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The Primates in London

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Spring Books

The Anglican Primates at Lambeth Palace (see page 5)

1. Michael Lewis (Jerusalem & the Middle East), 2. Carlos Matsinhe (Mozambique & Angola), 3. Stephen Cottrell (York), 4. John McDowell (Ireland), 5. Sixbert Macumi (Burundi), 6. Andrew John (Wales), 7. Mark Strange (Scotland), 8. Josiah Idowu-Fearon (Anglican Communion Secretary-General), 9. Samy Shehata (Alexandria), 10. Linda Nicholls (Canada), 11. Justin Badi Arama (South Sudan), 12. Ezekiel Kondo (Sudan), 13. Albert Chama (Central Africa), 14. Naudal Gomes (Brazil), 15. Nicholas Drayson (South America), 16. Julio Thompson (Central America), 17. Justin Welby (Canterbury), 18. Samuel Mankhin (Bangladesh), 19. Jackson Ole Sapit (Kenya), 20. Titre Ande Georges (Congo), 21. Azad Marshall (Pakistan), 22. Prem Chand Singh (North India), 23. James Wong (Indian Ocean), 24. Howard Gregory (West Indies), 25. Dharmaraj Rasalam (South India), 26. Enrique Cruz (Mexico), 27. Cyril Ben-Smith (West Africa), 28. Maimbo Mdolwa (Tanzania), 29. Hector Zavala (Chile), 30. Michael Curry (United States), 31. Geoffrey Smith (Australia), 32. Ian Ernest (Director, Anglican Centre in Rome)

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THE LIVING CHURCH is published by the Living Church Foundation. Rooted in the Episcopal Church and the wider Anglican Communion, the Living Church Foundation seeks to champion the catholic and evangelical faith of the one Church and to hasten the visible unity of all Christians.

Primates' Meeting 'Positive and Encouraging'

By Mark Michael

The primates, or chief bishops, of 30 of the 42 provinces of the Anglican Communion gathered at Lambeth Palace in London in late March, their first in-person gathering since January 2020. A further nine bishops, who were unable to travel to London because of COVID-related travel restrictions, participated virtually in the gathering's business sessions.

The primates visit Westminister Abbey. ACNS photo

Among other things, the primates drafted a communique that called for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine, and urged prayer and action on behalf of those affected by a series of political and climate-related disasters.

The meeting, which constitutes one of the Anglican Communion's four Instruments of Communion, was the sixth convened by Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, who described it as "the best I have been to" at a press conference on its final day.

"It was a very positive and encouraging primates' meeting," said Archbishop Samy Fawzy Shehata of the North African Province of Alexandria, who joined Welby, Archbishop Azad Marshall of Pakistan, and Archbishop Linda Nicholls of Canada in the press conference. "The unity I see; there may be differences on some views, but we can still talk with one another."

Primates' Meetings are, by tradition, informal gatherings, largely focused on prayer and fellowship. Welby shared a series of reflections on leadership based on passages in the Gospel of John, and the primates participated in Bible studies on 1 Peter, the foundational text for this summer's Lambeth Conference.

The bishops "were able to talk and hear about the burdens we each face in our provinces and home regions," a process that Nicholls described as allowing her fellow Anglicans to "know us as a family in God together."

The meeting's four-page communique addressed a series of international crises, beginning with Russia's war against Ukraine, which began in late February. "We are particularly aware of the humanitarian crisis and other catastrophic effects of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. We call for an immediate ceasefire and the withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine," the primates said.

They devoted time to discuss a proposal to increase the wider Anglican Communion's involvement in the selection of future Archbishops of Canterbury, a conversation that Shehata said was one of the highlights of the gathering. "The large majority of the primates were generally supportive of the direction of travel," the communique noted.

It also laments the intense suffering associated with climate change, especially the devastation brought to Mozambique and Madagascar by a series of recent cyclones.

It reiterates that the Diocese of Egypt is "an integral and constituent part of this Church," in support of its struggle to secure full state recognition, and expresses concern at the "continuing misuse of blasphemy laws in Pakistan to unfairly target religious minorities," a cause in which Marshall serves as a leading public voice.

Other sections expressed concern about "the increasing use of 'fake news and false reporting,'" an unresolved dispute between Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan over the pending construction of the Grand Ethiopian Dam, and increasing refugee problems and food insecurity in many parts of the world.

The primates expressed excitement about gathering with more than 700 fellow bishops for the Lambeth Conference in July and August. Welby said the pre-Lambeth bishops' conversations convened online in the last year have been "one of the best innovations of this Lambeth Conference." He added, "It is, in effect, a four-year conference: two years virtually, two weeks physically, two years follow-up."

"For us, the Lambeth Conference has already started," said Marshall, who will attend his third Lambeth Conference this summer. "Our fellowship has been very meaningful, and those relationships that have already formed will be more meaningful when we meet together."

Lambeth Program

The primates spent time at the gathering reviewing the Lambeth Conference's program, and Welby said, "It is certainly one of the agreed aims of the primates — I think, by everyone — that we do not have the whole Lambeth Conference spent talking about issues of human sexuality, but we look at those things that are destroying tens and hundreds of millions of human lives, and will do even more around the world.

"The title of the conference is 'God's Church for God's World,' and the encouragement for it is to look outwards and to look at other issues that are deeply troubling to the way we treat people on the edge, food, insecurity, whether it's rising sea levels, whether

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it's war, persecution, freedom of religion and belief, torture, unfair trade practices, and a million other things. Those are things that come under the heading of God's call to the Church to speak for justice in every area, and not to human sexuality alone."

The leaders of the three large provinces, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Uganda, chose not to attend the meeting, as in recent years. "Our reflections, deliberations, and fellowship are diminished by their absence. We miss them and their prayerful wisdom, and we long for the time when we will all meet together," the communique said.

Welby said the missing primates had not given him specific reasons for their absence, but added, "They don't want to be in the room with those who have changed their teaching on marriage and the nature of human identity."

S.W. Florida Elects Bishop Coadjutor

By Kirk Petersen

The priest who's on track to become the next Bishop of Southwest Florida is about as thoroughly an Episcopalian as a person can be.

He's not just a cradle Episcopalian — he's the son of an Episcopal priest, and grew up as an acolyte and youth group member. He realized as a senior in high school that he wanted to be a priest, and has never pursued any other vocation.

The Very Rev. Dr. Douglas F. Scharf was elected bishop coadjutor on April 2 at the Cathedral Church of St. Peter in St. Petersburg. Assuming he receives the necessary consents from half of all diocesan bishops and standing committees, he will be consecrated September 24.

He will then work alongside the current Bishop of Southwest Florida, the Rt. Rev. Dabney Smith, until Smith retires, when Scharf will become the VI Bishop of Southwest Florida. Smith, 68, has not announced a retirement date, and is eligible to serve until he reaches the mandatory retirement age of 72 in December 2025.

Diocese of Southwest Florida photo

Scharf

"When you get here, we'll just start calling you Six," Smith said, standing at the podium as he called to make sure Scharf still wanted the job.

"There are few moments when a priest is speechless, but this is one of them," Scharf said, via the speaker of Smith's cellphone. "I have been so humbled and honored to have been a part of this journey with you all — and to be elected, I am truly overwhelmed. I feel the presence of God's grace in this moment."

In an interview with *TLC*, the bishop-elect said: "It really was when I was a senior in high school and I attended Happening, a national renewal movement for high school students," that he sensed a clear call to ordained ministry.

"I entered the ordination process as a teenager and began seminary at the age of 21. I was ordained at age 24, the minimum canonical age," he said. He received a master of divinity degree from Virginia Theological Seminary in 2004 after graduating from Florida Gulf Coast University, and subsequently earned a doctorate in ministry at Emory University.

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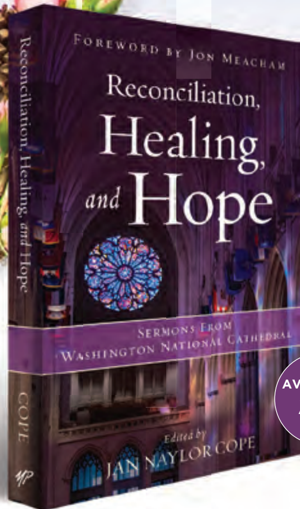
New Books for Spring



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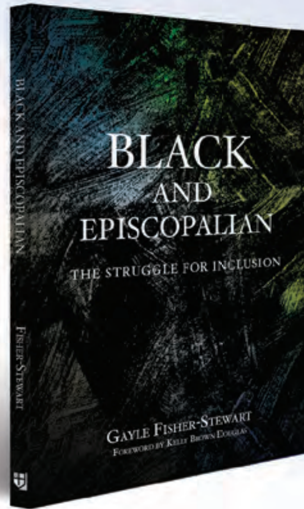

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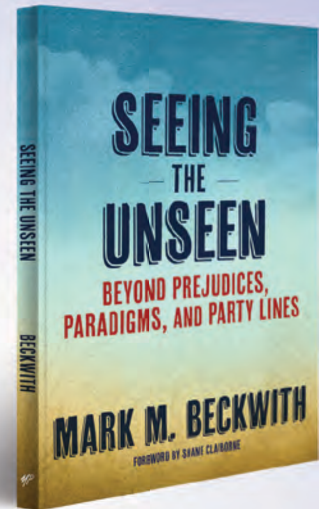

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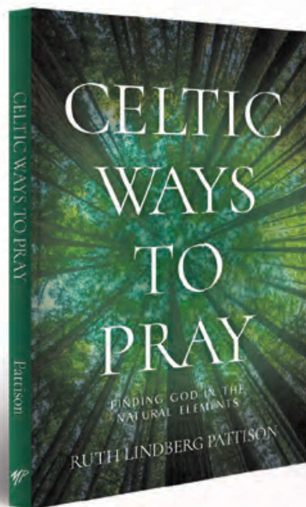

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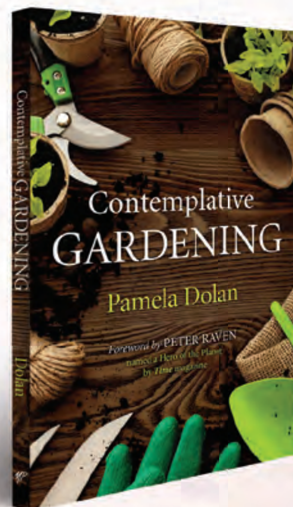

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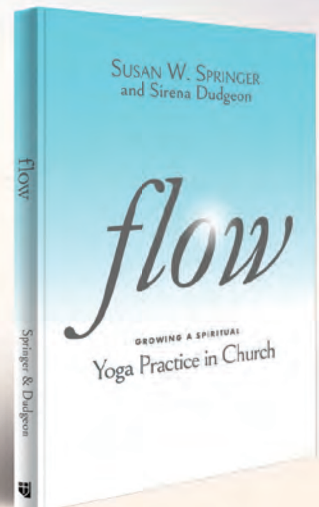

A guide on how the practice of yoga and faith can exist in harmony within churches.

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Scharf is also about as Floridian as a person can be. Since 2017 he has been rector of Good Shepherd Episcopal Church and School in Tequesta, part of the neighboring Diocese of Southeast Florida. The church had pre-pandemic average Sunday attendance of 343, and the school has 140 students.

But most of his life has been in the Diocese of Southwest Florida, to which he is returning. High school was in Estero, a town south of Fort Myers, and he has served churches in Osprey and Valrico, all towns in the southwest diocese.

His father, the Rev. Frederick E. Scharf Jr., retired about 20 years ago from St. Andrew's in Spring Hill. He is still canonically resident in the Diocese of Southwest Florida, and serves as a supply priest.

The elder Scharf, like all priests, took a vow at ordination to be obedient to his bishop. Bishop-elect Scharf quoted his father as saying, "I'll call you 'your grace' once, and then you're just Doug."

Scharf was elected from a slate of four candidates. The other candidates were:

- The Rev. Thomas P. Reeder, rector, Christ Episcopal Church, Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida;
- The Rev. Timothy E. Schenck, rector, Episcopal Parish of St. John the Evangelist, Hingham, Massachusetts;
- The Rev. Canon C. John Thompson-Quartey, canon for ministry development and congregational vitality, Diocese of Atlanta.

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Virginia Nominations Spark Diversity Complaints

By Kirk Petersen

For the first time in recent memory, a diocese has announced a slate of bishop candidates consisting entirely of straight white men.

The lack of diversity touched off a firestorm of complaints, to the extent that Diocese of Virginia Suffragan Bishop Susan Goff felt it necessary to issue an extraordinary message about the "800-pound gorilla in the room."

