MANDATE

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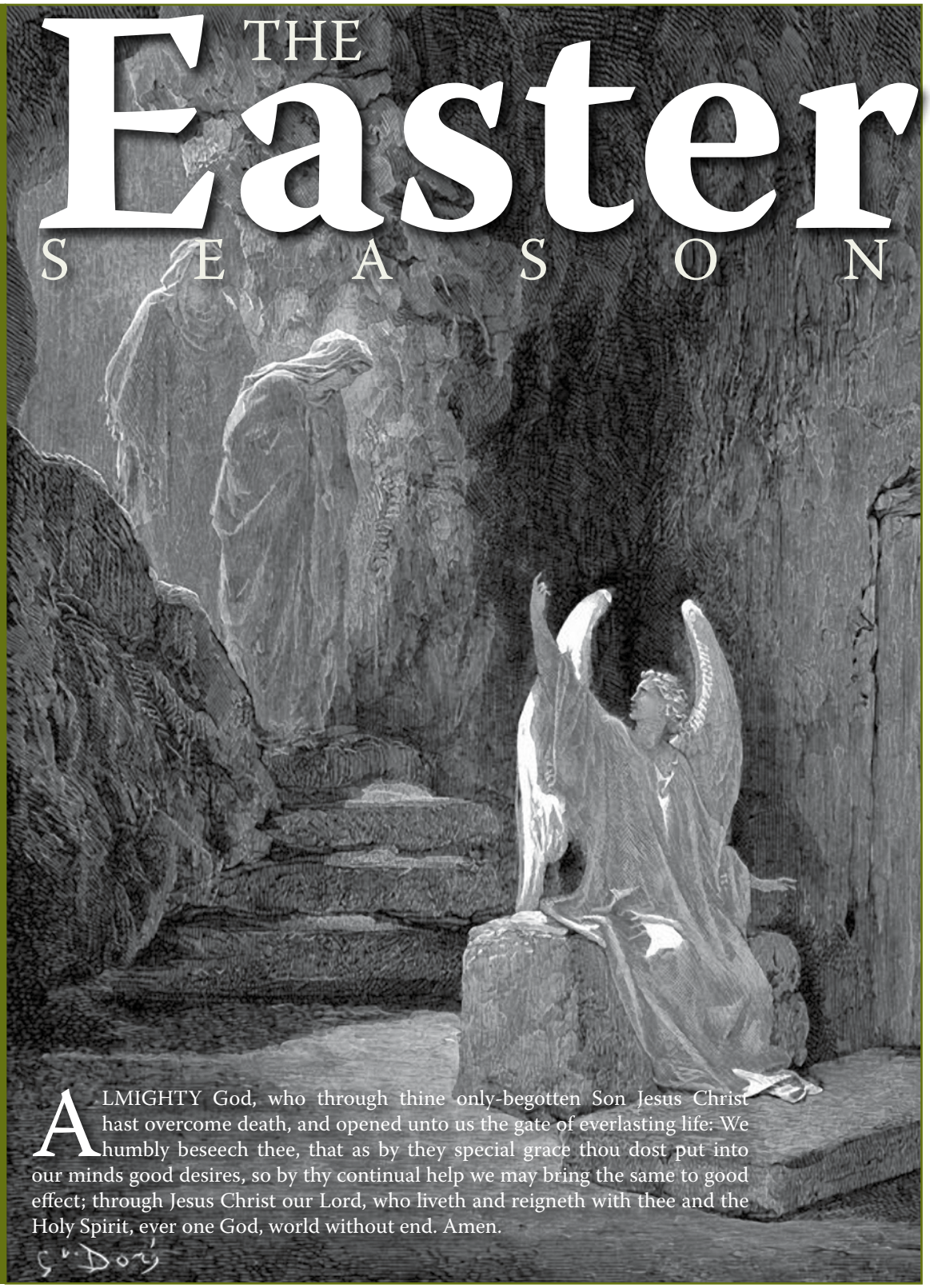
THE Easter SEASON



ALMIGHTY God, who through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life: We humbly beseech thee, that as by they special grace thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The Easter Season

Reflections from the Editor's Desk

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

Between Easter Sunday and Trinity Sunday there are eight weeks in which fall the Feast of the Ascension, when our risen Lord ascended at last to sit on His throne in the heavenly kingdom, and Whitsunday (White Sunday) or Pentecost, commemorating that moment when the Holy Spirit, or Comforter descended upon Christ's disciples in an upper room of a house in Jerusalem.

In these eight weeks Christ's disciples moved from slowly beginning to comprehend the meaning of Christ's life and His divinity, to the point of accepting and understanding the kind of life which Christ intends for those who love Him. From Good Friday to Pentecost the disciples experienced grief and loss first at witnessing their beloved Saviour die on the Cross, and then afterwards found joy in his return to them in His risen body. They suffered again, at what must have felt like an even greater loss, at His final departure from this world at the Ascension, only to receive even greater comfort in the knowledge that He had not left them, but was in some way still with them through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We can only guess at what those who loved our Lord underwent during those tumultuous weeks, and as we are in some way to walk with them through this season, they ought to be for us both emotionally transporting and also intellectually demanding. We begin in grief and end in the knowledge of our Lord's eternal love; but we are also forced to come to terms with Christ's divine nature, and each Gospel lesson, through Trinity Sunday, illuminates the complexity of that fact in revealing Christ's relation to his Father and to the Holy Spirit.

