Mandate

THE MAGAZINE OF THE PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY

Volume 33, Number 3
Summer 2010

In This Issue

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Matthew 28:19

Reflections FROM THE Editor's Desk

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

Who We Are

Why is there a Prayer Book Society? The simple answer is that it exists to preserve the worship and doctrine of the Anglican Church. But writing such words brings me up short; they are not quite right. Nietszche, the late 19th century critic of European and Christian culture, harshly criticized scholarly contemporaries for engaging in "museum culture". By that he meant that the elite of his day, while giving lip service to the importance of Christianity to progress and enlightenment and liberty, had a purely nostalgic view of the faith.

He was, so far as I can tell, quite right about the faith of a large part of the European and North American elite at that time, and more than one hundred years later it would seem that Europe, now priding itself on its "authenticity" has advanced beyond the museum culture which he ridiculed. Where arcane artifacts were once on show for the curious, they have now turned out the lights. So while in some parts of Europe they have shut the churches and locked the doors, in North America the museums have been re-built. With the introduction of artificial lights and loud speakers, churches now resemble conference centers/clubs, so that American culture is affirmed, and the church is relevant.

So what is the point of the PBS? To turn the lights back on in the museums? Well clearly this cannot be the goal; rather it is that submission to the order of prayer and doctrine within the *Book of Common Prayer* allows one to see and comprehend the true nature of prayer, and the difference between that to which Christ has called us and the surrounding culture.

Reasoning people need a teacher in the faith, and the *Book of Common Prayer* has always served that purpose for those who want to learn. If people are left to their own devices they tend to see what they want to see, and so their faith turns into something which serves themselves because our moral imaginations, shaped as they are by the surrounding images and ideas, hinder reflection upon our final end in God. Self-absorption is always a danger, no matter how well-intentioned one is, but it is good to be reminded of this danger on a regular basis while praying the daily offices, reading the Bible through the lectionary, and if possible engaging in some ancillary devotional reading.

The culture tells us, and some churches do this as well, that if we do this or that we may become an integrated, well-adjusted person whose life is a seamless fabric, whether voting, working, praying. But, I might offer the opinion that the Bible teaches that men are botched and bungled beings. (Is there any prophet, king, priest, or apostle who is unfailingly wise or utterly sane?) I am not sure how anyone who has faced the Cross for what it is can think that self-respect and self-expression are that to which we are called. The saints are called to something much higher, and it may not be to a life wherein one is praised for getting it all right, the right family, the right job, the right life. But this is hard to see if moral imaginations are warped by the same culture which Nietzsche ridiculed.

The daily exercise of ordered prayer and Bible reading as set out in the *Book of Common Prayer* require that I face God instead of myself, acknowledge my failures, list my sins so that they confront me in their honest garb; it helps me fight that love of my own well-being which the self-help books praise in various ways. In the business lingo of the day, the contemporary culture tells me I should "be my own brand." (Can one imagine a less Christian idea than being your own brand?) This strikes me as advice for

Mandate
Summer 2010 · Volume 33, Number 3
Editor: **Dr. Roberta Bayer** · Assistant Editor: **Mrs. Auburn Traycik** · Design/Layout: **Boldface Graphics**
The Officers for the Year 2010 are:
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All gifts to the P.B.S. are tax deductible for U.S. citizens.
Recipients of Mandate are encouraged to send at least $28 each year to maintain the ministry.
Editorial and all other correspondence: P.O. Box 913, Brookhaven, PA 19015-0913. Phone 1-800-PBS-1928.
Postmaster: Please send address changes to the above address.
Visit the websites of the Society: www.pbsusa.org & www.anglicanmarketplace.com.

a soul in Hell. It is because it is important to know Christ, and Christ alone, that we are dedicated to the *Book of Common Prayer*.

Theological Discussions

This June, the topic of the Canadian Anglican Theological Conference, held in Moncton, New Brunswick was Anglican Identity and the Challenge of Diversity. Speakers included Anglican Church notables Dr. Ephraim Radner, Professor of Historical Theology, Wycliffe College, Toronto, and Dr. Alyson Barnett-Cowan, the newly appointed Director for Unity, Faith and Order for the Anglican Communion. Fr. Dunbar and I were also asked to speak. We expressed, of course, the view that the *Book of Common Prayer* and formularies were the foundation of doctrinal unity and identity in the communion. Dr. Radner and Dr. Barnett-Cowan spoke of current problems facing the "instruments of communion", i.e. international Anglican councils and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The talks will be published by St Peter's Publications of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. Their website contains a wealth of material on Anglican and Christian topics that can be ordered, and there are also a number of excellent scholarly articles which may be read on- line.

A Note from a Reader

Fr Dunbar received the following letter from the rector of St John's, Detroit.

Thank you for your fine article "Lessons in the Lectionary" in the Trinitytide edition of Mandate. This past Sunday marked our second anniversary of returning to the 1928 Lectionary to make us fully a 1928 Prayer Book Parish. Here is the article from our weekly bulletin about the switch.

The 1928 Prayer Book Lectionary

We are only one of two parishes in the Diocese of Michigan that uses the 1928 *Book of Common Prayer*. It is the last American prayer book to keep the form and theology of our world-wide Anglican Common Prayer Book tradition. The Episcopal Church's most recently approved book deviates from its form for worship and theology in many ways. In other countries, where such alternate worship forms were adopted, they were given the title "alternate" book, recognizing the difference while continuing to allow the use of the older form. In America, the General Convention, bishops, and some who were zealous to change the Church sought to suppress the use of the original forms. Only in recent years, and in our case at the most gracious permission of our diocesan bishop, has there been wider permission and acceptance of the use of the 1928 Prayer Book.

An integral part of the "Rite" (1928 v. 1979) for Holy Communion is the schedule of readings, called The Lectionary. The new rite(s) adopted a three year cycle of readings, which have since been revised and updated as required by the Episcopal Church since 2008. The 1928 lectionary is a one year cycle, helping us to solidly recognize and memorize a core of Scripture used at the Sunday Holy Communion. This schedule in our prayer book tradition, is based on the older Western Liturgies, and goes back past the 13th century. For nearly 800 years this schedule of readings have been used to teach about the life of our Lord and the direction of holiness for His Church.

It is certainly not perfect: no lectionary is! With only two lessons assigned for each Sunday it assumes that Christians will also be reading scripture in the context of Morning and Evening Prayer, as well as self-study! However, even with more scriptural variety in the 1979 lectionary, as has been used at Holy Communion over the last 30+ years, I wish I could believe the Episcopal Church is holier and more scripturally literate than its first 200 years, but that is not my observation. In fact my observation is quite the opposite! I think the original lectionary is worth using and so we all do!

Under His Mercy,
Fr. Steven J. Kelly, SSC

We need your gifts in order to carry out your mandate to defend the 1928 *Book of Common Prayer.* You may send a contribution in the enclosed envelope.

Please give generously.

Please read our redesigned website: www.pbsusa.org

Contact Dr Bayer at editor.mandate@gmail.com or from the pbs website

Border-Crossing

AND THE ANGLICAN WAY

By Roberta Bayer

I have some trouble accepting the dogma of the Windsor Process that border-crossing and the innovations in the idea of marriage ought to be treated as equivalent errors. As Christians our obedience is owed primarily to the body of Christ, which is the invisible Church, and only secondarily to any particular church in the world. Diocesan lines do not reflect borders within the invisible Church, any more than can any particular denomination lay claim to being the only worldly manifestation of the Body of Christ.

The Body of Christ, by which St. Paul meant the Church, is a spiritual reality, invisible to us including as it does the living, and the dead, and those to come; it transcends the limits of space and time. (Ephesians 4) It has never been said that every baptized Christian warrants membership. It is by the grace of God and my desire to follow in the footsteps of Christ, and know his Word, that I may hope to belong. Consequently, a faithful Christian may move between various worldly instantiations of that one true and invisible Church in their life. People who seek the church catholic, or the universal and invisible Church, may be fluid in their institutional attachments insofar as they seek catholic teaching.

Many traditional Anglicans have gone to Rome over the last few years, others have moved to the Eastern Orthodox Church, or to different forms of Protestantism. The border crossing by Anglican provinces such as Nigeria, Uganda, and Rwanda to assist North American Anglicans scandalized by their own provinces has offered an opportunity to keep some of those people within the Anglican Way. The litigious behaviour of The Episcopal Church suggests that TEC leaders have forgotten that the church is unified in God, rather than by contract, and they act as if people will stay committed out of a sense of identity or nostalgia or duty while the church acts in its own proprietorial interests. This is asking more patience of the contemporary 'seeker' Christian, than can properly be expected, given the religious pluralism of the day.

Now if one is an eccentric, historically read Anglican like myself, one can come up with various complicated reasons for staying within the Anglican Way, or Anglican chaos. I know that the theology of the Magisterial Reform is both intellectually sound and theologically rich. It is not possible to produce generations of learned and faithful Christians, as did the Church of England in the 16th, 17th, and even into the 18th centuries with an unsound theology. So I sit down and read Jewel, Hooker, Laud, Andrewes, Donne, Herbert (or those who read them) and know that the Anglican Way lives in books, even if it is gone institutionally.