"This slate as currently composed has become a lightning rod for deep issues facing both the Diocese of Virginia and the entire Church," she wrote. "Our anxieties about diversity, race, sex, gender, COVID losses, economic uncertainty, changes in church attendance and other issues have latched on to this slate, making it the latest repository of our fears."

The candidates were "presented by the diverse Search Committee to our diverse Standing Committee," she added.

Goff, who is retiring at the end of the year after serving as the ecclesiastical authority since 2018, urged people to "engage the petition process which remains open until midnight on April 8."

This issue of *TLC* went to press before any announcement was made about petition candidates.

Churchwide, the 10 most recently

elected bishops have included five men (three white, one Hispanic, one South Asian) and five women, two of them Black. Every slate included female or non-white candidates.

The slate announced in Virginia includes:

- The Rev. Joseph H. Hensley Jr., rector, St. George's Church, Fredericksburg, Virginia;
- The Rev. Canon Alan C. James, interim canon missioner, Diocese of Western Michigan;
- The Very Rev. Gideon L.K. Pollach, rector, St. John's Church, Cold Spring Harbor, New York;
- The Rev. Canon E. Mark Stevenson, canon to the presiding bishop for ministry within the Episcopal Church (and a member of the Living Church Foundation).

Walkabouts are scheduled for late May, and the election will be held June 4, with the bishop-elect to be consecrated December 3.

The Diocese of Virginia is a partner of the Living Church Foundation.

Diocese of Florida Nominates Five

The Diocese of Florida on March 10 announced a slate of five candidates to be elected bishop coadjutor. They are:

- The Rev. Canon Wiley Ammons, regional canon, Diocese of Florida, and rector, Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, Jacksonville;
- The Rev. Charlie Holt, associate rector for teaching and formation, Episcopal Church of St. John the Divine, Houston;
- The Rev. Fletcher Montgomery, regional canon, Diocese of Florida, and rector, Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Gainesville;
- The Rev. Miguel Rosada, canon for Hispanic ministries, Diocese of Florida, and rector, St. Luke's-San Lucas Episcopal, Jacksonville;
- The Rev. Beth Tjoflat, canon for urban ministry, Diocese of Florida, and vicar of St. Mary's Episcopal, Jacksonville.

Walkabouts are scheduled for early May, and the election will be held May 14, with the bishop-elect to be consecrated October 8. The winning candidate will work with Bishop of Florida Samuel Johnson Howard as bishop coadjutor until Howard's retirement in late 2023, and will then become IX Bishop of Florida.

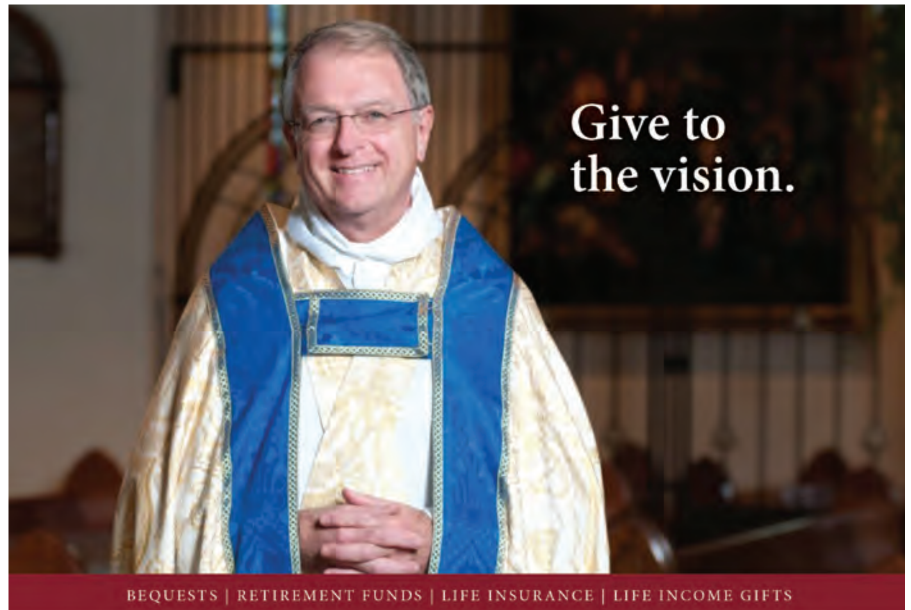
Briefly

The Rt. Rev. **Elizabeth Bonforte Gardner** was consecrated the XI Bishop of Nevada on March 5 at Christ Episcopal Church in Las Vegas.

"My deep heart's desire is that we begin a new season today of resurrection, hope, justice, and love in the Episcopal Diocese of Nevada that will be a beacon for all," Gardner said during the service, as reported by Episcopal News Service.

Gardner was elected on the fourth ballot from a slate of four candidates, in an online convention October 8. The other candidates included two women and a Native American man. She succeeds the Rt. Rev. Dan Edwards, who retired in December 2018 after serving since 2008.

The Diocese of Springfield has been notified that the Very Rev. **Brian K. Burgess** has received the required majority of consents from standing committees and diocesan bishops, the last hurdle before his scheduled consecration as the XII Bishop of Springfield on May 21. Burgess was elected on Dec. 11. The Diocese of Springfield encompasses 50 congregations in the southern two-thirds of Illinois, with 2020 membership of 3,582. It shares the state with the Diocese of Chicago.



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— The Rev. Dr. Fredrick A. Robinson
St. John's Church, Tampa

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Passion and Failure in the Church's Story

Generally, we don't review self-published books in our pages. Lacking professional editors, such volumes often suffer from internal repetitiveness, poor or outdated argumentation, and grammatical incoherence. Self-published books also tend toward idiosyncrasy, bathed in the peculiar passions of their authors.

Dozens of self-publishing Episcopal authors write to me every year, sometimes with a dauntless persistence that would be the envy of any commission-paid literary agent. I'm mostly firm on the policy, but I have a bit of a soft spot for the good storyteller and the dogged church historian. This Spring Book issue, I'm pleased to showcase a few recent discoveries — alongside a preview of our own (arguably) self-published series, Living Church Books, about which stay tuned.

Mary Foster Hutchinson, author of *How the Faith Came to Texas*, told me her project was sparked years ago when she came upon two precocious acolytes arguing over whether Episcopalianism started with Henry VIII's divorce. Hutchinson, a nonagenarian stalwart at St. Matthew's Cathedral in Dallas, comes down firmly in the camp that favors a much earlier, apostolic lineage.

Her tale wends from the prehistoric rise of the Celts to the intrepid James Alexander Gregg, the fifth man asked to serve as missionary bishop to Texas and the first one brave enough to hazard it, in 1859. As church historians go, Hutchinson is more in the line of Geoffrey of Monmouth than Justo González or Diarmaid MacCulloch. All the old churchly and Texan legends have a moment in the spotlight: Joseph of Arimathea and the Grail; the Welsh princess Gladys, who could just possibly be mentioned in 2 Timothy; Columba dispelling the Loch Ness Monster and Boniface chopping down the Oak of Geismar; Queen Elizabeth the peacemaker and Samuel Seabury the persistent; the piper at the Alamo and Richard Salmon, chaplain to Sam Houston and Stephen Austin.

Hutchinson writes with confidence, touching nearly every figure in Western history that a sixth-grader might know, and evincing a steady trust in the gospel and gratitude for our "goodly heritage." Sure, it could use some nuance, but wise teachers know that we can only faithfully critique those things we have first learned to love.

A narrower, but similarly bullish, story is Phyllis Kester's *Historic Church Serves Big City*, an account of the wide-ranging ministry of St. Andrew's Church in Denver, which will celebrate its sesquicentennial in 2024. St. Andrew's is one of the region's historic Anglo-Catholic outposts, located on a perpetually scrappy side of downtown.

Kester's tale is mostly biographical, profiling the ministries of four of the church's long-serving rectors. Neil Stanley introduced Anglo-Catholic ceremonial and a daily Mass on his 1919 arrival, at a time when the Ku Klux Klan dominated city government. He held firm when disgruntled parishioners associated the new measures with what one called "the political machine, known as the Roman Catholic Church." Under the eventual leadership of the Sisters of St. Anne, the parish launched remarkable ministries among consumptives, polio victims, and children being relocated West on the Denver Orphan Train.

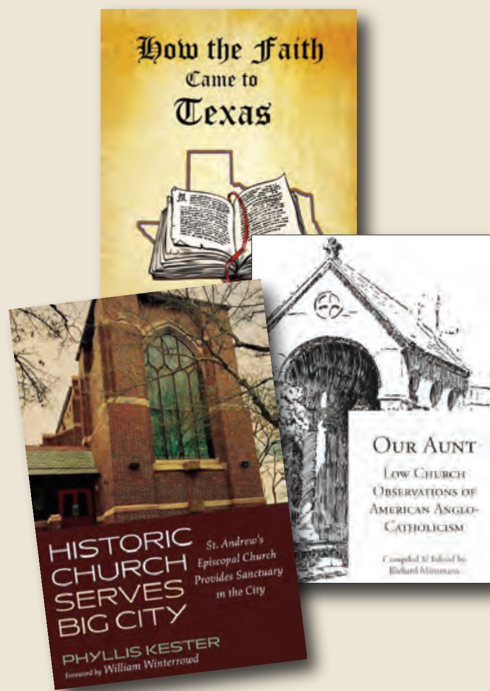
A later rector, John Marr Stark, transformed the clergy house into a Crisis Center for countercultural youth in 1969. He housed over a thousand young people a month, hosted innovative "Love Masses," and helped many reconcile with their families. He later founded the Order of the Holy Family, a mostly male community whose members included TLC's frequent contributor Father Charles Hoffacker, then Brother Seraphim. He appears in full tonsure and the order's denim habit in one of the book's photos. The brothers prayed six offices a day and painted the church walls in neo-medieval murals, while caring sacrificially for a continuing stream of young transients, some of whom found Christ and sobriety.

Disagreements gradually emerged, and the intense work of ministry left the aging buildings in shambles. After 15 years, the community largely disbanded as Stark decamped for Santa Fe, remarking: "Either we're underfunded or overprogrammed, and I suspect it's both." Later leaders maintained the St. Andrew's tradition of sacramental worship and ministry (at a more sustainable pace) to marginalized persons, especially those suffering with AIDS.

Our Aunt: Low Church Observations on American Anglo-Catholicism offers a series of passion-infused vignettes on congregational life in the 1930s and 1940s from an unusual angle. Their author, Alexander Griswold Cummings, was an influential church politico with "an extreme antipathy to Anglo-Catholicism," in the words of editor (and TLC stalwart) Richard Mammana. From his rectory in Poughkeepsie, New York, Cummings published *The Chronicle*, a monthly journal with an international readership, one regular feature in which was the column "Our Aunt."

The columns purport to relate the peregrinations of a Manhattan penthouse-dwelling grandee and her nephew to various Anglo-Catholic churches and convents, mostly around the city and its outer reaches. Festal ceremonies are related in elaborate detail, purportedly to shock readers of *The Chronicle*, though one could probably restage the pontifical high Mass celebrated by "The Bishop of Coney Island" or "the Nashotah twist" (a method of altar censing) using the columns alone.

The impossibly ancient aunt, an inveterate name-dropper (she punted on the Isis with Blessed Pusey and Keble and played cards with Arthur Tooth while he was imprisoned for violating the Ritual Act), is a font of waspish humor, mostly at the expense of the "priestlets" who dread her arrival at their



struggling parishes. Her impeccable Tractarian credentials (she spends her spare time stitching gremials for West Indian bishops while humming Coptic canticles) might authenticate her disgust for the Rome-aping Anglo-Catholicism then in vogue. Surely, no one could be better positioned to pronounce, as she does in every other column, that "the Catholic Movement has ceased to move."

The critiques of "Our Aunt" are familiar. An earlier generation's passion for social service has been set aside by clergy "who care more about the cut of copes and the height of the *predella* than they do about the cure of souls." A passion for all things Roman betrays Anglicanism's comprehensive ethos and opens the door to cheap and tacky accoutrements and gullible superstition. Then there's the bugbear of liturgical conformity and perennially tricky questions of authority and private judgment. When her nephew asks just what Anglo-Catholics mean when they refer to "the Church," she responds, "Don't ask embarrassing questions."

At her grumpiest, our aunt is certain that there is simply no future for the kind of Anglicanism that she says has formed her so deeply. "People want simple religion today," she reports, "and not many will accept medieval customs." As evidence, she frequently details how congregations are shrinking, and even manages to visit one tiny mission on its last Sunday before amalgamation. Trinity Church Wall Street, which continued financing Anglo-Catholic chapels in many of New York's poorest (and least Anglo-Saxon) neighborhoods as the Great Depression raged on, is often warned about just how lousy the returns on its investments are.

