



# Mandate

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## ADVENT MEDITATIONS

Blessed Lord, who has caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of ever-lasting life, which thou has given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Collect for the Second Sunday in Advent*



# Reflections FROM THE Editor's Desk

By Roberta Bayer, Ph.D., Assistant Professor,  
Patrick Henry College, Purcellville, Virginia

## Peter Toon's Final Book

Certainly the most important news is that Wipf and Stock have published the last of the books written by the Reverend Dr. Peter Toon entitled: *Foretaste of Heaven amidst Suffering: Living with the Life-Threatening Disease of Amyloidosis*. It is, as the title suggests, a reflection upon the last things. This book is available on Wipf and Stock's website, and shall be available through Marketplace.

## More on Women's Ordination

In the last issue I offered some reasons for why someone might have reservations about ordaining women to the priesthood. Subsequently I was asked, interestingly enough, why I did not mention the authoritative tradition of the apostolic priesthood. This was not an oversight on my part because throughout the arguments it was assumed that there is an intrinsic connection between the Scripture and that tradition, in particular if one considers the fact that Christ chose only men to be His apostles. If, as Dr. Michael Carreker argues most beautifully in his article in this issue, the Bible is the most transparent of windows into the mind of God, and it is the end of Biblical seeing to follow Christ, then surely it is Christ's example, given in the Bible, which is the source of the tradition of male priesthood within the Church. Obedience to Christ's example is anything but sexist; for indeed, it is only through obedience to Christ that each person finds the way that is set before them.

## A response to *Border Crossing*

My comments in the last issue under the topic of *Border Crossing and the Anglican Way* elicited some commentary from one of our Board Members. Fr. Daniel Clarke wrote that my comments do not place

enough importance on the visible church, manifested through baptism. He wrote:

The idea that only the "earnest" (those who "desire to follow in the footsteps of Christ and know his Word") can "hope" to be members of the Church seems directly opposite the teaching on page 292 of the 1928 BCP, that the inward and spiritual grace in Baptism "is a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness, whereby we are made the children of grace." This Prayer book description sounds a lot like my understanding of Church membership, as we say of the newly baptized: "a child of God, an inheritor of heaven, and at this moment the newest member of the one Holy Catholic Church." The Sacrament does the work of Grace, not any works of mine such as *desiring* or *knowing* — and I cite Article XXVII in this regard. The whole Anglican Way has been based on the givenness of the visibility and specificity and knowability — the absolute instantiation — of the Church.

Fr Clarke is exactly right to point out that the saving grace of Baptism is a work of Christ and not our own work. Furthermore the Church is made visible in its sacraments as a corporate body — this is a mark of the Church. Yet, at the same time, in saying that the Body of Christ, the Church, is a spiritual reality, one does not belittle its visible manifestation. The Church is both visible and invisible at the same time, but the borders of those two realms do not entirely correspond. The grace of baptism is given; but it can also be rejected.

When St Augustine of Hippo (354-430) pointed to the existence of false Christians within the Church, and that the City of God, while on pilgrimage in this world has in her midst some who are united with her in participation in the sacraments, but who will not join with her in the eternal destiny of the

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saints, he makes this very distinction between invisible and visible churches (*City of God* 1.35). He had cause to give much consideration to this question in his disputes with the Donatists. Augustine concluded that although we cannot in this life discern who will inherit eternal life, what we do know is we cannot be saved against our wills.

### Further Thoughts on Mary

Continuing discussion about the ordination of women encourages me to note again that it is a woman, not a man, Mary the Mother of God, who is the exemplar above all of Christian virtue, for both men and women. In the last issue I mentioned Cranmer's reasons for placing the *Magnificat* as the first canticle of Evening Prayer.

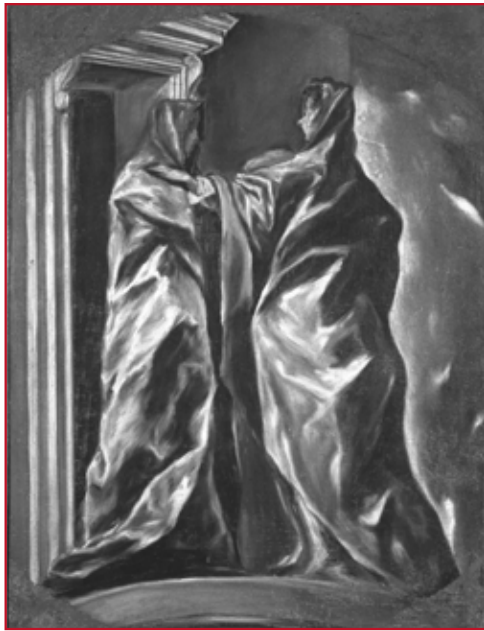
The *Magnificat* is Mary's prayer in praise of God for condescending to use her as the means by which he would bring salvation to his people. The setting of Mary's prayer was in the house of her kinswoman Elizabeth to whom she had rushed, after having been visited by the Angel Gabriel: *And Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, into the city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias and saluted Elizabeth. And it came to pass that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. And she spake out with a loud voice and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. (Luke 1.39-42)*

In the Music Room at Dumbarton Oaks in Georgetown, D.C. there hangs a painting by El Greco (1541-1614) of the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth. An intense expression of purpose is depicted on the face of Mary as she and Elizabeth salute each other, one arm outstretched towards the other, not so much in an embrace of sisterly love, but in a gesture of unity, of companionship, united in their fate, each seeing in the other the fulfillment of God's divine purposes. The ethereal light in the background, typical of El Greco's paintings, outlines the figure of Mary and Elizabeth and points to that unity of purpose.

Mary has run in such haste into the mountains to see Elizabeth that she appears in her humility, shoeless. Both are clothed in shapeless blue-grey cloaks, almost the color of the rocks in the background. The only sign of human habitation is the unexpectedly angular and wonderfully classical portico to Elizabeth's house standing at the center of rocky hillside. It makes a startling contrast with the shapelessness

of both rocks and cloaks. The only face one sees is that of Mary; Elizabeth's face is hidden within her hood. It is as if in the rational and artfully-made classical architecture of the portico in which Elizabeth stands, and into which Mary shall enter, El Greco is foreshadowing how God, in taking on humanity through Mary, is about to enter into that house of reason which man had built, to grace it forever. The entire picture seems to foreshadow what will eventually be accomplished in the history of the Church.

Which brings me back to this rather interesting point about the relation of men to women within the church. While men are appointed by Christ to sustain the Church, to offer the sacraments, and to maintain the teaching, it is only through the sublime love of God which can be seen in Mary's obedience, revealed even in her haste to bring news to Elizabeth of God's announcement, that the Church, which is after all the Body of Christ, began as a child, in Christ Jesus.



El Greco, Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth. Courtesy Dumbarton Oaks, House Collection, Washington, D.C.

### Nunc dimittis

Cranmer placed the *Nunc dimittis* or Song of Simeon, (Luke 2.29), as the second canticle at Evening Prayer. Like the *Magnificat*, this passage has traditionally been sung at the Evening Service since the fourth century. Simeon, as Luke relates, was a man righteous and devout, who lived in Jerusalem and was looking and waiting for the consolation of Israel. When Mary brought the new born Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem to be presented to the Lord, as was the custom, upon the sight of Jesus Simeon took the child into his arms and was inspired by the Holy Ghost to pray these words to God.

The placement of the Song of Simeon after the reading of the New Testament is entirely logical. Massey Shepherd notes in The Oxford American Prayer Book Commentary that insofar as "the *Magnificat* looks forward to the Incarnation, this canticle looks back upon it as an accomplished fact." Israel's hopes are fulfilled, the incarnation is complete; therefore Simeon speaks of that complete peace which will accompany his death in the comforting knowledge that salvation is accomplished. Christ is not only the glory of Israel, but also a light to lighten the Gentiles. The transition from the reading of the Old Testament to the reading of the New through the canticles of the *Magnificat* and the *Nunc dimittis*, has been the mainstay of evening liturgical practice since at least the fourth century.