The First Sunday after Easter tells about the return of Christ to his disciples after rising from the dead, when He spoke these words unto them, "Peace be unto you." After displaying His wounds from the cross, illustrating His incorporeal and corporeal nature, He breathes upon them the Holy Ghost. His divinity is for the first time made clearly and undeniably manifest, Jesus was no ordinary man.

In the Gospel of the Second Sunday, Jesus tells his disciples that He is the good shepherd, and so reveals that it was He of whom David had written in Psalm 23: "The Lord is my shepherd, therefore can I lack nothing." Jesus said: "I am the good shepherd; and know my sheep, and am known of mine, even as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father." We are the sheep for whom He has laid down his life, Christ is the same as the Father who was known to David as the true shepherd. The messianic prophecy is fulfilled.

The Gospel of the Third Sunday assures us again of our Lord's continued presence even after He has gone to his Father. "A little while, and ye shall not see me; and a little while and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father", he said. "Verily, verily I say unto you, that ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." This is the promise of future comfort through Father and Son.

Again the Fourth Sunday after Easter teaches that although Jesus must go away and leave his dis-

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ciples, and sorrow will fill their hearts, it is most expedient: "for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him to you." The Holy Ghost is of the Godhead. It is he who will comfort them in their loss of Jesus and will bring judgement and righteousness, and will be the Spirit of truth.

In the Gospel lesson of the Fifth Sunday after Easter, just before Ascension Day, Christ explains, again to his disciples, the intrinsic relation between Christ, the Father, and the Holy Spirit in preparation for Trinity Sunday. Jesus states that "whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you." They are of one mind and of one act. There is no difference of substance between them. The disciples, in looking upon Jesus also look upon the Father, and in praying to Him they are praying to the Father. "I come forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world and go to the Father." It is not accidental that the Easter Gospel readings, as a whole, come from the Gospel of St John who, of the four evangelists, offers the fullest Trinitarian theology.

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.

The Sunday after Ascension Day is a day for watching and waiting, preparing for the coming of the Spirit on Pentecost. This is followed by Trinity Sunday, when the Church in the world knows at last all that has been done for it by God through Christ and the Holy Spirit, and waits now, standing steadfast in the knowledge of God, until all earthly things will pass away, and at last we will come to see our Lord face to face.

# # #

The Easter issue is devoted to various kinds of responses from our readers. We have printed a short letter below from Jan Mahood, editor of *Episcopalians for a Traditional Faith,* correcting our overly general statement that the Episcopal Church abolished the 1928 BCP. For this reminder we are very thankful.

Secondly, we received an interesting letter from a priest in Dallas, Texas who inquired as to the significance of the order of Cranmer's Communion Service. He asked why the break with the ancient Roman liturgical tradition while Anglicanism, in so many other matters, is a continuation of the ancient church. To this end the Reverend Gavin Dunbar has written something of a reply, noting that Cranmer was not breaking with catholicity in doctrine, rather he was moving the idea of catholic worship in accord with the growing understanding of the interiority of the divine-human relationship in worship, a concern typical of the classical Reformation. Both the articles by the Reverend Dunbar and Dr. Paul Epstein address this matter.

A few friends and Board members have offered their thoughts on the subject of marriage in the church today, and for their contributions to this discussion I am very grateful. Also I am pleased to include a learned essay by Michael Carreker on a Fra Angelico depiction of the Resurrection.

# # #

Jan Mahood, editor of *Episcopalians for a Traditional Faith* (www.etf1928.org) wrote the following note to us:

The Episcopal Church did not "abolish" the 1928 Book of Common Prayer, as you state. In fact, the 1928 is alive and very much in use today. At the 1979 General Convention both houses — Bishops and Deputies — overwhelmingly passed the "Denver Resolution" approving its continued use. The 2000 General Convention reinforced this approval with another Resolution affirming the Denver Resolution. In yet another 2000 Resolution, General Convention issued a formal apology to anyone who had been treated discourteously during the revision process.

Bp. Otis Charles, then chairman of the House of Bishops Prayer Book and Liturgy Committee and the person responsible for bringing the Resolution before the full House of Bishops, summarized the intent of the Convention. In a letter to the Reverend K. Logan Jackson, then President of the Prayer Book Society, he wrote, in part:

"When all is said and done the one fact that seems clear is that no Bishop has the right to deny use of the 1928 Book."

The Denver Resolution on Prayer Book Usage, a publication of the Prayer Book Society, gives a detailed account of the circumstances surrounding the 1979 General Convention's approval of continued use of the 1928 BCP, and emphasizes that parish priests may use freedom of choice in use of the 1928.

The editor has a new address:
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Or you may write by going to our website: pbsusa.org and clicking on Write the Editor.

We need your gifts in order to carry out your mandate to defend the 1928 *Book of Common Prayer*. You may send a contribution to: The Prayer Book Society · P.O. Box 35220 · Philadelphia, PA 19128-0220. Please give generously.

