

MANDATE

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Lent

THE SEASON OF PILGRIMAGE





*The Rev. Gavin Dunbar,
Rector, St John's,
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Letter from the President

Thirty years ago the Episcopal Church abolished not only the 1928 edition of the Book of Common Prayer. In doing so they abolished not only that particular edition of the Prayer Book but also the whole tradition of worship it represented, a tradition that goes back through the prior American (1892 and 1789), Scottish (1760), and English (1662, 1559, 1552) to the first English Prayer Book of 1549, but even further back than that: for the first English Prayer Book preserved elements of liturgy that can be traced back a thousand years or more before the sixteenth century reformation. Thirty years later, however, the Prayer Book Society – formed initially to prevent the destruction of the Prayer Book tradition in the Episcopal Church – is alive, well, and *young*. Its current board is largely drawn from a generation that came of age *after* 1979; its current president was only baptized (as a young man) in 1981. And its current mission field often extends outside “the Episcopal Church” to the “new Anglicans” that have multiplied in recent years and are found in such diverse groupings as the Anglican Province of North America, the Anglican Mission in the Americas, and other “continuing” churches.

The two mission fields look rather different – the one older, a bit stolid, morally somewhat liberal; the other newer, dynamic, and morally rather conservative. Ironically, however, both fields are rather similar in one critical regard. While they adopt the name “Episcopal” or “Anglican” they tend to have little understanding about just what that means: a certain understanding of the *gospel*, and deriving from it, a certain understanding of the *church*, its doctrine, discipline, sacraments, and worship. For a great many churchmen old

and new, generic liberal Protestantism and generic evangelical Protestantism supply the content and the categories of religion, except for those who espouse forms of Anglo-Catholicism or Neo-Pentecostalism both of whom are equally ignorant of classical Anglicanism. There are of course exceptions proving the rule, but the rule is predominant, and the conclusions clear. More than ever, the mission of the Prayer Book Society is clearly to assist in the recovery, rediscovery of classical Anglicanism – starting with very basic questions: what is Anglican teaching on the atonement? On sin, grace, and works? On the sacraments? On the church? On the ordained ministry? On pastoral care and evangelism? What is the rationale for the liturgy, what theology does it express, what practice does it imply? Learning how the historic Prayer Book answers these questions, and getting those answers out to those who need to know them, are big challenges for the Society right now.

The challenge for both liberal and conservative is to learn again to be the church – that is, with a centre of gravity in the gospel and parameters that are both comprehensive and coherent, themselves shaped by the historic *consensus fidelium*, and capable of shaping and expressing a common understanding, and a common practice, united in common prayer. There is much involved in this rebuilding of the Church, but undertaking the corporate disciplines of Lent – fasting and abstinence, prayer, and almsgiving, the works worthy of repentance – is a very good place for us to start. Precisely as *corporate* disciplines, rooted in Scripture’s teaching and the Church’s ancient tradition, and shaping the way we choose to use time, food, mind and money, their recovery rebuilds the Church.

THE MANDATE

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By Roberta Bayer, Ph.D.

Reflections from the Editor's Desk

The Lent issue of *Mandate* is devoted as usual to explaining the basic teachings of Anglicanism. The Reverend Gavin Dunbar has contributed an article on the Sundays of Lent and their history, Dr. Peter Toon a meditation on the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary which is celebrated mid-Lent on March 25, and an essay on the meaning of Reformed Catholicism. May their thoughts assist you in your Lenten devotions.

Praying to our Lord through ordered and disciplined devotions is necessary to the Anglican way. Through the daily offices we are enabled to ask our Lord for help in our daily tasks, to preserve us from temptation, to ask forgiveness for those things which we have done, and those we have left undone, and we are reminded that on him all things depend. Lent is, of all the seasons of the church year, the most important time in which to place oneself under its discipline. It is the yearly season of pilgrimage when we once again undergo forty day of fasting and penance as a means to prepare ourselves for our Lord's passion and resurrection.

We have just read John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* as a family. It has been said that it was the most widely read book outside of the Bible in colonial America. It tells the stories of two pilgrims, named Christian and Christiana, who travel from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City. The story, told allegorically, depicts the many temptations and trials which beset all those who seek to do God's will. On pilgrimage they learn to trust to God for help, and learn what it means to know His grace. Lent is a good time to read such a book, and use it as a means of self-examination. Bunyan's book is rich in scriptural reference, a compendium of teaching, helpful to thinking about what it is to be a pilgrim.

.....

After the February meeting of the Anglican Primates in Alexandria, Egypt the Anglican communion is no closer to reconciling its differences. On the key issue of same-sex blessings there was no agreement, nor apparently any plan to find agreement. The Episcopal Church will continue to allow for extra-legal blessings, and prosecute parishes which place themselves under the jurisdiction of an overseas province, and institutional confusion will reign. It is not yet clear whether we will see a day when it will be possible to pass a binding covenant to which all provinces agree.

Since the time when the Church of England first planted sister churches outside of its geographical boundaries, each province has developed its own canon law, based on that of the Church of England, to suit the local situation. What always bound the church together was neither law nor covenant, but common theology based on The Book of Common Prayer, the Ordinal, and the Articles.

In recent decades some Anglican scholars have been researching and comparing Anglican law from different provinces in order to draw out common ideas and principles. Theirs is a much more modest project than that of the scholastic canon lawyer Gratian, who in the twelfth century gathered all existing canon law into a *Concordance of Discordant Canons*, but it is very helpful nonetheless. In addition to returning to its theological roots, the church needs to develop an ecclesiology. Ever since the Anglican Communion embarked upon liturgical revision as part of its intention to bring doctrine up to date, a dubious project in itself, the center of the communion has not held. The results are now apparent.



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The PBS at Two Conferences

by The Reverend Jason Patterson

As stated on our website, the Prayer Book Society seeks to serve the Anglican Church by keeping alive in the church the classic common prayer tradition of the Anglican Way, which began in the Church of England in 1549. We wish to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness and in a dignified and understandable English. We are committed to educating and informing people on the nature and content of the common prayer tradition, and its use for Holy Communion, Daily Offices, baptism, funerals, family prayer and personal devotions.