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## FORETASTE OF HEAVEN AMIDST SUFFERING

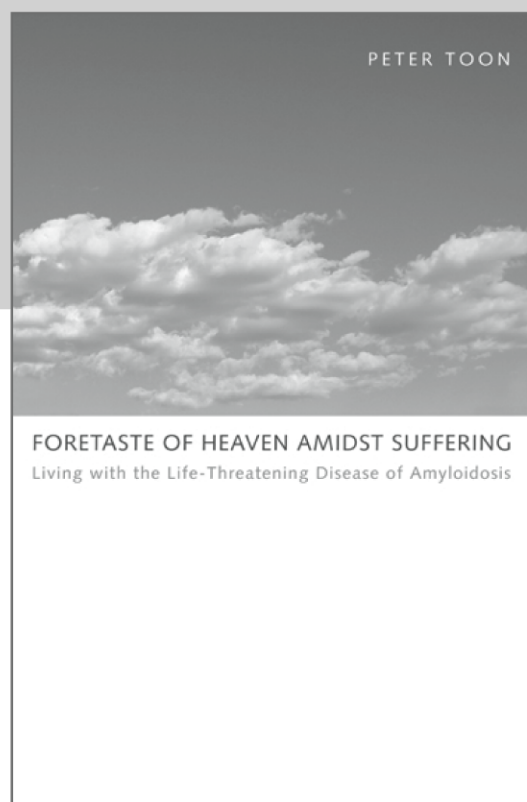
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“Mortally ill, Peter Toon was personally confronted by questions about Christian patience and hope, the nature of intercessory prayer, the life of the world to come. His response was to interweave theological thought of his customary clarity with the experience of a dying man. One reader told me she had stayed up all night to finish the story, sometimes weeping. This is a beautiful, practical, profound Christian book.”

—Ian Robinson, author of  
*Who Killed the Bible: Last Words on Translating the Holy Scriptures*

PETER TOON



The Reverend Dr. Peter Toon (1939 - 2009) was born in Yorkshire, England, and was a graduate of the University of London and of Oxford. He was ordained a priest in the Church of England in 1973, and taught theology in both England and America, and was also a visiting professor and guest lecturer at a variety of seminaries and universities in Asia, Europe, and Australia.

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# A Letter from the President

## INSTANT UNDERSTANDING — OR DEEPER MEMORY?

According to a report in *The Economist* (October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010), “numerous studies have demonstrated that when people are forced to think hard about what they are shown they remember it better.” The report focused on a Princeton University study of memory and visual difficulty. They compared the retention rates of those who read the same text in a difficult to read font, such as a 10-point Earwig factory, versus those who read it in something like a 14-point Arial Black. Exposed for ninety seconds to the text and told to memorize it, they were then distracted with unrelated matters for an hour. At the end of an hour, 87% of the test subjects who had read a text in a difficult font were capable of remembering it, while only 74% of those who had read that text in an easy font had the same recall. Apparently this technique has worked in the classroom too.

I am not surprised by this response. The bridegroom who has to remember to say “and thereto I plight thee my troth” — a rather long sentence with unfamiliar words whose pronunciation has to be learnt — has undoubtedly had to focus his attention rather more than the one merely has to remember “this is my solemn vow.” The mental effort required to make sense of, and then remember, something obscure requires a greater degree of work, of attention. The mind and will are both engaged more fully. Where mind and will are both engaged, a deeper impression is made, and with that the capacity for remembrance.

So should we go back to the Gothic script in our Bibles and Prayer Books (which I sometimes find almost illegible); or go back further, to ancient script styles — all capitals, no spaces between words, almost no punctuation? Or combine the two? Perhaps this is not for everybody — though it might be a good learning tool for memorizing Scripture! (I am keen to experiment with my Sunday School — though not so keen to try the experiment with older, weaker eyes.)

But there is another possibility which this report unfortunately does not explore. Does the same result after mental application follow from verbal presentation as well as visual (the font)? Is the liturgical English of Tyndale, Cranmer, Coverdale, and the King James Version intrinsically more memorable than (say) the New International Version or the Good News Bible — precisely because it is not as immediate and easily understood? There is some anecdotal evidence of the same. One thinks not just of those Anglicans with little schooling who for centuries have memorized vast tracks of the sacred text, but also of conservative Muslims in their *madrassas*, memorizing vast tracts of the Koran in classical Arabic, which is, I am told, quite different from various modern spoken forms of Arabic, and completely different from the languages of Iran, Pakistan, and Indonesia.

Episcopalians and Anglicans in the west are not great memorizers, and often seem condescending to those Christians who make

memorization of scripture a part of their Christian discipline. That is part of our Episcopalian snobbery, I am afraid. It is also a measure of how much even conservative Anglicans have been conformed to a world marked by immediacy, instant gratification, and the consequent transience.

But what comes easily also goes easily. Scripture instructs us that memory is the foundation of a true knowledge and love of God; forgetfulness leads to ignorance, perversity, and ruin. There are many texts which exhibit the connection between forgetfulness/fairness and remembrance/faith, hope, and love, but Deuteronomy 8 is a good demonstration of the theme. Israel is only faithful in the present and hopeful for the future so far as it remembers what God has done.

In the Prayer Book, and the King James Version, we have a corrective — if only we would use it. We cannot do much about those who dismiss these things; but we can certainly change what we do.



The Rev. Gavin G. Dunbar, President, Prayer Book Society, and Rector, St John's Episcopal Church, Savannah, Georgia

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*The Society is dedicated to the preservation, understanding, and propagation of the Anglican Doctrine as contained in the traditional editions of The Book of Common Prayer.*

# Advent Meditations

The Rev. Dr. Robert Crouse, Professor of Classics, Emeritus, Dalhousie University, Halifax, N.S.

**A**nglican spirituality is essentially liturgical: it is a way of spiritual life founded in worship and fulfilled in worship; a spiritual life shaped by the word of God mediated to us in the cycles of the liturgical year. It is that liturgical pattern of proclaiming the Word of God, day by day, week by week, year by year, which has shaped the mind and heart of Anglican Christianity. And that pattern has remained substantially unchanged for more than a millennium, up until our own generation.

If you consider, for instance, the selection of Epistle and Gospel lessons for the Sundays in Advent,

development of teachings from one week to the next. Each set of texts builds upon the thought of the preceding set, and points ahead to the one that follows.

Our Anglican Reformers saw no need to alter that ancient pattern; they insisted only that it be better understood by all the faithful: read, marked, learned and inwardly digested; that it be more deeply understood and more perfectly obeyed, that by patience and comfort of God's Holy Word, we might all embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope which is ours in Christ Jesus. Anglican spiritual nurture is basically a matter of hearing that proclamation, following that pattern, year after year, understanding perhaps a bit more each time, and each time conforming our lives



as they appear in the Book of Common Prayer, you will find that they are precisely those appointed in the Sarum Missal of the medieval Church of England, and are in fact the same as those prescribed in the *Comes of St Jerome*, which goes back to the Fifth Century. The only change has been Archbishop Cranmer's addition, in 1549, of a few verses to the beginning of the Epistle lesson and the end of the Gospel lesson for the first Sunday in Advent. Apart from the slight lengthening of those two lessons, the Advent lectionary remains unchanged since early Christian times.

What we have in that series is not a random selection of readings, but a coherent series of texts, in which Epistle and Gospel lessons interpret and supplement each other, and in which there is a continuous, logical

a bit more closely to its truth.

Because our spiritual life is basically liturgical, because it is formed and shaped and sustained by that pattern of proclamation of God's Word, it makes little sense, I think, to try to consider it abstractly, as though spiritual life were an activity somehow off by itself. The problem is rather to see and understand the spiritual dimensions of the Church's liturgical proclamation week by week, and season by season, throughout the year. And therefore, as we prepare for Advent (as we prepare, that is to say, for preparation!), it seems to me that our best course is to try to prepare ourselves to understand more deeply the spiritual dimensions of the Advent lessons.

The Advent season is multi-dimensional. It looks backward in time to the coming of the Son of God

as the Infant of Bethlehem two thousand years ago; it looks forward to the end of time, to the consummation of history in the coming of the Son of God as Judge. But there is yet another dimension of the most vital importance for our spiritual life: Advent is about God's coming now, and our Advent lessons encourage our hope and expectation of his presence in our life here and now.

Thomas Aquinas, in the Prologue of his commentary on Isaiah, speaks of these three dimensions of Advent: the coming of the Son of God *in carne*: in the flesh, historically; his coming *in mente*: in our souls, now by grace; and *ad iudicium*: at the judgement, at the end and as the end of history. Paramount in our Advent lessons is that second dimension: Christ's Advent *in mente*, the present coming of the Word of God in our souls by grace. If you were to look at the lessons from that standpoint, you would notice how in each case the Epistle lesson underlines the present reference of the Gospel lesson.