A Letter from the President

The Prayer Book and Fidelity to Catholic Tradition

The Rev. Gavin Dunbar, Rector, St John's, Savannah, GA

It is no secret that many (though not all) Anglo-Catholics take a dim view of the Prayer Book tradition 1552-1928 and prefer the 1979 revision because of its 'catholicity'. In their view, the protestant reforms of the liturgy in the sixteenth century diminished its claims to catholicity, and therefore the catholic-minded should make use of those rites which more closely approximate the Latin Mass. In the old days, this meant using Anglican Missals which blended the rites of the Roman missal (in Prayer Book English) with those of the English or American Prayer Books. But in the Episcopal Church, the 1979 Prayer Book is the preferred option for the catholic-minded. Its revisions were presented as a return to ancient catholic tradition, and in outline, it does approximate the order of the Roman mass. The Offertory precedes the Sursum corda, the Gloria comes after the Kyrie, and so on. Moreover, there is provision for the special ceremonies of Ash Wednesday and Holy Week. It is therefore patient of much traditional Roman ceremonial—and if you do not really pay attention to what the priest is saying, you can imagine that this is a fuller expression of catholic tradition than what we find in the historic Prayer Books.

Three points need to be made as to this error. They are made in no particular order:

First. While the ancient rites of the Roman church deserve high esteem, as noble expressions of catholic truth and devotion, and (in their pre-Tridentine, pre-curial form) as the tradition from which the Prayer Book tradition took its origin, the catholic-minded must admit that the rites of the Roman church are not the only legitimate expressions of Catholic tradition. There is no *single* normative liturgy of ancient Catholicism.

In the west, besides the Ambrosian rite of Milan (which is related to the Roman rite), the Mozarabic rite remains as a remnant of the Gallican rites. In the east, the diversity is even greater: the Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil the Great among the Greek Orthodox, the liturgies of St. Mark and St. James and so on. While these liturgies have important similarities and points of contact, there are also significant differences. While the old Roman rite has deservedly enjoyed esteem for many centuries, it cannot be the measure against which all other liturgies are assessed. Josef Jungmann, in his magisterial study of the Roman Mass, tacitly admits as much, by relating elements in the Roman mass to other ancient catholic liturgical traditions.

If we have much to learn from the Roman rite, we also have much to learn from the other ancient catholic liturgical traditions: and among other things, they teach us that a certain degree of liturgical variety is legitimate. That's a point vigorously maintained by Article XXIV: "it is not necessary that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all places one, or utterly alike; for at all times they have been divers, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word". Possibly the older liturgists (Dom Gregory Dix *et al.*) did not fully appreciate this fact.

But one of their basic assumptions—that liturgical unity preceded devolution into diversity—has been overthrown by later scholarship (Paul Bradshaw *et al*). Now it is believed that liturgical diversity was the rule, historically, and that similarities over time resulted from churches adopting practices from one another. (See for instance Max Johnson's essay in the new *Oxford History of Christian Worship*).

Second. The return to ancient catholic tradition in the new Prayer Book is much exaggerated. The eucharistic lectionary is the obvious example. For the sake of a *hypothetical* reconstruction of what modern liturgists thought an ancient eucharistic lectionary would look like, an *actual* ancient eucharistic lectionary which had been in continuous use for almost fifteen hundred years was discarded. In other respects, the recovery of catholic ceremony often came with a dilution of catholic doctrine. While the ceremonies of Ash Wednesday and Good Friday were restored, for instance, the catholic doctrines of the atonement, of sin and grace—not to mention the disciplines of repentance—were sadly diminished. Group process plays an exaggerated role in the administration of the sacraments, so much so that the presence of Christ in the eucharist seems to amount to little more than the experience of community. The emphasis on the economic Trinity at the expense of the theological Trinity moves in a unitarian or even pantheistic direction. Catholics who sacrifice catholic doctrine for the sake of catholic ceremony have got their priorities mixed up. Let's not major in the minors!

Anyway, since when has liturgical revolution—even in the name of "tradition"—been a principle of catholic liturgical development?

Third. The historic Prayer Book rites have too often been evaluated in a very superficial and polemic way, often on the basis of doubtful historical scholarship. Too often they have been

measured and found wanting on the basis of narrowly conceived criteria. When we attend to them carefully and sensitively, however, we find in them something that is profoundly theological and spiritual. That should not surprise us: for Cranmer was deeply versed in "the old catholic fathers" and his thought is deeply formed by fundamental catholic doctrine. It was no idle claim of his to entitle his eucharistic treatise, "**The true and catholic doctrine of the Lord's Supper".** It is replete with a careful and comprehensive patristic scholarship.

All liturgies, both ancient and modern, change. The question is always what kind of change. The 16th century reforms of the liturgy are obviously strongly anti-Pelagian in tendency, and strongly Augustinian in their doctrines of the soul, of sin and grace, as they are also Anselmian in their doctrine of the atonement. What is less obvious, but equally important, is the influence of post-Nicene Trinitarianism, and Chalcedonian Christology which is fundamental to the eucharistic theology of the Reformers, a topic which needs more attention in liturgical circles. Catholics may well desire the restoration of some aspects of pre-Reformation Catholicism, by way of its ceremonial, music, and art, its devotional forms and disciplines. But we should not ignore the catholic substance that is so strongly represented in the Prayer Book tradition, or to imagine that we have nothing to learn from the Reformers.

The Logic of Conversion and Community

The Order of Holy Communion or the Lord's Supper

Basic Principles

The 1662 Prayer Book is, under Scripture itself, the touchstone of the Anglican Communion's Historic Faith, Unity, and Mission. In the historic Prayer Book we find expressed the Anglican consensus about Gospel and Church. The rediscovery of the Prayer Book is thus necessary to the restoration of Anglicanism.