One of the ways in which we seek to fulfill this mandate is by attending and participating in regional, national, ecclesiastical and/or educational conferences and seminars throughout the country.

Most recently, the PBS was present at the Mere Anglicanism Conference in Charleston, SC (January 15-17) and the Anglican Mission in America Winter Conference in Greensboro, NC (January 28-31).

There was much interest in the PBS at the Mere Anglicanism conference. Books were sold, members of our board were present, one served on a

panel, and the final communion service was celebrated from Dr. Toon's *An Anglican Prayer Book* (a contemporary language version of the 1662, 1928 BCP). The conference focussed on the challenges of Secularism and Islam, with able presentations by Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali of the diocese of Rochester, England, Dr. Albert Mohler, and Dr. William Abraham, among others. Next year speakers will address the subject of homosexuality in the church and society.

At the AMiA conference the PBS was warmly received. A PBS board member led daily Morning Prayer and our book table got a great deal of traffic. Many PBS tracts and booklets were distributed and we sold out our stock of *An Anglican Prayer Book*. This is the third year that the PBS has been present at the AMiA conference. The total sum of monetary donations and monies received for purchases was double what it was last year at the conference, which we believe signifies that (thanks be to God!) there is a renewed and growing interest in the common prayer tradition of the Anglican Way among attendees of this annual gathering.

If you know of a conference at which you believe the PBS should be present, please contact us.



Nine Sundays To Easter

The Church's Spring-Training

by The Reverend Gavin G. Dunbar

Advent, Christmas, Epiphany: these set before us the wonder of the Lord's Incarnation, and the transformation of human nature that is revealed in him. The lessons for Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima begin a new phase: for they remind us, with unrelenting practicality, that this transformation does not take place without labour and struggle. In one way these lessons speak generally about the place of disciplined effort in the Christian life generally: in another way they are designed very specifically to prepare us for Lent as a time of the Church's corporate discipline, as spring-training for spiritual life. In Lent itself we find that this discipline of self-denial involves spiritual warfare, the casting out of demons – deep-rooted and fundamentally destructive attitudes and habits of thought and action. Passiontide, the final phase, brings this conflict to its climax, in death and resurrection of Christ for us, and, spiritually, in us. Dying to the old life of sin, we rise to the new life of righteousness – and so we are fit to keep the feast of Easter, and its completion in the feasts of Ascension and Whitsunday, in the new life of the Spirit.

Origins

The season of preparation for Easter that we find in the Prayer Book has its origins in the ancient Church. The details of its origin and development are complex, but a forty-day fast before Easter was accepted throughout the Church shortly after the First Ecumenical Council of 325 A. D., and may in fact have been promulgated by it. Its actual length has varied according to what days were counted. Saturdays, Sundays, and Holy Week were sometimes included, sometimes excluded, from the counting. The current system in the west excludes Sundays only from the total. Then from before the end of the sixth century the Roman church adopted three additional Sundays before the Fast began. Because Lent was known as Quadragesima ("fortieth"), these Sundays were called – picturesquely if inaccurately -- as Quinquagesima ("fiftieth"), Sexagesima ("sixtieth"), and Septuagesima ("seventieth"). A similar "pre-Lent" season developed in the eastern church. It is this system of nine weeks preparation for Easter, which was retained in the sixteenth-century reform of the liturgy and still today connects Prayer Book Christians with the actual practice of the ancient catholic church.

The reasons for the fast are various. At first it was primarily a time for the preparation of catechumens for baptism at Easter, but by late antiquity,

the number of adult converts had diminished to a trickle, and so the emphasis shifted from preparation for baptism to a general penitential observance based upon what were once penances for those seeking formal reconciliation in the Church at Holy Week. The most notable example of this is the ceremonial imposition of ashes on the first day of the fast, a custom whose association with penitence goes back to the Old Testament (Job, Jonah), though its universal practice in the western church was not formally required until 1091. The shift in emphasis, however, was minor: central to the preparation of catechumens for baptism, of penitents for reconciliation, and of the faithful for Easter, are the ideas of conversion and new creation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Fasting

In ancient times, the requirements of fasting were rather strict: no food or drink until a service at mid- or late afternoon, and then no meat, fish, eggs, dairy products, wine, or oil. (Hence "Mardi Gras", "Greasy Tuesday", the day when the fat was used up.) At least in theory, this remains the practice in the eastern church. In the west, however, the requirements have been gradually relaxed, to the point where (as in the 1928 Prayer Book), actual fasting is only required on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, while a measure of abstinence (traditionally defined as abstinence from meat) is all that is required on other days of the fast. Abstinence also means that we take a hard look at the amount of time we spend watching television, surfing the net, playing computer games, shopping, cocktail parties, and so on. We invest a great deal of time and energy in secondary things, or even trivial time-wasting things, yet grudge a half hour spent reading Scripture or taking part in the Church's daily prayer.

The 16th century Reformers were often highly critical of Lent, though in principle in favour of public fasts. Despite some continuing criticism, however, the Lenten fast was enforced by civil and ecclesiastical authorities in England. The controversy is the background for George Herbert's poem, "Lent":

*Welcome dear feast of Lent: who loves not thee,
He loves not Temperance, or Authority,
But is compos'd of passion.
The Scripture bids us fast; the Church says,
now:*

*Give to thy Mother, what thou wouldst allow
To ev'ry Corporation.*

Well into the 18th century, public corporate fast-



ing was an accepted, and legally-supported practice in England and elsewhere. Archbishops of Canterbury were required to grant dispensations from the fast; theatres and opera houses were closed; amusements and lavish entertainment frowned upon. Today, however, the *corporate* observance of dietary fast or abstinence is spotty at best, at least among Episcopalians, although some will choose some form of self-denial, such as giving up candy or sweets. Under pressure from exaggerated modern individualism, Lenten fasting has almost disappeared as a distinctive badge of Christian identity.