But this situation has its ironies because, of course, the whole point of the Anglican Reformation was to create a stable church, a body of people with a hierarchy and internal order, common worship by which to live the faith, and to transmit this unchanging faith to future generations. Faith is not just a set of abstract ideas which we hold in our heads. (Which is one reason why the Reformers were neither pietists, congregationalists, nor covenanters.) To say that there is an Anglican Way is not just to say that there is an Anglican theology to which we must adhere or covenant, but to say that there is a historic church into which we must enter, with a common life and doctrine and sacraments which continues unchanged in its essentials from the early centuries. This is the church catholic.

So what to do? At present, for a North American Anglican/Episcopalian, there are a variety of answers depending a great deal on where one can drive on Sunday morning. Where however is the church catholic? Most certainly the Church exists where there is a parish which upholds the worship and doctrine of the *Book of Common Prayer* and the other Formularies.

One must belong to one or another parish within Anglicanism, participating in the sacraments and engaging in a life of charity and prayer, because membership in a particular ecclesial community is necessary for the sake of preparing oneself in faith for membership in the invisible Church. But it is the invisible Church to which the faithful always owe their primary allegiance. Which is why when faced with such ecclesial disorder, each individual ought to think on the best means by which to remain within the church catholic. The BCP offers a way.

Mission Statement

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.

Worship and Warfare

THE FEAST OF THE ANGELS

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

"O Praise the Lord, all ye Angels of his: ye that excel in strength, ye that fulfill his commandment, and hearken unto the voice of his words" (Psalm 103).

What about the Angels? You cannot go far in Scripture or the Christian tradition without running into the Angels: yet I wonder what many people think when they encounter that teaching. Though the image of the angel may have an appealing poetic beauty, we suspect serious belief in them is an irrational superstition, a kind of mythological hangover from pre-modern times. The recent revival of interest in the Angels – often cloyingly sentimental or (at best) sub-Christian – does not help. Yet properly understood, the teaching about Angels is an important part of Christian Faith and of living the Christian life. Yet on Michaelmas, the Feast of Saint Michael and All Angels (September 29), the Prayer Book requires the Church to thanks to God for the ministry of the Angels and Archangels. Because he has "constituted the services of angels and men in a wonderful order", we may therefore expect that as his holy Angels alway do him service in heaven, so by his appointment they will succor and defend us on earth.

Modern Christians live in a very secular world, and we cannot help but be affected by its outlook. For us, as for many people in our world, reality is defined in terms of empirical phenomena alone, of what can be known with the senses. It is a very flattening view of reality: one dimensional, one might say. The feast of Saint Michael and all the holy angels, suggests to us a deeper dimension to reality, an unseen and invisible depth, a realm of pure, incorporeal spirits, the spiritual creation. Far from being figments of man's overheated religious imagination, angels, one might say, are the living thoughts of God, the living principles of thought whereby he governs the world according to his knowledge and love. The world is something more than empirical phenomena: it is governed by the knowledge and will of God, through the ministry of angels.

Worship

In the Bible, and in the ancient liturgies of the Church, the service of angels looms large. The courts of heaven are thronged, it seems, with splendid creatures, wise warriors, before whom even the saints are overcome with awe and fear, but who themselves ascribe all glory to God and delight to give him praise and worship (Isaiah 6, Rev 4, 5). In Jacob's dream, he sees the Lord at the head of a great ladder set up from earth to heaven, upon which countless angels continually move, ascending and descending – it is a vision of the servants of God, going forth into the world to do his will and returning to the throne when their tasks are done.

Jesus himself, alluding to this dream, told his disciples that they would see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man (John 1). The great Anglican divine of the Elizabethan and Jacobean settlement, Richard Hooker, has a marvelous interpretation of Jacob's dream. "What is the assembling of the Church to learn" he asks, "but the receiving of Angels descended from above? What to pray, but the sending of Angels upward? His heavenly inspirations and our holy desires are as so many Angels of intercourse and commerce between God and us" (V.xxiii.1).

For the Son of Man is the King of Angels, and where his church is gathered the air is thick with angels: a worship is the commerce of angels coming down from above to inspire our minds with truth, and angels going up to the throne of heaven bringing our holy desires. It is with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, with cherubim and

seraphim, that we lift up our hearts to laud and glorify the everlasting name of Almighty God as Most Holy. We are not just animals, governed by the sensual. Even in our bodies, in our passions, we like the angels are governed by what we know and love, by what is in itself knowable and loveable, the True, the Good, and the Beautiful. And thus our chief end is not found in this world, in an earthly paradise, but in the world to come, in the heavenly paradise, in which our delight is to glorify God.

Warfare

The epistle lesson for this feast, however, speaks of a conflict among the angels, conflict among the transcendent principles: "war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels". There are bad angels as well as good; "rulers of the darkness of this world" as Saint Paul calls them; but they are not simply bad. Evil exists only as perversion of the good; and Satan himself was once Lucifer, he who brings light. In his pride and envy he sought to make himself as god, and so fell into darkness (Isaiah 14; Luke 10). "The dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not, neither was their place found anymore in heaven". Evil has no place in heaven; it has no ultimate reality: it exists only as the perverse will of the finite creature to be absolute, to be as god. And so evil also falls under the providence of God, who makes good even from evil. That is the message of this festival: we live in the conflict of good and evil, a conflict whose frontline runs through the center of our souls; but this festival of St. Michael assures us that the truth and goodness of God are not thwarted. "The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil ['Slanderer'], and Satan ['the Adversary'], which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him". And though he comes among us "having great wrath", it is "because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" before he is bound for ever in everlasting chains in darkness.

This conflict of truth and falsehood is one in which we ourselves live. Though it takes tangible forms, it is fundamentally spiritual: "we war not against flesh and blood" says Saint Paul, "but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places". We must remember that Satan is, as Jesus taught, "a liar, and the father of lies", a "slanderer", "who deceiveth the whole world". It is by stirring up lies and half-truths and confusions and deceptions and fantasies of power and lust, of pride and envy, that he seeks our destruction. When his deceptions are unmasked, then he is cast out. "The accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night". And so we rejoice on Michaelmas not only in the angels who fight for us, but in the martyrs and confessors who stood fast in their faith, who "overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death". We rejoice in the victory of truth over the lie.

The Prayer Book & Evangelism

IS THE HISTORIC PRAYER BOOK AN EVANGELISTIC LITURGY?

By the Rev. Gavin Dunbar[1]

Is the historic Prayer Book an evangelistic liturgy? Can a church that uses one of the classical Prayer Books (England 1662, USA 1928, Canada 1962) fulfill the Great Commission to "make disciples of all nations"? It is a mark of our time that many Anglican and Episcopalian Christians would answer these questions in the negative. The Prayer Book may be good for some things – but not evangelism. So runs the current wisdom. So prevalent is this view, that even many Prayer Book Episcopalians share it!

Two intersecting influences are responsible for this negative view of the Prayer Book – first, the influence of revivalistic evangelicalism and its 20th century charismatic development, and second, the influence of the "church growth" movement, with its use of modern marketing techniques to boost church membership. The first perceives the genuine movement of the Spirit, and genuine faith, in worship which is emotionally exciting and open to spontaneous self-expression. In Anglican or Episcopalian churches, this is often expressed in a resistance to "worship styles" that seem old or dated, and an expectation that corporate worship will be varied – thus demonstrating, it is thought, a willingness to be flexible and responsive to the Spirit's leading. Where these presuppositions exist, the ancient, predictable objectivity of Prayer Book worship appears unspiritual, rigid, and dead.

The second influence, the church growth movement, uses worship services as evangelistic outreach events. Thus services are carefully designed to attract and hold worshippers, who are treated as religious consumers. In this approach, what happens during a service should be immediately understandable and accessible both to the unconverted and to Christians coming from non-liturgical backgrounds. Such "seeker-sensitive" services are deliberately unchurchy and undemanding, providing upbeat contemporary music, and upbeat "messages" that aim at "relevance". The "churchiness" of the Prayer Book, its preoccupation with the administration of Word and Sacrament, the demands it makes of the worshippers, these are thought to be useless for church growth.

This paper is written in the conviction that the evangelistic character of the Prayer Book liturgy has for too long been dismissed, even by those who love it. This is not just a matter of nostalgia. There is a real loss to Anglican Christianity when the evangelistic strategy embodied in the reformed and catholic tradition of the Prayer Book is abandoned for the sake of ideas drawn from revivalistic-charismatic Christianity, or from the marketing approach of the church growth movement. Though these are not without certain strengths, they are at best only part of the Christian and Biblical tradition, and do not represent historic Anglican Christianity.