The doctrine of the Prayer Book is found in its explicit doctrinal statements. It is also found implicitly in its order and structure. A profound and subtle doctrine of the soul and of its conversion to God and the reconciliation of all things in Christ is set forth in the very order of the services, especially the service of Holy Communion or the Holy Eucharist, also known as the Lord's Supper.

The soul carries within it the Trinitarian Image of God (Genesis 1:26, 27), which consists of the faculties of memory, reason (understanding), and will (love). The conversion of Soul to God restores the image of God in us. Deformed by sin, and conformed to this world, the soul must be reformed by grace, transformed by the renewing of the mind in the wisdom of God's word (Romans 12:2 cf. Ephesians 4:17-24; 1 Corinthians 2).

Conversion has three moments or aspects: first there is **Repentance,** which heals our forgetfulness of God. Then there is **Faith** which heals our ignorance of God. **Charity or love** marks the healing of our perverse rebellion against God. (The exercise of these three virtues corresponds to the objective moments of "**Guilt, Grace, and Gratitude**" which belong to the Reformed doctrine of Sin, Justification and Sanctification.) As a result of Conversion we are transformed, translated from the alienation of sin to **Communion** and Fellowship with God and man in the Body of Christ.

These three moments of conversion supply the basic structure of the 1662 Communion rite. The whole cycle is repeated three times, but each time from a new and different angle. Rather as in the Gospel of John, the movement is not linear—A to F—but a spiral, in which we return from C to A, but now at a higher level. So the pattern is ABC A'B'C' A"B"C".

The first cycle is primarily concerned with conversion in relation to the outward community (horizontal) defined by the rehearsal of Law, the preaching of the Gospel, the confession of the Church's Faith, and the offerings of the Church. The second cycle moves inward and upward through confession and absolution of sin. The third cycle unites inward and outward community, and so both horizontal and vertical conversion are united in the self-giving love of Father and Son transacted at the Cross. By communion in his Sacrifice, Christ's body offers itself to the Father through the Son, and enters into the peace of God.

Analysis of 1662 rite: Opening Prayers

We attain to God only if we begin from God—his Word (**Lord's Prayer**) and Spirit (**Collect for Purity**): "cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name". The end of our worship is present from the beginning.

First Cycle of Conversion — External and "Horizontal" Community

REPENTANCE: The rehearsal of God's Law in reciting the **Ten Commandments** and then again by saying **Lord have mercy,** awakens within us our need for God's grace to cover our sins and incline our hearts to righteousness. The **Collect of the Day** sharpens this general need for grace in a particular way.

FAITH. The **Epistle and Gospel Lessons** proclaims publicly the Grace of God in Christ, as focus of community faith. The **Creed** exercises our personal faith in an ecclesial (community) form. The **Sermon** explains and applies the Word to the community of faith, stirring up faith and leading us to good works of charity.

CHARITY: The **Offertory Sentences** move us to works of charity springing from a lively faith. (Faith without works is dead, this is the meaning of the offeratory.) The **Prayer for the Church** offers up these alms and oblations with prayers in intercession for the Church, as the Word-hearing, Word-receiving and in a sense, Word-embodying society of faithful seeking to serve him in holiness and righteousness.

In this first cycle, one finds a preliminary realization of God's plan for salvation in the Law, the Gospel, and Church. But a further dimension must be explored.

Second Cycle of Conversion—Inward and "Vertical"

WE are moved from the first cycle to the second by the **Exhortations** and the **Invitation.**

REPENTANCE: In the **General Confession,** we acknowledge the grievousness of our sin and we turn from it in grief towards amendment of life.

FAITH: We hear with faith the **Absolution** by the grace of God in Christ that releases us from bondage of sin; and we are encouraged in this faith by the **Comfortable Words.**

CHARITY (TOWARD GOD, GRATITUDE): In the **Sursum Corda** ("Lift up your hearts"), we lift up our hearts to the Lord in the adoring praise of the **Preface** (which means 'praise' not 'prologue') and **Sanctus** ("Holy, holy, holy"). The grace of Absolution both releases from sin and elevates us to a new spiritual life. Therefore, we ascend in heart and mind into heavenly places, where we join in the angels' worship. "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:1, 2).

Third Cycle of Conversion—The Cross as the Ground of Divine Human Community

REPENTANCE: As when Isaiah said "woe is me" when he saw God in the temple and the angels singing Holy, Holy, Holy (Isaiah 6), so after the Sanctus the cycle begins again, with the **Prayer of Humble Access.** This prayer directs us now very specifically to spiritual participation in the Body and Blood of Christ (the benefits of his sacrifice), and in Christ himself, as members of his Body.

[**N. B.** In the 1928 BCP this moves to a point immediately before the sacrament is received.]

FAITH: In the "**Prayer of Consecration**", faith acknowledges the paternal grace of the Father, his tender mercy, in giving his Son to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; and the filial grace of the Son, in his offering of himself once for all as a "full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice… for the sins of the whole world". We acknowledge also the Son's institution of the Lord's Supper as a "perpetual memory of that his precious death, until his coming again", and we rehearse the commands relating to this Institution, which are also promises. In the act of **Communion**, obeying these commands, and remembering his death, we receive the bread and wine, and thereby partake by faith in his body and blood, the benefits of his sacrifice. Thus the conversion of the mind and heart to God has its outward sign in the sacramental conversion of bread and wine to signify the body and blood of Christ.