The Inward Fast

That is the outward fast of Lent. As the Scripture repeatedly makes clear, however, such fasting is only of benefit if it is accompanied by the inward fast of the heart and mind from all that God hates (see Isaiah 58 on the futility and hypocrisy of fasting outwardly only). This inward fast consists in a turning away from the pride in which we have abused the good creatures he has given for our use and enjoyment - and a turning toward the Lord in humble trust in his mercy. This conversion of the soul, this repentance in heart and mind, is the point of the Lenten exercise, and so it is properly completed in good works of service and witness done toward our neighbour, out of gratitude for the gifts of mercy given by God to us. Our Lenten works of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving (St. Matthew 6) are "fruits worthy of repentance" (St. Luke 3), brought forth in gratitude for, and in virtue of, grace freely bestowed. Andrew Louth comments: "the increased consciousness of dependence upon God disposes one to prayer, and active charity towards others is to fill the spaces, to use the resources, made available by fasting". We

fast from earthly bread that we may feed upon the bread of heaven, which is the word of God, and this bread, both earthly and heavenly, with out neighbour. We practice self-denial, that we may give ourselves more fully to God and neighbour.

The "Gesima" Sundays of Pre-Lent

Contemporary liturgists dismiss these coolly, and they have been abolished in the new Roman Missal and most new Anglican liturgies. The entry in the *New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy & Worship* expresses this point of view with a rich display of pedantry: "Quite apart from the philosophical question as to whether a period of preparation (i.e. Lent) should itself have a period of preparation, there seems little merit in continuing to name Sundays after inaccurate Latin calculations, and it seems very unlikely that anyone will wish to revive their use". Against the "philosophical" question one might cite Alexander Schmemmann on the similar pre-Lenten season of the eastern church, who ascribes them to the "deep psychological insight of the Church into human nature": "Knowing our lack of concentration and the frightening "worldliness" of our life, the Church knows our inability to change rapidly, to go abruptly from one spiritual or mental state into another. Thus, long before the actual effort of Lent is to begin, the Church calls our attention to its seriousness and invites us to meditate on its significance. Before we can *practice* Lent we are given its *meaning*" (*Great Lent*, 1974). The Church does not turn on a dime. If it is to undertake the labours of Lent, it needs a time of preparation, to focus its mind and will on the task at hand, to understand the place of discipline and self-denial in the nurture of the virtues, especially faith, hope, and charity.

The Annunciation

Its Anglican Collect and Its Holy Doctrine

By The Reverend Dr. Peter Toon

For the New Testament account of The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary we turn to Luke 1:26-38. In the sixth month after the conception of John by Elizabeth, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to Mary of Nazareth in Galilee. She was betrothed to Joseph and both were of the Jewish house of David. Appearing awesome but looking like a man, the angel came to Mary and said: "Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women." All this troubled Mary as she pondered what was being said. The angel continued: "Fear not Mary; for thou has found favor with God. And behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shall call his name JESUS."

Mary was concerned that she was not yet married and so Gabriel, to remove Mary's anxiety and to assure her that her virginity would be spared, answered: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. And therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Gabriel also made known to her the conception of St. John, the pregnancy of her relative, now old and sterile: "And behold, thy cousin Elizabeth; she also has conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren: for with God nothing shall be impossible." Mary may not yet have fully understood the meaning of the heavenly message and how the maternity might be reconciled with her virginity, but clinging to the first words of Gabriel and trusting in the gracious almighty power of God, she said: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according unto thy word."

It is most important to note that the cause of Mary's conception, presented in Old Testament terminology, is God the Lord, "the power of the Highest/Most High" and the descending upon her of the Holy Ghost. This is totally different from normal human procreation. Thus the Annunciation is the beginning of Jesus in His human nature. Through His mother He is a member of the human race.

Catholics and Orthodox claim that: "If the virginity of Mary before, during, and after the conception of her Divine Son was always considered part of the deposit of faith, this was done only on account of the historical facts and testimonials. The Incarnation of the Son of God did not in itself necessitate this exception from the laws of nature. Only reasons of expediency are given for it, chiefly, the end of the Incarnation. About to found a new

generation of the children of God, The Redeemer does not arrive in the way of earthly generations: the power of the Holy Spirit enters the chaste womb of the Virgin, forming the humanity of Christ. Many holy fathers (Ss. Jerome, Cyril, Ephrem, Augustine) say that the consent of Mary was essential to the redemption. It was the will of God, St. Thomas says (*Summa* III:30), that the redemption of mankind should depend upon the consent of the Virgin Mary. This does not mean that God in His plans was bound by the will of a creature, and that man would not have been redeemed, if Mary had not consented. It only means that the consent of Mary was foreseen from all eternity, and therefore was received as essential into the design of God." (Catholic Encyclopedia)

The Collect

The normal date for this Festival is March 25, nine months exactly before Christmas Day, but since March 25 was in Easter week in 2008, most churches transferred it to March 31, a Monday. So it is transferrable when necessity calls.

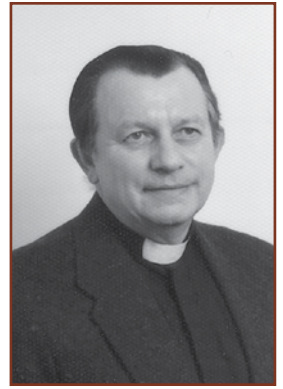
Let us look at the Collect in The BCP. It is a translation of what was the Post-Communion Prayer in the Latin Medieval Service according to the Sarum Use/Rite.

The Reformers of the Church of England were not able to use the actual Collect in the Sarum Use because of its perceived doctrinal errors concerning the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Here it is in a traditional English rendering from the original Latin:

O God, who didst will thy Word to take flesh from the womb of the blessed Virgin, at the announcement of an angel: Grant unto us thy supplicants that, as we believe her to be the mother of God, so we may be assisted by her intercessions with thee, through the same, thy Son, Jesus Christ.

