will hire a professor of Anglican studies to join the four Episcopal priests on Union's faculty.

EDS plans to purchase a floor in a new building being constructed at Union that will house offices, residential space for the dean, and other facilities. The EDS campus in Cambridge will be sold after operations there cease in July, and the proceeds will be added to the school's endowment, now valued at \$53 million.

The EDS board has voted to cap spending at four percent of its endowment once expenses associated with the move to Union are paid. "We are in this for the long haul," said Bonnie Anderson, vice chairwoman of the EDS board. "Enshrining our commitment to sensible, sustainable spending in our affiliation agreement was important to us."

EDS alumni will enjoy the same library and campus privileges as Union alumni. The EDS library and archives will be reviewed by representatives from both schools and Union will accept items that do not duplicate its holdings. The Burke Library at Union is part of Columbia University's library system and one of the largest theolog-

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The initial term of the EDS-Union affiliation agreement is 11 years, and both schools have the option to agree to extensions beyond that time. EDS will remain a legal entity with a board of trustees.

The two seminaries began negotiations in February after Union was chosen from among nine potential candidates that expressed interest in an alliance with EDS. The EDS board, spurred by financial challenges that were depleting the school's endowment, voted in 2016 to stop granting degrees in May 2017 and to explore options for EDS's future.

EDS has adopted a severance plan for its faculty and staff. All students who did not complete their degrees this month may continue their studies at other seminaries with EDS's financial support.

Episcopal Divinity School

Welcome to Sewanee

Invite • Welcome • Connect will be a program of the Beecken Center beginning July 1. The Beecken Center, a department of the University of the South's School of Theology, is in its fourth year of expansion and is the home of Education for Ministry.

Invite • Welcome • Connect, created by Mary Parmer and developed through the Newcomer Ministry Project in the Diocese of Texas, helps congregations and individuals cultivate intentional practices of evangelism, hospitality, and connectedness.

Designed to accommodate congregations of all sizes, the work has been integrated into 40 dioceses of the Episcopal Church, seminaries, colleges, and other parts of the Anglican Communion. The Beecken Center will host the movement's third summit in 2018.

Parmer will continue to lead this program's development as a member of the Beecken Center's staff.

"We need to be agents of imagination in our communities and empower people to take risks, trying new things for the sake of the gospel," Parmer said. "In order to expand this important

work, a home for the is needed. I am confident that the Beecken Center is just the right place for this work to thrive, to develop, and to grow."

Parmer comes to Sewanee from Austin, where she was director of the Gathering of Leaders, a national group of young Episcopal clergy. She has served as lay deputy or alternate lay deputy to General Convention since 2006, and is a member of the Task Force on Clergy Leadership Formation in Small Churches.

She holds a degree in religious studies from St. Edward's University in Austin and formerly served as director of adult ministries and evangelism at St. Stephen's Church in Beaumont, Texas.

REACH Speeds Past GAFCON

POSTCARD FROM LONDON

REACH, a South African denomination claiming Anglican allegiance but not recognized as part of the Communion, is the body behind an irregular consecration of a curate in Newcastle to serve as a bishop for Church of England conservative evangelicals.

At the center of the Newcastle action is the Rev. Jonathan Pryke, an assistant curate at Jesmond Parish near

the center of Newcastle. The May 2 consecration was not held on an Anglican site.

REACH's history dates to the mid-19th century. Controversy in South Africa led Canadian Anglicans to call for the first Lambeth Conference in 1867. The church in the Cape Colony had suffered a split: the Rt. Rev. Robert Gray, Bishop of Cape Town and an autocratic Tractarian, had triggered revolt among evangelical and liberal clergy who refused to acknowledge his authority.

The Lambeth fathers did not formally discuss the situation in the Cape. But they created no impediment to formation of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa (CPSA), and it was inaugurated in 1870 with Gray as Archbishop. An isolated number of parishes refused to throw in their lot with CPSA, tenaciously adhering to the name the Church of England in South Africa (CESA).

The result was several rounds of scandalously expensive litigation. The South African Supreme Court and the United Kingdom's Privy Council both ruled that CPSA was distinct from the Church of England. CESA won, in legal terms, but CPSA held most churches, properties, cathedrals, church schools, training institutions,

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REACH

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and endowments. CESA remained a loosely connected group of independent congregations for more than a century.

CESA entered a new era in 1955. Its representatives invited the Rt. Rev. G.F.B. Morris, recently retired as Bishop of North Africa, to be their first bishop. CESA had another staunch ally. For many years, bishops from the Diocese of Sydney would stop over at Cape Town, while traveling to or from London, to minister and confirm in CESA congregations. During the tenure of the Most. Rev. H.W.K. Mowll of Sydney, a constitution was drafted for CESA in the 1930s. With it came a fresh infusion of evangelical energy.

CESA was a source of various disputes. Its second presiding bishop, the Most Rev. Stephen Bradley, openly supported apartheid. Leaders of the apartheid government often called him an Anglican leader, much to the chagrin of the CPSA.

CESA's third presiding bishop, the Most Rev. Dudley Foord, was recruited from Sydney in 1984 and was consecrated with participation of a CPSA bishop. Some hoped this might open the way to rapprochement, but neither side particularly warmed to the proposition. Foord resigned and returned to Sydney after a tenure of three years.

CESA set up George Whitefield College in 1993, and another Sydney import, D. Broughton Knox, was its first principal. In 2013, the church changed its name to the Reformed Evangelical Anglican Church of South Africa (REACH-SA). In the last two decades, it has expanded to neighboring Namibia and Zimbabwe and claims 100,000 adherents.

Pryke, who has been on the staff of Jesmond since 1998, is believed to have been consecrated to the episcopate by the Most Rev. Glenn Lyons, REACH's presiding bishop. The identity and orders of his co-consecrators have not been revealed. Pryke took an oath of allegiance to "bishops and other chief ministers" with whom he works in the

United Kingdom, so he owes no canonical allegiance to REACH.

The action took place without the knowledge or consent of the Rt. Rev. Christine Hardman, Bishop of Newcastle. Jesmond Parish has long said it is in impaired communion with the diocese.

Pryke is expected to spend 80 percent of his time working with Jesmond Parish and the remainder working with affiliated churches of the Anglican Mission in England.

The Rev. David Holloway, the senior minister of Jesmond Parish, believes the Church of England's Clergy Discipline Measure will not apply in this case. Ecclesiastical lawyers are studying the case, and it is not yet clear what their response will be.

The Rt. Rev. Rod Thomas, appointed as Bishop of Maidstone to work with conservative evangelicals, is reserving his opinion.

The action in Jesmond caught GAFCON by surprise. Except for a conversation with GAFCON's general secretary, the Most Rev. Peter Jensen, Jesmond's statement makes plain there was no consultation with GAFCON's primates. A week earlier, GAFCON's primates stated their intention to send a missionary bishop to the United Kingdom amid conservative concerns about the state of the Church of England.

Archbishop Jensen confirmed it was entirely independent of GAFCON. "But it does show, I think, that the situation in England is becoming very difficult for those who hold the traditional and biblical view."

John Martin

'Valid in a Certain Context'

Pope Leo XIII's papal bull *Apostolicae Curiae* (1896), which declared Anglican orders "absolutely null and utterly void," has long cast a shadow over the search for unity between Anglicans and Roman Catholics. Anglican churches' ordination of women as priests is a further complication, as Pope John Paul II made clear.

Now one of the Vatican's top legal minds seems to have opened the way

to reconsider Pope Leo's teaching on Anglican orders. "When someone is ordained in the Anglican Church and becomes a parish priest in a community, we cannot say nothing has happened, that everything is invalid," said Cardinal Francesco Coccopalmerio, president of the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts.