For the sake of Christ, and the Church's witness to him, Anglican Christians need to rediscover in understanding and practice the Prayer Book as an evangelistic liturgy. I should also note that this paper is an attempt to rediscover and re-assert the evangelistic character of the Prayer Book. As such it is doubtless in need of correction, clarification, and further exploration, by those who agree with its thesis and those who do not. I welcome response from both groups!

In this essay we shall consider (1) the historic record on the Prayer Book as an evangelistic liturgy; (2) the Biblical teaching about evangelism; (3) the Prayer Book's conformity to the Biblical teaching; (4) the practical use of the Prayer Book for evangelism.

The Historical Record

The historic record does not support this assessment of the Prayer Book as a liturgy unsuited to evangelism. The Prayer Book emerged from the 16th century rediscovery of the Gospel (the "evangel" of evangelism) and is itself a primary witness of the degree to which the gospel mandate to "make disciples of all nations" was embraced as a normative characteristic of all faithful Christian ministry. At no other time in church history – certainly not the hey-day of 20th century liturgical revision – was there a comparable clarity of conviction about the Gospel. Although not all Protestants considered the English Prayer Book to be the best expression of the gospel, Lutheran and Reformed liturgies had more in common with it than they do the liturgies of contemporary charismatic revival or the modern church growth movement.

As an instrument of evangelism, moreover, the Prayer Book has been effective for more than four centuries, from the mid-16th century onwards, not only in England but around the world. For wherever English traders, explorers, navies, armies, settlers, government officials, and missionaries went, they went with the English Bible and the English Prayer Book. Missionaries expended enormous energy not only in translating the Bible into local languages,

1 The author gratefully acknowledges the very helpful suggestions of the Rev. Jason Patterson in preparing this paper. Any of its faults and inadequacies, however, are his own responsibility!

but also the Prayer Book. The present-day Anglican Communion was a result of that Prayer Book Christianity.

To suggest, therefore, that the Prayer Book is something less than adequate as an evangelistic liturgy, therefore, flies in the face of the historic evidence.

The Bible's Teaching about Evangelism

History suggests that the Prayer Book is in fact an effective evangelistic liturgy. At a time when the witness of history is dismissed even by conservative Episcopalians (those who count themselves committed to historic Anglicanism), it is necessary to consider the Prayer Book in the light of Biblical teaching about evangelism.

It is in Saint Matthew's Gospel that we find the best-known expression of the Church's evangelistic mission, in the "Great Commission", given by the risen Christ to the apostles: "All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth: Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20).

St. Matthew's Gospel is not the only account of the Great Commission. There is another version of it in the ending of St. Mark's Gospel, also given to the apostles: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15, 16).

Likewise St. Luke, though here it is given to other disciples as well as the apostles: "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations: and ye are witnesses of these things" (24:46-48).

In St. John's Gospel Jesus tells the disciples, "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you … Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (20:21-23).

In the Acts of the Apostles, Jesus tells the apostles, "ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Finally, there is the witness of Paul: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 4:17-21).

One could vastly expand this catena with ancillary texts. These six allow us to identify and elaborate on the four primary aspects of this mission, namely its goal, agency, means, and duration.

First, the goal of the mission: the mission consists in *the making of disciples of all nations.* The word "disciples" means literally "learners", by which it understands not only the instruction of the intellect but also the training of the will in subjection to the authority of Christ's teaching and example, and by participation in the fellowship of his Church. The sketch of the Church in Jerusalem after Pentecost in Acts 2:41-47 illustrates the ecclesial form of discipleship. The reference to "all nations" bespeaks the catholicity of the church's evangelistic mission, because Christ died "not for that nation only", that is, the Jews, "but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad" (John 12:52 cf. Ephesians 1:10), without respect to any distinction of nature - sex, age, race, language, culture, economic or social status, and religious background (see Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:11-22).

Second, the agency of the mission: authority to evangelize is granted primarily to the *apostolic ministry* (thus Matthew, Mark and Acts) ordained of Christ and empowered by the gift of his Spirit. This authority should not be understood as excluding other Christians (the other disciples mentioned in John and Luke), for the mission belongs to the whole Church. (Remember the Israelite slave girl, whose testimony sent Naaman the Syrian to be healed and converted by Elisha the prophet.) Rather, this authority to make disciples is vested in the apostolic ministry, as their special office and responsibility, to ensure that is a priority of the Church as a whole.

Third, the means by which the mission is carried out: the *preaching of the gospel,* the *administration of baptism,* together with the *teaching and learning of Christ's commandments.* The first two (preaching and baptism) are not essentially different activities, but complementary aspects of Word and Sacrament, both of which require *repentance*, and authoritatively proclaim *remission of sins in his name,* thus bringing about *reconciliation* with God. Moreover, what Word and Sacrament proclaim (as signs) they also effect: those who receive the Gospel and Baptism in repentance and faith are indeed *saved*; those who do not are, by their own choice, *damned.* "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained".

As for the *teaching and learning of Christ's commandments:* although disciple-making has a beginning point (baptism and faith in response to the preaching of the gospel), the Bible presents it not as a "one-time" event (a conversion experience), but

rather as an ongoing process of growing to maturity in the knowledge of God (see Ephesians 1:15-18; 4:8-16), and learning to obey his commandments (e.g. Matthew 5-7 esp. &;24-27, John 13:17, 34-35, 1 Corinthians 11:23-29). Of necessity this will include growth in doctrinal, moral, spiritual, ecclesiastical and sacramental knowledge and practice.

If the preaching of the gospel and the administration of baptism correspond to justifying faith, the teaching of Christ's commandments corresponds to the sanctifying good works of charity in which lively faith is expressed. This pattern corresponds to the pattern of disciple-making set forth in the Great Commission, and the pattern of Christian conversion and spiritual growth envisioned by the Prayer Book in its pattern of initiation through Baptism, Catechesis, Confirmation, admission to Holy Communion, and perseverance in the fellowship of good works. Thus neither preaching for conversion by itself (the "altar call"), nor baptism by itself, nor both together, are sufficient for disciple-making: ongoing theological, moral, and spiritual formation, by catechesis and common prayer, is also necessary.

When the whole scope of Biblical teaching is taken into account, the calling of the Church cannot be restricted simply to the mandate to turn unbelievers into believers (evangelism, narrowly construed). If this were the sum of the Church's calling, it would make sense for her corporate gatherings to be oriented primarily to the "outsider" whose adherence she is seeking to woo. (Though one wonders then what the Church triumphant would do in heaven.) But when all the implications of the Great Commission are allowed to shape our understanding of Christian duty and calling, evangelism in this narrow sense must be seen as but part of the whole.

Evangelism must be understood as terms of discipleship – learning to know, love, worship and obey the Lord. Therefore, the making of a disciple cannot be regarded as simply making converts to the Faith. It is rather a transformative process which embraces the whole of a disciple's life, and begins with his conversion. A Christian is always a learner in the school of Christ, and the Church's calling is to embrace and manifest the fullness of Christ's commandment to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them… and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you".

The Prayer Book's Conformity to the Great Commission

If one comes to the Prayer Book from the Bible's teaching about evangelism, rather than from the point of view of conventional wisdom about church growth, one discovers how profoundly *evangelistic* the Prayer Book is, how deeply it conforms to the New Testament teaching about the Gospel and the Church. It says something about the blinders of the present age, that this should be so rarely perceived. Yet the most distinctive features of the Prayer Book conform to the Bible's teaching about evangelism.

As we have seen, the New Testament teaches that the evangelistic mission of the Church - as set forth in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) and related texts - is threefold. (1) It is *centered in Christ,* and in the remission of sins and reconciliation to God in his name (Luke 24:46-47, John 20:23 cf. 2 Corinthians 5:17-21). (2) It is *effected by means of the apostolic ministry of word and sacrament.* (3) It awakens *true repentance, justifying faith, and sanctifying obedience* to Christ's commandments.

That is a capsule description of the essence of the historic Prayer Book liturgy. Indeed, some of the very features for which it is deplored – such as its "medieval" penitential devotion, its "morbid" clarity about Christ's atoning death, and its alleged "clericalism" – are elements required by the Great Commission. It is the contemporary expectation that evangelistic liturgy should be upbeat and positive rather than penitential, an egalitarian celebration of community rather than a humble adoration of the crucified God because that humble adoration looks out of step with the Great Commission. But this is unBiblical.

Likewise, one might note the Prayer Book's confidence that the primary means of this evangelization – the means God has ordained and which we consequently may and should expect him to bless – is nothing else than the ministry of his Word and Sacrament. Whatever else may be said about praise songs, guitars, drums, video, drama, liturgical dance, personal testimonies, ejaculations of private prayer, the exchange of the peace, "contemporary" language, upbeat messages shaped more by pragmatism than by doctrine, or what have you, it is not these, but the ministry of Word and Sacrament that Scripture regards as the primary and indispensable means of carrying out the Great Commission. Everything else is either legitimate but ancillary (in which I would include small groups for study, discussion, prayer, and encouragement in the faith) - or it is trivializing and distracting. Scripture-believing Christians with a heart for evangelism need to look first to the Scripture's teaching on the means to be used, and not read it through the blinkered perspective of current conventional wisdom about spiritual revival and church growth.