This point can be illustrated with reference to the lessons for the First Sunday in Advent. The Gospel lesson recounts as historical incident the coming of Jesus to Jerusalem and his cleansing of the Temple. But the historical reference is broader than that: the Kingdom of Israel is God's city and his Temple; he comes to claim the throne of David, and his coming is a judgment upon that Temple, both immediately and ultimately. Thus the Gospel speaks of Christ's Advent *in carne* and *ad iudicium*. But on another level, the Temple of God's presence in the human soul, and Christ, the Word of God, comes to the soul to awaken it from its futile dreams and purify its desire. It is that dimension of the Gospel lesson that the Epistle lesson draws out: "Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep." The Word of God approaches, "the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light...put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof. This, you see, is Christ's Advent *in mente*.

I suggest we consider the themes of the four Advent Sundays in a three-dimensional way. The

themes are there:

#### I. The Awakening and Cleansing of the Soul.

*Gospel*: Mtt. 21.1: Jesus arouses Jerusalem and Cleanses the Temple. *Epistle*: Rom. 13.8: The Soul (God's Temple) is to be awakened and cleansed of works of darkness, and armed with light.

#### II. The Passing World and the Enduring Word.

*Gospel*: Lk. 21.25: Heaven and earth pass away, but the Word of God endures. *Epistle*: Rom. 15.4: The Word of God in the believing soul is the ground of patience, comfort and hope.

#### III. Witnessing to the Word, in Hope

*Gospel*: Mtt. 11.2: John the Baptist in prison, the prophetic messenger. *Epistle*: 1 Cor. 4.1: The Christian soul as faithful steward of the revealed mysteries.

#### IV. Recognition of the Word and Rejoicing in His Coming.

*Gospel*: John 1.19: Behold the Lamb of God. *Epistle*: Phil. 4.4: Rejoicing, thanksgiving and peace in heart and mind.

Advent is the proclamation of God's three-fold coming: *in carne*, *in mente* and *ad iudicium*. And notice how those three dimensions are connected: Christ's coming in the flesh, historically, and his atoning work, is the basis of his coming to our souls in grace; and his coming in judgement is nothing other than the summation of all his comings in grace and what we have made of them. "This is the judgement, that light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light..." (Jn. 3.19) And so this season urges us to wake up, to cast off darkness and clothe ourselves in light.

As Austin Farrer puts it, "Advent brings Christmas, judgements runs out into mercy. For the God who saves us and the God who judges us is one God... what judges us is what redeems us, the love of God... But while love thus judges us by being what it is, the same love redeems us by effecting what it does. Love shares flesh and blood with us in this present world, that the eyes which look us through at last may find in us a better substance than our vanity." (*Crown of the Year*, Advent II)

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# The Order of the Service of Holy Communion

## AND THE LOGIC OF CHRISTIAN REDEMPTION (PART 6)

by Paul Epstein Ph.D.

**A**fter the Comfortable words, the remainder of the Service indicates to the believer that his being saved from sin is a moment within the glory of God. The consecration begins with ascribing “All glory” to almighty God, and the service itself concludes with communicants singing the Gloria in Excelsis. God is glorious because Christ, having taken human nature, causes us to participate in the divine life through his all-availing sacrifice.

The nature of that Sacrifice is not presented to those who have never known division or sin but to those who feel and know the anguish of division within themselves and of separation from God. Those who plead that Sacrifice have been brought to the knowledge that only friendship with God can overcome that division. While neither Adam nor a primal innocence is directly mentioned in the service, the well-instructed communicant knows that the friendship between God and man established by Christ’s sacrifice is something far greater than the natural happiness imaged in the mythology of Eden.

That God has planned his friendship with us from all eternity is indicated in the third of the Comfortable Words that says “..Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.” The same sentiment is expressed in the verse from Revelation “the lamb that was slain from before the foundations of the world.” (Rev. 13:8) Blessedly our service is not interrupted by footnotes indicating the exact order in which sin and redemption appear in God’s mind. Much 17<sup>th</sup> century ink was spilled about disputes on this question. The first sentence of the Prayer of Consecration is more interested in ascribing all glory to God for the tender mercy shown to us through Christ’s sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. This excludes, of course, the monstrous speculation that from all eternity God has

planned to save some and damn others.

Although the phrase “for the sins of the whole world” has been in the Service since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, this is not to say that those who devised the service would have intended the idea of universal salvation in their theological speculations. If, however, the much-overused phrase *lex orandi lex credendi* (the law of praying is the law of believing) has any real meaning, it teaches us that a literary-theological work such as a liturgy can teach truths that the theologians have not yet learned how to define. Liturgy, like Holy scripture itself, and much poetry, presents us with a combination of thought and image; students of poetry and philosophy know well that poets can often intuit what philosophers cannot think.

The universality of Christ’s sacrifice is the ground of the believer’s confidence that Christ has also died pro se (for him). The Episcopal Church has always steered clear of trying to devise means whereby the believer’s confidence rests in some special knowledge of the workings of Providence in his own particular case. Together with that of the Lutherans, our piety has made the sacramental presentation of the Sacrifice the center of the individual’s assurance.

This sacramental representation also depends for its character on the absolute uniqueness of the Sacrifice, as the very strong language “by his one oblation of himself once offered” makes clear. The absolute priority of the one Sacrifice to the many representations of it is strongly insisted on, against any Roman Catholic blurring of the distinction between Christ’s sacrifice and sacramental representations of it.

This means that the believer does not depend on a sacred priest who has had a semi-magical “character” added to his being. Our priests lead an ordered congregation in the sacramental representation of Christ’s saving work.

Please remember the  
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your charitable giving and in your will.  
*Thank you.*





# A Sermon Preached at a Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols

by The Rev. Jason S. S. Patterson, Rector of St. Andrew's Anglican Church (AMiA), Asheboro, NC.

One of things that binds any family together are shared memories and shared stories. When my family gets together (especially during the holidays), after the plates are cleared and the coffee is served, one of the things in which we delight is to reminisce and tell stories about our past (and when done in the company of siblings this often involves telling stories *on* each other).

The memory of our shared past gives depth to our present. In fact, it is often those common experi-

Incarnation, lending depth and significance to this miracle of all miracles.

The service of Lessons and Carols helps us to remember. The nine lessons span the whole breadth of our common history — the history of God's grace and mercy being poured out upon His people.

As we tell that story and remember the history of our redemption, what stands out? First, this is not the history of man reaching out to God and searching to find Him. The Incarnation is not the crowning achievement of man's search for salvation. Just the opposite is, in fact, the case. What we see in the



*King's College Chapel, Cambridge*

ences and shared memories that really bind people together. In this regard what is true of one's natural family is also true of one's spiritual family, namely the Church, though sometimes we forget that it is so. We have a common history together.

When we speak of Jesus, especially at this time of year, when our thoughts turn toward his Incarnation, we would do well to remember the long history of God's redemptive activity that led to this first advent. It is a rich and glorious story that culminates in the

texts this evening is the story of the persistent love of God for His creation, the unwavering faithfulness of a God who wills to redeem and restore.

God did not create the world as a watchmaker might make a watch. He did not wind it up and then set it aside in order to attend to other business. Nor did he act like a watchmaker who made a watch, and then later rejected it when it broke. Rather, God *cares* for His creation and *makes plans* for its future and *provides a means* by which the creation may receive

healing, restoration, wholeness, redemption, forgiveness and reconciliation.

This is most especially true in regards to man, whom He made in His own image, to receive and return His love. The story we hear in these texts is the story of the manifestation of the love of God. It is the story of a loving Redeemer — the Hound of Heaven — who relentlessly has pursued and called out to and poured out grace upon *us* and He has done this most supremely in the life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. The point of all these readings (which touch upon so many important moments in the history of the world), is not to remind us of our infinite worth, but rather of His infinite love. His love is such that “before the foundation of the world” He determined to redeem His people, despite their unworthiness to be redeemed (thus in the Incarnation we see the profound humility of God’s love).

One must take heed of the fact that Gabriel’s message to the Blessed Virgin was not the first message spoken to man about the salvation that He had determined to accomplish for His creation. What a different story we would have to tell if this had indeed been the case, if the Archangel *had* been the first messenger we had from Him! Imagine it: imagine us back in the Garden with Adam and Eve — imagine their fall from grace, their shame and fear because of their wicked rebellion against His love and His trust — imagine if God had simply turned away — withdrew into silence, leaving our first-parents to suffer and to wonder with no word from Him, no contact of any kind. What a different story we would have to tell if God had acted thus.