[**N. B**. The Prayer of Consecration in 1928 combines the 1662 Prayer of Consecration with the 1662 Prayer of Oblation (after Communion), and an Anamnesis based on that of 1549, in a slightly different order. Although the pattern of repentance, faith, charity is therefore a little different, the substance does not differ greatly].

CHARITY (GRATITUDE): In receiving the signs of his sacrifice by faith, we are at the same moment urged to "be thankful". Communion with Christ in his sacrifice moves us to offer ourselves through him in thankfulness. Beginning again with the **Lord's Prayer**—always the beginning point for the Church's prayer - in one of the two **Prayers after Communion** the faithful Church, in virtue of its communion in the benefits of Christ's sacrifice, offers itself to God through Christ, as members of his mystical Body, the Church. That is, in virtue of our communion with Christ in his sacrifice for us, we are caught up in the same motion of love that goes forth eternally from the Father and returns eternally through the Son, which was accomplished for us once for all on the Cross. Christ who offers himself once for all *for* us, in sacrifice for sin, now offers himself perpetually *in* us, in the sacrifice of thanksgiving, the Church's "eucharistic" sacrifice. For "here we offer ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee"–"not only with our lips, but in our lives" (General Thanksgiving).

This sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving is dramatized by the **Gloria in excelsis**, the angelic hymn, which together with the Sanctus frames the memorial of Christ's sacrifice for us and the offering of the Church's sacrifice through him in terms of angelic worship. We are in heavenly places, in presence of the Father, celebrating the accomplishment of his salvation in us.

The Sacrifice of Christ is thus the ground of man's conversion to God in eucharistic sacrifice, and of all true human community which results from this conversion—the Body of Christ.

CLOSING AND DISMISSAL: With the completion of the third cycle, we are dismissed with the **proclamation of God's peace, and blessing**. It is only as a result of the conversion of the soul and through its participation in the sacrifice of Christ that it enters into the peace of God's kingdom, and knows itself to be "kept" within God's knowing and loving.

The Order of the Service of Holy Communion *and the* Logic of Christian Redemption

by Paul Epstein, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Classics, Oklahoma State University

The 1928 Prayer Book service of Holy Communion is based on the idea that God wants us to share in his life, and that this is mediated to us through Christ's overcoming of sin through his Sacrifice. Therefore the Service begins with the Collect for Purity and the Decalogue whereby we acknowledge our sinfulness and our utter dependence on God even to worship him properly; it ends with the Gloria, through which we praise the God who has restored us to fellowship with himself. Between these two points comes a series of divine-human encounters, by which the believer is more and more incorporated into the divine life. These include (1) readings from the New Testament, (2) the Nicene Creed, (3) Sermon, (4) Intercession, (5) Confession and Absolution, (6) Consecration and Communion, and (7) Thanksgiving.

I shall try to demonstrate in a series of articles, that, as I stated above, these parts of the Service follow each other according to the logic of Christian redemption. That is, each part reveals a stage of the divine-human relation, and each successive stage shows a deepening of that relation. Thus the service begins with the Collect for Purity. This prayer is an appeal to God that he make us capable of worshipping him worthily. It declares that worship cannot be exclusively a human activity; from the beginning of the Service it is seen as a divine-human activity.

The rite of Holy Communion itself was not designed by men and women to reach God, but was commanded by Christ himself. It belongs to God's revelation of himself that it is not only the presence of Christ on earth 2,000 years ago, but a revelation made also to us now. The Collect for Purity makes our preparation for receiving the revelation a part of the Service. This is in accord with the Protestant Principle. A Roman priest can celebrate Mass by himself, while Holy Communion is a public service. Moreover, it emphasizes that the individual's way to the truth is an essential part of religion.

The Decalogue, which follows, is at once the Law that God gave to the Israelites, and the standard by which the well-instructed Christian knows his duties to God and his neighbor; this latter includes his duties to the civic order, and his family. A look here at how the catechism (p. 288 of the 1928 Book of Common Prayer) interprets one's duty to one's neighbor is appropriate, "To love, honour, and help my father and mother: To honour and obey the civil authority:..." Thus the believer is led by the reading of the Decalogue to know his proper relation to the whole of the commonwealth in which he lives.

The end of the Law, of which the Decalogue is the summary, is to convince men and women of their sinfulness. The Service begins then with the believer's knowledge that he cannot attain the holiness that God has proclaimed. Thus the first stage of the believer's journey is his sense of his distance from God.

The reading of the Decalogue represents an innovation of the English Reformers; this element was not present in the traditional 'Shape of the Liturgy.' Some people think that the exact state of the Communion Service in the early centuries of Christianity has an authority that should not be challenged. This view, however, tends to overlook the fact that Christian doctrine and Christian practice have a history. For example, although the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are all mentioned in the Bible, there was no clearly expressed doctrine of the Trinity until the fourth-century Council of Nicaea defined the equality of the Son with the Father in respect to his divinity. If, as orthodox Christians have tended to believe, Nicaea is accurate in its theological teaching, then this innovation is both good and necessary. Its not having existed in the year 237 is thus no argument against it.