The disclosure comes in a volume of papers and discussions in Rome as part of an ecumenical forum on the Malines Conversations. Its title refers to a series of Anglican-Catholic conversations acting on the 1920 Lambeth Conference's "Appeal to All Christian People," a statement widely credited as foundational to modern ecumenism. The Malines Conversations met with only lukewarm support from Rome and Canterbury but are now considered an important ecumenical stepping stone.

Cardinal Coccopalmerio argues that the Catholic Church has "a very rigid understanding of validity and invalidity" on Anglican orders, and he believes it could be revised. "One should be able to say: 'this is valid in a certain context, and that is valid in another context.'"

"What does it mean when Pope Paul VI gave a chalice to the Archbishop of Canterbury? If it was to celebrate the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist, it was meant to be done validly, no?" the cardinal said, as reported by *The Tablet*, an international Roman Catholic newsweekly. "This is stronger than the pectoral cross, because a chalice is used not just for drinking but for celebrating the Eucharist. With these gestures the Catholic Church already intuits, recognizes a reality."

The Rt. Rev. Geoffrey Rowell, retired as the Church of England's Bishop in Europe, co-edited papers recording discussions between Anglicans and Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger when Ratzinger was prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. He quotes Cardinal Ratzinger as saying, "We cannot do anything about Leo XIII's words but there are ... other ways of looking at things."

Rowell said that Ratzinger, who served as Pope Benedict XVI from 2006 to 2013, accepts that an Anglican Eucharist has value.

John Martin



Matthew Townsend photos

Beyond Plastic Cuba

The island nation is a land of contrasts: Beauty and deprivation, renovation and abandonment, an alienated church and grassroots growth.

By Matthew Townsend

Cuba is complicated. Visitors to Cuba hear this refrain over and over again as they try to wrap their minds around a society that is unlike any other in Latin America or, for that matter, the world.

Likewise, the Episcopal Church of Cuba is complicated. The church, split from the Episcopal Church in 1966 after relations between Cuba and the United States soured, is governed by a council consisting of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, Archbishop Fred Hiltz of Canada, and Archbishop John Holder of the West Indies. The Rt. Rev. Maria Griselda Delgado del Carpio, Bishop of Cuba, was appointed by the council in 2010 after the Cuban church failed to elect a bishop coadjutor in 2009.

Success in connecting Episcopal churches in the United States to Cuban Episcopalians depends on creating relationships between Americans and Cubans in general. Only in recent years have Americans been free to visit Cuba legally, with relaxations in the embargo that allow U.S. citizens to visit for educational reasons. Programs like the Authentic Cuban Experience, coordinated by Florida-based Educational Opportunities Tours and Celestyal Cruises of Greece, offer secular tourists and religious pilgrims a guided journey to several locations on the island.

Celestyal Cruises and Educational Opportunities have also invited travel and religion writers to tour Cuba at no cost, an invitation TLC accepted in May.

Expectations abound among Americans who make the journey. Cuba does not occupy a neutral space in the minds of Americans: it is the land of rum and cigars, a land of toil, a workers' paradise, a corrupt dictatorship, a place that stood up for the poor, a place that stole the life's work (and lives) of so many innocents.

Jorge Arrocha, a citizen of Cuba and an academic who lectures on Cuban history and culture aboard Celestyal's voyages, focuses on cultivating such relationships. Arrocha delivers lectures about Cuba — everything ranging from its general history to the cultural significance of rum — as the cruise line's vessel circumnavigates the island. Many crew members aboard the ship are Cuban citizens, further adding to a sense of immersion.

Arrocha told TLC that the complex layers of Cuban society can make it difficult for Americans to understand the country.

"On the one hand, you have the Cuban people," he said. "The common people really want change and transition, normalization with the U.S. They're waiting there for you on the street with their arms open."

Another layer is the Cuban government, he said, in which dialogue is focused on programming — what to

show and how to show it. While Arrocha does not explicitly avoid political topics, he places heavier emphasis on cultural and historical exchange. The nature of Cuba's government is apparent and self-evident upon visiting: it is frequently present, whether in the form of uniformed officials or propaganda posters. Passengers' belongings are X-rayed at each port as they come and go from the ship. Cuba does not feel like a police state crawling with minders, but it does not feel like a free state, either.

Visitors' experience of Cuban citizens — who are often friendly and will readily engage in conversation on the streets — and the Cuban government can come into conflict with their expectations. A potential trap: playing to a paradisiacal vision of what Arrocha calls "the plastic Cuba" to visiting foreigners, in which "Cuba is the island of the cigars, Cuba is the island of the rum, Cuba is the island of mulattas and mulattos dancing salsa on the beach." Part of introducing Americans to Cubans involves showing the history and change present in the country, including more relaxed attitudes about religion and LGBT people that have emerged in the last few decades.

A desire to "see Cuba before it changes" often motivates visiting Americans. Arrocha described this as a mix of fear about an encroachment of McDonald's and the belief that a tran-

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Beyond Plastic Cuba

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sition to a capitalist system is inevitable. These possibilities were on Sarah Kirchman's mind. Kirchman, who worships at St. David's Church in Columbia, South Carolina, joined Roman Catholic friends Arlene Rowland and Freda Crawford for Celestyal's journey in mid-May. Like everything else in Cuba, the portents of change are complicated.

"I've been really surprised," Kirchman told TLC aboard Celestyal Crystal. "They really are making progress as far as the renovations and the updating and the remodeling of some of the buildings. But we've all talked about how we'll see two or three buildings that look really great, and then five or six next to them, obviously built in the '50s, are just about ready to fall."

Rowland, who organized their trip as an opportunity to see the "real Cuba" with the concern that the island could again close to tourists, said the change she saw was hit and miss. A frequent traveler, she said the poverty in Cuba was less pronounced than she had seen in Vietnam or Cambodia, "but it's still poverty."

Arrocha said that most Cubans are concerned less with sweeping, systemic changes than meeting their day-to-day needs, which may explain the gap be-

tween Americans' fear of dramatic change and their observations of slow progress.

"Cuban people are not thinking right now about a specific definition of what is Cuba," he said. "Cuban people are more interested now in the economy, in their everyday life, and how to make their life better. That's it. It's a very simple question. It's not a question about capitalism or socialism."

"It's Tough Living"

Signs of change appear on Cuba's horizons: restored buildings, revived projects, and much-needed repairs are clear. But as Rowland, Kirchman, and Crawford pointed out, projects with international investment sparkle as neighboring buildings crumble due to lack of funds for restoration. Poverty in Cuba is indeed visible, if different from the American experience.

Decades of persecution and social disengagement from religion have left many churches, especially in Roman Catholic and Protestant mainline traditions, struggling to survive.

Fr. Damian McElroy, priest at Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church in Moorestown, New Jersey, also traveled to Cuba for the first time in May. Born in Northern Ireland, McElroy is no stranger to religious tension, and the pain that can come with a struggle for independence. He jumped at the opportunity to travel to Cuba and meet Christians there.

"I was just shocked at the poverty and the deprivation," he told TLC aboard ship. "I saw store after store after store closed, the windows dusty. I went into food stores, saw people with their ration coupons, and nobody was speaking. I found that a little bit unsettling."

The Rev. Mark Pendleton, rector of Christ Church in Exeter, New Hampshire, and member of the task force preparing a resolution about Cuban-TEC reunification for General Convention, told TLC by phone that Cuba and the churches within it have experi-

enced substantial ups and downs that challenge simplistic views of the country.