The more I read, the more my sympathies warmed for the targets of her invective, and not just because they belong to my tribe (more than one of the crumbling chapels had a stack of *The Living Church* on the back table). Church attendance was falling across the country in the 1930s and '40s, especially among the poor, whom these churches were specifically designed to reach. All were "free churches," relying on congregational giving instead of pew rents for finance, at a time when mass unemployment left many of the faithful without a dime to spare. A few of the churches she reviles had been founded as part of the Episcopal Church's short-lived "Italian Mission," an attempt to provide spiritual support for the 2 million peasants from Sicily and Calabria who flooded the U.S. in the first decade of the 20th century. Mission priests set up statues and donned fiddlebacks not just to be "as Roman as ravioli" on principle but because such practices evoked the spiritual world their charges had left behind.

Less than half of the churches and religious houses chronicled in *Our Aunt* survive. Using Google Maps, I found that a few of the buildings remain — one as a community center, another as a Spanish Pentecostal church, in still-marginal neighborhoods where the Episcopal Church has had no presence of any kind for generations.

Maybe this vindicates our aunt's confident judgments about a promising movement wrecked by sloth, extremism, and obscurantism. But the Anglo-Catholicism that seemed so sweepingly successful a few generations earlier may also have been, like Father Stark's St. Andrew's of the 1970s, "overprogrammed and underfunded." Many of the "priestlets" savaged by our aunt were surely trying their best, at a time (like today) when very little seemed to work as it had before. They grappled with self-doubt, asking, "Is it me, or everything else that's falling apart?"

Reading *Our Aunt* also forced me to reassess some of the stories I tell myself about the decline of the Episcopal Church I love and serve. On my worst days, I might savor creating such satire, with a different kind of churchmanship in my sights. I have my own (surely well-considered) opinions about ugly mid-century church fittings, virtue signaling from the pulpit, and *Enriching Our Worship*. I could document how long it takes certain churches to pass the peace.

Numbers, though, are not always barometers of authenticity. Faithful mission sometimes comes at the expense of seemingly successful pastoral work. And if risks are the way of the Spirit, that's no guarantee that they will always succeed, as Ephraim Radner's latest tome persuasively argues. In times of chaos, we need one another more than ever.

If *Christianity Today*'s recent survey is true, the "getting back to normal" stage of the pandemic is over. The American church is smaller — 33 percent smaller among the mainline; 14 percent smaller if you count online attendees. COVID-19's impact is set to surpass that of the Great Depression, the sexual revolution, and youth soccer. This will mark an existential crisis for many of our churches, especially those that serve more marginal populations.

About a year ago, TLC began including the names of churches that have closed in our People & Places column. In some cases, these mark secularizations of buildings, as congregations merged with others or moved to shared spaces. We discussed the change in editorial meetings, and worried that some would read the names as "downers," or signposts on the road to irrelevance.

But for those who use People & Places as a prayer list, it is fitting to remember these congregations before God: to thank him for the passion he placed in the hearts of their founders, and ask that those who knew them as home will find new places to grow in grace and service. In God's good providence, long-shuttered chapels, nascent plants, and perduring outposts *all* bear witness to the one who, mysteriously, bids us scatter seed that surely sprouts and grows, we know not how (Mark 4:27).

—Mark Michael

Why God's First Language Is Not *Silence*

By Timothy Jones

On the surface, the short quote *seems* profound enough, and jarring in a good way: "Silence is God's first language."

The line is variously attributed online to the Sufi mystic Rumi or to St. John of the Cross. While the 16th-century contemplative saint did speak of the importance of stilling our words in God's presence, the remark belongs to Thomas Keating, a Trappist monk and popularizer of centering prayer. Keating adds that next to God's silence, "everything else is a poor translation."

And there is something intriguing in all this. I want the aphorism — whoever said it — to remind me how rarely I sit in awed quiet. In our creatureliness before an immense God, we indeed need to still our voices, often. Silence can enshrine wonderful communion. It can become a wonderfully fruitful discipline. Essential, even.

Still, for some time I've sensed that the saying's angle on silence doesn't do justice to the richness of God's approach to us. In speaking about God's *first* language, the implication seems to suggest *primary*. I've seen the motto-like saying in sermons and blog posts and memes, and while it might remind us to cultivate silence (important for any encounter), it does not adequately picture God's many ways of communicating. I've even wondered if the saying is pastorally confusing — blunting our expectations, obscuring what's possible in the presence of God.

Still, before retiring it altogether, there is something to heed. We know from our most basic and intimate moments of relating how words can spoil or trivialize and how a break from verbosity can be a balm in a noisy world. A silence borne of communion can be rich indeed.

I've always loved the story of the budding friendship of Southern novelists William Faulkner and Eudora Welty. She'd never dreamed of actually meeting the iconic writer, she recounted. But some mutual friends took her to his house, where, among other parts of a neighborly visit, they stood around a piano and sang hymns. The next year, Faulkner asked Welty to go sailing with him on a lake. "I was so happy he invited me," she said. "I had trouble getting in the boat. … [But I] waded out in the mud, got in the boat, and he took me sailing. I don't think either of us spoke. That's all right. It was kind of magical to me. I was in the presence."

I like to linger at that picture of those ridiculously articulate writers leaving words behind for a spell while they floated along and the lake water lapped gently while they communed.

And some mornings, it seems like something similar happens when I sit still in Presence. I become aware of the Ineffable (a great word in our Book of Common Prayer that has Latin roots that mean literally incapable of being said or spoken of).

Indeed, the Christian contemplative tradition does show a great fondness for the practice of silence. That tradition speaks of what we discover in an awe-suffused freedom from words — a meeting with a God who is beyond the limits of any language.

And John of the Cross, also known for his exploration of the "dark night of the soul," *does* stress silence. For John it is silence that allows us to commune. It's not an absence of speech so much as a transcending of it. It is a paradoxical silence that has much insight and encouragement hidden within. For we sometimes get so caught up in our talking that we stop leaving spaces. Thomas Merton famously said, "Music is pleasing not only because of the sound but because of the silence that is in it: without the alternation of sound and silence there would be no rhythm." So also with our often incessantly chatty world and gabby web-o-sphere.

All good. But some of my dis-ease with stopping in silence comes from my experiencing of its hard side. Silence sometimes is no unalloyed blessing.

Early in our marriage, before I learned more mature ways of expressing frustration, I sometimes withdrew from my wife when conflict arose. I'd reply with monosyllables (if at all), turn my back, and turn silence into a weapon. My withholding words and pulling away left Jill confused, hurt. While I suppose I communicated *something*, it took seasoning to help me realize how punishing a lack of response can be — not only not constructive but also corrosive of growth in intimacy. Better an angry word from me, I discovered, than icy, calculated withdrawal. For some of us, silence has indeed inflicted pain, made us wonder if we are loved. It can inject uncertainty, a sense of being off-kilter in a relationship. It can lead to a feeling of forsakenness — just as I've experienced from the withdrawal of others in my life, whose forgetting me or whose lack of a returned call wounded.

All the more so with what some depict as the cold silence of the universe. Or of a distant deity who goes mute, diddling quietly away while we sit smack in the middle of crisis and we punch again and again a kind of cosmic doorbell. Or maybe, in some initial moment of discovery and spiritual exhilaration, a door swings wide, but not forever.

C.S. Lewis, in *A Grief Observed*, famously wrote in his pain at losing his wife, that you go to God "when your need is desperate, when all other help is vain, and what do you find? A door

slammed in your face, and a sound of bolting and double bolting on the inside. After that, silence."

It is the loss of a loved one and even the fear of a silence from the heavens that compounds grief. "The longer you wait," Lewis keened, "the more emphatic the silence will become." No romanticizing of a seemingly quiet God here. Nothing resembling a motto that glosses over our existential dread of being cosmically snubbed.

Reading a Jewish commentary on Genesis, the monumental volume in the JPS Torah Commentary, has further helped me put a finger on my disquietude about a too-exuberant, not-well-nuanced ascription of silence to God. Nahum Sarna assigns great significance to God's voice in the Genesis accounts of creation. When creating, I read, God *said*, and out of the chaos a world appeared. The divine word, Sarna says, "shatters the primal cosmic silence and signals the birth of a new cosmic order." What is inchoate becomes ordered in response to the blessing of divine speech.

And that gives a clue about God and *us*, Sarna continues, as we see God bless the creatures of land and sea that God has made. God offers a general blessing to the creation of fish and fowl, spoken, so to speak, to no one in particular (except perhaps, I'd add, the co-creating members of the Trinity). But when it comes to the making of humans, God speaks *to* them. Here the "transcendent God of creation," Sarna exults, "transforms Himself into the immanent God, the personal God, who enters into unmediated communion with human beings."

And that remarkable picture of a God overflowing in communicative delight continues. Much of Scripture as it unfolds conveys a sense of the *gift* of being addressed by God with guidance and assurance and even sometimes judgment, the latter of which pains us but reminds us at least we are not ignored, we are noticed.

God chose a prophet with hard words for oppressive kings to speak something about God's investment and involvement, in a reading from Isaiah: "For Zion's sake I will not keep silent."

Especially in the Incarnation does it become clear how too much accent on a merely silent presence contrasts with the biblical picture of a God whose coming took the form of a figure of speech. For the *Word*, who was with God and was God, took on flesh — became vividly visible and audible in real human affairs. Not just a subtle presence, this, but a nearness born of a Person with whom conversation is possible. One whose glories have very much to do with revealing and announcing.

Perhaps no aspect of our faith opens the communicative picture of God more than the Trinity. I know that for many in our culture, the Trinity muddies the supposedly simple message of an itinerant Palestinian teacher. But I believe a trinitarian view indicates that God's first language is *communion*, self-expression. That's what we see in Jesus — at his baptism, at the Transfiguration.

In the Trinity we see a God who from before time already exists in delighted communion — even conversation. Our words pale, of course, placed anywhere near a heavenly language beyond the limits of speech or vocabulary. There may be a bit of divine condescension in this picture — a stooping to the rudiments of human speech that approaches the anthropomorphic. But the idea is that among the three Persons, God is used to dialogue (trialogue?). We speak of "pregnant" silences for good reason — for the divine richness and life busily at work — whether word-rich or quieter.

For our parts, for our participation in that divine interplay, we prepare ourselves in prayer and worship and spiritual exercises to be noticed, addressed, loved. Our liturgies, for all their words, school us in expectant waiting for insights beyond words. Our little quiet moments open to a grand silence. Prayer in this climate is ultimately and supremely a matter of communion with a God who speaks — to *us*. Silence is just one of the many, crazily multiplied languages God uses to get through to us.

So it's not absence of speech here that deserves our keenest attention, but communication on the most profound levels. For prayer is not, Mark McIntosh writes, "to succumb to a final speechlessness but to become free enough from self-preoccupied speech so as to be available for that infinite dialogue which catches up our language into its supernal converse, namely the communion of the trinitarian Persons."

Words are never adequate, of course. Our praise and worship, Rowan Williams reminds us, have us answer "to a reality not already embedded in the conventions of speech." The psalmist got at this when the well-worn words encourage God's people to "be still," to resist the temptation always to fritter away time spent in God's presence with agitated prattle. The Christian contemplative tradition, John of the Cross, Thomas Keating, all are right to urge us to stop our running mouths.

But such stillness never ends with itself or a mere moment of untrammeled calm. God's people are asked to be still in order, as the Divine Voice says, "to know that I am God."

In his essay on John's Gospel, novelist and essayist Reynolds Price writes that the one sentence humankind craves to hear is, "The Maker of all things loves and wants me." There are few days in which I don't need to hear precisely those words.

So while we may sometimes meet God in a wordlessness beyond imagery or form, the God of Trinity reminds us that ultimately God by nature is self-expressive. God overflows in communicative delight. Yes, we hear *in* the silences — sometimes only there — and yes, we attend to our lives and work even amid the sometime silence of God.

We can do so because God has been delightfully carrying on a conversation of trinitarian proportions from before time. The great grace of it all is how we get invited in — to commune, and to hear the Voice that we most long to hear, a Word that bridges chasms of silence.

The Rev. Timothy Jones is rector of St. John's, Halifax, Virginia. He is the author of several books on prayer and the spiritual life, including the Art of Prayer: A Simple Guide to Conversation with God, *and he blogs at revtimothyjones.com.*

COVID Leaves Ugandan School in Crisis

By Jesse Masai

Paul Natuhumuriza remembers growing up without electricity and plumbing in a mud-walled house in Kyempene, a village in rural southwestern Uganda.

At a tender age he showed academic promise. His parents ensured that he attended a nearby school with brutal tutors. He sat on floors smeared with cow dung in rooms without window shutters, furniture, or books.