This is not to vindicate do-nothing, dead-end fogeyism, or conservative complacency, that is suspicious of zeal for mission, nor is it to dismiss that which charismatic revival and the church growth movement seek to accomplish, and actually do sometimes accomplish. Nor is it to say that evangelism is merely a matter of "good liturgy", however much good liturgy is the matrix of effective evangelism. It is rather to point out the dangerous assumption which is too often un-critically embraced by sincere and zealous Christians: that the church can grow evangelistically only if it discards and distances itself from the church's own tradition.

The blithe assumption that the pure core of the

Gospel can be extracted from the Church and its tradition, and extracted easily and without impairment to its substance, is unfounded optimism. It is not like shucking a cob of corn. What we discard as irrelevant or alien to the Gospel is often precisely the tradition of faith and worship which over many centuries arose and developed in response to the Gospel, and which embodies and communicates the Gospel more fully than is recognized.

As a result, what we discard often leaves behind a mutilated or diminished Gospel; and what we adopt in its place as a means for church growth, often compromises it. Those who think that the Church can grow only by abandoning its own tradition and taking up the latest marketing techniques should give heed to the apostolic charge: "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds" (Romans 12:2). A church that grows by means of marketing techniques at the expense of the Church's ministry of Word and Sacraments runs the risk of conforming itself not to the Holy Spirit but to the spirit of the world.

How To Practice Prayer Book Evangelism

What is required for the Prayer Book to be as evangelistically effective in the 21st century as it was in the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, and, yes, 20th centuries? There is no magic technique: simply the implementation of the Great Commission: (1) an apostolic ministry ready and able to make disciples of all nations (2) by preaching the gospel and administering baptism for the remission of sins through repentance and justifying faith in Christ, and (3) by the teaching of Christ's commandments for the sanctification of the faithful in good works.

Apostolic Ministry: By this I mean the ministry of clergy who are themselves grounded in the Faith of the Bible and the Church as set forth in the Prayer Book: who believe and practice it, who understand and pray it, and are consequently able and ready to teach and train other Christians in the same Faith and Worship. Churches in which the clergy both embrace and teach (with clarity, coherence, conviction, and confidence) that which the Prayer Book sets before us to believe, pray, and do, will equip those whom they serve to recognize the Prayer Book as a powerful and effective way to believe, practice, understand, and pray the Christian Faith. Thus grounded in the Gospel by the Prayer Book, by their word and example they will be able to commend to their families and their circle of acquaintance, both the Gospel itself, and the Prayer Book as a tried and true framework for praying and living the Gospel.

Once again, it must said, there is nothing magical about what I am proposing. Rather, it is just the way Christian churches have always evangelized and discipled the people of God. Where the Prayer Book fails, it fails because clergy who are hostile to it, who do not understand its rationale and thus cannot communicate it, lack confidence in its ability to present the Gospel, or (tragically) do not believe the Gospel which the Prayer Book presents. In the absence of understanding, confidence, skill in communication, or faith itself, such clergy are unable to take their part in the Church's evangelizing mission. Distressingly, such clergy are often regarded as "conservatives".

Baptizing and Teaching. Central to the Prayer Book's "evangelistic strategy" (which is simply the Great Commission) is the baptism of the newborn (the normative practice), or (exceptionally, in missionary settings among the unchurched) of those come "to riper years and able to answer for themselves". Although the secularization of society and the demoralization of Christians have enlarged the missionary aspect of the Church's mission in formerly Christian countries, even where the baptism of children is not normal, it remains normative. After the first generation of adult converts, the children of the Church cannot be treated as pagans outside the covenant. To do so is to deny the power of the Gospel, which of its own nature produces Christian families and societies.

What is critical is to recognize that the Great Commission pairs baptism with catechesis. By thorough catechesis, as well as participation in the Church's common prayers, those who were baptized as infants grow up in the Gospel, and learn to repent, believe, and obey in accord with the promises of their Baptism. This enormous advantage conferred on the Christian church by infant baptism has historically been the primary way churches have grown. It made unnecessary the desperate expedients to which the churches are now being urged to resort.

That the formation of mature Christians by such catechesis was an integral aspect of Anglicanism is now forgotten. Its disappearance has had far-reaching consequences. Far too many adult Episcopalians have only the vaguest ideas about the Christian Faith. This vagueness, transmitted to the children of the Church, has trained them up in indifference and ignorance, as consumers rather than believers.

Until the 19th century, this was not the case. Anglicans and Episcopalians were first instructed in the Prayer Book Catechism, a kind of "shorter" catechism intended for little children. From there they went on to "middle" and "larger" catechisms of one kind or another: Nowell's Catechism, the Heidelberg Catechism, and Nelson's *Feasts and Fasts,* as well as sermons and homilies. Traditional catechesis engages the memory, and rightly so. But the catechetical method is more dynamic and interactive than one might think. What begins with a foundation laid in the sponge-like memories of the young, is developed in terms of understanding and will. Much of learning the truth depends critically on learning to ask the right questions.

The Church too often throws away the enormous advantages conferred by infant baptism, and the opportunity for spiritual formation through common prayer and catechesis. Rediscovering and

refocusing on this primary pastoral and evangelistic discipline is a key to growing churches – not least because many families are looking for it. Despite the secularization of society and failures of the church, there are many folk out there with some sense of themselves as Christians, who are seeking to put down roots in the Faith. Show them where to do so, and they will take root, and grow.

Conclusion:

Prayer Book Anglicans and Episcopalians do not always commend the Prayer Book by the evangelistic weakness of their churches. In this weakness they betray a failure to grasp the evangelistic character of the liturgy, or a lack of confidence in its evangelistic power. Therefore we bear a share of the blame for the widespread assumption that historic Anglicanism must rely on approaches to evangelism that are not historically Anglican, or indeed entirely in accord with it. If the Prayer Book is to be recovered and rediscovered, its friends must not thus betray it. They must themselves take seriously what it teaches us to believe, do, and expect: and that means taking evangelism seriously.

A Poetical Anglican

By Roberta Bayer

A Review of *Anglo-Catholic in Religion: T.S. Eliot and Christianity,* by Barry Spurr, The Lutterworth Press, 2010

The poet and social critic T. S. Eliot was entirely convinced of the extraordinary importance of the *Book of Common Prayer* both as literature and as liturgy. The recently published *Anglo-Catholic in Religion* by Barry Spurr, Professor of Literature at the University of Sydney, Australia, examines the influence of the Anglo-Catholic liturgical tradition on T. S. Eliot's poetry and prose and his worship life . Spurr argues that Eliot's poetry reflects the influence of its liturgy, and that poetry, prose, and dramas expound its doctrine. Drawing on correspondence, previously unpublished, between Eliot and Mary Trevelyn during the years 1940 and 1957, Spurr has written a book about the religious life that informed Eliot's works.

Living in London in the 1920s, Eliot's slow, careful, and rational acceptance of the dogmas of the Christian faith was guided throughout by priests and friends he met in attending the church of St Stephen's, Gloucester Road in London and from within the Anglo-Catholic movement. This was a period when the Anglo-Catholic wing of the English church drew into its fold many young men and women attracted to the liturgical beauty of their services, and the intellectual tenor of the priests. It is not surprising perhaps that a brilliant young American resident in England, of intellectual and poetical turn of mind, might end up in the Anglo-Catholic wing of Christianity. But Eliot's faith was not a matter of aesthetics alone; as Spurr notes, his piety was real. Eliot attended church daily, he taught the faith in his poetry and plays, and defended it in his prose.

When it came to controversy over revising Cranmer's great work, however, Eliot was too "enamoured of the seventeenth-century Church to dismiss The *Book of Common Prayer* — he had a profound admiration for its prose, which is without parallel in vernacular liturgies." (86) In Eliot's opinion the two great monuments to the literary genius (and I might add piety) of the English church were The *Book of Common Prayer* and the King James Bible. It was, I would say, a mark of the historical breadth of Eliot's thinking, comprehending the reformed and catholic nature of Anglicanism. This is a fascinating story of conversion (acknowledging that Spurr does not like to use that word about Eliot), but it clearly is a conversion through learning and ordered prayer.

Reading *Anglo-Catholic in Religion,* while re-reading Russell Kirk's comprehensive work *The Age of Eliot*, led me also to contemplate Eliot's politics in light of the purportedly new phenomenon of 'red toryism' emerging in England. Eliot's political works need to be re-read today as well as his poetry. He exhibits a sympathy for community, for place, for all classes, and places this alongside a robust defense of the Christian tradition. Eliot not only assented to traditional doctrines, but to a Christian ethic that led him to expound the very real moral limitations of liberal individualism, and to see the intrinsic connection between charity and prayer and contemplation and an ordered community.