Pendleton first journeyed to Cuba 30 years ago and is intimately connected with the place. For the past four years, he has brought missionary groups from his parish to visit and learn about the complexities of Cuban life and faith.

"Cuba is complicated," he said. Pendleton said politically progressive Americans who travel to Cuba sometimes return impressed with its medical and educational systems. Over time, though, he has developed a different view.

"I think it's a very oppressive system. It's tough living. I've lost the rosiness of what I might have had 30 years ago in the real nostalgia of Che Guevara. It's a pretty tough place now where people just struggle, and they're isolated on that island. They can't walk north."

Those with a more open-eyed approach can see Cuba — a place of happy people, hard living, and deep poverty — as unsettling. Pendleton said a balance can be struck between the extreme perspectives that nothing good can come from Cuba and that Cuba is a utopian workers' paradise.

For McElroy, the sorrow of Cuba's desperate poverty was balanced by the simple faith that he found there, especially among older Cubans. He walked alone in Havana and found himself in a plaza across from a church. A man called to him and asked him where he was from and about his journey to Cuba. McElroy told the man that he was a priest and had come to Cuba on a cruise ship.

"I don't think he entirely took me seriously," McElroy said. "When I assured him I was, he called over a number of people in the square — pregnant mothers, people who were sick." McElroy said a prayer and blessed those who had gathered.

"They were all from an older generation. It was almost like when they met the priest, it was like meeting something from their past," he said. Younger



Dr. Jorge Arrocha (right) discusses Havana's Plaza Vieja with Arlene Rowland of Columbia, South Carolina.



A greengrocer in a Havana fruit market takes a moment of rest after preparing the day's display. Hard work is a regular part of Cuban life. The average Cuban's monthly salary is about \$20.

people he met seemed less interested in religion; their grandmothers go to church. "It seemed in their eyes that Christianity, faith, was something for the past. It belonged to the world of faith and superstition."

Faith in the Shadows

In Cuba, many churches are relics of the past. As religion became ostracized in revolutionary Cuba, church buildings closed or were turned into state museums or cultural centers. Churches that continue public worship face an environment with little tolerance of evangelism, even in some of its simplest forms.

"I noticed how many church bells were used as decorative pieces at the entrance to the church, on the ground because they'd been taken down," McElroy said. "I never heard a church bell ring in Cuba because they don't ring."

While visiting a cathedral in one Cuban city, McElroy said, he found the structure in a state of desperate disrepair. "But I also found six elderly ladies gathered around the Blessed Sacrament, some meditating and some reading the Scriptures. And that was like a little oasis of faith. It was something beautiful to see."

He met the parish priest, whom he described as humble and heroic, a Cuban man leading a simple life.

"I'm delighted that the daylight is

shining on the Christian faith in Cuba. But a lot of that life is still lived in the shadows."

Pendleton said religion became more acceptable in Cuba in the 1990s. By 1992, atheism was removed from the constitution and Christians could serve in government. After Pope John Paul II's visit in 1998, Christmas was again declared a holiday. Such changes stood in stark contrast to the persecution of the '60s and '70s, during which future bishop Emilio Hernández spent a decade in jail. "Seminarians were thrown into, really, these concentration camps," Pendleton said. "Miguel Tamayo, the one-time bishop of Cuba, suffered through that."

Pendleton also said that Cuba, unlike other Latin American countries, does not have a history steeped in Roman Catholicism. Jose Martí, great hero of Cuba's independence from Spain, was a Freemason. "Cuba has always been unique, I've found, in Latin America in trying to figure out the role of the church."

Like the Book of Acts

Growth in Episcopal churches has been tempered by a government with no formal or informal relationship to the church, Pendleton said. "Today, what's hard for the church is if they want to build a new church they have so much bureaucracy."

Clergy work outside of Cuba's social

security system. Numbers have grown in the Cárdenas-based parish that Christ Church supports, but rules of assembly limit how many can gather outside of worship services. "There has been great growth. But the government is always there."

In Cuba, the church has "been neglected for 30 years, far beyond typical Latin American churches," where the state rarely intervenes in matters of church construction and repairs. "That's not true in Cuba. You can have the money and not get the permission."

Protestant churches that are growing in Cuba are doing so thanks to less traditional approaches to organization and worship. "Not all churches are growing," Pendleton said. "The churches that have grown have taken a track similar to other parts of Latin America. The evangelically minded churches tend to get more folks. The ones who don't need seminary-trained pastors grow: Pentecostal, Seventh-day Adventists, those with services that reflect the culture."

This approach works well in the countryside, where storefront churches can be started more easily and with fewer resources. "You don't need a full-time paid priest to do it. You get a pastor, you get a band, you get a guitar, and you're ready to roll. Those churches have seen growth."

One mainline denomination that has experienced some success in recent years is the United Methodist Church, which has spread by planting house churches. The Rev. Larry Selig and his wife, Ida, also traveled to Cuba on the cruise. A retired Presbyterian pastor who works with ecumenical churches in America and overseas, Selig told TLC he had gone to Cuba to observe "the factors under communism which not only attracted people to seeking Christ but also sharing him with others."

While in Cuba, they visited a Methodist house church — a house transformed into a full-fledged sanctuary — to learn about the way the church has been spreading in Havana. Selig said they often start with a home Bible study and build to 25 members. At that point, the Methodist bishop assigns a pastor in training, who attends

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seminary and is mentored by an ordained pastor in the area. The house church the Seligs visited has grown to about 125 members. When membership grows beyond that number, a house church will spin off a new Bible study to plant churches in other neighborhoods.

“It sounds like it was in the Book of Acts,” he said. “And they’re not building church edifices but neighborhood worship spaces where people live.” Because air conditioning is rare, the indoor services can be heard through open windows by the neighbors, drawing them in, he said.

Building Friendships

As connections grow between Episcopal churches in Cuba and the United States, some programs help Cuban churches tell American counterparts what they truly need.

“That’s what we’re trying to set up with this Friends of the Episcopal Church of Cuba program,” Pendleton said. He came from the Diocese of Florida, which has collaborated with the Cuban church for more than a century.

“What we’re trying to set up is a more coordinated resource network

where we’re not duplicating efforts and working at cross purposes,” he said. Because the network allows Cuban



Buildings along Havana’s plazas have seen loving restoration (bottom), but a quick jaunt down any side street shows shockingly deteriorated buildings next to inhabited ones (top).

priests to share their plans and needs directly, American churches can be involved more easily — it is all spelled out. “If you want to send a group to Cuba, here’s the process and here are the needs.”

Pendleton said that Bishop Delgado’s support for this network has helped move relationships from being ad hoc, in which “each diocese, each church would do its own thing.”

The priest cautioned Christians against heading to Cuba to check an item off their bucket list or to engage in make-work activities that make American church groups feel helpful without meeting actual Cuban needs. He also said the Cuban church needs financial resources, and that Christian travelers who do not leave much money behind may create more financial strain than benefit.

“It may feel good to you, but they just crave relationships because they’re this isolated island,” he said. “Check that Type A personality at the border. It might not matter if you do something physical in that week. There’s a whole lot you can do with your presence.”

This is the first in a three-part series about the Episcopal Church of Cuba.

What the Camino Taught Me

By Daniel H. Martins

For a little more than a thousand years, the mortal remains of St. James have rested in a crypt behind the high altar of Santiago de Compostela Cathedral in Spain. Santiago has been a well-traveled pilgrimage destination since then. Between August 13 and September 19 last year, as part of a sabbatical, I walked all 820 kilometers (about 500 miles) of the classic Camino de Santiago de Compostela pilgrimage. In so doing, I followed in the footsteps of innumerable other pilgrims who have trod that route across northern Spain for more than a millennium.