In time he studied at Makerere University, and then served with a youth and children's ministry in Kampala. He went on to earn a scholarship in the United Kingdom, where he spent two years studying while volunteering at an English school and doing outreach to prisons.

"I came face to face with a functioning and well-equipped education system, which by far confronted the troubled one under which I had been raised, including at Makerere. I felt compelled to return home and dedicate my life to teaching and empowering young leaders in Kyempene, 15 kilometers from Ntungamo, our nearest town," he said.

Equipped with £400 he had saved while working at a warehouse, and donations of used football uniforms, he returned to Uganda with a grand plan for founding the Life School, aiming to form "a generation of young people whose heads are informed, whose hands are equipped, and whose hearts are transformed."

Some residents thought he was not serious, because they were used to rote learning, an approach Natuhumuriza rejects. This led him to consider breaking the barrier by working with local churches.

"The first bricks were laid down by 60 volunteers from across East Africa in early 2011 on land donated by my dad, and the first photos of the school showed just a mere brick shell of two classrooms," he said. "The first classroom block was completed in December 2011. That same month we also built a temporary wooden classroom block for our nursery section. In 2012, our first students started their education at the Life School."

Photos courtesy of the Life School

By March 2013, he had more than 200 students.

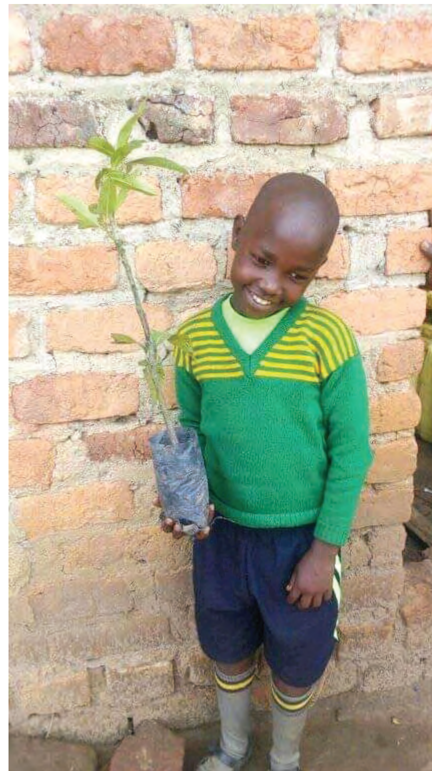
"In the summer, our football team embarked on their first regional tour-

With the pandemic, nine years of work came to a standstill, following government orders for all learning institutions to close for an eventual 22 months, the world's longest pandemic school closure.

nament, performing well against much more established schools," he said. "Construction began on four new classrooms by the end of 2013 to keep up with the rapidly rising demand for school places. We always wanted to accommodate students in need. In 2015, our very first primary class sat for its National Primary Leaving Exam, achieving the best results in our sub-county."

Natuhumuriza adds: "We also gratefully received two huge new water tanks for our water-harvesting scheme, helping provide water for our students and staff. In order to improve income generation, we started a pig-rearing project, purchasing piglets and selling them at profit once matured. This helped us grow the school further."

Fundraising helped purchase computers and to launch new programs



focused on tailoring, music and the arts, acrobatics, leadership development, and road trips. The school also began offering Bible study during morning assemblies, discipleship classes, and worship services, including Sunday chapel.

"By 2020, we had our first secondary-school classes, with students learning in their own classroom block separate from the primary section," Natuhumuriza said. "This meant that we could now provide high-quality education for local children from nursery to secondary levels. We attracted those who could pay fees to cover our expenses and boost our ability to absorb and support the poor. Soon, we became the best in national exams in Rushenyi County."

Before COVID-19, he was living his dream of transforming the lives of Kyempene's underprivileged. The project attracted visitors, including a secondary-school group from London in 2018 and volunteer groups from Youth for Christ Rwanda, who have visited every summer.

With the pandemic, however, his nine years of work — embodied in more than 750 students and several staff — came to a standstill, following government orders for all learning institutions to close for an eventual 22 months, the world's longest pandemic school closure.

The shutdown has been devastating for Uganda's 15 million students, and the country's National Planning Authority estimates that 4.5 million of them will not return to classes, due to huge spikes in teen pregnancies and so many school-aged children entering the workforce to help support their families.

Schools like Natuhumuriza's are also in crisis. When classes were allowed to resume on January 10, "our pit latrines and fence had collapsed, solar lighting systems had expired, and half of the teaching staff had left the profession," he reported.

Roofing is required for classrooms in the primary section to accommodate more students and attract new teachers. The school needs funds to pay a huge water bill and to purchase new tanks. Fencing, solar lighting, textbooks and at least 10 computers are required for the secondary section.

"We are rebuilding from zero, including by securing new furniture and benches," he said. "We are still understaffed, but getting better. We close on April 15, and hope to be stronger when we return for second term on May 2."

Jesse Masai is a freelance journalist based in Limuru, Kenya. Those who wish to support Life School's recovery can do so via its website, lifeschooluganda.weebly.com.

COVID-related shutdowns stalled construction at the Life School.

Common Counsel

Is There a Rationale for the Anglican Communion?

The following essay is excerpted from a chapter in "God Wills Fellowship": Lambeth Conference 1920 and the Ecumenical Vocation of Anglicanism, *ed. Christopher Wells and Jeremy Worthen (Living Church Books, forthcoming this spring).*

By Ephraim Radner

What might a substantive or "thick" rationale for the Anglican Communion look like? Thin rationales for communion tend to focus on one or two things only — a rule, a precedent, a principle. They tend to rely on divine presumption: since this is what God is already after, we don't need to worry about our role too much. And they tend frankly to end up subtracting, not contributing to communion, because what doesn't fit the rule or what seems to demand too much is easily discarded or ignored. A thick rationale, by contrast, is filled with a range of ends, demands lots of work, imagines God doing all kinds of things. And it results in a wider and deeper communion as a result. The contrast of thin and thick as I use it is ultimately metaphysical, and speaks to the nature of reality, in a manner explained by, among others, the philosopher Robert Nozick. Reality is full, complex, varied, ever challenging, and *must* be described as such. So is communion.

In its historical emergence, the Anglican Communion was informed by thicker rationales, culminating in the 1920 Lambeth Conference's "Appeal to All Christian People," which dealt with attitudes and actions of all the churches, and finally with the nature of God. Over the past decades, however, we've been holding on to thinner and thinner rationales. For instance, we say that the Anglican Communion is a vehicle for promoting certain forms of social progress; or that the Anglican Communion is a body that articulates and develops certain dogmatic truths of the gospel; or again, that the Anglican Communion is a place where different people come together in benign respect, according to certain strict principles of governance or limited legal relationships. Precisely because these kinds of rationales are thin, they do not cohere with one another, nor do they offer the means or openings to engaging, including, reforming, and mutually remaking one another. There is, as a result, a fair degree of conflict in our midst — conflicts between thin rationales, you might say — such that the Anglican Communion is today characterized by churches that are *not* in communion with each other, or that are in something called "impaired communion," or that ignore one another, or are practically ignorant of each other, and so on. At the same time, individual members have left the Communion for other churches in search of some better rationale for their commitments. All this is what happens with thin rationales: they cannot bear the weight of actual ecclesial reality, which is thick. A thick rationale has room for the Church as it is, even if it makes heavy demands upon the Church's members.

I certainly make no claims to knowing much about this. But one thing I bring to the discussion is simply having lived *through* changes in rationale, as well as through the conflicts themselves: through thick and thin, or rather *from* thick *to* thin.

My first work of ordained ministry was as a young American Episcopal priest in the Anglican Church of Burundi, working alongside British Church Mission Society (CMS) missionaries. It was a tough row to hoe. American smug self-confidence meets British know-it-all-ness, amid an alien world with its own gifts of faith. I was initially sent for a couple of months to CMS's then-training college, Crowther Hall, in Birmingham. I could feel myself being sucked into a heavy atmosphere of smiling British evangelical Anglian re-education — getting me to learn to trust my betters, learn the well-ordered ropes, and squeeze out my callow, New World self-assertions. They were right to be anxious about me, as it turned out. In any case, it was with a certain trepidation and resistance that I then joined my British colleagues in Burundi, within a classic mix of mutual cultural suspicions.

What ended up happening, though, was that the British and the American in this case became deep and fiercely loyal friends. It was simple, really: our inculcated and sparring confidences inevitably dissolved, over time, in the face of the tremendous challenges we shared within our lives and work. With the burdens came often hard-won blessings of breaking through a far more difficult set of cultural demands embodied in our common life with Burundi colleagues and neighbors — Anglicans, Catholics, government employees, police, merchants, soldiers, goatherds. Hard-won indeed, though real. There were illnesses, lies, wants, injustices, AIDS, arrests, the memories and ongoing realities of violence, and the search for a gospel stronger than our wretched incapacities and angers. Not once, but many times, this reality drove us all — British, American, Burundi — literally to our knees. We were driven there by each other, to be sure, but eventually and necessarily *with* each other; and it was clear, at last, *for* each other too.

A thicker rationale for communion — and thus a thicker Anglican Communion — must be bold, in the tradition of Lambeth 1920's great proclamation that "God wills fellowship," a statement that functioned as an undergirding rationale for

the Anglican Communion for decades. Perhaps it still does.

Thick communion will be *eager* to face failures, learn from them, and change, and to develop patience with one another in the process. Such a thick communion will be more grateful for what we have received as God's gifts from both the apostles and the fellowship itself. And it will be more willing to admit in humility, not disdain, that the Pentecostal movement has brought those "far off" into a new place of honor, perhaps greater than those "nearby" (Eph. 2:13). A thick Pentecostal rationale for communion — any Christian communion — provides a textured setting in which constructive proposals can be engaged.

It does so in at least four ways.

First, a thick Pentecostal rationale for communion offers a *benchmark for evaluating the current ordered structures* of our particular communion. If God willing fellowship means obedience to *this* Pentecostal movement, then, from a limited Anglican perspective, we can judge — or rather God will judge — our activities and structures accordingly. This would include the next Lambeth Conference; the way the Anglican Consultative Council does its work; the manner of speech, life, and gathering of the primates; the Archbishop of Canterbury's own words and witness; as well as the commitments of *all* bishops and their clergy, the shape of synods now and in the future, and our formal teaching. The edge of the Pentecostal movement will properly cut *all* of this. While it is true that our structures emerged out of this movement, it is hardly clear that they are today reflective any longer of its thick identity. But that is something we must assess with fierce honesty in the light of God's will.

Second, a thick Pentecostal rationale provides a *benchmark for evaluating alternative pathways* before Anglicans. Some of ARCIC III's suggestions, such as a common eucharistic prayer and common catechism, fit well with elements of the Pentecostal gathering of apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 2), in terms of prayer and learning. By the same token, it is not clear how ordering Anglican life more centrally around Canterbury fits with or furthers the rationale. But the rationale itself is precisely the place to reflect on these matters. Without it, or something like it, we are left to the vagaries of what is now a dispersed set of competing energies, rather than the Spirit's multilingual press toward a univocal acclamation at the Lamb's High Feast.

This leads to a third gift of robust rationale of Pentecostal communion, namely, the *freedom simply to order ourselves anew*. We *are* given both ear and tongue to receive the word of God's great works together. We *are* granted conversion of heart, in their echo, to repent and to change. We *are* offered freshness of vision and act, that we might gather in renewed humility and solidarity. These are not simply claims for a course correction. Such reformation is the *substance* of living in fellowship. I continue to believe that something like the Anglican Covenant, with greater catechetical, missionary, and synodical depth, is a good thing; and that finding a way to integrate and reintegrate protesting bodies like the Anglican Church of North America into the formal Communion is in keeping with the Pentecostal call to repentance and gathering. If I am mistaken in these judgments, it will *not* be because they transgress former habits, or current canons, or settled antipathies. The fellowship God wills is not captive to such restraints. It frees us from them.

Finally, a thick Pentecostal rationale for communion exposes the *ultimately non-Anglican character of the hope for the world's destiny* that drove the 1920 Lambeth Appeal in the first place. Communion is not a peculiarly Anglican concern. It is ours only because it is God's for all Christians. Communion, even this struggling Anglican form of it, doesn't belong to us. Because fellowship is God's will in both senses of the term, as God's gift and as God's command, communion can be taken away from some and given to others, as St. Paul makes clear (see Luke 20:16; Rom. 11:22). It is manifested across Christian traditions, human time, and cosmic promise, and our own obedience is measured only in those far-reaching terms.