But for all one's admiration of Eliot's prose works dealing with politics and culture, the sheer faith of the man is most evident in his poetry. It is the poetry of the great Anglican divines, metaphysical and allegorical, forged in contemplation of the weakness of fallen man without grace:

I said to my soul, be still, and wait without hope
For hope would be hope for the wrong thing;
wait without love,
For love would be love of the wrong thing; there
is yet faith
But the faith and the love and the hope are all in
the waiting.

—T.S. Eliot, *The Four Quartets*

Dr. Spurr's book can be purchased at Anglican Marketplace

Heavenly Avarice

THE THEOLOGY OF PRAYER

This essay was first given as an address at a theological conference. Dr. Crouse, retired Professor of Classics, Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, is a priest in the Anglican Church of Canada, and a world renowned scholar of Patristic and Medieval philosophy and theology. We thank St. Peter's Publications for allowing us to publish this again.

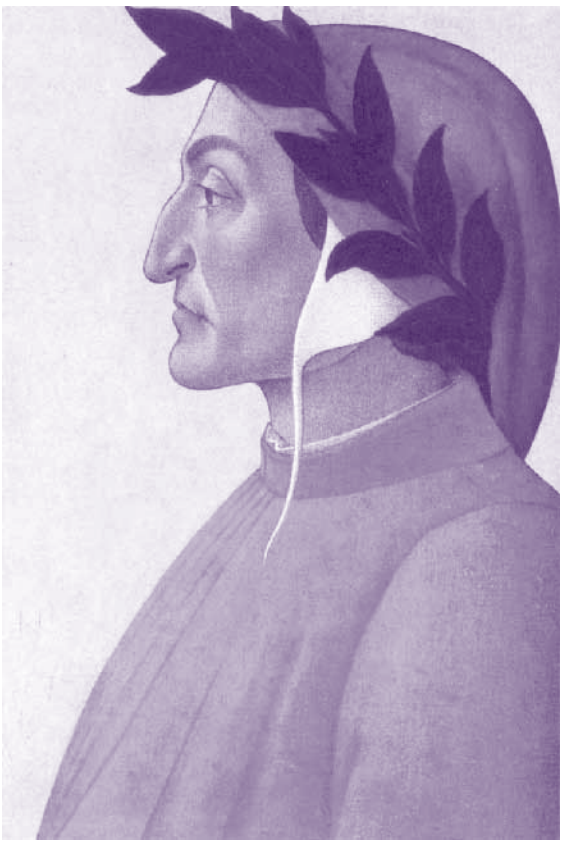
Note: The title of this article comes from Thomas Traherne, "Desire," *The Oxford Book of Christian Verse*, ed. D. Cecil (Oxford, 1940), p. 273.

By the Rev. Dr. Robert Crouse

I. Prayer as Human Desire

Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks: so longeth my soul after thee, O God. My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God when shall I come to appear before the presence of God? (Psalm 42:1-2)

Regarded from the standpoint of human psychology, and as a phenomenon of universal religious practice, prayer appears to be simply the articulation of human desires, human longings and human aspirations. "My soul is athirst for God," cries the Psalmist, and it is indeed that thirst, that desire for God, which whether acknowledged or merely implicit underlies and impels every quest of the human spirit.



Alessandro Botticelli. *Portrait of Dante.* c.1495. Tempera on canvas. Private collection, Geneva, Switzerland.

"All men by nature desire to know," says Aristotle at the beginning of his *Metaphysica*.[1] But what is it that they desire to know? They long to know the reasons of things, the causes, the truth of things; finally to know that truth by which and in which all things have their truth. Thus Dante, in the *Paradiso,* compares the intellect's desire to a wild beast's racing to its den, where alone it can find rest.[2] What are all our sciences, what are all our fragments of knowledge but droplets from that fountain of which we long to drink in all its fulness? "My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God."

What is our quest for happiness, but a desire for the good; and what is that good we seek whether knowingly or not — but some participation in the pure and perfect good which is God himself? What is our quest for liberty, but our longing for God's own city, the heavenly Jerusalem, which is above, and is free, and is the mother of us all? "My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God" (Ps. 84:2). What is our quest for beauty, but a longing for that pure and perfect beauty which belongs to Sion; and what are all our fragmentary images of beauty, whether in music, or painting, or sculpture, or poetry, or whatever human arts, but pallid reflections of the unimaginable beauty of the countenance of God? "My heart hath talked of thee, Seek ye my face: thy face Lord, will I seek. O hide not thou thy face from me: nor cast thy servant away in displeasure" (Ps. 27: 9).

Desire takes so many forms, and speaks with so many different voices. High up in the mountains of central Italy, in Abruzzo, there is a tiny, isolated hamlet called Bominaco; and near that place, in a solitary spot on a mountainside, there is a supremely lovely twelfth-century church, with frescoes, sculpture and architectural lines of such exquisite beauty as to move one to tears. The pastor of Bominaco sums up the meaning of the place in one phrase: "*insonne desiderio di Dio*": unsleeping desire for God. It is the soul's thirst, articulated in stone. "One thing have I desired of the Lord that I will require, even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life: to behold the fair beauty of the Lord and to visit his temple" (Ps. 27: 4).

All human desire, all human longing and aspiration, expressed in a thousand different forms, at a thousand different levels, is ultimately desire for God. Dante makes that point lucidly in the *Convivio:* Therefore, I say that not only in the gaining of knowledge and wealth, but in any acquisition whatever, human desire reaches out, in one way or another. And the reason is this: the deepest desire of each thing, arising from its very nature, is to return to its principle. And because God is the principle of our soul, and has made it like himself (as it is written, "Let us make man in our image and likeness"), the soul mightily desires to return to him.

1 Aristotle, *Metaphysics,* I, 1 (980a 21).

2 Dante, *Divine Comedy, Paradiso*, IV, 127-129, Dante Alighieri. *Tutte le opere,* ed. L. Blasucci (Florence, 1981) p. 631.

And so, as a pilgrim who travels along a road he has not been on before believes each building seen in the distance is the inn, and finding it not so directs his belief to the next, and so from house to house, until at last he finds the inn; just so our soul, as soon as it enters upon the new and unfamiliar road of this life, directs its eyes towards the end, the highest good, and each thing it sees which manifests some good, it takes to be that end.

And because its knowledge is at first imperfect, inexperienced and untaught, little goods seem great to it, and thus it begins its longing first with them. Thus, we see the infant intensely longing for an apple; and then, later on, for a little bird; and then, still further on, fine clothes; and then a horse; and then a mistress; then modest riches; then more; and then still more. And that is because in none of these things does it find that for which it ever seeks, and it believes to find it further on.[3]

Prayer is the interpretation, the articulation of all this desire: the soul's ceaseless desire for God; and prayer is therefore, indeed, as George Herbert describes it, "soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrimage."[4] Indeed, the desire is itself the substance of the prayer, as St. Augustine remarks in one of his sermons: "Desire itself prays, even if the tongue be still. If you always desire, always you pray. When does prayer sleep? Only when desire grows cold."[5] St. Thomas Aquinas makes the same point in his commentary on the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, when he says that "desire itself has the force of prayer"[6] ; and Richard Hooker sums it up in a comment in the *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, where he remarks that "Every good and holy desire though it lack the form, hath notwithstanding in itself the substance and with him the force of a prayer, who regardeth the very moanings, groans and sighs of the heart of man."[7]

The articulation of desire, the articulation of human longings and aspirations: from the standpoint of human psychology and universal religious practice, that is the meaning of prayer. It is homesickness for God. "My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth after thee: in a barren and dry land where no water is."(Ps. 63:2). But looked at only in that perspective the perspective of human aspiration and human experience it has inevitably a tragic character, because it seeks an end which human energy and human ingenuity can never attain: it seeks the divine life, it seeks divine friendship, it seeks to be as God. That is tragic hubris, the tragic pride of human aspiration, whether one thinks of that in terms of the biblical accounts of the expulsion from the garden, and the destruction of the Tower of Babel, or whether one thinks of the fate of the heroes of Greek tragic poetry; for the divine life and the divine friendship appear to be, as Aristotle remarks, "a life too high for man."[8]

Remember how the temple of the oracle at Delphi bore the inscription *gnothi seauton,* "know thyself,"[9] know that you are a man and not a god, and do not transgress the human limits. The end of our desire must remain eternally beyond us, as in Keats' meditation on the figures of the lovers painted on a Grecian urn, poised there forever in the moment just before the kiss: "Bold lover, never, never canst thou kiss, Though winning near the goal."[10] There is, of course, in such a spirituality a terrible hopelessness, perhaps most fully manifest in the desperate religiosity of the last great pagan philosophers, and perhaps less nobly manifest in some of the bizarre religious enthusiasms of our own times.[11]

But what is the alternative? To deny the desire is to reduce the quest for truth to idle curiosity or pedestrian utility, the quest for happiness to selfish self-indulgence, and the quest for beauty to the search for emotional "highs". It is to fall into that pusillanimity of spirit which Dante so marvellously describes as the vestibule of hell, where life is but the futile pursuit of an empty figment. *"Non ragioniam di lor, ma guarda e passa,"* says Virgil, "Let us not speak of them, but look and pass on."[12] "O turn away mine eyes", cries the Psalmist, "lest they behold vanity" (Ps. 119:37) - lest they behold emptiness. "My tears have been my meat day and night, while they say daily unto me, Where is now thy God?" (Ps. 42:3).