But that (thank God) is not the story we have to tell. He did not withdraw, He did not disappear, rather He went to them and He spoke to them and even though His good justice could not turn a blind eye to their sin. He spoke words of comfort and of hope to His fallen creatures, giving them (and us) a very great promise, promising that though the consequences of their rebellion are terrible (for their sin dragged the entire created order and all their posterity down with them into enmity with God and with each other) there was this gracious promise — that from the offspring of Eve one would come who would crush the head of the serpent.

In this promise, we see the beginning of the story of God’s redemption of His people. The Incarnation is the long anticipated, long foretold, manifestation of the fullness of the love of God — wherein He took upon Himself the fullness of what it means to be human — in every way except sin — so as to undo the dire affects of the fall.

Jesus (as St. Paul and others tell us) is the second and greater Adam — succeeding where Adam failed. Whereas Adam’s disobedience results in all mankind being in need of atonement for sin — Jesus’ perfect obedience (which culminates in His death on the Cross, an offering to God the Father in obedience and perfect love and submission to the Father’s will)

accomplishes that atonement for all who are found to be in Him, united to Him by faith.

He is the one foreshadowed by Isaac, who takes upon himself the wood for the sacrifice and gives himself over to the will of his father. He is Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (our Passover who is sacrificed for us) — to whom all the sacrifices had pointed and been a foreshadowing. He is the Great High Priest who enters into the Holy of Holy — making intercession for mankind and offering the proper sacrifice to atone for sin once and for all. He is the great light of whom Isaiah wrote — the child to be born unto us — the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace, the King in the line of David whose kingdom will have no end. And He is also the one of whom the prophet Micah wrote, the ruler to be born in Bethlehem, the one who wins peace for the people, the strong Shepherd who is able to guard and keep the flock from every danger.

He is the One for whom the faithful had long been waiting, and about whom the prophets had been preparing. He it is whom the wise men had been studying and for whom the entire creation had been longing. He is the One — the only One — through whom we may return into that fellowship and joy and peace which was destroyed in the Garden: the Lord Jesus Christ, the babe in the manger who is God Incarnate — the True Light that shines in the Darkness and vanquishes the darkness — the eternal Word of God through whom and in whom and for whom were all things made that have been made — the beloved and only-begotten Son whose blood is able to wash us clean from every stain of sin and through whom we may be adopted to be sons (and daughters) of the Father, no longer being burdened with shame and fear — no longer being condemned but rather having the great privilege of being members of God’s family, welcomed to His table and included in the great story — the great *true* story that is our family history, the history of the love of God made manifest for our sakes in the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ our Lord.

May God, by His grace, increase our faith — that we might know and love and cherish the Holy One of Bethlehem.

In the words of the final verse of that well loved carol, let us pray:

O holy Child of Bethlehem  
Descend to us we pray;  
Cast out our sin, and enter in,  
Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell:  
O come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Emmanuel.

*Note: The texts for a King’s College Lessons & Carols service are - Genesis 3:8-15; Genesis 22:15-18; Isaiah 9:2-7; Micah 5:2-4; Luke 1:26-38; Luke 2:1-7; Luke 2:8-20; Matthew 2:1-12; John 1:1-14.*

# “Come unto me all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you”:

## A THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON MATTHEW 11:28

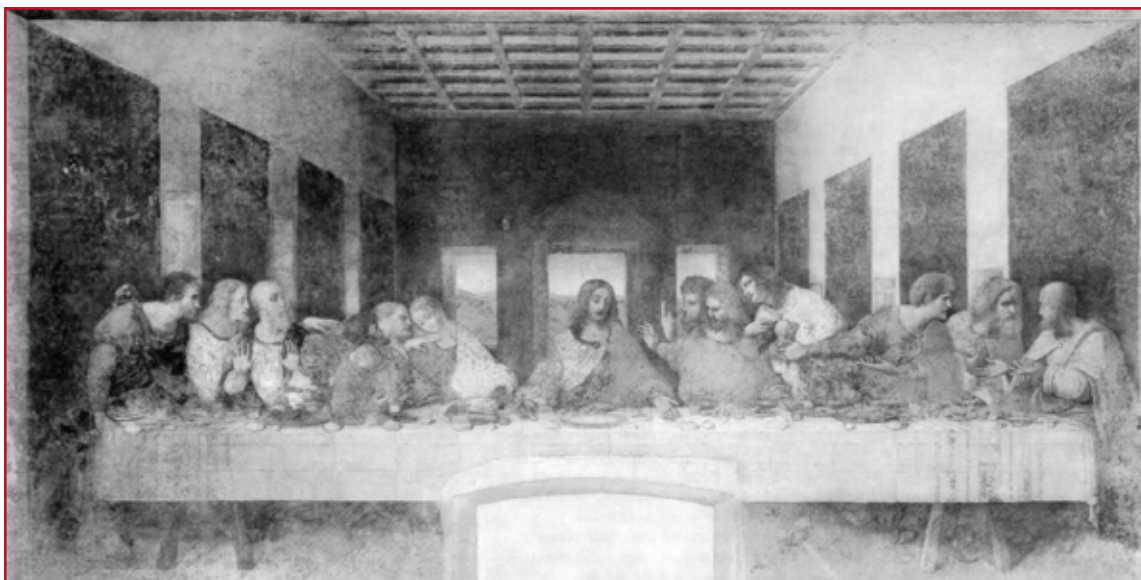
by the Rev'd Dr. Michael L. Carreker

In this essay I want to look at the person of Christ, and in particular I want to look at the person of Christ as man; and therefore, as the Mediator between God and man.

### The Call of Jesus Christ

“Come unto me,” says Jesus. He speaks with authority and assurance. His words resound with

profound religious thinking, or to his human sentiment. To a degree this would work, because Jesus teaches an abundance of truths which are moral in meaning, sublime in tone, and human in attitude and emotion. But even if, at the beginning, you should seek Christ indirectly, at the end of the day, you would realize that what is written about him and his life points pre-eminently to a person. At every turn, the ethical, spiritual and aesthetic are woven into a



Leonardo da Vinci, *The Last Supper*

the sublime poetry of Isaiah, “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye buy and eat; yea come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”<sup>1</sup> Isaiah invites Israel to partake of what is freely given: wine and milk are images of plenty and pleasure. Israel is invited to partake of the promise and provision of God who alone can satisfy human thirst and hunger. But here, in the words of Jesus Christ, we find something greater. We hear the voice, not only of poetic vision and prophetic word, but of a singular man. With Isaiah, he says, “Come,” and yet even more, “Come unto me.”

Christianity is Christ. If you should introduce a friend to the Christian Religion, no matter which route you should take, you would end with Jesus of Nazareth. You might try to finesse an approach to Christ, pointing to his high moral code, or to his <sup>1</sup>Isaiah 55:1

single, seamless garment, worn by Christ alone. The summary evidence of the New Testament is this: Jesus of Nazareth is Himself the sum total of human morality, religion, and sentiment. Christ is the individual human being who was in himself what Plato understood as exalted forms of being: the good, the true, and the beautiful. We hear Jesus declare: “I am the good shepherd;”<sup>2</sup> “I am the way, the truth, and the life;”<sup>3</sup> “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father”<sup>4</sup> - “Come unto me.”