In other words, Anglican communion, and "the Anglican Communion," demand *ecumenical transformation*, now more than ever. Lambeth 1920's own discussion of peculiarly Anglican communion was set precisely within an ecumenical context, however limited. The appeal to all of Christendom arose not from arrogance but from the demand of a divine fellowship that far outstripped what the bishops rightly recognized as both struggle and incapacity among Anglicans left to themselves. Lambeth 1920 initiated its call not because Anglicans were better leaders in the Pentecostal movement, but because the movement itself had relativized all leaders, driving all of Jerusalem and the world — Canterbury and Rome, Geneva and Azusa Street — to search for the other. Christians cannot ask who does Pentecost better but only how it happens at all.

Four ways or applications, therefore, of the Pentecostal rationale for communion: present judgment, future possibility, freedom to change, and the wider world's promise. Lambeth 1920 said that this is how God's will *is done* on earth. God has in fact done something and is doing it still. The right side of history, we may say, *has* embraced aspects of our Anglican life, but only as that life has gone beyond itself toward the Lamb's high throne with myriad others similarly called through the long traversal of Pentecost. The days of a special Anglican charism are probably over, except as a residual set of habits, histories, and relationships. I don't want to dismiss these; they still function in important ways. But we must ask what they are *for*. They are not for specialness itself — special liturgies, special attitudes, special histories, customs, and clothing. They are for getting us somewhere with and for others, in the posture of Jerusalem's impassioned, repentant, self-offering crowds who constituted the world's future. All Christian communion is given, and called forth, for this purpose, and this is just the communion that God wills.

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War and Judgment

By John Bauerschmidt

This essay was first published on Covenant, *the weblog of The Living Church, on April 4.*

A Ukranian tank on patrol in eastern Ukraine — Ukraine Ministry of Defense photo

Russia's attack on Ukraine has already borne out the insight that the course of history is marked by surprising events. Surprising, of course, to many in the West; though in this case the attack was hardly prepared in secret. What was certainly unexpected was the extent of Vladimir Putin's ruthlessness, though there were many warning signs (Chechnya, Georgia, Syria). His ruthlessness has been matched by Ukrainian resistance that, in its courage and resourcefulness, was again unexpected.

If the unfolding events catch us by surprise, it is partly a matter of perspective, of what we know and don't know at the time. No one ever sees the entire playing field. But the capacity of events to catch us off-guard really lies in their own contingent nature. The possibility of a war in Europe may have seemed improbable or been widely discounted by the public, given the history of the last 30 years, but a war is now precisely what we have.

This is not the first time that notions of historical progress have disappeared in the marches of Eastern Europe. Stalin and Hitler, between them, killed millions in what is now Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia, as well as Poland and Lithuania: those places that historian Timothy Snyder called "the bloodlands." Here, the sheer contingency of historical phenomena yields to the nature of sin itself, original and endemic to the human race.

If events have frustrated the idea that history is set upon a firm and determined progressive course, we are still left with the field of moral action, and ourselves as actors. Doubly so in time of war, when the stakes are so high. Christians may be tempted, in the face of the chaos and destruction of war, to consign it to a category where moral reflection is beside the point. For some, war is either unthinkable in itself, or so morally troubling that the means of waging it are not worth considering at all. The temptation to not reflect on it should be resisted.

Oliver O'Donovan has written about war as a form of judgment that takes place "within the theatre of unbelief and disobedience" (*The Just War Revisited*, 6). War occurs at the intersection between different polities, in the interstices between nations. Though it is waged in a conceptual space where the law of no single polity prevails, it is morally analogous to other actions of government as judgment, and subject to the same constraints. For Christians, all actions of government take place in the saeculum given by God, where faith is exercised.

These actions of judgment undertaken by government include the extraordinary actions of war. "[A]rmed conflict can and must be reconceived as an extraordinary extension of ordinary acts of judgment; it can and must be subject to the limits and disciplines of ordinary acts of judgment." O'Donovan continues, "In the face of criminal warmaking, judgment may take effect through armed conflict, but only as armed conflict is conformed to the law-governed and law-generating shape of judgment" (6). "Judgment in armed conflict is extraordinary, an adventure beyond the ordinary reach of law and order, hazarded upon God's providential provision" (19).

In rendering these extraordinary judgments, Christians should not forget what is true about our ordinary judgments: we are not God, and our judgments are not perfect. Whatever judgment we render is not final judgment, which is reserved for God. We trust in divine providence, approaching judgment in humility and with prayer. "In enacting judgment we are not invited to assume the all-seeing view of God. ... We have a specific civic human duty laid upon us, which is to distinguish innocence and guilt as far as is given us in the conduct of human affairs. ... To lose the will to discriminate is to lose the will to do justice" (47).

Christian thinking about war, in what has come to be called "the just war tradition," is properly considered under the heading of the love of

neighbor. O'Donovan points out that even in a defensive war, where a nation has been attacked, Christians look less to a claim of absolute right to defend themselves, and more to the call to love the neighbor. This commitment also involves the neighbor who is the enemy. "In the context of war we find in its sharpest and most paradoxical form the thought that love can sometimes smite, and even slay" (9).

The war in Ukraine invites moral reflection by Christians under at least two headings: discrimination and proportion. Both are involved in thinking about war as an extraordinary act of judgment; both are part of the limits and disciplines that we should accept as moral actors in time of war. The two considerations impinge on our moral conscience in different ways in the conflict in Ukraine.

Discrimination between the innocent and the guilty is at the heart of the act of judgment itself, as O'Donovan says. "We shall define a discriminate act of conflict as one that intends to make a distinction between guilt and innocence" (35). There are cases where it is hard to distinguish between combatants and non-combatants, but the soldier in the tank is clearly one thing, while the family in the bomb shelter is another. "The innocence in question is simply that of not being materially co-operative with wrongful hostilities" (39).

Destroying a society may be the road to victory, but it is indiscriminate in not intending to distinguish between the guilty and the innocent, which is always judgment's task.

> If we were to deny our enemy the power to produce food, if we were to terrorise his market-places or flatten his residential suburbs, we might quite probably hamper his ability to pursue his wicked purposes against us; but such a route to victory is one we should deny ourselves, since it denies a right of peaceful social existence, a right in which we and our enemy both share. (40)

The Russian attacks on civilian shelters, hospitals, and other non-military targets in Ukraine look to be indiscriminate attacks that do not intend to distinguish between the guilty and the innocent; forms of demoralizing assault on the fabric of society itself that attempt to terrorize one's opponents into submission.

Russian means look disproportionate to the desired end.

The question of proportion also figures here. It would be disproportionate to destroy the civil infrastructure of a society, leading to mass starvation and disease, and the genocide of the innocent, even if the enemy infrastructure were being used for military purposes and therefore a legitimate target. The destruction caused would be incommensurate with the end gained; the means themselves would undercut the aim, the restoration of peace and the establishment of justice.

Again, Russian means look disproportionate to the desired end. O'Donovan reminds us that "an act of judgment must be proportioned to a political end" (59). Even given Putin's historical narrative, which denies the reality of Ukrainian identity and sovereignty, the goal is peace. From Putin's bogus perspective, this peace is represented by the unification of an artificially divided country. Yet the act of judgment "must achieve peace, understanding that term properly to include all that is comprised in a stable and settled political order, including the justice and law-governed character of relations established within it" (59). This goal looks to be an unlikely result of this invasion. The best that Russian forces seem to be able to achieve is a destructive assault on Ukraine. Putin can perhaps produce the peace of a graveyard, but not peace in any meaningful political sense.

Considerations of proportion figure also in the moral discernment of the nations of the West, which instinctively recognize in Ukraine's struggle their own hopes for independence and peaceful self-determination. In many cases, the response to the Russian invasion has not been the action of governments but has stemmed directly from the public. The moment has been a clarifying one for the liberal political order of the West, galvanizing it in a way not seen for decades. How do those nations respond to the challenge posed by Putin's attack? What are they called upon to venture in judgment against criminal war-making?

Christian reflection on this conflict brings us back to the love of neighbor. If your neighbor is attacked, coming to his defense is an act of love. For St. Augustine, responding to violence directed against others may be the only act of defense that Christian ought to engage in (*Letter* 47.5). We might willingly endure blows ourselves, from which we would have a moral imperative to defend others. Through this lens, to pass by the wounded Samaritan of Ukraine without venturing aid seems like an act of moral abdication, and a failure of charity.

But if peace is the aim, then the response of Western governments to aggression must be proportionate to that political goal. Here we are mindful of the complexity of political decision-making in the midst of conflict. None of us sees the entire playing field. Decisions about establishing a "no-fly zone," about sanctions, about weaponry and aid supplied to Ukraine, must be proportionate to the threat posed, and proportionate to the peace we seek to establish.

These are times when we should pray for ourselves, who will be called upon to discern, judge, and act, and especially for our leaders, who will bear the greatest responsibility. We should pray for safety for those in danger, on both sides. If we define victory as the preservation of Ukrainian sovereignty and independence, the integrity of its borders and the safety of its citizens, then we should pray for that victory as well. Finally, in God's providence, we should pray for the peace that we all seek, and that only God can give.

The Rt. Rev. John Bauerschmidt is Bishop of Tennessee and president of the Living Church Foundation.

Giovanni della Robbia, *Resurrection of Christ*
Brooklyn Museum, gift of A. Augustus Healy
Creative Commons

Abundance and Hope in della Robbia's Resurrection

The Resurrection of Christ
The Brooklyn Museum
200 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, New York
Long-term installation

Review by Pamela A. Lewis

Composed of 46 glazed terra cotta pieces, *The Resurrection of Christ* by Renaissance artist Giovanni della Robbia (1469-1529/30), is a mighty and gorgeous relief sculpture depicting Christ's triumphant rising from the dead. A compositional and technical *tour de force*, *Resurrection* is replete with religious symbolism and references to antiquity. Even the wealthy Florentine patron who commissioned the work is included among its sculptural figures.

The first Italian Renaissance work to enter the Brooklyn Museum's collection (1899), *Resurrection* soon became one of its most significant artworks. Over time, however, institutional priorities changed, and since the 1990s the massive sculpture was either in storage or otherwise difficult to see. After a major 2015 conservation project generously funded by Marchesi Antinori, a scion of the same family of vintners whose ancestors commissioned *Resurrection* nearly 500 years ago, the sculpture was returned to a prominent place in the museum.

The della Robbia workshop in Florence encompassed three generations of prolific and gifted entrepreneurial artists, whose work was as ubiquitous as it was beautiful. Their colorful plaques and sculptures decorated civic, private, and religious buildings throughout the city and beyond. The workshop's founder, Luca (1399/1400-82), established it in the early to mid-15th century and invented the proprietary glazed terra cotta technique that became associated with the family's name.

Upon Luca's death, his nephew and collaborator Andrea (1435-1525) inherited the business. By the early 16th century, one of Andrea's sons, Giovanni, became head of the workshop, producing works such as *Resurrection*, notable for their bold color effects, highly energetic sculpting, and spatially complex compositions.

Prosperous silk merchants, winemakers, and patrons of the arts, the Antinori family commissioned Giovanni around 1520-25 to create a work for their estate outside Florence.

Scholars are uncertain as to precisely where the completed *Resurrection* was to be displayed; but its arched (or lunette) shape suggests a placement over a door or gate, perhaps in an entry area, or given its subject, in the family chapel. The work remained on the estate until 1898, when the family sold it to Aron Augustus Healy, the board president of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences (which later became the Brooklyn Museum), who gave it to the fledgling institution.

The eminent biographer Giorgio Vasari in his *Lives of the Artists* had high praise for the della Robbia workshop's glazed terra cottas, describing them as "a useful, new, and very beautiful art."

A hallmark of the della Robbia workshop, a lush and colorful garland of fruits, flowers, and plants, signifying a transition from nature to the sacred, encloses the entire sculpture group. Carefully naturalistic birds, snails, and other small creatures are tucked among the various flora, animating the scene while imparting a decorative charm.

The sculpture's extensive symbolic program, in which

the meaning of these plants and animals would have been familiar to the patron, also heightens its visual power, and connects it to the central themes of rebirth, renewal, and immortality. Pinecones, evergreens, gourds, and pomegranates are all apt symbols of new life; plentiful and ripe grapes allude to the wine the disciples drank at Christ's Last Supper, but may also refer to the Antinori family's vineyards.

In the lower left corner (on Christ's favored right side), a blooming fruit tree represents Paradise and the world's regeneration through Christ's sacrificial death. There is a naturalistic vignette of an eagle killing a snake just above the Antinori emblem, signifying Christ's triumph over Satan.

Giovanni, like many Renaissance artists, venerated ancient Greek and Roman art, which provided forms and motifs that inspired his artwork. This *all'antica* style is manifested in the arrangement of full and half-figures within the tight yet balanced space of the *Resurrection* lunette, suggesting that Giovanni made a close study of the densely figured compositions that he carved in high relief on the sides of Roman sarcophagi.