By analogy, the fact that the reading of the Decalogue is an innovation is a matter of comparative indifference. The real question is whether its addition improves the Service of Holy Communion. I think that it does because it reminds the believer that both historically and in his soul the beginning of Christian faith lies in a sense of one's own sinfulness in the face of the divine holiness. Such a sense is at the heart of the Old Testament, and it awakens in the individual Christian the felt need for a Saviour. It also emphasizes the revealed nature of Christian religion. The Decalogue is revealed by God; it is not the work of human thinking. Unless the Christian believer knows from the beginning that the Christian religion is revealed by God, he cannot understand it. The reading of the Decalogue, therefore, teaches the believer that God is the true source of Law and holiness.

(to be continued)

A Pastoral Comment on the Joy *of the* Resurrection

by Michael Carreker, Ph.D.

In the Dominican convent of San Marco in Florence, among the gentle and lovely frescoes of Fra Angelico, Mary Magdalene reaches out to the risen Christ. It is one of the tenderest of all the frescoes, a perpetual evidence of the deep religious sensibility of Fra Angelico and his assistants.

The frescoes, which adorn the cells of the friars, were meant to provide a governing idea, a means of meditation, fashioned on Christian doctrine but with the aesthetic intention of the true experience of God. This same experience may move us still, as Fra Angelico invites us to look at the magnificent triumph of Jesus Christ from a fragile, human point of view. We are given to see human affection, devotion, and unfettered joy, while discovering at the same moment that there is something yet to come, that must come and shall come, even greater and more wondrous. By means of quiet, soft, and light color, this particular moment between Mary Magdalene and Jesus lifts us ever so sweetly to catch a glimpse of the Transcendent Beauty. We are just on the verge of happiness.

The painting recalls the glory of Easter Day (John 20: 1-18). Mary Magdalene has gone to tell Peter and John that the stone has been moved from the tomb. Running after them, she stands outside the tomb weeping. Peter and John leave, but she remains. And suddenly, two angels, who sit at the head and the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been, ask her why she weeps. She replies that someone has taken the body of Jesus and she does not know where, but as she turns to look behind her, there stands another who asks the same question, "Woman, why weepest thou?" Overcome by grief, Mary assumes the person to be the gardener, and beseeches him to let her have the body of Jesus. And then Jesus speaks, and calls her name, "Mary."

For Mary, it must have been an unparalleled moment, akin to those times when someone speaks straight to the heart, but this time with the clarity of truth and of unknown goodness. And what of Jesus? What would have been the gladness

he experienced by bringing Mary such novel and incomprehensible joy?

To hear her name on his lips meant everything. This was the Mary from whom the Lord had cast out seven devils (Luke 8:2), which is to say that she had lived an existence wholly and completely oppressed with habitual sin. She is sometimes identified with the sinful woman of Luke 7: 36-50, who washed Jesus' feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, and kissed his feet. If so, we can begin to understand the profound love she had for him. Indeed, our Lord had said as much. She was a paradigm; Jesus said that she loved much, because she had been forgiven much.

And so here, on Easter morning, when Jesus spoke her name, all the possibility of love - the fact of forgiveness, pardon, newness, worth, all the anticipations of godly friendship, over which the crucifixion had cast a very dark shadow indeed - was now gloriously and powerfully true and real. That one moment, and her name, "Mary," was all it took.

The fresco captures the moment after this. Mary reaches out to her Lord, to hold him yet again. The King James Bible, influenced by the Vulgate translation of "noli me tangere," translates the passage in the famous and splendid: "Touch me not." Often this passage has been interpreted to mean that Mary was forbidden to touch Jesus at all. It may be that it means, rather, stop touching me, in the sense of "stop clinging to me." However we interpret the passage in the original, the meaning is the same, and the painter (Fra Angelico or his assistant) conveys the central and indisputable truth.

It is a scene cast in joy and tender mercy, but with an expectation only Jesus knows, and only Mary can trust. One tear trickles down the longing and loving countenance of Mary. The question of why she weeps reverberates now with an eternal answer. He is there, alive. She had seen him dead, the spear thrust into his side, no bones broken, taken down off the cross; all her dreams seemed dead as well. But now he stands there in the confidence of conquering love. Jesus is depicted wonderfully with a gardening hoe on his shoulder; at once, both what she had mistaken him for, and what now, with his calling her name, she knows him truly to be. The gentleness of the scene is shown in the still and lovely colors. Mary in a light red ochre dress, with long golden hair down her back, and Jesus in elegant and simple white linen, whose golden hair is a shade lighter. They stand frozen in joy and affection in the midst of a lush and well manicured garden.

And yet, they stand there apart. The Magdalene reaches out and Jesus holds his hand, not out to take hers, but to delay her, if only for the moment. It is here that the command to stop clinging qualifies their joy. There is something else now that must happen. His life had had one meaning and that must be fulfilled. He must do the will of his Father. He must return to Him. It had been the Father's words that Jesus had heard and taught to them all. It was the Father's works that Jesus had done before them all. It would include them all, yes, but they were only the beneficiaries of his love of the Father. The joy and pleasure of Jesus, the very food and drink of his soul, had been to do the will of his Father who sent him, and now he must return.

The fresco has it right. There is a higher and more perfect love. All human love depends upon God who is Love. And all human love, if it is to be made blessed and happy, must partake of God himself, in the joy of His presence and in the pleasure of His Company. And so it is that Jesus says to Mary, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God" (John 20:17-18).