The notion of pilgrimage is common to many religions and cultures, and it certainly enjoys a secure place in the tradition of Christian spiritual practice. We all come from God, and the fulfillment of our human destiny and purpose lies in our return to God. A Christian may see returning to God as a pilgrimage writ large, beginning in baptism and culminating in the Celestial Banquet. A traditional church interior reflects this mystical reality, with the baptismal font near the entrance, a place of welcome and initiation, and a central aisle leading to the altar, a place of communal feasting and adoration.

While walking the Camino, I had occasion to discern and reflect on several themes that linked my long trek to the journey of a soul back to God. I will point to some of those themes without connecting the dots between the physical and mystical experience of pilgrimage in very much detail.

There is only one destination, and there is only one “best way” to get there from wherever you are. There are rare instances when the signs that mark the Camino route offer an alternative path — usually one that is

shorter but over more taxing terrain — but these are both few and short. The main path is the main path, and if you want to reach Santiago, it is best to follow that path and not try to improvise. Remember, people have been doing this for centuries.

Your feet will blister, and it will hurt. With my high-end shoes and socks, and no foot pain after the first couple of days, I began to consider myself immune. I was wrong. Pilgrims feel pain. My shins hurt, my muscles ached, and I was often bone tired after walking 15



Wikimedia Commons

Camino de Santiago directional sign

miles. It's all quite normal.

The way is well-marked, but heed the signs. Either yellow arrows painted crudely on pavement or the side of a building, or more upscale blue-and-yellow shell logos on stone pillars, mark the route of the Camino. But I discovered that I had best not let my mind wander or my attention lapse. This is particularly true in populated areas, where the route lies along crowded city sidewalks, with lots of turns. Even in the countryside, if there

is any kind of intersection, a pilgrim had better watch for that familiar yellow arrow.

If you make a wrong turn, the wisest decision is to retrace your steps. There was one day when I missed a sign coming out of a town and walked on the wrong path for 45 minutes before it became clear to me that I was no longer on the Camino. The anger I felt toward myself melted away in joy when I saw the familiar and comforting (and, to my chagrin, unambiguously clear) yellow arrow that I had missed. Repentance is emotionally laborious, but it is also very rewarding.

Sometimes the signs are not as clear as we would like them to be. Unlike the one I missed that morning, there are instances of genuine ambiguity, or the apparent absence of any sign. This can be disconcerting. But patient attentiveness, combined with clear and non-anxious thinking, invariably pays off. Clarity eventually emerges.

Listen to your fellow pilgrims. Some of them may have a helpful guidebook. Or they may have walked that part of the way before, or they may know someone who has walked the way before. Once, on a day when it was particularly important for me to find a place to refill my water bottle, and I came across one of the “alternative route” choices, I saw a message scrawled with a marker warning that one of the possible routes passed through no towns or villages, so there would be no water. That single message made my decision easy.

Greet those whom you meet along the way. It becomes clear quickly that there is an etiquette along the Camino. When someone passes you, or you pass another pilgrim, you say, “Buen Camino” (“good way,” but more equivalent to “Have a good trip”). Those might be the only words you exchange — people walk at different speeds —

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I began to see my backpack as a sort of sacramental sign of these intercessory intentions, to see myself mystically as “carrying” these people and institutions and situations constantly into God’s presence.

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but pilgrims headed toward the same destination share a profound bond, even when they do not know one another’s names.

Invest in temporary relationships. The Camino is dynamic. People on a pilgrimage are, by definition, always moving. Not only do people walk at different paces, but they start at different times and have different deadlines for arriving in Santiago, and various levels of interest in the sights along the way. Some pilgrims are already, by intention, walking with one or more companions. Some form a bond with someone they meet, or with a group, and choose to stay together for an extended time, perhaps all the way to the end. But those traveling alone, as I was (and especially those of an introverted temperament, as I am) meet and interact with a wide variety of other pilgrims in exchanges that last between a few seconds and several hours. It is tempting to not give very much weight to these chance encounters, to avoid

the risk of vulnerability in conversations with people you will likely never see again. But I found that some of my most rewarding moments on the Camino happened when I was willing to extend myself with those whom I met, to take an interest in their lives, in their stories, to invite them to share those bits of themselves with me. Temporary relationships do not have to be meaninglessly casual.

Sometimes you will see someone headed in the wrong direction. The Camino is mostly a one-way street, but not completely. On those rare occasions when I passed someone hiking the other way, it certainly caught my attention and caused me to wonder what was up. If someone looks confused or distressed, be open to offering help. But if someone looks resolute, simply offer your greetings, keep moving, and perhaps say a silent prayer.

Pray without ceasing. Some of the Camino route requires focused attention to avoid potential injury. The terrain is never dramatically dangerous,

but the Camino is not a theme park; it is possible to hurt yourself if you are not careful, and perhaps even if you are. But much of it is tame enough for the average pilgrim to multitask. As a result, I have never done as much purely intercessory praying in my entire life as I did on the Camino. Without particularly intending it, I quickly developed a set list of intercessory intentions — people and institutions and situations for which I prayed importunately. In time, I began to see my backpack as a sort of sacramental sign of these intercessory intentions, to see myself mystically as “carrying” these people and institutions and situations constantly into God’s presence. There was a great spiritual sweetness to this experience.

A pilgrimage route is foreign territory. It may be pleasant or beautiful (and a great deal of the Camino is one or both), but it is not home. I can get along decently well in Spanish, but it is not the language of my heart, and I am always a little bit on edge, stressed, when most of my interactions are in another language. Unlike residents of larger cities in Europe, most of the locals along the Camino cannot be counted on to converse in English. I was constantly aware that I was an alien in an alien land.

Accept that the road will end. The night before my last day of walking, I had mixed feelings. I was eager to regain my “real” life, but I was also in grief. The Camino is compelling. But when I came around a bend in the city of Santiago and caught my first glimpse of the cathedral spire, my spirits were buoyed. I was seeing that toward which my life had been singly configured for the proverbial 40 days and 40 nights. It was a moment of supreme consummation.

The Rt. Rev. Daniel H. Martins is Bishop of Springfield.

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Darkness Closed in on Caravaggio

Caravaggio's Last Two Paintings
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Fifth Avenue at 82nd Street
New York City
Through July 9

Review by Pamela A. Lewis

The Metropolitan Museum of Art has reunited two of the final paintings by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571-1610). *The Martyrdom of Saint Ursula*, on exceptional loan from the Banca Intesa Sanpaolo in Naples, joins *The Denial of Saint Peter*, owned by the Met, for the first time since a 2004 exhibition in London and Naples that was devoted to Caravaggio's late work.

The Martyrdom of Saint Ursula, commissioned by the Genoese nobleman Marcantonio Doria two months before the artist's death in July 1610, is a bold departure from the artist's familiar style, by way of its minimalist approach to the subject, as well as in its limited palette. Caravaggio has depicted the legend of the saint who traveled with 11,000 virgins to Cologne, where the chief of the Huns besieging the city fell in love with her. When she rejected him, he killed her with an arrow. The artist has placed the two figures extremely close to one another, heightening their contrasting expressions: Ursula's perplexity at being shot, and the chief's, a mixture of rage and guilt. Caravaggio included himself as a spectator in the small group behind the saint, straining to see the scene. The contrasting light and dark serve not only as an artistic device but also as a symbolic allusion to sin and redemption, life and death.