In contrast, the Collect that became the reformed Catholic Collect of the Anglican Way in The BCP is:

We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts; that, as we have known the incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his cross and passion we may be brought unto the glory of his resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.



*The Rev. Dr. Peter Toon,
President Emeritus,
Prayer Book Society*

In a more contemporary and modified form this could be:

Pour your grace, O Lord our God, into our hearts, that we may not be as those who received in vain from the angel the announcement of the Incarnation of your Son; but, being led by the Spirit, we may go on in faith to be conformed to his death and resurrection, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

In this Collect, the church speaks of the merciful, dynamic relation of the Father to his adopted children under the image of dew or rain, which descends to fertilize the heart and life. Further, the church utters a prayer for grace, not only to receive God's message of reconciliation but also to be so established in it, as to be conformed by it to a suffering and glorified Lord and Savior.

The church also recalls the means used by God to communicate first with Mary and then with Joseph of Mary's miraculous conception (which is the human side of the Incarnation of the Son). God sent an angel, probably Gabriel, the very same angel who had announced to Daniel the future advent of the Messiah (Daniel 9:21 ff.).

The Incarnation, the taking to himself by the Son of God of our human nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, makes it possible for him to be the true Savior of the world, since he is both one with us and one with the Father. Therefore we come to the Father through union with him. We know these truths not merely as statements to be understood and learned, but also through faith and spiritual union with the Incarnate One himself.

We are brought to the glory of his resurrection by his cross and passion, and this in two ways. First, at the Cross he paid the ransom for our sins objectively as our Representative and Substitute, making for us a right and everlasting relation to the Father. And secondly, through our being conformed to his suffering in two ways—through the putting to death all sinful passions and thoughts in our hearts and by suffering patiently adversities,

sickness, pain and tribulation.

The Festivals of the Blessed Virgin Mary in The BCP all point to her Son, who is her Lord and, concerning whom she once said: "Whatever he says to you, do it!"

Implications of the Annunciation for modern issues

In conclusion we may note that in recent times the celebration of this Feast appears to have declined much in the West and thus its doctrinal implications have been or can be neglected or set aside. Here are two of these implications:

1. Conception creates a new human being; and life begins at conception. The example of the Lord of Glory becoming Man has powerful teaching power, making it difficult for any Christian to argue for abortion at any day of a pregnancy. It would appear that this dimension of the Incarnation has not been "exploited" to the full by Christian teachers. In other words there are creative ways of using this Feast which in a devout, doctrinal way speak winsomely against abortion and for life with God in the womb.
2. Jesus began to exist when Mary conceived by the direct action of God himself. The only-begotten Son of the Father, the eternal Logos/Word, existed from all eternity but Jesus, as the One Person, with the two Natures (Divine and Human), existed from his conception in the womb of Mary. It is very important to believe, teach and confess this so that the Festival of Christmas clearly celebrates not the Incarnation (which belongs to March 25) but the Nativity, the coming forth from the womb of Mary of Jesus. The Nativity is thus nine months after the Conception and leads to the title of "Theotokos," meaning the "Birth-Giver of God [the Son], for Mary.

**Please remember the
Prayer Book Society of the U.S.A.,
both in your charitable giving and in your
will. Thank you.**

Divorce and Remarriage in Anglican Canon Law

by Roberta Bayer

Speaking as a woman with a young family, one cannot but be fearful for the future of society and the children growing up in it, as families disintegrate all around us, and many children are left not only in troubled situations but without any model of what makes for stable, life-long marital commitment. Statistics indicate that children living in a family with both biological parents are much more likely to succeed in school and much less prone to psychological disorder. Women are more likely than men to be put at risk by divorce; single family households with a mother at the head more likely to be impoverished. Consequently, I find the facts as reported below, that church law is increasingly likely to reflect cultural pressure to facilitate divorce, very troubling. The church is a repository of teaching which is based on the Biblical injunction to treat marriage as sacred, and not simply a legal contract, easy to make and easy to break. It would seem that in light of the social upheaval created by the divorce-culture, the church might reconsider those changes to canon law which have been less than salutary for the protection of marriage, or defending its sacred character.

Canon lawyer Norman Doe states in his authoritative book on the canon law of the Anglican communion that marriage is one area of canon law which has undergone radical changes in recent years.¹ He says that “the stimulus for change has been the shift in secular society and law toward the greater incidence and availability of civil divorce.”² Evidence supporting his finding is found in resolutions from the Lambeth Conference as well as various provincial canons from throughout the communion. That societal shifts have affected church discipline with respect to marriage and divorce raises fundamental, although unasked, questions about current church teaching on marriage. Not surprisingly the permanence of marriage is increasingly looked upon as an ideal, rather than a fact.³ Furthermore, because societal pressure to make divorce more available counters church law, clerical discretion has increased at the expense of upholding the canons.

Evidence that the western church has been influenced by secular culture is seen not only in the growing desire to bless same-sex unions, particularly in places where same-sex marriage is being regularized in law, but also in widespread

acceptance of remarriage after divorce. Insofar as the Anglican church has linked its moral strictures to societal norms, it might have been better if it had considered more carefully the compatibility of contemporary psychology with Biblical teaching. It might have asked why psychology, which is the basis for societal change, should affect the church's teaching on the divine institution of marriage. It might question whether it is coherent to refer to marriage as a divine institution, and describe marriage as “a lifelong union, lasting until the death of one partner,”⁴ all the while accepting divorce and remarriage in the church, and sometimes the blessing of same-sex unions.

Sometimes it would also appear that an extra-Biblical theology is being incorporated into the language in which contemporary canons are written. As an example, the New Zealand canons state that marriage is for the “full development of the personalities of husband and wife”⁵ and that, in marriage, the sexual act is “the means of declaring the deepest and most complete personal exchange and love.”⁶ This is truly an innovatory teaching in that it places sexual fulfillment as the central expression of human personality, rather than the faithful love of God. Christian discipleship is not mentioned as central to marriage; it has been replaced by an orientation to self-fulfillment. If a Christian marriage is for self-fulfillment rather than personal devotion to God, there is no bar to inhibiting two men or two women from celebrating marriage for the sake of the full development of their assumed personality, despite Biblical injunctions.