II. Prayer as Divine Gift: The Redemption of Time

To such an account of human prayer as human desire, Christian theology would add another, and more profound, and for Christian prayer altogether crucial perspective, in the recognition of prayer as divine gift in creation and redemption, inspired by the divine Word and moved by the divine Spirit. St. Augustine makes the point in a famous passage at the beginning of the *Confessions*. "It is thou, O God, who dost rouse mankind to delight in praising thee, for thou has made us for thyself, and our hearts are restless, until they find their rest in thee."[13] In another

3 Dante, *Convivio,* IV, 12, ed. cit., pp. 176-177, tr. R.D.C.; cf. Augustine, Enarr. in ps. LXII, 5, CCL, 39, 796.

4 George Herbert, "Prayer," *The Oxford Book of Christian Verse*, p. 139).

5 Augustine, Sermon LXXX, 7, PL, 38, 497; cf. A. Cacciari, S. Agostino d'Ippona. *La preghiera.* Epistola 130 a Proba (Rome, 1981), p. 48.

6 Thomas Aquinas, *Super epist. s. Pauli lectura*, Vol. II (Marietti, 1953), I ad Thessal., 130, p. 189.

7 Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity,* ed. J. Keble, *Works of Hooker,* (Oxford, 21841) Vol. II, V, xlvii, 2, p. 201.

8 Aristotle, *Nichomachaen Ethics,* X, 7 (1177b 25); cf. *Metaphysics*, XII, 7 (1072b 15-20). On the impossibility of friendship with God, Nic. Ethics, VIII, 7 (1158b 35-1159a 5).

9 For the history of interpretation of the maxim, see P. Courcelle, *Connais-toi toi-méme de Socrate à saint Bernard* (Paris, 1974).

10 John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn".

11 Cf. G. Reale, L'estremo messaggio spirituale nel mondo antico nel pensiero metafisico e teurgico di Proclo, introductory lecture in C. Faraggiana di Sarzana, trans. Proclo. I Manuali (Milan, 1985) pp. v-ccxxiii.

12 Dante, *Divine Comedy. Inferno,* ed. cit., III, 51, p. 396.

13 Augustine, *Confessions*, I, 1.

passage, near the end of the *Confessions,* he comments more fully on the meaning of that unquiet heart:

> By its own weight, a body inclines towards it own place. Weight does not always tend towards the lowest place, but towards its own place. A stone falls, but fire rises. They move according to their own weights, they seek their own places. Oil poured into water rises to the surface; water poured on oil sinks below the oil. They act according to their own weights, they seek their own places. Things out of place are restless. They find their own places, and then they rest.
>
> My love is my weight *(pondus meum amor meus).* Whithersoever I am moved, I am moved there by love. By thy gift (*dono tuo* = the Holy Spirit), O Lord, we are set on fire, and are borne aloft: we burn, and we are on the way. We climb the ascents that are in the heart....With thy fire, with thy good fire, we burn and go on, for we go up to the peace of Jerusalem.[14]

The activity of prayer is thus the activity of love's conversion, the activity of rational will aspiring and ascending towards its true, eternal good. But what is the impulse, the spring of this ascent, this pondus, this "weight" of love? It is the natural God-given desire of the created soul, "the concreated and everlasting thirst for God's own realm,"[15] inspired by the fire of the spirit, which burns within the soul. And just as fire, by the compulsion of its very nature, rises upwards, so the soul moves to desire, and finds no rest until it finds rejoicing in the final object of its love.

But whereas in the realm of nature all things are created in number, measure and weight, and by their very natures, by their rising and decline, infallibly seek the good in ordered and harmonious praise of the creator, human love is the activity of free and rational will; and therein lies the possibility of wayward love: a love which fixes upon some finite good as though that were the absolute and perfect good. Thus, in human life, love becomes distorted, perverted, and frustrated, and leads the soul to slavery - subservience to the sensible, to idle curiosity and vain ambition, subject to all the demons of the present age. And thus, the true freedom of the will is lost; the fire of love is, as it were, extinguished, frozen in a dark abyss of alienation and despair, and prayer is dead. But still, somehow, the thirst is there, if only in a half-recognised sense of emptiness and futility: "Like as the hart desireth the water, even so my soul longeth after thee, O God."

That text from Psalm 42 is marvellously illustrated in the great twelfth-century mosaic (just now beautifully restored) which adorns the apse of the ancient Church of San Clemente, in Rome. In that picture, the harts come to drink of the streams of paradise which flow from the Garden of Eden, which is also the hill of Calvary, surmounted by the Tree of Life, which is also the Cross of Christ. There is much more symbolic richness in that astonishing mosaic,[16] but the essential point for us now is just this: It is through the Cross of Christ that the ancient enmity, the old and ever new alienation, is overcome, and the streams of grace flow out to renew the spiritual life of humankind, and give rebirth to prayer.

It is through the Cross of Christ that the gates of prayer are truly opened. Prayer is, indeed, the articulation of human desire; but Christian theology sees it as properly much more than that. By the Cross, we are raised up, no longer just clients, so to speak, but friends of God; and prayer becomes the conversation, the communication of friends. As St. Thomas remarks, in his meditations of St. John 15 (Jesus' Last Supper Discourse), Our Saviour calls his disciples "friends," and to converse together in the proper condition of friendship. Friends delight in each other's presence, and find comfort there in their anxieties. We are made friends with God, he dwelling in us, and we in him. We are no longer servants, but friends, "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Rom. 8, 15).[17]

14 Ibid. XIII, 9 (tr. R.D.C.). For a full discussion, see A. DiGiovanni, L'inquietudine dell' anima. La dottrina dell' amore nelle "Confessioni" di S. Agostino (Rome, 1964).

15 Dante, *Divine Comedy. Paradiso,* ed. cit.,II, 19-20, p. 622.

16 For a detailed description, see L. Boyle, *A Short Guide to St. Clements', Rome* (Rome, 1972), pp. 26-32.

17 Thomas Aquinas, *Contra Gentiles*, IV, 22; cf. Super Evan. S. Jo.

The great Puritan divine, Richard Baxter, makes just the same point as St. Thomas, specifically with reference to the Lord's Supper, wherein, he says, "we have the fullest intimation, expression and communication of the wondrous love of God."

> In the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, we are called to a familiar converse with God.... There we are entertained by God as friends...and that at the most costly feast. If ever a believer may on earth expect his kindest entertainment, and near access, and a humble intimacy with his Lord, it is in the participation of this sacrifice feast, which is called the Communion.[18]

It is, of course, a token of the intimacy of divine and human friendship that in the language of prayer, in English as in many other languages, we are privileged to use the intimate, second person singular forms, the "thee" and "thou" and "thine" of intimate friends, rather than the public and formal plurals. Prayer is the conversation of intimate friends. But the theology of Christian prayer takes us even beyond the intimacy of friendship: "Your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3): "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20). We dwell not only in God's presence, as friends, but we dwell in him and he in us, and rightly does George Herbert speak of prayer as "God's breath in man returning to his birth."[19]

Indeed, in prayer we are taken up into the deepest mystery of the divine life, in the relations of being, knowing and loving which are the Holy Trinity. Through the gift of the Spirit, the Word of God engraces our hearts to cry, "Abba, Father," and thus we have our places in that eternal outgoing and return of the divine Word and Spirit, the divine self-knowing, and the bond of love which unites the knowing and the known.

Thus our prayer approaches God not from outside, as it were, but from within, "through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the power of the Holy Spirit"; that is to say, our prayer is within the knowing and willing of God, with the divine Providence. In a right understanding of prayer, it can stand in no ultimate opposition to divine Providence, because its whole point, really, is to place our life freely within God's will, in knowledge and love; and our prayers accomplish precisely what God's eternal Providence, the source of all order in the world, has eternally willed to accomplish by them. They are the free agents of Providence, the free, rational and willing instruments of grace. God's grace descends, and ascends again in prayer. As Richard Hooker beautifully expresses it:

> For what is the assembling of the Church to learn, but the receiving of Angels descended from above? What to pray, but the ascending of Angels upward? His heavenly inspirations and our holy desires are so many Angels of intercourse and commerce between God and us.[20]

God's grace descends, and ascends again in prayer. Thus prayer is God's gift to us: God's work in us and our life in God, the redemption of desire. As St. Paul explains, all who are in Christ are, by God's grace, new creations (2 Cor. 5:17), and our prayer is our participation in that new life of grace, converting us, setting straight our love, transforming, transfiguring, "transhumanizing" us (to borrow Dante's special word, *transumanar).*[21]

And at this level, when we speak of prayer, we're not speaking just of particular acts of prayer, or occasional prayer, but of prayer as a condition of life in continual conversion, continual reference to God. That is habitual prayer, that state in which, according to the magnificent Prayer Book collect for the Fourth Sunday after Easter, God so orders our unruly wills and affections that we love what he commands and desire what he promises, that so our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found. In that condition of habitual prayer, that state of being in prayer, as John Donne says, in one of his sermons, "that soul prays sometimes when it does not know that it prays."[22]

lect., XV, ed. Marietti, lect. 3, 1-4, pp. 379-382.