Thus we are shown the Transcendent Beauty. And no greater fact can now be rehearsed in the history of man. The Lord, as the Son of Man, has given a new state of being to man. The abundant life that Jesus spoke of was and is a transcendent life, Life Itself, which now in all its power perfects every human wish and desire. The fragility of mankind has been swallowed up in the humility of God. And Mary, and all they who put their trust in Jesus, shall experience this incarnate life as their own. Mine and yours was the way Jesus put it. We will be with Him and He shall be with us: the Father with His children, the children with their Father.

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

Divorce & Remarriage
in the Anglican Church

by the Reverend Gavin G. Dunbar

The last issue of *Mandate* raised a question overdue for serious discussion in the church. High rates of divorce and remarriage prevail in most North American churches. It was in the 1960's and 70's that the civil law gave up any attempt to limit divorce and remarriage. No longer was it necessary to prove objective grounds of fault (typically matters like adultery, bigamy, cruelty, desertion, imprisonment, indignities, insanity). The advent of "no-fault" civil divorce (functionally divorce at will) had its counterpart in the liberalization of the Episcopal Church's canons on divorce and remarriage. The reforms of civil and canon law were intended to provide for a modest number of "hard cases". Instead, there was an avalanche, which shows no signs of slowing down. North American Christians have by and large accepted the secular view that divorce and remarriage are largely private matters between consenting adults.

The destructive effects of no-fault divorce (and the high rates of divorce it allowed) have been extensively charted by social scientists. The impact, as one might expect, is most severe on the children of such families, whose "outcomes" in many areas of human endeavour (jobs, schooling, relationships, crime) are considerably worse than those of children of parents who were and remained married. Nor has it been as liberating of women as its proponents claim. At the same time, however, one must also allow that in many cases the subsequent remarriage after divorce proves stable and faithful.

Over against these high rates of divorce and remarriage, even among Christians, we set the distinctive teaching of Jesus, who affirmed in uncompromising terms the indissolubility of marriage: "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:6)—although in the Sermon on the Mount, he allows an exception "for fornication" (Matthew 5:32). St. Paul adds another, the departure of an unbelieving spouse (1 Corinthians 7:15). The permission for divorce given in the law of Moses, the Lord says, was made "for the hardness of your hearts…but from the beginning it was not so" (19:8). Until modern times, the practice of the Christian churches reflected this teaching: if divorce was permitted at all, it was discouraged. And, by and large, Christians accepted that membership in the Church involved acceptance of the Church's marriage discipline.

Thus the Roman Church has historically refused divorce in any form, although it does permit separation and annulment (declaring the marriage invalid). There is, of course, a long and continuing history of multiplying the grounds for annulment, even after the marriage has been consummated. Famously, Henry VIII sought an annulment of his marriage with Katharine of Aragon, even after the birth of his daughter Mary. He did not get one from Rome—although this was because the Pope was more afraid of Katharine's nephew, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, than he was of King Henry.

The Anglican Church retained its medieval (basically Roman) canon law concerning marriage, and so until very recent times, the canon law of the Church of England did not provide for divorce and remarriage. An Act of Parliament was required to obtain a civil divorce.

There are other strands in the Christian tradition, however, which have developed certain accommodations to the "hardness of your hearts". The Eastern Churches permit the church to bless remarriage after civil divorce permitted in the Justinianic code (and there are some saints of the Eastern church who were remarried persons). In the Reformed churches divorce and remarriage are

legal, but difficult. As the Westminster Confession puts it: "Although the corruption of man be such as is apt to study arguments, unduly to put asunder those whom God hath joined together in marriage; yet nothing but adultery, or such willful desertion as can no way be remedied by the church or civil magistrate, is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage: wherein a publick and orderly course of proceeding is to be observed, and the persons concerned in it not to be left to their own wills and discretion in their own case".

Even the most liberal Reformed churches, however, limited the grounds for divorce to a few verifiable and objective circumstances. Moreover, the pastors and civil magistrates were required to apply pressure for reconciliation through a prolonged legal process. In the end, the suit for divorce might be refused. But in the cases where it was granted, remarriage could follow, immediately for the innocent party, and after a waiting period for the guilty.

As a pastor with a good-sized Episcopalian congregation, in which a good number are remarried, and living in fidelity to their new vows, I would like to know what would be required for a return to the historic Anglican teaching and practice on the indissolubility of marriage. Not only have divorce and remarriage become a deeply ingrained part of North American society, but the Church has also discarded most of the disciplinary means necessary to regulate marriage.

There are any number of questions to consider. Would the divorced be excommunicate, for instance? Would remarriage by a judge or another church be honoured as marriage, or regarded as adultery? (Matthew 5:31-32 would seem to suggest that it should be.) What sort of pastoral counsel and encouragement would be offered to those abandoned by their spouse—perhaps at a very early age—and therein called to live a single life of continence for the rest of their natural lives (or at least until the spouse was dead)? If we permit divorce, on what grounds, and how are these grounds established? And so on. Merely to raise the questions is to illustrate some of the difficulties of reforming our present marriage discipline (or lack thereof). As anyone who has tried to counsel persons in marital difficulties, or recovering from the dissolution of a marriage, the approach needs to be consistent and clear, at every step of the way. It also needs to be real: a legalistic abstraction is hardly an adequate witness to the gospel.

Two things are obvious. First, that a great deal of confusion exists about the understanding and practice of Christian marriage; and second, that within that confusion, there are some very real questions that need to be carefully considered. As Prayer Book Anglicans, this is a discussion which needs to take place among us also, and in a manner becoming to Christians.