Apart from the incorporation of new ideas into the marriage canons, the relationship of canon law to civil law in some jurisdictions adds complexity to distinguishing Biblical from societal norms. The fact that the Church of England is an established church and links canon law to civil law on marriage has meant that in England there is a legal “right to marry in church.”⁷ In ECUSA, and most other provinces of the communion, it is within the discretion of any member of the clergy to decline to solemnize a marriage. Here “unless the proposed union satisfies the secular legal criteria on validity,”⁸ the church must not solemnize marriages. That means that outside of those states where same-sex marriage has been legalized (i.e. Massachusetts and Connecticut) no minister of

4 *Ibid.*, p.273.

5 Norman Doe, *Canon Law in the Anglican Communion*, p.274

6 *Ibid.*, p.274, n.11

7 *Ibid.*, p. 274-5

8 *Ibid.*

1 Norman Doe, *Canon Law in the Anglican Communion: A Worldwide Perspective* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998)

2 *Ibid.*, p. 272.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 300.

the Episcopal church may solemnize such a marriage. It must be stressed that in ECUSA, now TEC, clergy are at liberty to impose ecclesiastical conditions on marriage, and a church marriage can be barred if those ecclesiastical conditions are not met. Discretion was originally conceived as a negative, rather than a positive power.

Preparation for marriage varies from province to province. Mostly the obligation is very light and does not go beyond setting prescribed periods of waiting prior to marriage, the publication of banns, and the obligation that the officiating cleric investigate any possible legal impediments. There are varying expressions of the need for instruction in the nature and meaning of marriage. The majority of church laws include the following rules for discerning a valid ecclesiastical marriage: "(1) that the parties have a right under secular law to contract a marriage; (2) that both parties freely and knowingly consent to the marriage, without fraud, coercion, or mistake as to the identity of a partner or the mental condition of the other party; (3) that the parties do not fall within the prohibited degrees of relationship; (4) that the parties have attained the legal age for marriage; and (5) where required in the case of minors, that their parents or guardians have consented to it."⁹

The annulment of a marriage in civil law is accepted as a genuine ground of ecclesiastical nullity in many Anglican churches and in these cases generally a second marriage is permitted. Several jurisdictions have an ecclesiastical system of nullity whereby church authorities determine nullity, following civil proceedings. But civil divorce or dissolution is not treated the same way. "Traditional Anglican doctrine teaches the indissolubility of marriage, that union is dissolved only by the death of one of the parties."¹⁰ However, in fact, episcopal discretion is found to circumvent this teaching. In ECUSA, now TEC, "canon law permits an ecclesiastical decision about the effect of civil proceedings with regard to both annulled marriages and dissolved marriages."¹¹ It would appear that civil divorce is accepted by church authorities on the basis of a written judgement from the Bishop as to the status of dissolution.

Remarriage after divorce, while the first spouse is still alive, now occurs. Normally it is the case that "where the union is ended on grounds other than invalidity...the more usual method by which churches regulate remarriages...is by provisions dealing directly with the use of the church's rites at the celebration of the proposed marriage."¹² There is no blanket rule forbidding clergy to solemnize the marriage. The right to refuse to proceed with solemnization follows three models in different

provinces: (1) the laws confer the right upon ministers to refuse as a matter of conscientious objection; (2) law requires a minister who desires to solemnize such a marriage to obtain permission of the bishop; and (3) the matter is left to the minister who makes a decision in consultation with his bishop.

The fullest canonical treatment of the procedures allowing for the solemnization of such marriages is given in Southern Africa. This treatment, it would seem, obscures rather than illuminates. The traditional ban on remarriage can be lifted if: (1) there is no prospect of establishing a *true marriage relationship*¹³ between the former partners; (2) the person acknowledges a share in the sin which led to the breakdown, is repentant and seeks forgiveness from God; (3) the persons understand the church teaching and intend to uphold it; (4) the divorced person has made proper provision for the dependents of the former marriage, children or others; (5) the applicant is ready to fulfill moral and legal obligations from the former marriage.¹⁴ In other words, so long as it is assured that the divorced and remarrying person retain responsibility for and ties to the former spouse, while entering into a new relationship with someone else, they may be remarried.

Has the church now completely accepted that remarriage after divorce is fine so long as all dependents are provided for? Should the church use the civil divorce procedures as a legitimate guide to accepting a given divorce in the church? This may be a mistake as studies on marriage law in the United States indicate that secular divorce procedures are inclined to facilitate divorce, rather than make for reconciliation.¹⁵

As in the case above, the phrase "true marriage relationship" illustrates the level of opaque reasoning which seems to guide thinking about remarriage. What is the definition of a true marriage relationship? How does it fit with traditional teaching on the dissolubility of marriage? Is marriage indissoluble in fact, or is dissolubility subject to the opinion of the parties who can say that their marriage failed to be *true* because it did not live up to a personal ideal? Are the participants themselves free to define the ideal of a true marriage? To import such phraseology, subject to a multitude of explanations, into canon law just raises questions.

In its treatment of divorce and remarriage the church has been influenced by secular society, and now is faced with an even greater challenge from those who desire to incorporate same-sex marriage into regular practice. The root of the problem appears to be that the church is seems to be confused as to what is the nature of Chris-

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.281.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.284.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.285.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 287.

¹³ my italics

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.289.

¹⁵ Maggie Gallagher, *The Abolition of Marriage* (Chicago: Regnery, 1996)

The Christian Marriage

Eros Redeemed

Romantic Love

Since the time when Thomas Cranmer compiled The Book of Common Prayer, the idea that romantic love is a necessary preliminary to marriage has taken on much greater importance to Christians than previously was the case. In the BCP Christian marriage is depicted as a union between man and woman, founded not on feeling alone, but on the hope of redemption following a life devoted to our Lord. It was generally thought that through common faith and common work love and affection would increase within the marriage, alongside discipleship to Christ. Our understanding of marriage as primarily romantic is shaped by ideas that have had more recent origin.