18 Richard Baxter, *Works,* III, 816, as quoted in J. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness* (Wheaton, Ill., 1980), pp. 213-214.

19 George Herbert, *Prayer,* ed. cit., p. 139.

20 Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity,* ed. cit., V, xxiii, p. 115.

21 Dante, *Divine Comedy, Paradiso,* ed. cit., I, 70, p. 619.

22 John Donne, Sermon 12, in G. Potter and E. Simpson, eds., *The Sermons of John Donne* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1962) Vol. IV, p. 310.

III. Our Life in Prayer

In Christ, we are new creations, born anew, no longer at enmity, but friends of God. Our reconciliation has been accomplished, once for all; for Christ's sake, we are accounted friends of God. But in another sense, our reconciliation is not complete, and will not be complete, until we come to know as we are known and to love as we are loved. Thus, there is the tension between a justification, divinely-wrought and finished once for all, and a sanctification, which is being worked out within us day by day. Prayer reaches out, in faith and hope, across that space.

In that reaching out of prayer, precisely because it is by faith, trials and temptations, the dark night of doubt, confusion and uncertainty, are not just unfortunate accidents. In God's good Providence, they belong to the very life of faith, for faith must be tried, like precious metal, "which from the earth is tried, and purified seven times in the fire" (Ps. 12:6; I Peter, 1:7). As St. Ignatius of Antioch puts it, our desire is crucified: "My love," he says, "my eros is crucified."[23] Perhaps the trials take different forms in one age or another, and different forms for each of us. Those trials are necessary, and must be embraced. Indeed, as St. James says, we must "count it all joy, knowing that the trial of your faith worketh patience. Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire (Jas. 1: 3-4).

Certainly, the confusions of the world in which we live, uncertainties within the Church, and confusions within our own souls, present us with problems and dilemmas, in which it is surely not easy to "count it all joy"! But that is precisely the nature of our calling, and by the grace of God, who gives manna in the desert, and water from the rock, we are not without resources. As we were reminded this morning, the Church's time of persecution is God's time of preparation, and it is in exile that the bride is prepared for her husband. As Thomas Traherne puts it, "Our very rust shall cover us with gold."[24]

In this mixed time, which is both glorious and hard, we are not without resources. We do possess, in faith, God's word of reconciliation, committed unto us. We do possess, in faith, God's work for us, God's word to us, made audible in Holy Scriptures, made sensible in Holy Sacraments, if we will but attend with minds and hearts obedient and penitent. We do possess, in faith, the gift of God's Spirit to lead us into truth. We do possess, if we will, in the community of faith, centuries of wisdom and experience none of it irrelevant words and images of prayer and sanctity which will come alive for us, if we will give them (as to the shades in Homer's Hades) the living blood of our own labours to drink. It seems to me terribly important and urgent that we do our best to reclaim that great heritage of prayer and spiritual discipline which is ours especially as Anglicans in our great tradition of common prayer.

The practice of Christian spirituality, our life of prayer, presents us, no doubt, with many difficulties. But only one of these difficulties is, I think, really fundamental; and that is the demoralizing of the Christian mind and heart, and the demoralizing of the Christian community, which we bring upon ourselves when we forget our calling, and fall into a mindless conformity to the spirit of the present age-the *ambitio saeculi,* as St. Augustine calls it.[25] Secular ideals, secular methods and measures insidiously invade our consciousness, and pollute the springs of prayer. We lose heart, and fall back into a hopeless neo-pagan spirituality.

The only true remedy lies in the steady cultivation of the Christian virtues of faith and hope and charity,[26] holding on to the centuries of Christian wisdom, holding fast to our road of pilgrimage. What is essentially required is the practical upbuilding, among us and within us, of the life of penitential adoration, the life of habitual prayer. With such graces, may God now refurbish his house. If this conference has given us a little bit clearer insight into what that means, and if it has given us any morsel of encouragement to renew our disciplines of prayer, it has indeed been blessed by God, to whom be everlasting praise and glory.

"Why art thou so full of heaviness, O my soul? and why art thou so disquieted within me? O put thy trust in God, for I will yet give him thanks, which is the help of my countenance, and my God." (Ps. 46:6-7).

23 Ignatius of Antioch, Ep. to the Romans, VII, (ed. K. Bihlmeyer, *Die Apostolischen Väter* (Tübingen, 1956) I, 16, p. 100.

24 Thomas Traherne, 'Christian Ethics', in *The Oxford Book of Christian Verse,* p. 287.

25 St. Augustine, *Confessions,* X, 30, 41.

26 Cf. R. Crouse, "Hope which does not disappoint: The Path to Genuine Renewal," in G. Egerton, ed., *Anglican Essentials* (Toronto, 1995), pp. 286-291.

The Order of the Service of Holy Communion

AND THE LOGIC OF CHRISTIAN REDEMPTION (PART 5)

By Paul Epstein, Ph.D.

The confession and absolution bring the first part of the Service to a certain conclusion. The remainder of the Service then is devoted to the sacramental presentation to us of Christ's sacrifice and our inclusion in it. I shall consider here why the confession falls where it does, and the nature of the transition to the presentation of the sacrifice through the Comfortable Words and the Sanctus.

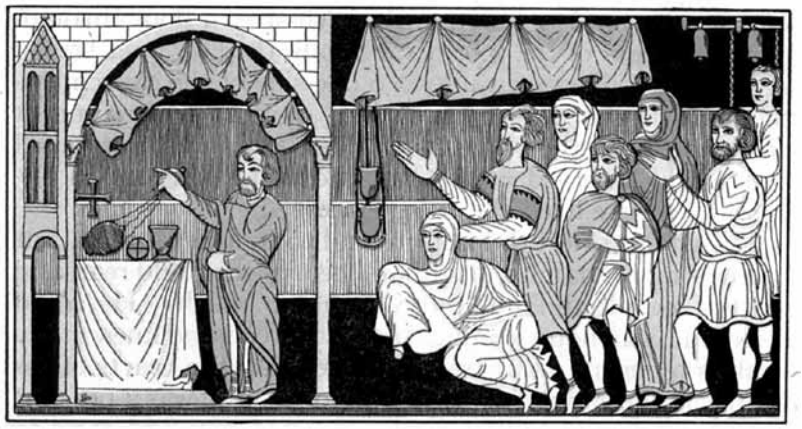
The person who has made this confession is not one about to be baptized but a believing Christian, who in the words of Martin Luther, is *simul iustus et peccator,* at once a just man and a sinner. The Decalogue, the New Testament readings and the Sermon are not designed to instruct the ignorant but to remind the believing Christian of his own beliefs and commitments. The Prayer for the Church compels us to measure our behavior by communities into which we have already been incorporated, the Universal Church, the State, our particular congregation. We have proved radically incapable of living in this realm of Redemption. To know and feel that we are still in this realm, we must experience the true ground of life in the spiritual community, the sacrifice of Christ.

The confession is our acknowledgement that we are wayfarers, redeemed by God's grace but not complete. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that those who sin mortally fall out of Justification and must be restored to it through the sacrament of confession. Some Protestants from the so-called "Radical Reformation" have perhaps been taught that once they have made a true profession of faith, they can never again sin. The Prayer Book holds to the deeper truth that during this life we must constantly be recalled to what we really are.

It is thus the sinning Christian who is recalled to his own profession by the Comfortable Words. In the first Christ summons sinners to himself. The second and third indicate that the reason for Christ's coming into the world is the salvation of sinners. The fourth declares that Christ's sacrifice has restored the sinner's relation to God the Father. This sense of our restoration allows us to join together, with the whole host of heaven, to sing the praises of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

We thus begin the consecration from the knowledge of our having been restored to our relation with God through Christ's sacrifice. This knowledge is mediated to us through our confession. In it we have acknowledged our deep incapacity to live in the those communities of the Spirit that God has made for us. We must turn again to the only sure ground of our life in those communities, the all-availing sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

If the argument here is accurate, that the Comfortable Words are a part of the underlying logic of the Service, then their omission in the current Rite II of the Eucharistic service of the Episcopal Church is very much to be regretted. One can never be sure in any particular case why changes have been made, but one can discern two underlying causes. The first is a kind of archaeological regard for the old. The comfortable words were not part of any liturgy until the Reformation and thus do not have the authority of tradition. The second is a general desire to undo the understanding of the relation between our sins and Christ's death, which is evident throughout Rite II. The first stems from a desire to change the Protestant faith of the Prayer Book in a Roman direction, the other in a liberal direction. We can learn from both these camps that to affirm the Comfortable Words is to affirm that we are justified by faith and grace.