### From the Doctrinal Axiom to the Living Person

As I write this, I am keenly aware of the doctrine of the Incarnation, confessed at Chalcedon and articulated in the Athanasian Creed; Christ Jesus is fully

<sup>2</sup> John 10:11

<sup>3</sup> John 14:6

<sup>4</sup> John 14:9

divine and fully human. But the truth of this doctrine is not my focus, at least, not in the way that we so readily think about it, as a kind of theological axiom. Certainly, I do not intend in any way to differ with, or to depart from, this axiom of Christian Theology. The doctrine of the Incarnation is essential to Christianity. It is an accurate account of the revelation of Jesus Christ in the New Testament, and I embrace it with my whole heart. But at this juncture I would suggest that the mysterious and sublime attributes of Christ, namely his ethical purity, his sure knowledge of the Father, and his creative imagination which are rightly taken to be evidence of his divinity are in fact no less evidence of his humanity. I am not saying that the divine and the human are equal, or that Christ could be what he manifests himself to be without his divinity, but rather that God, in choosing to reveal Himself, actually reveals himself most fully and most perfectly, not through nature, nor through reason, but through the crowning creation of both nature and reason, through the person of Christ in the totality of a human being.<sup>5</sup>

It should also be said, remarkably, that God needs no such union with man. God exists — which is to say that He is and lives and enjoys His Triune Life, free from all need, ignorance, and weakness; He is rather, eternal, omniscient, almighty, infinitely above all that we can think or imagine. And yet the attributes of His being, wisdom, power, and goodness are not an abstract mystery; they are attributes of His personal life, the divine life which is nothing other than the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Hence, in the Incarnation, the person of Jesus marks the divine in the human. And thus, while we are accustomed to think of God correctly as mystery, we are better suited to think of Him as mysteriously personal. In speaking of the personal in this way, we ought not to think of divine personality as mere analogy, a mere metaphor, as if we might think of the meaning of person from the bottom upward, from man to God. We are better suited to think of God as personal mystery, because we have been made in the image of God, and to think this we must begin with the absolute personality of the divine life, and look downward from God as Archetype to us as ectype.<sup>6</sup>

Let me explain. The Anglican Articles of Religion combine the many attributes of God into three spiritual characteristics: infinite power, wisdom, and goodness.<sup>7</sup> Inasmuch as God's power and wisdom and goodness are each one infinite, they are equal in the Unity of the Godhead. How this must be so for God we grasp through reason. God is spirit, and the perfection of His attributes is, each one, equal and adequate to the rest. For instance, if God's

power were not equal to his wisdom, what He knows he should do He would be unable to do. Likewise, if God's goodness were not equal to his power or wisdom, He would exist either unable or unwilling to be good. The same reasoning holds true for all of the divine attributes, yet while we may understand this about God on the basis of logic, such a perfection of being is beyond the actual experience of human life. The attributes of power, wisdom, and goodness are neither equal nor perfect in human beings. Hence, we grasp what it means for God to be a personal mystery not on the basis of mystery — through the equality of His perfect attributes logically considered — but rather through the revelation of His personality. We are able to consider that the mystery of the divine being is in Christ because in Christ the Divine Being speaks. In the gospels, Jesus reveals God in names which are understood personally: Father,<sup>8</sup> and Son, and Holy Ghost.

Indeed the wonder of the Incarnate Person is seen in the fact that in Christ the terms of divinity and humanity are mutually interchangeable. Herein lies the ancient teaching of the Church — the *communicatio idiomatum* — the communication of properties, in which the church (by which I mean all subsequent orthodox Christians) has taught that, by virtue of the union of the two natures in Christ, attributes of the divine nature may be attributed to the human and attributes of the human nature attributed to the divine. The Biblical evidence for this is found in such passages as when St. Paul declares that in Christ “dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily”<sup>9</sup> and as when St. Luke declares that God purchased the church “with his own blood.”<sup>10</sup> It was on account of this doctrine that Mary could rightly be called *Theotokos*,<sup>11</sup> the God-bearer, because she gave birth to Jesus in whom is the glorious union of the divine and the human. And thus, in Christ, the properties of the divine and human natures are communicated, the one to the other, in a perfect union, maintaining the integrity of each nature.<sup>12</sup> But now here is the point. It is the fact that the communication, the interchange, is fashioned in and through the person of God the Son that renders the way, the truth, and the life so wondrously clear that we cannot mistake it for something else. “God was in Christ” says St. Paul, “reconciling the world to Himself.”<sup>13</sup>

The Living Person of Christ as Eternal Word and

5 This is the explicit teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas who locates the term of the Incarnation in the person of the Word, *Summa Theologiae* 3a.2, 2, *Responsio*. I mean that while God reveals himself through nature as in Romans 1:20, he is most fully known in his personal being as in John 14:8-11.

6 This is the argument of St. Augustine's *De Trinitate*.

7 Article I of the Articles of Religion.

8 It is of the greatest importance to remember what is all too often forgotten by the lax theology of the present church. St. Thomas understands the name of Father to be, indeed, proper to God the Father, and in no way an analogical or metaphorical name. All created fatherhood stands as the image of God the Father. See *Summa Theologiae* 1a.33.2, especially ad 3.

9 Colossians 2:9

10 Acts 20:28

11 The doctrine of Mary as the “Mother of God” was vindicated at the Council of Ephesus in AD 431 and at the Council of Chalcedon in AD 451.

12 This is most clearly stated, as a result of centuries of thought, prayer, and debate, in the Athanasian Creed.

13 II Corinthians 5:19



## Historical Man

Hence we believe and profess that Christ, the eternal Word, speaks as man because he is a man. His historical life remains as the actuality of his being human, over which men stumble, and by which, if they do not stumble but rather believe, they are saved. And the consequence is this: unless we meet Him in the sublime particularity of His personal being as man, we shall never know the Father who sent him nor shall we know the Spirit who is his Gift. The unfathomable fact is and shall always be: that in Jesus Christ, Godhead and Manhood have been truly and eternally united; that in him, mankind possesses a true and everlasting way to God; that in the actuality of his person, both fully divine and fully human, Jesus is the one *principium* of all true mediation, the Savior and Lord of mankind and the hope of all created being.

And so it must be said that we must not mistake the supreme truth of the personal reality of Christ. If we are to know him at all, we must know him in the wholeness of his person, as one person to another. This kind of meeting harkens back to Moses who met with God “face to face,” and who characterized the children of Israel as those who had known God “face to face.”<sup>14</sup> It is as David solemnly yearns in the psalm, “My heart hath talked of thee, Seek ye my face, Thy face Lord will I seek.”<sup>15</sup> Still, more than Moses, Israel, and David, our meeting is with God who is also man, and inasmuch as he is man, we meet him with the expectations and familiarity of meeting someone who is like us, though as we get to know him, it becomes magnificently evident that he is also unlike us. Even so, what is unlike and different is not a total otherness of Being, but a Being whose personality, while infinitely deeper than our own, is our template, source and end. The author of Hebrews writes unforgettably of the likeness we have with Christ, “Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise partook of the same...”<sup>16</sup> Moreover, his unlikeness is unforgettably clear as well, as when from the eternal depths of Godhead, Jesus declares, “Before Abraham was, I

am.”<sup>17</sup> Whether alike or unlike, it is his personal life that he shares with us and that unveils the God with whom we have to do. “Whosoever shall receive me, receiveth Him that sent me.”<sup>18</sup>

## The Person of Christ is the Goal of Human Longing

Now that something of the truth and wonder of the person of Jesus is at the forefront of what I want to say, there is need still of further clarification. To say that we must meet Christ in a personal way is not to say that this meeting is merely private and subjective,

although the private and subjective aspects of personality, as aspects of an individual human being, remain indispensably intrinsic to human life. I mean that at the end of man’s search for meaning, to borrow Frankl’s phrase of half a century ago,<sup>19</sup> man must end with something and someone capable of making him secure and happy in the entirety of his being. At the end of our end there stands one whom we are able to know in ways that are familiar to us, altogether human in soul and body, mind and will, feeling and emotion, but also altogether honorable, noble, just, majestic in mind, and merciful in



Leonardo da Vinci, *The Last Supper*

will. For Frankl, such a meaning was only partially understood, grounded in the realization of universal love, unconquered by the heinous cruelty of a Nazi concentration camp. His experience was proof that human love participates in a transcendent reality far deeper and more real than the most horrific circumstances inflicted by man on man. And yet, while Frankl’s participation in the power of love was no doubt true and genuine for the existential moment of his suffering, it remained incomplete. It was true in the sense that Frankl remembered the concrete sublimity of love he had for his wife and she for him, which the fierceness of ideological cruelty could neither undo nor harm, and which was shown by evil to be stronger than evil. His experience, a private and subjective participation in universal love, was not, however, the total experience of meeting Jesus of Nazareth. Frankl did not locate the eternal reality of love in the historical person of Christ Jesus. If he had, his private, subjective, existential experience would

<sup>14</sup> Numbers 14:14

<sup>15</sup> Psalm 27:9

<sup>16</sup> 2:14

<sup>17</sup> John 8:58

<sup>18</sup> Luke 9:48

<sup>19</sup> Victor E. Frankl, *Man’s Search for Meaning*.

have been greater and more secure in the public, objective, historical knowledge of Eternal Love made man, whose crucifixion and resurrection assure us, not only of conquering evil, but of life eternal. In the final analysis, the true sentiment of and participation in universal love alone will not suffice. The private and subjective, the concretely personal, desires and demands love's permanence, an eternal possession of the good, the true, and the beautiful, which are the designs of each particular man, in both body and soul. Jesus Christ was made man for this end.