The ancients considered romantic love as a kind of divine madness, an entrapment. The goddess of love was fickle and untrustworthy, and her son cupid or eros portrayed as an imp, and when people found themselves in love, it was because these two had made them their unwary victims. The point was that people fell in love without any sense of reason or propriety, it was irrational. In Renaissance song, poetry and art cupid is mocked, but also respected. While the power of love was never denied, it was clear that in Christian thinking, because of this association of romantic love with passion, it was not to be considered a trustworthy guide to marriage. A couple should enter into marriage guided by the standards given in the faith, which are a common devotion to God, a common understanding of morality, and a strong sense of duty.

In the time of the Renaissance, the word *romance* did not refer to a feeling of love, but instead to a chivalric tale set in verse. Within the next century, the word romance came to refer to a fictitious narrative in prose, where the incidents that took place were very remote from ordinary life, and the writer included long digressions illustrating some point

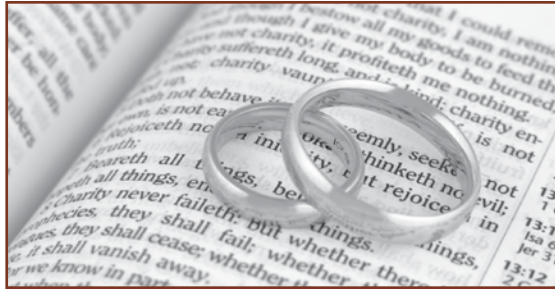
about the workmanship of the divine in nature. Although William Shakespeare followed ancient, classical models in composing his comedies and tragedies, he also developed something new in his Romance plays, *The Tempest*, *A Winter's Tale*, and *Cymbeline* which partake of these characteristics.

The Pilgrim's Progress, a prose tale written by John Bunyan in 1684, might be considered a late addition in the genre of literary romance. It went on to be one of the most well-read and popular works written in English, and teaches, among other matters, how a Christian marriage differs from a worldly marriage. Towards the end of their pilgrimage, the pilgrim Christiana arranged for the betrothal of her son Matthew to her fellow pilgrim Mercy. The match was made for a number of reasons,

in part because it is good that people marry for the sake of building up the church, and because the two young people already shared the same devotion to our Lord. Unlike various worldly couples mentioned in the book whose marriages were

based on passion and self-interest, the marriage of Mercy and Matthew only makes sense if one thinks of it as part of a Christian life, governed by the idea that life is a pilgrimage to our Lord.

By the early nineteenth century the word romance came to have much the same meaning as it does today. A romantic story was full of high drama and passion, and also depicted romantic love. In the study of the history of ideas, it is generally said that this development occurred under the influence of certain philosophers of the eighteenth century who argued that intuitive sense is the true and only guide to moral conduct. Sometimes this is called a theory of *moral sentiments*, which is to say that the sentimental, more than the rational side of human personality, is the best guide for judgment. Consequently in popular culture, romantic love came to be viewed as a necessary preliminary to marriage.



Continued from previous page

tian marriage, and has been unwilling to discuss the theological and social impact of existing in a society where there is now much greater access to easy divorce. As it becomes increasingly clear that marriage is treated in the church much as it is in society, despite the fact that social norms and tra-

ditional church teaching are at odds, I would hope that church leaders will give some attention to the discord between how marriage is dealt with in civil society, and what is said on the subject in the Bible, the canons and BCP.

In this same period, however, Jane Austen expressed something of a sensible person's ambivalence about this point of view. In *Pride and Prejudice*, her character Elizabeth Bennett, who is blessed with character, intelligence, and humility, is capable of unifying reason and sentiment in her decision to marry, and so indeed chooses to marry someone suitable in character and intellect. On the other hand, not all her sisters were so wise, and Austen suggests that the pursuit of romantic love by itself is mistaken, and does not lead to a wise marriage, as in the case of the erring Miss Lydia. Austen's other novels multiply such examples.

By the early twentieth century the novels of Henry James, marvelous studies of human motive and emotion that they are, depict romantic love as a means to self-transformation. Characters move beyond the confines of the culture of their birth through love, and so discover their true self, for better or worse. James is not entirely sanguine about this. His stories are filled with dramatic encounters and desperate affairs governed by passion, which frequently lead to downfall. However, he does describe the world in which we live, where romantic love is considered sufficient excuse to break all former vows. This is very distant from the picture of marriage in *Pilgrim's Progress*.

In a society where formal commitment, rational judgement and self-denial seem less important than emotional fulfillment, a great deal of sobriety, moral judgement and education is needed to counter the cultural exaltation of romantic love. Engaged couples seem to require marriage counseling of a high order before entering into Christian marriage, so that romantic love does not preclude commitment, self-denial, and sacrifice, and they recognize that God intends for it something other than our pleasure and self-fulfillment.

The Teaching of the Book of Common Prayer

The 1662 Book of Common Prayer, the oldest edition of the BCP still in use in the Anglican world, teaches a theology of marriage which is salutary and something of a corrective to our *eros*-dominated views. Even if people use the 1928 or one of the other books of Common Prayer, 1662 might profitably be studied.¹

The opening paragraph of the 1662 marriage service offers three reasons for why God ordained marriage. It states that marriage is not to be taken in hand lightly or wantonly "to satisfy men's carnal lusts and appetites," but "soberly and in the fear of God." Marriage exists first, for the procreation of

children to be brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord and to the praise of his Holy Name, second, as a remedy for sin, and to avoid fornication, and third, for our help and comfort. The list and its order suggest that the comforting aspect of marriage is dependent upon the former reasons for marriage. That is a way of saying that our feelings are formed or educated through the performance of our christian duty.