In the smaller and even more technically reductive *Denial of Saint Peter*,



Caravaggio presents the well-known Gospel account of Peter's threefold denial of Christ. Peter is accused by a woman speaking to a soldier. The pointing finger of the soldier and the woman's two pointing fingers, which allude to the three accusations and Peter's three denials, confirm Caravaggio's narrative powers.

From police reports, legal depositions, and court transcripts, we know that Caravaggio's life was often

marked by violence. (He murdered a man in 1606.) Despite his growing fame and improving social connections, he cultivated a bad-boy reputation, carried a sword and a dagger, and was always one step ahead of the police. Yet it was his criminal persona, as well as the transgressive atmosphere of early 17th-century Naples and Rome, that imbued many of Caravaggio's early works with visual power. The theatricality,

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CULTURES

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eroticism (even his other religious works raised eyebrows), and shocking violence the artist often witnessed (and sometimes generated) provide the ingredients of his greatest paintings and define his entire *oeuvre*. He dared to show saints with dirty feet, half-rotten fruit, angels who seemed more sensuous than seraphic, and Madonnas in whose delicate and virginal features the faces of local prostitutes could be recognized. Whether their subject was sacred or secular, Caravaggio's paintings bore the gritty, street-smart features of his turbulent life and milieu.

In 1905, the English painter and critic Roger Fry wrote that Caravaggio "was in many senses the first modern artist, the first to proceed not by evolution, but by revolution." In a career that lasted less than 20 years in which he produced between 80 and 90 canvases, Caravaggio cre-

ated a different kind of art that had emerged from his new ways of seeing and depicting the subjects of his paintings. Wedged between a waning Mannerism and a burgeoning and assertive Baroque, Caravaggio pioneered startling and original innovations such as live models and a greater narrative realism that at once attracted his fellow artists and repulsed his critics.

Most compelling among Caravaggio's techniques was his use of *chiaroscuro*, the dramatic interplay of light and dark, present in masterpieces such as *The Calling of Saint Matthew* (1599-1600), his first public commission, and *The Entombment of Christ* (1603-04). So distinctive was this feature in the artist's work that it prompted art critic Gilles Lambert to observe that Caravaggio had put the *oscuro* in *chiaroscuro*. Admirers in Italy and in other parts of Europe, who became known as the *Caravaggisti*, or the Caravagists, eagerly imitated his

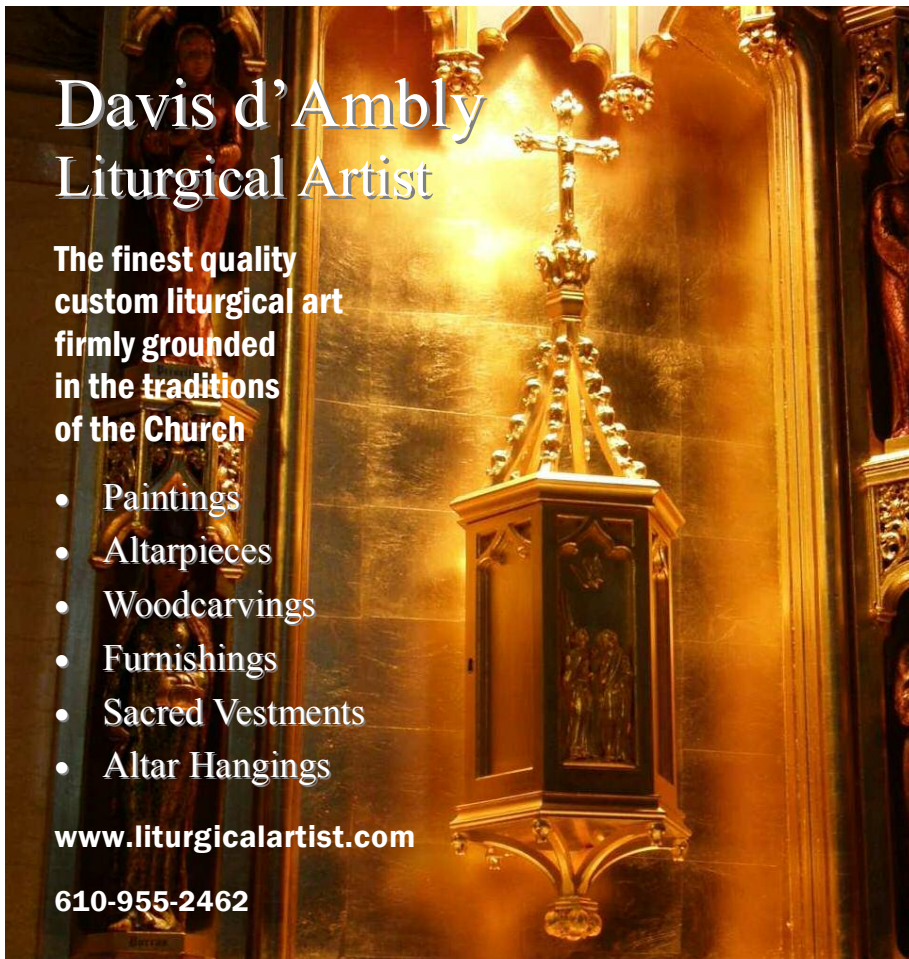
style, from which an international *Caravaggesque* Movement sprang, responding to the growing market for the master's compositions.

The grand gestures, the vivid colors contrasted by *chiaroscuro*, and the emphasis on naturalistic depiction that had characterized Caravaggio's earlier paintings are absent in these last two paintings, however. In addition to the unusual (and unprecedented) economy of color, the artist has used a technique touching on the unfinished (or *non finito*), as if executed in haste. Naturalism has been supplanted by a heavy psychological presence and a sense of doom, which the artist has imposed by eliminating practically all light and by placing his three-quarter-length subjects close to the foreground. Each subject is the victim of sin, trapped in a place devoid of redeeming light. The viewer looks at the paintings but is also a not-so-innocent bystander.

Information about Caravaggio's private life has been scanty, the legal paper trail notwithstanding, obliging scholars to construct his biography by deconstructing his early work, by attempting to interpret the facial expressions, gestures, and even that magnificent Caravaggian light and dark to figure out the man behind those extraordinary paintings. Since that 2004 London exhibition, there has been a great deal of information about Caravaggio's last years, thanks to novelists such as Peter Robb and Francine Prose and art historian Andrew Graham-Dixon, writers who have added missing details either through artful imagination or more probing scholarship.

These two splendid works, sensitively displayed with informative but not overbearing wall labels, are Caravaggio's final and poignant utterances in paint, which some scholars have understood as reflective of his biography. While they tell the timeless stories of their subjects, they illustrate the artist's sense of life's tragedy.

Pamela A. Lewis attends St. Thomas Church in New York City and writes on faith and the arts.



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Slightly Less Than Full Communion

Time and tide wait for no man, nor do ecumenical agreements. A May 17 letter from Episcopal and Methodist bishops, commending a draft document for a “formal, full communion relationship” between the Episcopal Church and the United Methodist Church, surprised many around the world, although the proposal has been public for more than two months. Numerous national and international dialogues press on despite widespread apathy, hostility, and other sundry forces of division.

We are without excuse, however, when it comes to the full visible unity of the Church, for which our Lord Jesus prayed on the night he was betrayed into the hands of sinners. Because all are called to unity, this new proposal is welcome, and deserves our attention and prayers.

In one sense, the proposal reflects quick progress; the official dialogue between Episcopalians and Methodists only began in 2002. It builds on a 2006 agreement of “interim eucharistic sharing,” and on two draft theological documents: “A Theological Foundation for Full Communion” (2010) and “That They May Be One?” (2014). In another sense, the proposal is long overdue, given the churches’ common origin as the variously patient children of the Church of England; and Episcopalians and the predecessors to the United Methodist Church have been in dialogue for more than 50 years.