While the proportions of the figures appear incorrect (perhaps indicating their contrasting distances from the central figure of Christ), the twisting bodies and emotional expressions of the black-bearded soldier and his younger comrade holding a lance quote the famous *Laocoön* group, an ancient sculpture excavated in Rome in 1506 (in Michelangelo's presence). The form-hugging cuirasses of two soldiers are patterned in the ancient Roman style.

Christ, surrounded in a radiant mandorla and a halo, stands atop the tomb from which he has risen in a subtle *contrapposto*, further evidence of Giovanni's acquaintance with Greco-Roman statuary, as well as the works of his contemporaries who emulated it.

The bountiful garland in *Resurrection*, heavy with realistic fruit and vegetation, is an additional nod to antiquity. Ancient Roman mosaics and frescos depicting fruit baskets communicated abundance and hospitality, themes embedded in this work, and personified by Christ and the Antinori patron (portrayed somewhat larger than Christ) kneeling in prayer close by.

Visitors must lift their eyes to take in the wide lunette comfortably. One does not merely *look at* della Robbia's *Resurrection*, but rather *enters into* his richly colored vision of faith and salvation. We want to eat the fruit, smell the flowers, and receive the blessing Christ gives with his right hand.

We are not in the realm of the demure and tender della Robbia Madonnas, whose flawless complexions and downcast eyes are familiar to admirers of his religious art. This is a muscular work offering a glimpse of abundance and hope by an artist who chose to do something new, useful, and gloriously beautiful.

Pamela A. Lewis is a member of Saint Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, in New York City. She writes on topics of faith.

Finding God in Strange Places

All's Well That Ends Well

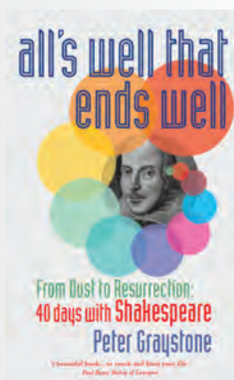
From Dust to Resurrection
40 Days with Shakespeare
By **Peter Graystone**
Canterbury Press Norwich, pp. 192, $20.99

Shakeshafte and Other Plays

By **Rowan Williams**
Slant Books, pp. 156, $28

Review by Anthony Baker

How might literature inform theology? More to the point, how can it do so well? Most basically, there are two ways. Good literature can send us toward theological questions; theological questions, alternatively, can send us to contemplations of good literature.



Two recent books offer excellent examples of this bidirectional possibility, centering on the inarguably great literature of William Shakespeare.

Peter Grayston's *All's Well That Ends Well* is a Lenten devotional consisting of 40 short chapters — four to five pages each — on Shakespeare's plays and sonnets. Each chapter takes a single work and reflects on how a particular passage or a plot point might intersect with Christian faith.

The epigraph and the last chapter title are the same, and they give us the Lenten theme: "It is required you do awake your faith." The line is from *The Winter's Tale*, one of the late romances in which Shakespeare is exploring theological territory with an almost reckless intensity. Graystone, though, shows that the playwright lays this requirement upon us in subtle ways throughout his works.

Graystone is an educator in the Church of England and an avid theatergoer. He opens his Lenten meditations, appropriately, with a song about all that will "come to dust," from *Cymbeline*. This leads him to wonder about the strange story of Jesus writing in the dust when the woman is caught in adultery.

Admitting he's always been curious about what Jesus wrote, Graystone now wonders if perhaps the medium was the message: "It wasn't the word he was forming … it was the dust his fingers were in. … That's what he wanted those vindictive men to think about. Life in a handful of dust" (5).

This is the way the chapters go. We hear a plot, we study a

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passage, and we follow the author into connections that he makes to Scripture or other elements of faith. Not all are equally compelling. But then again, neither are the plays. The mediation on *Richard III* leads to rather inane thoughts about evil. Sonnet 30, which reads to me as a moving account of the tension in friendship between remembered losses and anticipated restorations, is for Graystone a cheap dismissal of "the locust years."

Some readings, though, are brilliant. The unresolved tensions and ironies (including the title) of the play *All's Well That Ends Well* leads him to reflect on the surprises and unresolved nature of the Resurrection accounts in the gospel. *The Comedy of Errors*, by nearly all accounts a frivolous romp of a play, becomes a moving account of a profound recognition and acknowledgement, "as though I had seen the face of God" (48).

I journeyed "from dust to resurrection" during Lent this year with this book, and found it an excellent companion.

The path between literature and theology can sometimes, as I noted before, work in the other direction. Or, said better, the theological questions to which literature sends us can send us back into literature. Rowan Williams's collection of plays travels this path, with his signature depth and difficulty — a difficulty that is, in this case, less a matter of technical construction than emotional weight.

The title play is about young Will Shakeshafte, one of the possible aliases for Shakespeare. He comes to a Lancashire home in the midst of the crisis about the illegal missionary work of Jesuits under Elizabeth's Protestant reforms.

This theologically charged atmosphere provides, for the troubled young scholar that Williams imagines, an opportunity to notice what's missing in the public rhetoric of faith. In one of my favorite scenes, he and a friend discuss the old Chester Mystery Plays. They showed, his friend said, "bits of what you're like. With only God knowing how it all fits together."

Will is excited by this and says that it's as if the plays presented us with a mirror, and as people watched, they could say, "Yes, that's me, someone's seen me, someone's known what it's like, I exist. I'm here, not just in my head, but here for God and man."

Without the chance to really see what we're like and to both acknowledge ourselves and know ourselves as acknowledged by others, we're not really seeking or telling the truth. If a person couldn't see what he's really like, "he'd bust open like — like a man on the scaffold, like a man with his insides being, being …" (21).

The theological questions to which literature sends us can send us back into literature. Rowan Williams's collection of plays travels this path, with his signature depth and difficulty.

He trails off, and the scene ends with some embarrassment. "Steady, Will. It's only plays we're talking of," his friend says (22). But Will is clearly on the cusp of a discovery of what "only plays" can do. The scaffold imagery returns later, in a conversation with his Jesuit mentor. Will says that, while the Catholic "picture" of things makes the most sense, he worries that he'll miss some of the "voices" around him if he speaks *any* strong language of theological clarity (55).

His mentor seems to understand his dilemma before they part ways: "You're going to be asking every moment, have I heard right, have I heard enough, and that's not the state of mind that holds you upright on the scaffold" (57). The theater, clearly, will be Will's scaffold, where a person's insides can burst open and show themselves, nakedly, before God and the world.

The second play, "The Flat Roof of the World," follows the harrowing encounter of poet David Jones with the craft-priest community surrounding Eric Gill. Jones, best known for a long poem reflecting his experience in trench combat in the First World War, is making use of art to process his trauma. Not just in the sense of healing, though; he's haunted by the possibility that something true "grows in the trenches" that he cannot ignore. "Something had been sort of opened up in the trenches, something I couldn't close without closing up, well, everything that mattered. And I had to … you know; just *live* there" (119).

David's pain is not the only trauma that matters in the play. We now know that Gill, the community's founder, sexually abused his two daughters. Petra is here always in some way talking about her father's abusive presence, while Gill uses language to avoid it.

Neither David nor Petra, of course, can find the words to say all they need to. There's too much left behind, like the rifle he leaves under an oak tree after he was wounded in battle. Or the wooden doll her father made her, which lies abandoned on the workshop floor. And this failure becomes for both of them its own kind of torture. But the point, as another character reminds David, was never to say everything. "Not always trying to *say* big things, just letting it show through" (89).

The weakest moment in this brilliant play, for me, is the set of final monologues by David, Petra, and Eric. They talk about the traumas directly for the first time, especially the abuse. I suppose Williams intends to show how language remains unable, even when it is direct and non-evasive, to say all that needs saying. The shift, though, is abrupt, for a play that has gestured

toward deep, difficult, and true things by the gaps in language.

The final and briefest play is the most explicitly theological. It is about the resurrection of Lazarus, and the strangeness of that gospel story. The only characters are three "Voices": a contemporary English layman who is wrestling with the resurrection language, and two whom we come to see are Martha of Bethany and John the Beloved.

Jesus here seems to be physically taking Lazarus' death on himself as he approaches the tomb. He becomes death, even as "I am the Life" takes shape as the deep refrain of the play. He is not just life, but *the* life, as if, one voice says, he is "what's left" when rain washes away all the earth, down to living bedrock. Under all things is life, beyond even death. "The life itself" (135).

These three plays all explore the power of language, language taken not simply as the words humans say, but as a gift of creation and communication that is on loan, perhaps we could say, from God. Shakeshafte's yearning to give words to quiet voices, Jones's restless quest to name what grows in trenches, John's attempt to follow Jesus and pick up words like living pebbles off the ground — all speak to the beauty and the limits of our attempts to use words to bear witness to the living, transcendent God.

In both volumes, excellent and moving in very different ways, we find the sorts of theological surprises that only a literary imagination can really produce. God appears in the strangest of places. In a warm statue (*The Winter's Tale*), in the music that only a vile fish-smelling creature can hear (*The Tempest*), or in the muddy trenches of Europe. Or at the tomb of someone's brother. What strange stories these are. What a strange God they tell of.

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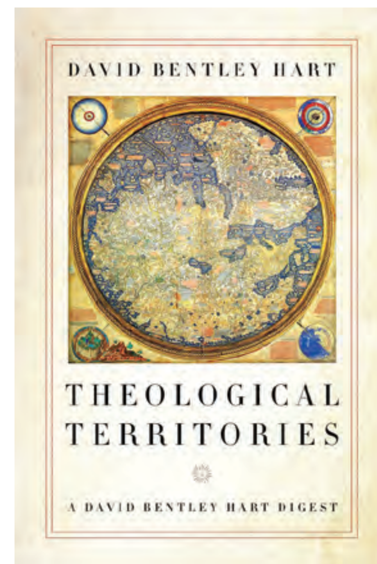
A Prophet for the Ages

Theological Territories
A David Bentley Hart Digest
By **David Bentley Hart**
Notre Dame Press, pp. 420, $29



Review by Dan Muth

It's not hard to point to your least favorite politician, cultural movement, what have you, and claim that, far from living in a time of meaningful progress, ours is actually a dark age of ignorance and superstition. What else is new? That's what every era of man since the Fall has been. Indeed, outside the rarified climes of scientific inquiry and technological innovation, the notion of progress is one of the sillier superstitions of our age.

For the last two decades or so, theologian David Bentley Hart has provided assured and often provocative guidance on how Christians might address some of society's errors. His colorful broadsides against latter-day atheism, with its painful ignorance of metaphysics, are well-known. He has produced noted works on theological aesthetics, theodicy, art, church history, and theism. Some — with good reason — consider him our greatest living essayist. His more recent works have included a controversial translation of the New Testament and an even more controversial defense of Origenian universalism.

In this volume, Hart gathers together a wide-ranging set of essays, most previously unpublished, many based on lectures, divided into five general sections: theology, science, culture, literature and art, and biblical translation.

The first section of the book is easily the most difficult for the casual reader. Some of the items in this section can be tough slogging for those not up on modern theological debates. This is not the case for the first piece, in which Hart responds to Rowan Williams's *The Tragic Imagination*. This is a particularly important topic for Americans, given their lawsuit-addled, utopia-inspired propensity to mistake tragedy for injustice.

Hart praises Williams's insights on tragedy's ability to enable the audience to experience suffering without being destroyed by it. Hart mainly adds that, for the Greeks, tragedy often fulfilled a religious purpose: Antigone *must* die, either to ensure that Creon and Thebes are not divinely punished, or (worse yet) it be shown that there is no divine order and law is arbitrary.

While acknowledging the brilliance of Williams's tragic reading of John's Passion, Hart demurs. Tragedy is a hopeful art form, yes, but for Hart, the hope offered is of the wrong kind. In the tragic telling, Christ, à la Antigone, must be sacrificed to appease divine wrath and restore cosmic harmony. Christ's death is foretold, all means of escape foreclosed, and the inevitable disaster takes place. Yet the Resurrection undermines the whole tragic structure: Christ's sacrifice is *not* accepted. He is raised, overturning all judgments against him. Balance is forsaken and the stakes are radically higher after Easter than they were before.

Throughout the book, one of Hart's major themes is his rejection of much of the Augustinian tradition of the West, particularly in its Calvinist and certain

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Thomist manifestations. These, he thinks, too easily accommodate tragic wisdom — particularly Christ's death as necessary appeasement of God's wrath.

For longtime readers of Hart, the second section of the book is a kind of old home week, a return to previous themes concerning theology and the natural sciences. In Aristotelian terms, science self-imposes a fixation on the material and efficient, to the exclusion of any consideration of formal or final causation. That this purely methodological limitation should be treated by some as a metaphysical necessity was probably inevitable, given the tremendous usefulness of the method and its results.