Children are the proper fruit of marriage because loving the Lord rightly and entirely leads to the desire and *intention* to build up His church militant here on earth. The intention to be fruitful is primary, and is more important than whether in fact the Lord blesses the couple with children. Openness to children unites the love of God and christian fellowship, it is the expression of charity.

All the prayer books make reference to Christ hallowing marriage at the Wedding at Cana, and note that marriage is commended by St Paul because it represents the spiritual unity between Christ and his church. The letter to the *Ephesians* at 5.22-31 states that husbands should love their wives as Christ loves his church. Marriage takes on a new meaning under the new dispensation. In the book of *Genesis* God made man and woman from one flesh, and marriage is understood to echo that original unity. The New Testament teaches that a Christian marriage symbolizes the relation of Christ and his church. The couple are made two in one flesh under the old dispensation, but under the new their unity is like the spiritual unity between Christ and his church. Consequently, marriage is a kind of mystery, as well as a divine institution. It will be one means by which husband and wife live out the faith, and will be sanctified. Faithfulness to our Lord is recognized in faithfulness to an earthly spouse.

So, the first task of marriage is to build up the church through charity and faith. The second is to live virtuously. Marriage was ordained "for a remedy against sin, and to avoid fornication, that such persons as have not the gift of continency might marry and keep themselves undefiled members' of Christ's body." The words of Christ and those of St Paul link purity of soul to purity of body. Much is said these days about how older generations were 'sexually repressed,' but such comments are hardly worth noting by those who love our Lord. If someone loves God above all else, not only does he desire to be faithful to his spouse as God is faithful to us, but he also subordinates all desires for earthly things to God.

Thirdly, marriage is said to be ordained for the "mutual society, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and in adversity." Making faithfulness to God and spouse the outward purpose of marriage, and practicing the inward discipline of Christian discipleship shapes the moral sentiments, it subjects

¹ As an aside, although it is clear that the American 1928 BCP differs very little in basic doctrine from the other historic books of Common Prayer, the 1662 has an opening exhortation which emphasizes the importance of charity, or love of God, as central to marriage. It clearly subordinates *eros*, or romantic love to the procreation and rearing of children, and strongly recommends purity of life.

them to duty and reason, giving husband and wife strength and will to help and comfort each other.

All this should be taught as a matter of course in catechesis. Today however, in some churches, engaged couples may only obtain something called 'marriage preparation,' which frequently entails social and psychological questioning, the filling out of forms, and deep questioning about their feelings. But there is still need to teach about Christian discipleship, the importance of regular church attendance, saying daily prayer and reading the Bible in conjunction with the daily lectionary, as well as living a life of mutual forbearance and love.

The task of the church is not only to help a married couple preserve the love that they had when they arrived at the church door, but also to lead them more deeply into Christ's love for his church. Clearly the rate of divorce and then remarriage in the secular world and among Anglicans shows that romantic love is not enough to sustain a marriage. This is why Christian marriage is shaped not by feeling, but by a new commitment to each other, and to the Lord.

The Worship of Eros

C. S. Lewis remarks in his chapter on Eros in *The Four Loves* that romantic love does not aim at happiness anyway. Evidence is to the contrary. He said that it is quite impossible to dissuade a couple who are desperately in love from marrying merely by telling them that they will ultimately be unhappy. Most of the time they do not believe you, Lewis writes, and "even if they believed, they would not be dissuaded. For it is the very mark of Eros that when he is in us we had rather share unhappiness with the Beloved than be happy on any other terms." Eros is like a god. Eros wants total commitment, and promises transcendence of self, unity with the other, becoming the other, the very thing which the lover thinks he or she wants. For this reason Eros is an idol, and makes for false religion.

Worship of Eros is, unfortunately, in competi-

tion with the love of the true God. Not that Eros has any reality or could oppose Christ in fact, but we *give it power*. Romantic love blurs sight of the truth and it is corrupting insofar as the total commitment that Eros demands is "a paradigm or example built into our natures, of the love we ought to exercise towards God and Man." That is why elevating romantic love to the point where it is the one reality in life, and the only thing that matters, is so wrong. It pretends to be truth, with a capital "T" -- but it is a shadow. The fact that romantic love can have such an intense and life-changing effect on people, and yet, as we all know, disappear into dust and ashes as time goes by, is proof of this unreality.

As Paul says in Ephesians 5, marriage is a profound mystery, and connected to the mysterious relationship of Christ and the church. It has only a superficial appearance of being like the secular version. The time to teach this is when a young couple enter into marriage, so it may sink in that there is a Christian understanding of marriage which is the standard, and quite different from what is depicted in movies and on television. Marital fidelity is part and parcel of living the moral life as Christians, not an exception to it.

The fruit of marriage is children, faithful discipleship its task, charitable love is its end. To live the life of celibacy in the world, or to live as a consecrated virgin, is not all that different from married life with respect to discipleship to Christ, and the call to charity. If the lesson of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer seems out of date it is because there are some very strong cultural forces at work which make romantic and erotic love into something that it is not. Our culture offers the wrong lens through which to look at marriage, the divorce rate within the church, and particularly among the clergy is full evidence of the error of that lens. Faithfulness to Christ requires that we examine, once again, the discipleship which Christ expects of husband and wife, so that our Lord is placed at the center of marriage, and through worship of Him, romantic love finds its proper place.

The cultural reasons for the high divorce rate, and why many people, even in the church do not consider marriage to be a life-long commitment, are quite complicated. Some consideration of this question is found in sociologist Christopher Lasch's *The True and Only Heaven*. He traces the increasing acceptance of divorce, the rise of feminism, and the changed definitions of virtue to the influence of various progressive and secular ideologies, and societal changes, from the late eighteenth century through to the present. Elsewhere he argues that our culture is fundamentally narcissistic and nihilistic in a book entitled *The Culture of Narcissism*. Lasch offers no easy answers, but opposes easy divorce.

Further evidence of the social effects of divorce is provided in the research conducted by the *National Marriage Project* at Rutgers' University. (<http://marriage.rutgers.edu>) Researchers have traced the effect of divorce on children (bad), on society (bad), and suggest that the assumption that divorce makes unhappy spouses happier is unproven.