Already, concerns have bubbled up. Like Anglicans, Methodists have been struggling with human sexuality, and some expect the UMC to split at its special convention in 2018. Will the UMC as we know it exist in 2021, the proposed time by which each church should have considered and voted on the prospect of further union? Such fears may appear plausible, and the 2010 document mentioned them, but they are presumptuous. We do not pretend to know the future of the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion, and the same must be true for other churches, the more when we factor in divine providence. Moreover, movement toward Christian unity will entail unexpected effects, and the cultivation of greater charity is always in season. Who knows where the Lord will take us?

Some concerns are more serious. First, the 2010 document noted potential obstacles to unity involving the two churches’ internal and external theological differences on issues like racism, baptismal regeneration, beliefs and practices surrounding the Eucharist (including Communion for the unbaptized and lay presidency), the national and international character of our churches, and much

else. The new proposal does little to address these issues, and here misses an opportunity. Perhaps it could do no better, given endemic fractiousness. At the same time, many of the issues identified in this document ought not be barriers to deeper unity, since we will likely only overcome them as we grow closer together. In the words of the international Anglican-Methodist dialogue, quoted approvingly in this proposal, Anglicans and Methodists need offer one another “no further doctrinal assurances.” Episcopalians, at least, are already in communion with Anglicans (and others) who hold varying views on nearly all of the issues in question. Yes, theological disagreements matter, and work should be done to bring about greater consensus, both within and between the churches. Let part of the proposed joint commission’s brief include establishing, encouraging, and monitoring deliberate theological dialogue at all levels.

A second concern: the report’s one-sided lamenting of Episcopal chauvinism regarding Methodist ministry, and concomitant attempt to resolve complex questions about holy orders with a wave of the hand. We welcome the lamentation, and the attempt to defend legitimate variation in forms of episcopal oversight is admirable. We worry, however, that Episcopal noblesse oblige in this instance may only underwrite longstanding disparities in power between our churches. A better approach would urge common repentance, with our long, shared history of illegitimate division in view. At the same time, simply setting aside *validity*, for instance, as traditionally understood, hardly sheds light on the rationale for historically ordered episcopal ministry, which we all say we would seek to attain and otherwise preserve. The remaining work to be done must be pursued multilaterally with other traditions and churches “not of this fold” (John 10:16), in a maximally comprehensive and cooperative context. Meanwhile, cleaving to the restrained solution of *Called to Common Mission* (1999), the Episcopal Church’s full communion agreement with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, sans amendment, would mark the better part of prudence.

Finally, the report struggles to describe the imperfection of Christian communion-in-division, thence the deeper unity that is sought, short of subsuming merger. It claims “that we are already united in the catholic church of Christ Jesus.” Yes and no. Continuing differences must be placed at the foot of the cross, on the way to deepening degrees of communion, in God’s time. Unity in diversity may be an admirable goal, but it must be hard-won and pass the test of evangelical coherence. □

Descent of the Holy Spirit

The third glorious mystery of the rosary marks the continuing transit of human beings to God and of God to human beings, in a further divine descent. God is in the business of building communion and extending his family, founded within the original love of the Trinity, and all the divine missions serve this cause of touching human beings — “with a mighty hand and a stretched-out arm, for his mercy endures for ever” (Ps. 136:12). God the Father meets us in his Son, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to lead us to eternal life, which we call salvation. To meet God is therefore to journey with him, starting with our own rescue. “He reached down from on high and grasped me; he drew me out of great waters” (Ps. 18:17).

It is no accident of the Christian year that, following the day of Pentecost or Whitsunday, marking 50 days after Easter, we come immediately to Trinity Sunday. Here, one supposes, with the whole sweep of divine action before us — Christ’s Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Spirit — we can see all the persons of God in action. As the creeds attest, God is the sustained focus of our faith and worship because his action generates both our beginning and our end — in creation and in redemption, as we learn to walk with Christ, growing in holiness and being drawn to him. “He brought me out into an open place; he rescued me because he delighted in me” (Ps. 18:20).

God, indeed, goes to great lengths to chase us down, in a remarkable series of trinitarian movements, ordered around divine speaking. He gratuitously creates in the first place — not as a one-off initiation but continually, “sustaining all things by his powerful word” (Heb. 1:3); “in him all things hold together” (Col. 1:17). We rightly conceive of life in Christ also in this sense: that through him all things were *and are* made. And then *re-made*, as this same Word of the Father “came down from heaven by the power of the Holy Spirit ... and was made man,” and upon

dying descends to the dead, as the Apostles’ Creed asserts (see Eph. 4:9; cf. John 3:13). Here God shows the extraordinary extent of his love, “so that he might fill all things” (Eph. 4:10). Finally, the Word incarnate pledges to “ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you” (John 14:16-17). The Spirit comes, descending on the apostles in the form of “tongues, as of fire,” so that they could “speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability” (Acts 2:3, 4).

We say in the Nicene Creed that the Holy Spirit “proceeds from the Father and the Son” to establish his divinity, so that he also may be “worshiped and glorified,” and to express God’s sustained unity: that the Spirit is not a new or created thing but *of* God. And because Jesus in particular pledges the Spirit — as in Acts: “you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses ... to the ends of the earth” (1:8) — St. Paul naturally speaks of the *Spirit of Christ* who “raised Christ from the dead.” This same Spirit will also “give life to [our] mortal bodies” by dwelling in us (Rom. 8:11). As the creed finally affirms: “We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.” Our resurrection begins now by life in the Spirit, as we “put to death the deeds of the body,” rejecting the slavery of fear. When we cry out “Abba! Father!” says Paul, “it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ” (8:12, 15, 16-17).

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, teach us to depend wholly on you, in the Spirit of your Son. Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, rejoicing in his holy comfort. And make us one body with one hope, one faith, and one Lord, who is above all and through all and in all. Amen.

Christopher Wells

Singing and History

Thank you for Andrew-John Bethke's article "Cranmer and Congregational Singing" [TLC, May 7]. It was the reticence of Lutherans from either Hamburg or Frankfurt to come to England to assist in developing what eventually became the Church of England that caused Cranmer and perhaps others eventually to entice a group of Zwinglian scholars to London. They enjoyed various "benefits," including the right to their own manner of worship in "the strangers' church" there.

Bethke's discussion could be misunderstood to suggest that Lutherans in Germany sang their chorales in four-part harmony. Not so. On the other hand, Lutherans' unaccompanied congregational singing was not so much a matter of theological persuasion or directive as of common practice.

At the same time, those 16th- and 17th-century Lutheran chorales did arise as unaccompanied singing pieces and were written specifically with such performance practice in mind. Indeed, the late British hymnody scholar Eric Routley wrote in his dissertation at the University of Scotland that the melodic and rhythmic strength of the Lutheran chorales were so effective as to make harmony or accompaniment "unnecessary for a successful performance," as Routley put it.

By the 19th century a strong tradition of four-part singing in church so greatly pervaded American hymn-singing of nearly all church bodies as to entice hymnal editors to print the German Lutheran chorales in four-part harmony as well, forgetting the *lex orandi-lex credendi* dictum and not sensing the negative effects of this practice against a "purer" use of those chorales in worship.