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The Lowliness of his Handmaiden

PRAYING THE WORDS OF MARY

By Roberta Bayer

The Gospel canticles traditionally associated with the evening office are the *Magnificat* and the *Nunc Dimittis*, both from the Gospel of Luke. The *Magnificat*, or Song of our Lord's mother, has appeared in liturgical offices since at least the fourth century; St. Benedict appointed it at the climax of the Vespers office.

Mary's prayer, spoken in profound humility and wonder at the work of God, echoes the Old Testament, particularly Hannah's prayer at 1 Samuel. 2:1-10. Archbishop Cranmer placed the *Magnificat* in a position where it might link in our thinking the Old Testament prophecy about the coming saviour with the New Testament revelation of its fulfillment because it is said after the Old Testament reading and just before the New.

When praying this canticle two things are necessary. First, it should be prayed so as to gain an understanding of Mary's humility and devotion to our Lord, and contemplate her virtue as a model for oneself. Secondly, one prays these words thinking of the Scriptural context. The first mode of prayer brings to mind our own sin through Mary's humility and sense of God's grace, the second, the doctrinal point about what God has done for man.

Mary was the vessel through which Christ our salvation came to birth, and was made man. The Fall was reversed, salvation history was made clear. In some of the earliest records of the church, in Justin and Irenaeus, Mary was called the new Eve because whereas Eve, the first woman, disobeyed God, Mary, by contrast was sublimely obedient. Whereas Eve, who should have best known God, challenged God's rulership and doubted his justice, Mary, by contrast recognized God's power and justice, His rulership of the world. Her trust is an answer to Eve's distrust; her greatest virtue, that of humility, was an antidote to Eve's pride.

The early designation of Mary as the new Eve was followed at the Council of Ephesus, the third of the four major councils of the Church recognized by the Anglican Reformation, with a new title or designation, that of *Theotokos,* which means Mother or Bearer of God. The Orthodox churches of the East considered that title to reveal a Christological, not Mariological fact, and one may say the same of the Anglican church. The importance paid to her within the primitive church points to the fact that her role, as described in Scripture, is extraordinarily important to understanding the Incarnation of Christ, his two natures.

The reverence for Mary which finds its way into the *Book of Common Prayer* serves to teach about Christ. In the traditional American *Book of Common Prayer* calendar we celebrate Mary on February 2, at the Purification of the Virgin Mary (Luke:2.22), and March 25, the Annunciation (Luke:1.26); these are fixed Holy Days. The Falling Asleep of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as remembered in the Canadian *Book of Common Prayer* on August 15, follows upon a tradition of very ancient lineage, and is a mark of that reverence which dates from the early centuries. These celebrations point to her role as mother of God, the visit from the angel, and the proclamation of the new dispensation through God sending his son into the world. Her death was remembered because of her extraordinary importance among the disciples. They point to Christ's humanity and to his divinity.

One point should be added. The devotion to Mary that has grown up in the last millennium within the Roman Catholic Church, while admirable for its piety, moves beyond what was said at the Council of Ephesus, centering as it does upon her rather than her Son. (There is an internal logic to the development of these doctrines, but they are unnecessary to salvation.) It may be that the late developed Marian worship within Roman Catholicism has led to an overly critical view among some Anglicans of the ancient Marian teaching of the primitive church. But what the Council of Ephesus upheld, and Scripture relates, is that Mary was uniquely honored by God, full of grace, blessed among women. So should we revere and honor her, and remember her feast days.

Just as the *Magnificat* in Evening Prayer links the Old Testament with the New, so Mary stood between both old and new dispensations. God, whose name alone is Holy, magnified Mary and called her blessed; God, who scatters the proud and puts the mighty down from their seat, regarded her in her lowliness. Praying the words of Mary is a salutary means by which to remember what God has done for us in our own lowliness, and assenting to that humility which was, and is, the *sine qua non* of salvation.

Spiritual Reality

BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER 1928 VS. 1979

By Roberta Bayer

The Bible, like the Church throughout its history, requires that one believe something which is inherently hard to believe, namely that there exists another reality, quite as real as this paper on which I write or any other physical matter, but which is a spiritual and intellectual reality. Furthermore, we are asked to understand that this reality must be known in order to comprehend God and ourselves properly. I am speaking here of incorporeal substances; angels are an example, and in a different way the rational soul.

In light of the Feast of Michaelmas, I would like to make some comments upon why, on the topic of spiritual reality the 1928 is doctrinally superior to the new American Prayer Book (1979). Following are a few examples.

In the 1979 American Prayer Book, the words "seen and unseen" replaced "visible and invisible" in the statement found in the Nicene Creed "I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible." This change was adopted in both Roman Catholic and Anglican modern language translations. The problem is that saying something is unseen is not the same as saying that something is invisible. When one states that an angel is invisible, one is not saying that he is merely out of sight, rather one is saying that invisibility belongs to his incorporeal nature. An angel may reveal himself to Abraham or Mary while retaining his incorporeal nature. This is because he is a spiritual substance, unlike men who are both spirit and flesh. Replacing the term invisible with the word unseen confuses the issue of intrinsic natures with subjective vision.

Also, the 1979 catechism teaches wrongly about human nature and freedom, raising a question as to its understanding of the nature of the human spirit. When the catechetical question is asked (p. 845) as to what it means to be created in the image of God, the answer given is that it's to be "free to make choices." As any student of Thomas Hobbes, the 17th century materialist philosopher knows, freedom of choice is not the same as free will. Hobbes objected to the doctrine of free will found in Christian theology because it implicitly contains a teleological and non-material expression of freedom — namely that man cannot without the help of grace have a good will, and only then is it free. This doctrine presupposes an end, or telos in God, that is a spiritual reality. As the the Collect for Peace in the *Book of Common Prayer* states, service to God is perfect freedom. If the freedom to make choices is the defining feature of our soul, what happened to the good will? Surely a free will is for something more than making choices, rather it is to love and serve God. Therefore being created in the image of God is to have a nature which is made to will him alone.

The question dealing with the definition of Church in the new catechism falls into the same trap. At first the Church is described as the "community of the New Covenant", and only secondarily, as the Body of Christ — the Pauline term. The 1979 catechism then goes on to state that this Body of Christ, this Church, is that in which all baptized persons are members. Here quite clearly the distinction between invisible Church (the Body of Christ) and the visible Church (all baptized members) is lost. To the contrary, St. Augustine wrote in his great treatise on the City of God::

> ...the City of God is on pilgrimage in this world, she 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 saints." (City of God, I,35)

Baptised persons belong to the visible church, but they are still struggling here below in need of hearing the pure Word of God preached. This is a very salutary teaching for those who are struggling with questions of ecclesiology today. But, the lesson here is that the 1979 Prayer Book, a book which is regularly used even by those claiming to be orthodox, is negligent about certain essential doctrines that go directly to the question of free will, the nature of angels and Church.

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The Headship of Men

By Roberta Bayer

Many conservatives within the Anglican Communion are uncomfortable with the ordination of women, but are unsure of how to argue against it. As an encouragement to engage in such a very important discussion, here are three Scriptural arguments which tell against this recent innovation. One may call them the arguments for the headship of men.

1 In the Old Testament the Levites or priests who were allowed to offer sacrifices in the Temple were men. Insofar as the Book of Hebrews states that priests are "after the order of Melchisedek", the Old Testament may be said to inform the New. One might also note in passing that priestesses are mentioned in the Old Testament, but only among the pagans.

2 Christ chose 12 men to be his Apostles. Only these 12 were with him at the Last Supper when Holy Communion was instituted, and then Christ commissioned them in washing their feet. Someone might respond, of course, that in choosing men, Christ was in some way captive to the views of his age, or that his actions in these matters were indifferent. But that argument is a very dangerous one to embark upon, if one wants to hold to the divine authority of Scripture, and indeed if one wants to defend the incarnation itself, that Christ is both fully God and fully man. He knew what he was doing, it was indeed, providentially speaking, ordained from the beginning of the world.

3 Christ dearly loved and revered some very devout and pious women: his mother, Mary Magdalene, Mary and Martha; but he did not offer them an apostolic role. The hierarchy of the church is set apart, and is different from the order of virtue and goodness among the saints. The fact that at the foot of the cross when all the apostles but John had run away, the women stayed, suggests rather that great virtue of an important kind may indeed be expected of the laity. "Mary has chosen the better part," but it is the life of devotion and contemplation, sitting at the feet of the Lord, not the priesthood.

Those who favour the ordination of women, an innovation which has no precedent in history or the rest of the catholic and orthodox world, must bear the burden of proof. Where is the clear Scriptural precedent? In what way is the desire to ordain women *not* captive to the historicism and scriptural skepticism of the age? Do those advocating such an innovation not by their actions suggest that they have progressed in their understanding of justice and truth beyond those who knew and talked to our Lord, indeed Our Lord himself?

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 for more information, or write our President at stjohnssav.org