Reformed Catholic

A Description of a Real Anglican Christian

By the Reverend Dr. Peter Toon

There is a world of difference between “A Catholic Reformer” and a “Reformed Catholic.” Following in the steps of many Anglican Pastors and Divines I am honored to be known as “a Reformed Catholic Christian” in a Church that is also Reformed Catholic in substance and historical expression.

A Catholic Reformer is wholly committed to the Catholic Church as of divine origin and works to see it become true to itself as the Church of God. An example from the medieval period would be St Francis of Assisi and from the sixteenth century St Ignatius of Loyola.

A Reformed Catholic is also committed to the Catholic Church but specifically as it submits to the supreme authority of the Bible, as the Word of God written. An example from the medieval period would be John Wycliffe and from the sixteenth century Thomas Cranmer.

A word coined in the late 1520s which communicated much then of what was involved in being a “reformed catholic” is “Protestant.” The meaning was of a positive protest on behalf of the Gospel of God the Father and the Lordship of Jesus as these had been received and given form in the one, holy, catholic church of the early centuries. This heritage is found in the full, legal name of the historic Anglican Church of the U.S.A., “The Protestant Episcopal Church of the U.S.A.” Regrettably for most people today “Protestant” means “opposed to Roman Catholicism.”

Yet another word from the 1520s, still in use today but again used not in the original meaning, is “Evangelical,” which is the German name of the original Reformed Catholic Protestant Church in Germany. To be “evangelical” here is to be committed wholly to the evangel, the Good News of salvation, which is only contained in the written Holy Scriptures and is a sure guide to the Church in contrast to the non-scriptural traditions of man (as in the medieval period).

Let us now reflect on the title, “Reformed Catholic,” with respect to that which was known as *Ecclesia Anglicana* and also from the sixteenth century as “The Church of England” and Anglican Church[es]. This ancient national, established Church of England, while retaining its glorious cathedrals, picturesque parish churches, historic provinces (Canterbury and York) and dioceses/parishes, and musical traditions, changed dramatically in terms of worship, doctrine and discipline:

All ties with the Papacy were broken and the Monarch became the Head of the Church; instead of the Latin Liturgy of the middle ages

The Book of Common Prayer in English was introduced for use by all clergy and laity; the doctrinal position taken by the English Church on major historical and contemporary issues was set forth in The Articles of Religion (to be accepted by all the clergy); the medieval Ordinal for the ordaining of Ministers—Bishop, Priest and Deacon—was much revised in order to portray the centrality of the Gospel in the life and work of clergy; the work of the revision of Canon Law was begun; and the Bible now in English became both in symbol (large copies found in all parish churches) and in reality (OT, NT and Psalms read daily at Morning and Evening Prayer and the Service of Holy Communion incorporating the Pauline doctrine of Justification by Faith) the final authority for this Church.

Therefore, it has been the position of the Church of England that it is based on Holy Scripture as the primary formulary and on four secondary formularies, the Articles of Religion, the Book of Common Prayer, the Ordinal and the Canon Law (only finally approved in 1604). Since 1662 three formularies—BCP, Articles and Ordinal—have been bound together inside one Book, commonly called The Prayer Book, until the 1960s, when the Anglican Way began in the West a period that continues to this day of modernization of its formularies.

Thus The Prayer Book is both the basis of worship and doctrine of what may be called The Anglican Way, the way of Reformed Catholicism.

The Anglican Way did not reject the medieval Church from which it emerged in the 1540s but it affirmed it in order to reform it by the Word of God written and guided by the models and principles from the early Church.

Since the sixteenth century, there has been a spectrum of ways of using and conducting the Liturgy of the Church, of teaching and expressing her Reformed Catholic doctrines, of commending forms of devotion in and around the Liturgy, and of developing styles of pastoral care. In the last two centuries, Anglicans have spoken of different schools of churchmanship such as High Church, Low Church, Latitudinarian, Evangelical and various combinations of these.

Since the publication of the first The Booke of The Common Prayer (1549), the Anglican Way has become a global fellowship of national and provincial Churches. The argument presented here is that the Anglican Way is in essence and in character Reformed Catholic and if these dimensions and tensions are lost in the current crisis then what is forthcoming is not the reform and regeneration of the Anglican Way!

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Embracing Lent within the Christian Year

As citizens of the City of God, we live in communion with the Father and his Incarnate Son, Jesus, through Advent, Christmas, Epiphany and then Ash Wednesday, opening up into Lent (including Holy Week), with Easter and much else to follow.

Let us seek to capture the basics of Lent, as it has been known and practiced in the West since the early centuries of the Church.

1. Lent literally means the Spring Season (**lenten**, “Springtime”) in Old English; but, in the Church Lent came to mean a distinct part of the Christian Year, which occurred around the time of the Spring Season in the North of Europe.
2. Lent has been, and is known, within the Latin Church of the West by the Latin name of **Quadragesima**, which literally means “fortieth,” and points to a period of forty days, which do not include Sundays, from Ash Wednesday to Easter.
3. Lent does not include, but is prefaced by the three Sundays known as Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima. They serve amongst other things to remind us that Lent is soon to start and we must prepare as a church and as individual persons for its beginning on Ash Wednesday.
4. Lent points to and presumes forty days of fasting and is obviously based, in its length and its devotional piety, on the examples of Moses and Elijah in the Old Testament and of Jesus himself in the New Testament.
5. Lent’s fasting for the ordinary church member has been understood in these terms: the ordinary rule has been to take only one meal a day and that only in the evening, while meat has been entirely forbidden (often wine also).. During Holy Week, or at least on Good Friday it was common to enjoin the *xerophagia*, i.e., a diet of dry food, bread, salt, and vegetables.
6. Lent’s discipline is not an absolute like the obeying of God’s holy law and believing his divine promises. It is a good and useful means of taking most seriously our Christian walk with the Lord and of the critical importance of his Death and Resurrection.



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