In many cases, those four-part harmonizations came from the church cantatas or passion music of Bach, which, as material for Bach's choir and orchestra in Leipzig, were never intended for congregational use and too

often were too complex for ordinary worshipers to sing. Bach's congregations in Leipzig and other places of strong Lutheran orthodoxy sang the chorales in unison and *a cappella*, much as did Calvin's congregations with their metrical psalms in public worship.

Thus, when *Hymnal 1982* arrived without harmony for a number of the German Lutheran chorales, a great howl went up across the Episcopal Church, the folks being more conditioned by American ecumenical tradition than by a more authentic performance practice. It's like having an "American colonial" church building with gargoyles and flying buttresses because we think these are nice.

If someday we have a new hymnal to replace *Hymnal 1982*, one wonders if it might actually follow the example of the ELCA hymnal of 2006, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, toward a yet-more authentic use of historic Lutheran chorales. The bias against chorales in unison is largely a generational issue in both the ELCA and the Episcopal Church, with younger Episcopalians not so much bothered by unison singing in church, whether of hymns or of liturgy music.

Here, as with so many other instances, the "pull" of 19th-century romanticism against earlier, more authentic manners of expression are strong among persons more greatly affected by Darwinian thought than by stylistic integrity as it pertains to Church faith and order.

Dr. Karl E. Moyer
Organist, St. John's Church
Marietta, Pennsylvania

Andrew-John Bethke replies:

Dr. Moyer has kindly provided us with a concise background of Lutheran con-

gregational singing that is very helpful as a contextual guide. American hymnals were not the only ones to provide full four-part harmonizations for hymn melodies in the 19th century. Indeed, British hymnals that were used in Anglican parishes throughout South Africa all provided harmonies for hymn melodies. There was only one exception: plainsong, where unison singing was expected.

For the most part, though, congregational singing in traditionally white parishes in South Africa tended to be in unison as few editions of the hymnals did not (and still do not) include any musical notation. However, in traditionally black

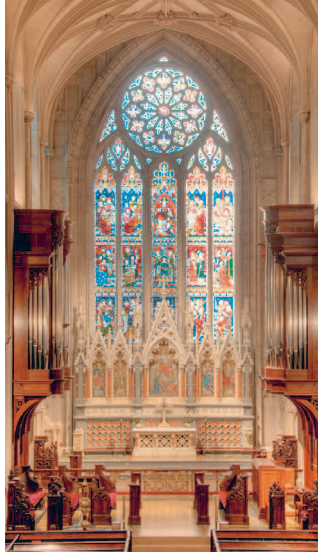
parishes, there is a strong tradition of congregational part singing and tonic sol-fa musical editions are ubiquitous. Here, though, the parts tend to follow vernacular musical norms, occasionally referencing Western stock harmonies. Thus, even plainsong is harmonized in such contexts. The result is a unique hybrid of western and African musical sensibilities.

In terms of musical authenticity, I do not completely agree with Dr. Moyer. Achieving authenticity in 16th- and 17th-century hymnody must surely be something quite tricky. A short example will suffice: while the *Hymnal 1982* did try to reintroduce older versions of chorale melodies, the editors were quite willing to make quite radical changes to original texts that were sexist or in some way outdated. Is that being faithful to the original?

Perhaps a compromise is to respect the intentions of composers and authors by providing original versions of tunes and texts alongside contemporary interpretations. In a place like South Africa, where Western hymnody has in some places been completely reinterpreted textually (in translation) and musically (through localization), "authentic" renderings of hymns from the 16th and 17th centuries can only be achieved in special concerts, but definitely not in the pews.



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SUNDAY’S READINGS | 2 Pentecost, June 18

Gen. 18:1-15 (21:1-7) or Ex. 19:2-8a • Ps. 116:1, 10-17 or Ps. 100
Rom. 5:1-8 • Matt. 9:35-10:8 (9-23)

Rublev and the Trinity

At the Oaks of Mamre, the Lord appears. To Abraham, sitting at the entrance of his tent, this appearance resembled three men. They are, as an old story tells, and imagination delights to see, three persons in the unity of one being. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit stand near the tent of the old patriarch, carrying news of a promised heir. Sarah, hearing the news, and considering her old age, laughs at the prospect of fertility, but her laughter signals both doubt and wondrous joy, a sign that what is impossible is possible to God. “Now Sarah said, ‘God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me’” (Gen. 21:6). Indeed, laughter is an immediate recognition of the strange mysteries of God, seen often by a trained eye.

Abraham begs the visiting men not to pass by until he has given them a little water and a little bread. At Abraham’s request, Sarah prepares bread. A servant prepares a calf. All these, along with curds and milk, are set before the visitors, thus fulfilling every obligation of hospitality. Viewing this scene through the eyes of Abraham and Sarah, as suggested in Rublev’s icon of the Trinity, the angels are seated around a table in perfect balance, each extending a hand of blessing over food placed in a cup. This visitation foreshadows the Eucharist, in which the presence of Christ is at the same time and necessarily the presence of the Trinity, a presence shared with the community. The offering of food by Abraham and Sarah, though a sign of the all-sufficient offering of Christ, shows also the role of the offertory by the faithful in the Eucharist. “You give them something to eat. ... How many loaves have you?” (Mark 6:37-38).

This eucharistic presence, which is not restricted solely to ceremonial celebration, is the very presence of God to which all the faithful have access through the mediation of Christ. “[S]ince we are justified by faith, we

have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand” (Rom. 5:1-2). *Access* here indicates both an invitation into the divine presence and a further invitation to free and open speech. “The grace in which we stand” is, in essence, the new condition of the new humanity redeemed in Christ. Christ and the whole Trinity, by implication, work to accomplish human redemption and impute that redemption moment by moment through the promise of a real presence. “I will be with you always, even to the close of the age.”

The gift of the divine presence remains a gift even though it is received “though faith.” Here *faith* cannot mean an act of will or mere emotion, however sincere. “Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven” (Matt. 16:17). “But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12-13). Consider Karl Barth on precisely this point: “We encounter the action of God in contemplating the crucified and risen Christ. His action does not depend upon some experience of our souls or upon some stirring in our spirits. ... Faith is the point at which life becomes death and death becomes life in Christ” (*The Epistle to the Romans*). In a sense, faith is doing and being nothing, a complete surrender to the prevenient work of God. Dying with Christ, we live in his presence evermore.

Look It Up

Read Romans 5:5 and Matthew 10:19-20.

Think About It

God’s love for you.

Gen. 21:8-21 or Jer. 20:7-13 • Ps. 86:1-10, 16-17 or Ps. 69:8-11 (12-17), 18-20
Rom. 6:1b-11 • Matt. 10:24-39

God Has Heard

Ismael, the son of Hagar the Egyptian, having been weaned and surviving the dangerous days of infancy, could perhaps live to adulthood, live to rival Isaac's position as the heir of a divine promise. "[Sarah] said to Abraham, 'Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac'" (Gen. 21:10). Every emotion is stirred. "The matter was very distressing to Abraham on account of his son" (Gen. 21:11). God, at first seeming an indifferent and unfeeling character in the story, allows Hagar and her son to be sent away to wander in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. Abraham places provisions of bread and a skin of water on her back, where she also hoists her young son. Taking almost nothing for the journey, she carries a cross into the valley of the shadow of death. Genesis 21 is Hagar's Genesis 22. My son, my son, my only son, whom I love.

In an act of mercy, all food and water spent, she places her son under a bush, exposing him to the elements and wild beasts. Sitting down opposite him, about distance of a bowshot away, she says, "Do not let me look on the death of the child" (Gen. 21:16). She lifts up her voice and weeps. We hear her. "Incline your ear, O LORD, and answer me, for I am poor and needy"; "Be gracious to me, for to you I cry all day long"; "Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer; listen to my cry of supplication"; "Save the child of your serving girl" (Ps. 86:1-17). Prayer like this is a bitter thing, cries and groans deeper than mere words.