And hence we should realize that beyond the private, subjective, existential experience of man as man, what Christ reveals to us in the reality of his human nature is his objective eternal union with the Father and the Spirit. The divine personality lives as Triune God. It is in the Trinity that the reality of the personal extends beyond human thinking in a dimension and quality of life, thought, and love, immeasurably unlike the image the Triune God has condescended to fashion. Still, it is through the dimension of persons that the Archetype is known, and there comes beneath the unlikeness a likeness that God has willed to bestow on man, seen both in the nature of man himself, and also in the relation man enjoys with man.

### Examples of the Christian Imagination that Focus on the Person of Christ

This personal union, first in God, then in man with God, and finally in man with man, has been the recurrent argument and theme of Christian proclamation and profession. We find it superbly articulated in the Creeds, where the order is established: first in the knowledge of God the Father; and then of God the Son in Christ; and then of God the Holy Ghost in the Church. Given the foundation of this definition and articulation, the theme has been portrayed most wonderfully in the redeemed imagination of Christian art. Throughout history, the Christian imagination has revered the person of Jesus Christ as its aesthetic principle in which heaven and earth are joined. As examples of this artistic expression of personal union, we could do no better than Dante and Leonardo.

Dante's poetic vision in *Paradiso* is itself an instance of what the vision portrays. Dante sees Christ in his personal union as God and man. Christ is the human image, truly present and whole, within and united to the Second Sphere of Divinity. He is portrayed as the goal of human longing in all its actuality. And so Dante's seeing is a way of mystical participation in the union that is Christ. The vision may be temporary, but it acts as a true instance and therefore an actual anticipation of the reality which continues outside of time, fulfilling all that is human, beyond the merely logical, beyond the squaring of the circle.<sup>20</sup>

Nor could we surpass Leonardo's *Last Supper*. In

20 Dante, *Paradiso*, Canto XXXIII. 136

his technical brilliance, Leonardo places Christ at the focal point of geometrical perspective and intellectual precision. He is the universal center. But there is more that is distinctly human and yet profoundly divine. Jesus is the friend of a greater love. He is prepared to suffer the dark work of Judas Iscariot, and thereby to make and to preserve the communion.

These inspiring, didactic works of the human imagination give us some aesthetic idea of the personal union in Christ; and yet, the most precious art of mankind, such as that of Dante and Leonardo, are only hints and guesses at the reality. The vast history of human longing and the exacting, inexorable quest for human happiness are essentially personal. It will not do, finally, for any particular human being who seeks true happiness to discover anything less than what Leonardo and Dante have known and testified. Each and every human being who desires it must go beyond the aesthetic image and the poetical vision, and discover for himself the immeasurable goodness, truth, and beauty of the reality he yearns for. It is the individual demand for the good, the true, and the beautiful that is so distinctively human and so truly personal. I am reminded of one of the violent metaphors of Jesus who declared that with the proclamation of the kingdom of God "every man presseth into it."<sup>21</sup>

### The Holy Scripture and the Blessed Sacrament as Means toward Union with Christ

The desire and capacity of human longing find true bliss in the person, and hence in the work, of Jesus Christ. He is the eternal Word who speaks to us, in whose becoming man we discover our integrity, and in whose perfect satisfaction of the Father's justice we acquire honor. As Word, as man, and as sacrifice, Christ pours out the power and love of his person. He does this for one reason only, that we, as St. Paul writes, may be formed into a perfect man "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."<sup>22</sup> Only by his uniting our person to his, do we become the creatures God has made for Himself, holy and happy.

And therefore, it is for the sake of this gracious formation of Christian personality that the Holy Scripture and the Blessed Sacrament exist. These great gifts of knowledge and participation were not given merely for the wonders they are in themselves. The majesty and glory of the Bible and the mystery and passion of the Holy Communion are God's given means for the formation of the Christian person, of what St. Augustine described as the "*capax dei*," the capacity for God. The Scripture speaks to and teaches the human person; the Holy Mysteries work a mystical participation for body and soul. It was St. Augustine, above all the Doctors of the Church, who demonstrated the seminal understanding of this

21 Luke 16:16.

22 Ephesians 4:13

truth.

For Augustine, the Holy Scripture is necessary for the formation of the godly man. But in knowing this, Augustine is quite content to point out something that may bemuse us for whom the authority of Scripture is supreme. Augustine asserts the possibility that the godly man, whose habits have been trained in faith, hope, and charity and whose every thought and desire is to seek the face of God, does not finally need the Scripture. He would need it only for the instruction of others.<sup>23</sup> For such a person, the Scripture has fulfilled its divinely given purpose, namely, of teaching and correcting and training the soul in a life of charity which is nothing other than “the motion of the soul toward the enjoyment of God for his own sake.”<sup>24</sup> This means that the content of the Scripture which points toward Christ and through Him to the blessed Trinity has performed its intended purpose in the soul of the man made godly. My point is this: while the Holy Scripture is the supreme and authoritative means for us to know and love God, it is finally mere means, a wondrous and humble means, a necessary means, but not the end itself, not the loving union of the soul with God, face to face. It will not do to make the Bible into a deposit of truths to be mastered by finite minds. The Holy Scriptures are the most transparent of windows into the mind of God, through which the end of Biblical seeing is to follow Christ to the right hand of the Father in a union of love. Hence the Scripture is properly used as that which contains “all things necessary to salvation;”<sup>25</sup> which things are signs of Him whom to know is life eternal. The Scriptures provide the signposts of our journey, but within the consummation of eternal life, the knowledge and love of an individual person is conformed to the “fullness of Christ.”

Likewise, Augustine writes of the Holy Communion as a true and efficacious means of participation in Christ, a means of grace like that of Scripture, that strengthens the heart and mind toward God and prepares the body for its heavenly transformation. In and of itself the Lord’s Supper is a temporal and transitory sacrament to be consumed to enliven the soul to draw near to the living God.<sup>26</sup> Akin to the Holy Scriptures, the Holy Mysteries are not an end in themselves. Those who adorn them with excessively elaborate ceremonial and ritual busyness run the risk of obscuring their signal character and thereby the true and efficacious means of participation.<sup>27</sup> True participation grants the holy mysteries of the body and blood of Christ to nourish our souls and bodies toward their final and consummate union with and in Christ, as St Paul writes, “from glory to glory.”<sup>28</sup> Nourishment here, in the holy mysteries, must not be confused with blessedness there, in the

maturity of vision. Hence Anglican wisdom forbids the Blessed Sacrament from being “gazed upon” or “carried about” and instructs that we should “duly use them.”<sup>29</sup>

## From the Historical Call to Eternal Union

And so, “Come unto me,” says Jesus. He is the final goal, the end for which all else exists and is properly used, the pattern of divine friendship, the everlasting Son of the Father, and with the Father the Sender of the Holy Ghost. We make our way to him as to a friend, with the qualities and sentiments we look for in a good man. Only, in seeking him we discover the very best of good men because he is true and everlasting goodness. His emotions and will and intellect are like ours: he knows human life just as we do; and yet, his intuition, and knowing, and compassion are different from ours because all his human loves are and continue pure. His ethical life has no inconclusive moments; no shadows of errant love or habit obscure his vision. He lives for the Father, anchored in the freedom of sinless devotion, received like ours, in the moments of prayer. His aesthetic imagination knows how man and creation are like and unlike God, and thus his parables of the Kingdom are both brilliant and deeply moving. He loves his Father with the entirety of his being, and in so doing satisfies the demands of the Law. At his hands we find rest for our personal being, rest from our sorrow, from burden, from vexation of spirit; and we find refreshment, freedom from self-deception and for truth, freedom from pride and for humility, freedom from lust and for love - as only persons made in the image of God who is love and “whose property is always to have mercy”<sup>30</sup> - can love. Rest and pleasure and the feast of the kingdom, face to face; these are his to give to those he calls.

And yet he remains unlike us in the full nature of Godhead. He lives eternally as the Son of the Father and the Sender of the Holy Ghost, mysterious to us, wrapped in the infinity of perfection, beyond all that we know to be true and wise and powerful and beautiful. Behind the adoration of his humanity, we adore the selfsame person in His divinity where He delights in the most profound pleasure of the Unbegotten and the Gift. To see Him face to face will be for us to know Him not only as friend but also as Master and Lord. His eyes no doubt will be uncommonly deep, and the more we ponder them, the more we shall move into the depths of eternity where the Son of God shines unfathomable. We shall see him as He is, and in seeing Him, we shall behold our true selves, and in beholding our true selves we shall gaze upon each other with the integrity of love.