The third section of the book covers culture, and begins with a strong rejection of Edward Feser and Joseph Bessette's defense of capital punishment as irrefragably Christian. For Hart, this flies in the face of the entire New Testament and the Church Fathers. He expends two full essays on the matter before following up with an interesting discussion of Eastern Orthodoxy in America.

The fourth section consists of some fascinating essays on relatively obscure figures, Victor Segalen, Wiliam Empson, David Jones, and Léon Bloy. The figures have in common a sense of not-fully-realized or underappreciated brilliance fully expressive of their Final Cause, which is not the biblical God in all cases. It's a shame the Jones article contains no plates of his artwork (do consult Google), but snatches of his amazing poetry are on glorious display.

The piece on Bloy is a delight. One can only say of him, as Hart does, "*how French*."

The book closes with a fascinating, though at times painfully defensive, nuts-and-bolts discussion of his version of the New Testament. Hart seeks to offer a translation faithful to its time, era, and culture, which he considers irremediably strange to modern ears and very unlike what we receive through most committee-produced versions. These (particularly the NIV) he dismisses as overly influenced by later theology and thus compromised by anachronism. He seeks to restore a more immediate connection to the premodern world of Christ, with its sense of divine warfare and provisional dualism.

This is a worthy goal and no doubt marks his translation as an important contribution to biblical studies. Hart's voice is always worth listening to. But I see no reason to abandon the RSV. For those of us in the catholic tradition (and this includes Hart), doctrinal development is as much a work of God as biblical revelation.

What, then, to make of David Bentley Hart circa 2022? It's a shame that his last two major works have been at best unevenly received. He is probably right that his critics are being unfair, dealing with his extreme rhetoric rather than his arguments. This volume lends itself to problematic interpretation.

From Hart's unequivocal disassociation from the conservative publication *First Things* through his various sniffish remarks regarding our most recent ex-president and his evangelical supporters, to his reprobation of capital punishment and of capitalism, one might readily be tempted to classify Hart as a former conservative who has now turned to the dark side or seen the light, depending on your political sympathies.

This would be a misreading, I believe. Hart's intention is to address the interaction of theology with culture, science, art, literature, and academia. Politics may interest him, but he never directly addresses it. His rejection of capital punishment, for instance, is intended for the Church, not for Caesar. I think it entirely consonant with Hart's muse to note that his admonitions on the matter are directed at civilized Christians, and a nation-state that countenances legalized abortion is neither. Indeed, there is something execrably unseemly in solicitude toward the guilty by a people who refuse to protect the innocent.

In his discussion of Bloy, Hart touches on his subject's disdain of wealth and notes the matter is moral, rather than economic. Bloy did not speak of there being a fixed quantity of wealth such that one man's surfeit requires another man's dearth. This would seem true of Hart as well. His moral pronouncements may well have political ramifications, but his endorsement of, say, socialism is redolent of the Book of Acts' voluntarism rather than a demand that the multicultural United States should seek to imitate the monoculture of Sweden. His approach is simply never that shallow.

Hart's voice is prophetic as only one steeped in the life and times (and language and culture) of Christ can be. He has done the hard work of inwardly digesting the Scriptures, building formidable reasoning skills, reading widely, and thinking deeply. This is a man who has earned his place in the theological pantheon. His voice is one we do well to heed in our particular dark age, and this book is not a bad place to get to know it.

Dan Muth is a retired nuclear engineering manager. He recently relocated to Windermere, Florida, and attends St. Alban's Anglican Cathedral in Oviedo.

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A 'Radical Contemplative'

Edward King

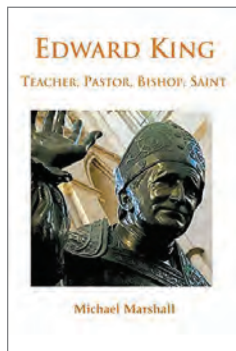
Teacher, Pastor, Bishop, Saint

By **Michael Marshall**

Gracewing, pp. xxi + 565, $40

Review by Peter Doll

When in 1885 Edward King (1829-1910) was appointed Bishop of Lincoln, the eminent church historian and Bishop of Chester William Stubbs told Prime Minister William Gladstone that he had made "the best appointment … since St. Anselm." The eminent canon of St. Paul's, Henry Scott Holland, exclaimed, "A St. Francis de Sales at Lincoln!"



A reader unfamiliar with Bishop King might assume that there was some friendly exaggeration at work here. Not the least strength of Michael Marshall's biography of King is that by this point in the bishop's life these comments come as no surprise, but seem fully justified. His contemporaries from all walks of life, no matter their perspectives on his principled high churchmanship, agreed that King exemplified in life the holiness that he preached.

In the same way that George Herbert came to be seen as an embodiment of the authentic parish priest in the reformed Church of England, so Marshall demonstrates that King — successively as parish priest, principal of Cuddesdon Theological College, professor of moral and pastoral theology at Oxford, Bishop of Lincoln, and "radical contemplative"— decisively shaped the ethos of Anglican priesthood for a century.

As a disciple of Newman, Pusey, Keble, Marriott, and other founders of the Oxford Movement, King as pastor, teacher, and liturgist embodied its priestly ideals and communicated them to successive generations. "Cuddesdon seemed to point further to something more radical in the training of the clergy, by providing not only a college for theological education but to set all study in the context of community life, committed to regular worship [of the Office and the Eucharist] and training in personal prayer," and gathered around the bishop supervising their formation for ordination.

As a priest, King was not only a person of prayer, but he was also outstanding in his love and care for the poor and the vulnerable. Even as bishop, he visited prisoners and accompanied the condemned to the scaffold.

Though he was not notable for his academic gifts (he took a "pass" rather than an "honors" degree at Oxford), he was an assiduous reader both of ancient and modern theology and of contemporary literature. He mastered French, German, and Italian so that he might read and converse with European churchmen, being influenced particularly by the writings of Johann Michael Sailer, the pastoral and ecumenical Bishop of Regensburg.

Although King is perhaps best known for being persecuted by the extreme evangelicals of the Church Association and put on trial for his very moderate high-church liturgical practices, he was not a "ritualist," and he always respected the traditions and practices of the parishes he visited as bishop. Far from being a narrow party man, he went out of his way to befriend Roman Catholics and Nonconformists.

Marshall, as a fellow bishop with King, writes with one eye on the present, acutely aware of how far today's managerial culture of the Church of England has devalued the pastoral tradition King embodied. This biography, clearly a labor of love, is in part a call to the Church to return to first principles.

Marshall has delved deeply in the primary sources, both manuscript and printed, and he has made good use of early secondary sources such as the work of Bishop Samuel Wilberforce. But, inexplicably, he has virtually ignored the rich seam of revisionist writing on the Oxford Movement stemming from the work of Peter Nockles. Had he not done so, Marshall would have been better able to appreciate the extent to which King's ministry and theology were more in sympathy with the high churchmanship of the long 18th century than the Anglo-Catholicism of the 20th.

The Rev. Canon Peter Doll is canon librarian and vice dean of Norwich Cathedral.

Medieval England's Daily Round

Going to Church in Medieval England

By **Nicholas Orme**

Yale University Press, pp. 483, $35

Review by Richard J. Mammana Jr.

Lay Canon Nicholas Orme of Truro Cathedral is one of the most prolific historians of religion in England, with more than 30 extraordinary titles to his name. Perhaps the most delightful was *Medieval Children* (2001), but his areas of expertise have been the history of cathedrals, pilgrimage, religious hospitals, education, and saints.

No scholar of the history of English lullabies can go without his *Fleas, Flies, and Friars* (2001). Now that he's in retirement from a long teaching career at the University of Exeter, Canon Orme's newest book, *Going to Church in Medieval England*, brings together a lifetime of work with a comprehensive

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account of medieval life in England's nearly 10,000 parish churches. (The word *medieval* in the title is somewhat misleading; his period begins with St. Augustine's mission to the English in 597 and ends with the Elizabethan Settlement in 1559.)

The parish system in the Church of England today is of course the direct successor of the world explored in Orme's book, continuing to offer a Christian presence in every community, with pastoral and sacramental services available to all local residents. Tracing its origins to the ministry centers where clergy engaged in the worship of God "through the daily round of services known as the Divine Office and through the celebration of the Mass," the parish system had reached most parts of England between the 10th and 12th centuries. By this time, it had completely transformed the English landscape and created the world sung into modern poetry by John Betjeman.

Legally required tithes and parish rentals supported the building of churches and the maintenance of clergy, and could be paid in young animals or money, as well as in "the wool of sheep, milk, butter and cheese, geese, ducks, hens and their eggs, honey from bees, doves from dovecotes, and catches of fish … hay, peas and beans, hemp, orchard fruit, garden vegetables, cider, timber, brushwoods and reeds, and the bracken used for animal bedding."

Most English Christians during the period could expect to spend the entirety of their lives in easy walking distance of one parish church, with many also experiencing the worship of smaller chapels (and domestic chapels), as well as monasteries and convents or cathedrals and pilgrimage centers. The parish priest was a figure of extraordinary importance, with divine responsibilities and authority but also an uneasy status as a community employee of sorts.

The pervasive sacramental ordering of life through the parish meant that English persons came into the world

The parish priest was a figure of extraordinary importance, with divine responsibilities and authority but also an uneasy status as a community employee of sorts.

fortified by baptism, organized their families through marriage, and continued to be remembered liturgically in the same churches long after their death in the omnipresent system of chantry Masses. This was of course the same lived experience of "going to church" known to most Western European Christians, but Orme is keen to track its development and specifics to currents in English history, such as observances related to English saints and local pre-Christian traditions, as well as the ever-changing attitudes of nobles and royal families.

Orme breaks his work down into separate chapters on the staff of the church, church buildings, the congregation, the daily and weekly cycles of worship, the seasons of the year and their traditional observances, the parish church as the center for the human life cycle, and finally the effect of the English Reformation on the world described in each of these ways.

There are wonderful glimpses of historical personalities in accounts of clergy and laypeople alike, suggesting substantial human continuity with church life in the present. There are also important social realities mentioned along the way, such as the regular tolling of the church bell as the only non-natural way of telling the time of day for most of English history. Orme is evenhanded in his evaluation of the Reformation as a time of profound disruption of many aspects of parish life, but also substantial survivals of earlier forms varying widely by individual community.

Some readers may ask why there is a need for a new treatment of what may seem familiar ground for students of English church history. Many will remember Eamon Duffy's work in the 1990s and early 2000s in his monumental books *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580* and *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village*.

Orme's work is different and welcome in its somewhat longer scope, as well as a slightly less academic register of writing. There are copious endnotes and a good bibliography, but *Going to Church in Medieval England* is less specialist in emphasis and tone than Duffy's contributions. It is an attractive and substantial brick of a book, with 60 color illustrations and maps depicting everything from medieval celebrations of the sacraments to building renovations during the Reformation. It would be an ideal seminary textbook for courses on English church history, and an important addition to any parish library.

Richard J. Mammana Jr. is the Episcopal Church's associate for ecumenical and interreligious relations.

Appointments

The Rev. Canon **Melinda M. Artman** is Northern canon missioner of the Diocese of Bethlehem and rector of Redeemer, Sayre, Pa.

The Rev. **Marla L. Asson** is associate priest at St. Catherine of Siena, Reno, Nev.

The Rev. **Susan Astarita** is assisting priest at St. Peter's, Del Mar, Calif.

The Rev. **Kelly Aughenbaugh** is rector of St. Paul's, Medina, Ohio.

The Rev. **Nina Bacas** is interim associate rector at Grace Church, Alexandria, Va.

The Rev. **William Boyles** is associate rector of St. Luke's, Birmingham, Ala.

The Rev. **Dan Collier** is supply priest at Christ Church, Medway, Mass.

The Rev. **John Conner** is deacon in charge of Grace, Hulmeville, and Incarnation, Morrisville, Pa.

The Rev. **Peter Corbin** is vicar of Bethany, Hilliard, Fla.

The Rev. **Rebecca Dinovo** is the Diocese of San Diego's ecumenical and interfaith officer.

Ms. **Debbie Donaldson** is the Diocese of Alabama's missioner for communications.

The Rev. Canon **Robertson Donehue** is canon precentor of Grace Church Cathedral, Charleston, S.C.

The Rev. **Anne Ellsworth** is interim rector of Transfiguration, Mesa, Ariz.

The Rev. **Anthony Estes** is rector of the Detroit Church Partnership (All Saints', St. Matthew's & St. Joseph's; associate at Cathedral Church of St. Paul).