We see through a glass darkly. Yet "nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known," Jesus says. "What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops" (Matt. 10:27). What shall we tell? We will say that the hair on the head of Ismael is counted strand by strand in the mind

of love itself. We will say that the almost certain death of this child under the bush is not death when God comes. "Those who lose their life for my sake will find it" (Matt. 10:39). We will say with St. Paul, "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3-4).

Will God baptize and save the son of Hagar, Ismael, her son, her only son, whom she loves? Where is Easter? "And God heard the voice of the boy; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, 'What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid, for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him.' Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water" (Gen. 21:17-19).

He grew up, lived in the wilderness, became an expert with the bow, and was the father of a great nation. Though sent into the wilderness, angels ministered to him. Near death, he was brought to life.

Look It Up

Read Psalm 86.

Think About It

He lived in the wilderness.



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Tremble and Rise

“Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the God of Jacob” (Ps. 114:7). The seas fled, the mountains skipped like rams, the small hills like sheep, as the Lord moved over the face of black water. Again and again, God shakes the earth. Tremble, O reader, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of Abraham and his son Isaac on the path to Moriah and the mountain God shows. “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I will show you” (Gen. 22:2). This is but one example. “When the time came for the purification according to the law of Moses, they brought [Jesus] to Jerusalem to present him to the LORD ... and they offered a sacrifice according to the law of the LORD, ‘a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons’” (Luke 2:22-24). The substitutionary sacrifice was a mercy covering an ancient claim. Take your son, your only son.

Job, a blameless and upright man, was tested long ago. God allowed it. Satan was going to and fro upon the face of the earth with an eye on Job. Marauding Sabeans took his oxen and donkeys and killed his servants. The fire of God burned up his sheep and consumed his servants. The Chaldeans made a raid and carried off his camels and murdered his servants with the edge of the sword. A great wind struck the corners of the house where his sons and daughters were eating and drinking, killing them all (Job 1:13-19). In a second visitation, Satan “inflicted loathsome sores on Job from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head” (Job 2:7). Atheists, generally being literalists, have a point. Is it not cruel to ask for a son, all one’s possessions, one’s health, and dear daughters? Why must sorrow and gaping wounds be the test of a blameless man?

The difficulty is resolved in the New Testament. Or is it? “If any want to become my followers, let them deny

themselves, and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their lives will lose it, and those who lose their lives for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel will save it” (Mark 8:34-35). The death occurs one blow at a time: brothers, sisters, mother, father, children, and fields (Mark 10:29). Tremble, O reader, and understand. The God of the Old Testament and the God of the New Testament, the God of the living and the dead, wants and claims everything. “All things come of thee, O Lord, and of thine own have we given thee” (BCP; 1 Chr. 29:14).

The language of the Bible is extreme at points, but not extremist. It paints in vivid pictures theological themes of incredible density. So we must see, and then think. Time and death are the background of so much of the Bible’s story. Show me the number of my days, how short life is, the span of a human life. The Bible knows time, and *time will take everything*. In a sense, God intervenes and takes early what would be taken later. And so a kind of death occurs in the land of Moriah, the Red Sea, the Jordan River, the offering of turtle doves, and consummately in the death of Jesus. We die with him. Before our dead bodies rest in the earth, we are buried into Christ’s death through baptism. And God provides a resurrection from death (Gen. 22:8; Rom. 6:13).

Look It Up

Read Genesis 22:6.

Think About It

Read Romans 6:13: from death to life.

Gen. 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67 or Zech. 9:9-12 • Ps. 45: 11-18 or Song of Songs 2:8-13 or Ps. 145:8-15 • Rom. 7:15-25a • Matt. 11:16-19, 25-30

Godward and Homecoming

“Now the Lord said to Abram, ‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to a land that I will show you’” (Gen. 12:1). “Hear, O daughter, consider and incline your ear; forget your people and your father’s house” (Ps. 45:10). “As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him” (Mark 1:19-20). Faith can seem a denial of fathers and families and the most intimate bonds of filial affection. “Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brother and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciples” (Luke 14:26). Added together, the impression is dramatic: God alone, God alone, God alone! But, with mature reflection and a measure of honesty, the demand is exhausting and troubling; even, it seems, cruel.

Jesus met a man living among tombs, cast out the demons that abused him, and then said, “Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you” (Mark 5:19). Standing near the tomb, a young man clothed in white said to the women, “Go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you” (Mark 16:7). Jesus, raised from the dead, goes home again to the place where he first met and called his disciples. Peter, having left everything, describes post-resurrection life with these few words: “I am going fishing” (John 21:3). He went fishing for fish, not for human beings. The risen Lord appeared, gave an abundant catch, sat with Peter and the other disciples for a seaside breakfast. And though no one dared to ask, they knew it was the Lord. They were at home, and they knew him.

Abraham had left his country and

father and kindred. He was an old man enriched with every blessing. “[The Lord] has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female slaves, camels and donkeys” (Gen. 24:35). And yet, planning for his son Isaac’s marriage, he could think of nothing but home. He said to his servant, “you shall go to my father’s house, to my kindred, and get a wife for my son” (Gen. 24:38). Rebekah is a homeland; she is the *anamnesis* that makes alive everything true and good and beautiful in land of memory. “He took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her” (Gen. 24:67).

Leaving home is dramatic, returning a matter of love and beauty. “The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The LORD is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made. ... [How] glorious the splendor of your kingdom” (Ps. 145:8-12).

Jesus calls, saying, “Come to me, all you that are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matt. 11:28-30). There is a rest and a humility and an ease that only home can give. And who is Jesus but *home*? “I’m going home,” said the Prodigal Son. A human past and a provident future are one. It is often said, “You can’t take it with you,” but you can and you must.

Look It Up

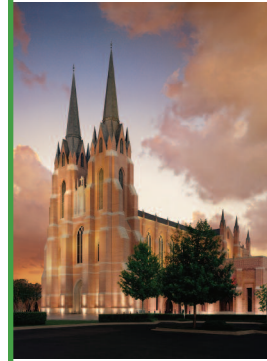
Read Genesis 24:38.

Think About It

Recall your childhood.

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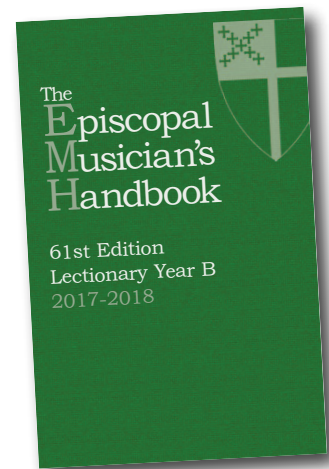
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Chapel

Rector, St. John's Episcopal Church, Salem, New Jersey

We seek a dynamic priest to lead us in worship, care for us in times of need, and be present in our city and surrounding area. St. John's, founded in 1722, is an endowed parish, has magnificent facilities, an excellent music program led by an experienced minister of music and four paid section leaders, and an expanding outreach ministry nurtured by a deacon. We want to increase the size and diversity of our congregation and are seeing this begin to happen. St. John's is located 45 minutes south of Philadelphia, 20 minutes east of Wilmington, and one hour west of the Atlantic seashore in an attractive, predominantly rural area of southern New Jersey. Please submit all application materials by June 30, 2017 to:

Dr. Gwen E. Norton
Discernment Committee
St. John's Episcopal Church
76 Market Street
Salem, NJ 08079