And wonder of wonders and glory of glories, our personality shall be filled with His.

<sup>23</sup> *De doctrina Christiana*, I.xxxix.43

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, III.x.16.

<sup>25</sup> Article VI of the Articles of Religion

<sup>26</sup> *De Trinitate* III.x.19

<sup>27</sup> *De doctrina Christiana*, III.ix.13

<sup>28</sup> II Corinthians 3:18.

<sup>29</sup> Article XXV of the Articles of Religion

<sup>30</sup> “Prayer of Humble Access,” *Book of Common Prayer*.





# The Foundation

## A TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN CHURCH PLANT

by Ethan Magness, Rector, Grace Anglican Church, Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania

I am a thirty-year-old Rector of an Anglican church plant in a small college town in western Pennsylvania, which uses the traditional Book of Common Prayer. If you examine that sentence carefully, nothing in it seems to fit together. But that is really the point of this essay. For his own sovereign purposes, God can make something lovely out of pieces that do not seem to fit together.

First, there is me. My Christian background and personality do not exactly make me a likely candidate for Anglican Orders, nor for church planting. Like many Millennials who were raised in the church, I was a denominational nomad, having been part of a variety of Christian traditions (United Church of Christ, jumbo-tron Evangelical, broad-church Lutheran, old-style Pentecostal, etc). I always had an interest in theology, but had trouble determining which tradition to be a part of—they all seemed to have something important to offer.

The main reason that I got 'hooked' by the Episcopal Church is that I happened to stumble into one

during college, and I soon fell in love with the Liturgy (1979 BCP). I rested from my nomadic state when I found that Anglicanism provided the Evangelical emphasis that I appreciated about other churches, but was rooted in an emphasis on a liturgical and sacramental framework, which gave me a sense of spiritual stability.

After experiencing the call of God to the Anglican presbyterate, I attended seminary and was ordained when I was 26 years old. During my Senior year of seminary, I was asked by a friend and senior clergyman to consider church planting in a nearby college town. Having very little ministry experience, no church planting experience, no money, and being something of an introvert made me a pretty odd candidate for church planting. But after a great deal of prayer, I concluded that was where God was leading me, even with my patchwork background and unlikely personality.

The second piece that does not fit is our location. Small-town western Pennsylvania is not the ideal place for a church plant, at least if you accept much of the common criteria by which such judgements

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are made. Slippery Rock is not a bustling area, business is not booming, churches are not large, and the nearby university does not have a large Christian presence on campus. In rural Pennsylvania, the pattern is church *closings*, not church planting. But for a variety of reasons, we believed that God was calling us to plant in this place.

We started with a leadership team of seven people and planted in 2006, hosting services on Sunday evenings at a Presbyterian church we rented. Five years later, we have a growing congregation of nearly 200 people. About half of the church is made up of local residents, and the rest is made up of undergraduates from Slippery Rock University and Grove City College. We have people who come from strong faith backgrounds, others who have taken sabbaticals from God but who are coming back to faith, several who come from no faith background at all, and others who are not Christians but are committed to learning about the Christ who is the “full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world.”

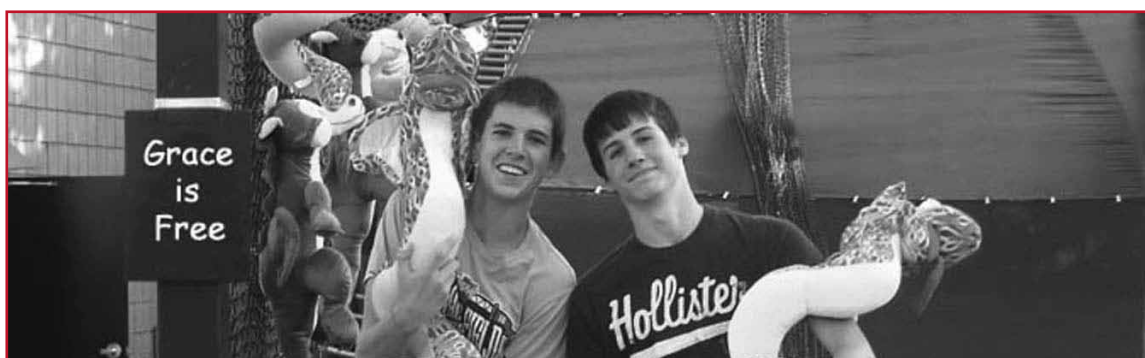
Thirdly, we are a fairly traditional-looking church-plant that uses the Old Prayer Book (we mostly use Peter Toon’s 1928 version in modern English). I was not exposed to the ’28 BCP at my first Episcopal Church. At seminary, I had professors who loved the old book, but we rarely used it in corporate worship. I developed a love for its rich theology in the course of my own study.

I did not fall in love with the ’28 BCP because of its linguistic beauty (though it is indeed beautiful). I love it because of its Augustinian, Reformational, Grace-centered theology. I love it because it is an effective tool for Pastoral Care; week after week, it

excavates our fallen nature and then soothes us with the Comfortable Words of the enfleshed, absolving God. I love its theology because it teaches the glittering moral precepts of Christ, while not being moralistic, as it points us to the Savior of sinners and the Enabler of new life. I love it because of its transcendence; that is, it brings us out of ourselves and focuses us on those holy and steady things that rescue and preserve. And I love the old book because it is *Old*—I suppose not just because it is old, but because its ancient truths have stood the test of time. When accompanied by Cross-focused hymns and choruses, and Gospel-centered preaching, the Cranmerian Liturgy has a dynamic power which penetrates, reveals, salves, and energizes like no other.

I am not an ideal church planter, our small town is not the most ‘advantageous’ location for a plant. The classic BCP and the all-sufficient Christ to which it points seem out of step with our contemporary world. But as we know in the Cross of Christ, God uses things that look weak to demonstrate his strength. The classic liturgy still has power, because of the God to it points.

This short essay is designed to encourage you to consider planting an Anglican church. You do not have to be the ideal candidate; you simply have to know the Gospel and have the gifts to proclaim it. You do not have to secure an ideal location; God may surprise you by working in unexpected places. You do not need to be ‘seeker-friendly,’ as defined by so many contemporary models. But what is needed is warmth, a solid core of loving, committed Christians, and a robust redemptive theology, grounded in the historic Book of Common Prayer.





# News *from the* ANGLICAN WAY

## ✚ The Anglican Catholic Church Grows in its African Mission

The Reverend Nick Athanaelos of St Andrew and St Margaret, Alexandria, Virginia reports that the Anglican Catholic Church (ACC), which has been a faithful witness to traditional Anglicans around the world since 1977, has recently consecrated three new bishops during its annual College of Bishops meeting in Central Florida. They included The Rt. Rev. Alan Kenyon-Hoare, Missionary Diocese of South Africa, The Rt. Rev. Solomzi Mentjies, Missionary Diocese of the Eastern Cape, and The Rt. Rev. German Orrego-Hortado, Missionary Diocese of New Granada, Colombia.

This year has also seen substantial growth in the African Missions. In May, The Rt. Reverend Wilson Garang, Bishop of Aweil, Sudan, made Episcopal visits to Rwanda and the Congo where he Confirmed 169 souls, ordained 25 men to the diaconate, and 3 to the priesthood.

In order to help coordinate sacrificial giving to the foreign missions, The Missionary Society of St. Paul has been established. Through this society, individuals and parishes can give to a central address which distributes funds to the various missions throughout the world. The Venerable Donald F. Lerow, Archdeacon for the Military, serves as director of the society.

## ✚ Closer to home, Archbishop Mark Haverland received three parishes into the ACC from other jurisdictions in the US. Holy Guardian Angels, Lantana, Florida, from the Episcopal Church, Good Shepherd, Palm Bay, Florida, from AMiA, and St. Athanasius, Glen Allen, Virginia from the ACA. In addition to these received, new missions are being formed in nearly every US diocese.

## ✚ In the Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic States, the Rt. Rev. William McClean, Jr. has announced his retirement effective June 2011. Bishop McClean has faithfully led the DMAS since 2003. Upon retirement, he will continue as rector of St. Anne's Church, Charlotte Hall, Maryland. A special electoral synod will take place in 2011 to seek a successor.