The Rev. **Grace Flint** is priest in charge of St. Francis', North Bellmore, N.Y.

The Rev. **John Gitau** is rector of Bristol Trinity, North Easton, Mass.

The Rev. **Katherine Gordon** is associate clergy at St. Alban's, El Cajon, Calif.

The Rev. **Jessica Holthus** is rector of St. Anne's, Reston, Va.

The Very Rev. **Robin L. James** is dean of the Diocese of West Missouri's Northwest-Metro Deanery.

The Rev. **Abram Jones** is rector of All Saints', Granada, Miss.

The Rev. **Tyler Jones** is interim priest at Grace, Nyack, N.Y.

The Rev. **Radha Kaminski** is Northern Region youth missioner for the dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan.

The Rev. **Linda Karpuch** is assistant at All Saints', Frederick, Md.

The Rev. **Lee Lowery** is interim rector of Holy Trinity, Auburn, Ala.

The Rev. **James Manion** is parish priest at St. Philip's, Laurel, Del.

The Rev. **David Manley** is rector of St. Matthew's, Kenosha, Wis.

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The Rev. **Maureen Martin** is priest associate for parish life at Christ Church, Grosse Pointe, Mich.

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The Rev. **Isaac Martinez** is a church planter in Allston, Mass.

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The Rt. Rev. **James Mathes** is dean of studies of the Diocese of San Diego's school for ministry.

The Rev. **Anna Olson** is associate priest at Misa Magdalena, Silver Spring, Md.

The Rev. **Elizabeth Orens** is priest associate at St. Paul's, K Street, Washington, D.C.

The Rev. **Larry Packard** is long-term supply priest at Our Redeemer, Aldie, Va.

The Rev. Dr. **John Palarine** is interim rector of St. Patrick's, Saint Johns, Fla.

The Rev. **Glenn Palmer** is interim priest at Holy Comforter, Martinez, Ga.

The Rev. **Marcea Paul** is the Diocese of Texas's chief of staff.

The Rev. **Andrew Rutledge** is rector of All Saints', Sunderland, Md.

The Rev. **Julia Rusling** is rector of St. Augustine's, Metairie, La.

The Rev. **Meghan Ryan** is associate rector at Christ Church, Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

The Rev. Dr. **Joshua Samuels** is interim priest in charge of St. John's, Springfield Gardens, N.Y.

The Very Rev. **Dow Sanderson** is dean of the Diocese of South Carolina's West Charleston Deanery.

The Rev. **Joshua Saxe** is rector of St. Matthew's, Wheeling, W.V.

The Rev. **Stuart Scarborough** is the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania's property manager and

The Rev. Dr. **Anita Schell** is rector of St. Ann's, Old Lyme, Conn.

The Rev. **Chris Schuller** is priest in charge of St. Timothy's, Henderson, Nev.

The Rev. **Joel Turmo** is Southern Region youth missioner of the dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan.

The Rev. **Francisco Valle** is priest in charge of Our Saviour, Hillandale, Md.

The Rev. **Dina van Klaveren** is priest in charge of St. Paul's, Poplar Springs, Md.

The Rev. **Doug Wasinger** is interim priest at Christ Church, Newcastle, and interim assisting priest at Good Shepherd, Sundance, and St. Francis on the Prairie, Wright, Wyo.

The Rev. **Anne O. Weatherholt** is interim rector of St. Mary Magdalene's, Aspen Hill, Md.

The Rev. **Diana Widlake** is rector of Epiphany, Oak Hill, Va.

Deaths

The Rev. **Ronald A. Glaude**, a Korean War veteran who served as rector of his home parish in rural Connecticut for 28 years, died peacefully on March 22 at 85.

He was born in Putnam, Connecticut, and served on the USS Midway in the Pacific during the Korean War, and afterward, in the Caribbean and Mediterranean on the USS Franklin D. Roosevelt.

He graduated from the University of Connecticut in 1974, and trained for the ministry at Episcopal Divinity School. After a three-year curacy at St. John's in Stamford, he returned to Brooklyn, Connecticut, in 1980, and served as rector of Trinity Parish until his retirement in 2008.

In Brooklyn, he served for many years on the local housing authority, community services, and hospital boards, and helped to establish a chapter of Habitat for Humanity. He had a strong tenor voice, enjoyed singing in local choirs, and tutored many students at the Pomfret Rectory School. He was trained in 15th-century Russian icon-writing and was a student of Russian history and literature, and Orthodox spirituality.

Glaude is survived by Grace, his wife of 63 years, and four children, 12 grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren.

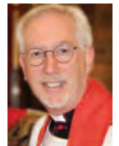
The Rev. **Vernon Donald Hall**, a longtime university chaplain and adjunct professor, died March 15 at 74.

A native of Connellsville, Pennsylvania, he was a graduate of St. Vincent College, Mount St. Mary's Seminary, and the University of Pittsburgh. He was a decorated veteran of the U.S. Army, serving in Louisiana and Germany from 1969 to 1972.

He was ordained a Roman Catholic priest, and served for nearly two decades in the Diocese of Greensburg, Pennsylvania. He was an adjunct professor of religion and sociology at Thiel College and taught in the education department at Duquesne University. He was also chaplain at Seton Hall University in Greensburg, and executive director of Catholic Charities.

Hall was received into the Episcopal Church in 1998 by Bishop Paul Marshall of the Diocese of Bethlehem. He served as rector of Trinity Church in New Castle, Pennsylvania, and of St. Andrew's, Canfield, and St. Luke's, Niles, in the Diocese of Ohio.

He is survived by his wife of 25 years, Mary Theresa, two sisters, two brothers, and numerous nieces and nephews.



The Rev. Canon **William John Spaid**, who served for 17 years as the Diocese of Western Michigan's canon to the ordinary, died March 20 at 68.

Spaid grew up in Frederick, Maryland, and after earning degrees in education from Frostburg State University, taught elementary school for seven years. Answering a call to the ministry, he studied at Nashotah House and was ordained to the priesthood in 1987.

He began his ministry as rector of St. Martin of Tours, Kalamazoo, Michigan, while also helping to lead the diocesan youth camp, and serving as a mentor in Education for Ministry. He was a deputy to several General Conventions and served on the team for several CREDO conferences.

Spaid became canon to the ordinary of his diocese in 2002, guiding many parishes through transitions and mentoring numerous candidates for holy orders. In 2019, he became a regional missioner in the diocese and retired in 2021.

He was a devoted gardener and entertainer, with an extensive china collection and a talent for calligraphy and the art of Ukrainian pysanky. Spaid is survived by his partner, Greg Fitzgerald, two children, and four grandchildren.

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SUNDAY'S READINGS | 2 Easter, April 24

Acts 5:27-32 • Ps. 118:14-29 or Ps. 150 • Rev. 1:4-8 • John 20:19-31

From Captivity to Freedom

The signs recorded in the gospel all have one purpose. Jesus turned water into wine, healed a young man near death, gave strength to a lame man at a pool of water, fed more than 5,000, walked upon the stormy sea, gave sight to a man born blind, raised Lazarus from the dead — all for one glorious reason. In the words of St. John, "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that *Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name*" (John 20:30-31). This interpretive key opens not only John's gospel but the whole of the Old and New Testaments. "These things are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name." To believe and to have life in his name is a true sharing in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, of which you and I are privileged witnesses.

In the Passion and death of Jesus, in his descent among the dead, and preeminently in the Resurrection, Jesus Christ reveals God's inexhaustible love for us, and *he frees us from our sins* (Rev. 1:5). Here, and briefly, we must inquire about the word *sin*. There are a few perfectly correct ways to define this word that do not fully express its gravity. For instance, it can mean a failure to hit the mark, an error of understanding, a single moral lapse. Its more common usage in the New Testament, however, especially in the writings of St. Paul, suggests an evil and pervasive power that rules over humanity. In this unusual time of global pandemic, it might help to think of sin similarly as a deadly threat to humanity that is highly transmissible.

Here is a brief list of sayings about sin, all taken from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans: death spread to all because all have sinned, all are under the power of sin, the whole body of sin, enslaved to sin. In this view, sin is a form of captivity from which there seems no escape. Again, to quote St. Paul, "For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me" (Rom. 7:19-20). The grave and pervasive power of sin explains why otherwise perfectly decent human beings can, if sufficiently tempted, do horrible things. As if in despair, St. Paul cries out, "Who will rescue me from this body of death?" (Rom. 7:24).

St. Paul would not dwell on the gravity of sin, but for this joyous exclamation: "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Rom. 7:25).

Jesus descended to the dead, "broke the bond of death and hell, and rose victorious from the grave" (Exsultet, BCP). In so doing, he delivers us and frees us from the gloom of sin, so that, in union with him, we might become a new humanity. United to the risen Lord, we become our true selves, the person "which in God, in the freedom of God, I am, and you are" (Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*).

That we must still grow in grace and love, that we must still repent when we sin and turn to the Lord is, of course, clear. The victory, nonetheless, has been accomplished and cannot be revoked. "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36).

Look It Up
Psalm 118:16-17

Think About It
The Lord is exalted!

Acts 9:1-6 (7-20) • Ps. 30 • Rev. 5:11-14 • John 21:1-19

Conversion

Saul of Tarsus, the persecutor of the Church, and Simon Peter, who denied Jesus three times, both undergo a profound conversion. They arrive at their new and transformed condition, not through self-reflection or the pangs of conscience, nor human persuasions. Rather, they each have a direct encounter with the risen Lord, which in some measure is true of every believing person.

So, to emphasize this point that Christ encounters each of us directly: the reading of Scripture in church and the sermon to follow it, the recitation of the Nicene Creed, the offering of the Prayers of the People, the confession of sin and absolution, and the declaration of the peace of Christ are, all together, a real encounter with the risen Lord in his holy Church. "For where two or more are gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Matt. 18:20). These words are a dominical and irrefutable promise. Take them to heart! "How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth" (Ps. 119:103).

Further, the Holy Communion is our weekly participation in the body and blood of Christ, through which we enter the cross, death, and Resurrection of Christ. "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16). The entire Sunday liturgy, every word of it and every gesture, is directed toward nothing less than a radical and thorough conversion to Christ.

Shortly before his encounter with the risen Lord, Saul of Tarsus was "still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9:1). While on his way to Damascus to arrest any who "belonged to the Way," a light flashed about him, cast him to the ground, blinded him, and spoke, saying, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? … I am Jesus whom you are persecuting" (Acts 9:4-5). With these words, the risen Lord announces his absolute identification with his disciples. Inasmuch as Saul breathes threat and murder against the disciples, he does so against Jesus. When Saul's vision is restored after three days, something like scales fall from his eyes, and he sees the risen Lord in the disciples of the Lord. In a real sense, the risen body of the Lord is the Church collectively and all her members individually. Turning to Christ will always mean turning to one another in understanding, forgiveness, compassion, and love.

Simon Peter, who had denied Jesus three times, said to his companions, "I am going fishing" (John 21:3). Although Christ had risen and revealed himself as alive to them, they were drawn back to their former lives almost as if nothing had happened. Earlier, when Peter and the other disciples went to the tomb, found the stone removed, and saw the linen wrappings, they did not announce the event. Rather, as St. John tells us, "the disciples returned to their homes" (John 20:10). *Going home and going fishing* suggest a regression, a backward drift toward a life in which there never was a Jesus. And this occurs after the Lord appeared to them in the Upper Room! God forbid, but it is possible to know the risen Lord, as we surely do, and yet drift toward a forgetfulness. So, again and again, Jesus will ask, "Do you love me?" And he will say, "Feed my sheep. See me in my disciples and feed my sheep." In our very midst, the risen Lord stands. Do we see, and do we love?

Look It Up

Psalm 30:1-3

Think About It

You brought me up, O Lord, from death.

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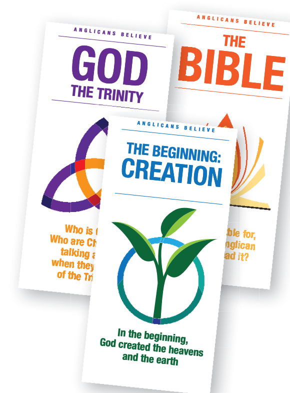
The 2022 World Christianity Summer Institute, "Grief, Resilience, and Hope amid the Pandemic," will take place July 18-22 at the Cambridge Centre for Christianity Worldwide, Westminster College, Cambridge, England. We will welcome theological students, educators, researchers, and any Christian interested in learning about Christianity in other parts of the world. We will focus on how the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting churches and their communities, locally and worldwide, and how they are responding. We will listen attentively to God and each other while we consider working together to create better societies built on care, compassion, and justice as we live through this pandemic. For more information or to apply by April 14, contact: **centre@cccw.cam.ac.uk**.



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