## ✚ St Andrew and St Margaret Anglican Church in Alexandria, Virginia holds regular Sunday services at 7:45 a.m., 9:00 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.

## ✚ The Episcopal Missionary Church Names Presiding Bishop

The Right Reverend Council Nedd II, Bishop of the Chesapeake and Northeast in the Episcopal Missionary Church (EMC) has been named Presiding Bishop. He succeeds now retiring Presiding Bishop William Millsaps of Monteagle, Tennessee, a longtime supporter of the 1928 Book of Common Prayer. The EMC broke with the Episcopal Church of the USA in 1992 over the ordination of women, and maintains churches in the United States, Canada, Australia and Africa.

The press release issued after the election relates that Presiding Bishop Nedd has been involved not only in the EMC, but also in the public policy arena in a variety of capacities, as well as served as a senior legislative staff member for three Members of Congress. He has also taught United States history and policy debate at a charter school in Washington, DC, and commented on public policy, social and theological issues for C-SPAN, CNN, NBC, MTV, Fox News, and numerous national syndicated radio shows as well as print media.

In addition to his work for the church, Bishop Nedd is Chairman of the Alliance for Health, Education, and Development (AHEAD). AHEAD has sponsored senior and community health fairs around the United States to educate clergy and seniors on health care options. He has also advocated at the World Health Organization to help eliminate the scourge of counterfeit prescription medicines. As part of Bishop Nedd's work, he heads a variety of ministries to the Kenyan, Sudanese and Ethiopian diaspora in the United States.

## ✚ St Alban's Anglican Church, in Pine Grove Mills near State College, Pennsylvania, where the press release originated, is a parish of the EMC. The 1928 Book of Common Prayer remains the liturgical standard at St Alban's. The Holy Eucharist is celebrated Sundays at 10:00 am.

*Mandate is pleased to report on important news from the traditional churches within the Anglican Way.*

# Now I lie me down to sleep...

## A PRIEST AND HIS WIFE PREPARE FOR DEATH

First please read *Second Corinthians 4:13-18*, *John 6:47-58*, and *Hymn 455*

So many people have asked so many questions about Jane's death that I feel obliged to address some of them, not as a lachrymose indulgence in mourning but as a good and godly opportunity for learnings we can all use and apply ourselves, because her preparations for physical death were as positive as her life always was. We are all going to die to this mortal world — perhaps Jane's and my preparations for this inevitability, preparations both worldly and

moderate and godly ways — but to do this right we have to face death *honestly*, as did our ancestors in the Faith. If we coast along in denial of the fragility of mortal human life, or remain oblivious to it, we deny ourselves and those close to us the special poignant *sweetness* of life *now*. Awareness of death can keep life from being boring.

Like our 1928 Prayer Book Order for the Visitation of the Sick, both our public and family evening services ask God's protection from "the perils and dangers of this night." When our ancestors prayed



spiritual, can be of help to you.

We knew for about two years that her recurrent severe attacks of atrial fibrillation, in which her heart rate would skyrocket to 240 beats a minute for hours or days, these physically and emotionally devastating attacks could lead to an immediate heart attack or to congestive heart failure — which together killed her last Sunday night. Many have said they were shocked because 'she always looked so well' — that's because when she wasn't well, you didn't see her. Asked how she was doing, what could she say? "I'm ok for now, but I could die any minute?" *That's* a conversation stopper you don't want to hear.

So, we each and both did what we could to be prepared. We both filled out and signed directions for our Burial Offices and our Living Wills (no heroic measures). She made me lists of whom to call to fix or service things, what to feed each animal when, marked our big year calendar ahead for tax and other payment dates, heartworm and veterinarian schedules, taught me the washing machine.

Last summer we redid our wills and then went to see relatives in Europe — *why not?* Knowing you might die at any moment is no reason to sit at home sucking your thumb feeling sorry for yourself — quite the contrary, looking death squarely in the eye is all the more reason to *enjoy* life *now*, of course in

"If I die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take," they *meant* it — so should we. Do you read your Prayer Book, *especially* the parts you don't hear in church? The rubric at the top of page 321, straight from 1549, begins

*Forasmuch as all mortal men are subject to many sudden perils, diseases, and sicknesses, and ever uncertain what time they shall depart out of this life; therefore, to the intent that they be always in readiness to die... the Ministers shall diligently from time to time... exhort their parishioners to the often receiving of the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ... that so doing, they may, in case of sudden visitation, have the less cause to be disquieted for lack of the same* — an instruction firmly derived from Jesus' words of promise we just heard from John 6:58, "he who eats *this* Bread shall live forever."

Jane's and my *material* preparations were simple: you write down a list, and it's *done*. Our *emotional* preparations grew steadily richer and deeper: when every day you may be seeing one you love for the last time, you become more tender, more patient, more affectionate, more *appreciative* — as happened in our *spiritual* preparations, individually and together. She knew herself to be a sinner, in times past and in the present moment — I have no idea how many times I've sinned since I woke up this morning — but by

the Grace of merciful God she knew herself to be a *redeemed sinner, simul justus et peccator*, simultaneously, at the same time, justified and a sinner. Her accurate self-assessment was a key to her faith: how often did she say in Bible class, “Miracles? No problem. If God can love *me*, He can do anything!” We prayed together, we read the Bible together, we talked about the Faith not as critics but as wonder-struck four-year-olds might stand awed, overwhelmed, and rejoice to see the wonders of Disney World for the first time. Her carefully-thought-through *joy* in the Lord was palpable.

Were we prepared for her death? Pretty well. Was I ready for it? You can’t be. I can’t tell whether I’m handling it well or whether I’m in shock. I hope the former.

April was a bad month: she managed Holy Week services and Easter, but the next Sunday she couldn’t make church or several favorite social events, unheard-of absences indicating how badly she was feeling. On April 26 she began a new medical regimen, a digitalis prescription for heart and a diuretic for pulmonary edema, fluid around the lungs, which helped a lot — May was pretty good, but she went back to the cardiologist team she’d seen before. On May 28 she passed a stress test, low-end but acceptable; on June 4 an echocardiogram showed no change from three years before.

That very night, Friday, we enjoyed a dinner-dance with good friends at a charity function — Saturday

she had fun at our local Farmers’ Market — Sunday several people commented on how well she looked at 8 o’clock Holy Communion — that afternoon she bought some salmon and cooked her usual excellent dinner — at 10 *p.m.* we said our prayers together as always, kneeling at bedside — the last words we said to one another, as we did whenever we parted even briefly, were “I love you.” We have next-door bedrooms because I snore, so she went to bed with her Book of Psalms and I went down to the computer, tiptoeing upstairs around midnight.

Just after 8 I woke up and saw no sign of her usual 6 *a.m.* rising. I went into her room and her hand was cold as any stone — absolutely peaceful, sheets not disarranged, no sign of struggle — just her normal sleeping posture, obviously instantaneous, she never felt a thing — which is what she’d always hoped for, as I think we *all* do.

I believe that Jane was a good example in this life: a good woman, a great wife, energetic leader, generous caring friend, above all the only thing that counts forever, a devout believing and practicing Christian — and, I believe that she set a good example in her preparations for death to this world *and* her preparation for *life* in God’s world to come — may every one of us do likewise, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen!*

— *This sermon is published anonymously for personal privacy.*

## ANNOUNCING THE PETER TOON MEMORIAL PRIZE

The Prayer Book Society of the U. S. A. is pleased to announce the Peter Toon Memorial Essay Prize in honor of the late Dr. Peter Toon, former President of the Prayer Book Society of the U. S. A., and staunch defender of the historic Books of Common Prayer.

The competition is open to postulants in seminaries. First Prize 1000 dollars, Second prize 500 dollars, Third Prize receives an Altar Service Book of the BCP (1928). The winning essay shall be published in *Mandate*.

**Contest rules:** 1600-1800 words. **Topic:** With reference to the historic editions of the Prayer Book, the Thirty-Nine Articles and Ordinal, and the classical Anglican divines of the 16th and 17th centuries (particularly Thomas Cranmer and Richard Hooker), discuss the rationale for one, authoritative *Book of Common Prayer* in the Church of England.

MLA Style.

The papers shall be judged by a learned panel.

Deadline December 31, 2010.

Please visit our website [pbsusa.org](http://pbsusa.org) for more information, or write our President at [stjohnssav.org](mailto:stjohnssav.org)