# # #

Reflections by a Classics Teacher on Christian Marriage

by Mrs. Rhea Bright
Secretary of the Prayer Book Society
Lecturer, University of Central Oklahoma, Oklahoma City

Reading Dr. Bayer's latest article on marriage in *Mandate*, put me in mind of the story of Dido and Aeneas in Virgil's *Aeneid*. The love story of Dido and Aeneas exemplifies the ancient world's view of the passions, particularly *eros*. Dido falls madly in love with Aeneas, and this passion for Aeneas inflames and consumes her soul, robbing her of all capacity for reason and rational activity. She thinks that this passion, this "union of hearts", is marriage.

Aeneas, by contrast, while no less enamored (he has to work hard to repress his feeling for her when it is time for him to leave), is nonetheless aware that this affair of passion is not a marriage. A marriage involves a question, an answer, and a contract. It is a matter of rational will, not of passionate desire. And in this case, Aeneas recognizes that he must suppress his personal desires in order to fulfill the divine will, which he knows to be a higher good.

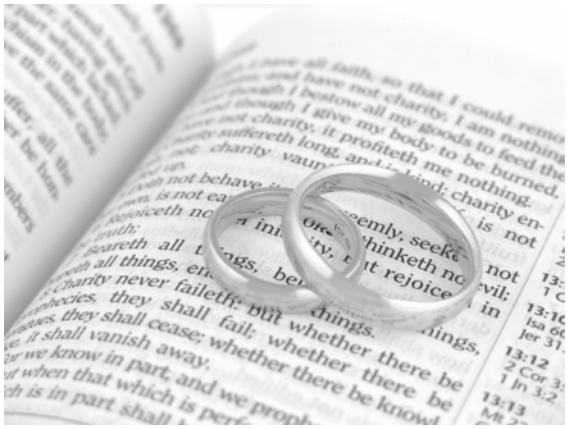
Passion, unchecked by reason, is self-destructive: in the story, Dido kills herself. Aeneas, on the other hand, leaves Dido, and passion, behind, and proceeds, in obedience to the will of the gods, to fulfill his destiny. Now this sharp distinction between love and reason may be, at first glance, rather jarring to contemporary sensibilities. Marriage exists, after all, because human beings are not gods or angels, but have bodies, parts, and passions. But consider how the story ends. Aeneas in fulfilling the will of the gods—in putting the divine will before his own desires—does, in the end, obtain the bride the gods have destined for him, the person meant just for him.

In a culture in which marriage has degenerated into a relationship grounded on the subjective and fluctuating passions of two individuals (by which

accounting, there can be no reasonable ground to exclude anyone from what is wholly subjective), it behooves the church to uphold the objective side of marriage.

Current marriages, like that of Dido, self-destruct on a pile of the discarded relics of passion at an alarming rate. The church must uphold the idea of marriage as something that is more than the romantic relationship of two people. Marriage is a matter of rational will—symbolized by that oft derided "piece of paper". In marriage, passion is brought under the rule of reason, and made to serve a higher good. Children, God willing, are the natural fruits of such a union, which makes real and concrete the fact that love is not merely subjective feeling, but has an objective consequence and content. However, as Dr. Bayer has said so well, the objective union is not a negating of the subjective elements of the human soul, but rather a means of raising it higher. It is part of the process of sanctification, in which *eros* becomes charity, in which human beings come to know the love of God.

# # #



Reflections on Marriage by a Priest

by The Reverend Nick C. Athanaelos. Rector
The Church of St. Andrew and St Margaret of Scotland (ACC), Alexandria, Virginia

I read with great interest the recent article by Dr. Bayer, *Divorce and Remarriage in Anglican Canon Law,* which appeared in the March/April 2009 issue of *Mandate.*

As a priest in a *Continuing* Anglican Church I am frequently approached by individuals seeking to have their marital unions annulled. Although there are certainly occasions where valid impediments to the sacramental bond existed, more often the petitioner will give reasons such as, "we were too young" or "we loved each other, but it just did not work out." Unfortunately, many enter marriage with the preconceived idea that "if it doesn't work out, I can always get out." I know this because couples that I have prepared for marriage have made similar statements to me.

In her article, Dr. Bayer states, "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." Not only is this statement right on target, it is sound advice to those of us witnessing the union on behalf of the Church. As clergy, it is our bounden duty to ensure that those preparing for marriage are fully aware that the sacramental bond is permanent and cannot be dissolved. For as the historic Prayer Book so profoundly states, those entering this union must do so "reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God." If couples truly followed this recipe, the number of divorces and petitions for disillusionment of marriage would be far less.

Prior to my coming to the Anglican Catholic Church, I belonged to a denomination which had a marriage preparation program that had been in place for many years. It required any couple intending to marry to attend a number of group sessions with other couples from around the diocese. The program had its good points, but the priests who were to be the witnesses of the sacrament spent little time with the couples. As a result, the couples knew much about money matters, communication, and the responsibilities associated with being good parents. What most failed to know, were the moral obligations of entering into a sacred union, obligations that should have been explained clearly by the one witnessing the sacrament on behalf of the Church.

In my current parish I require couples intending to marry to meet with me regularly over a sixth month period prior to the wedding date. In some cases, longer periods are needed. Occasionally, they will go elsewhere to get married because they do not wish to wait. And, on occasion, I have refused to marry couples where true impediments to a bond existed. I do feel confident, however, that those I have married are better prepared and understand more clearly the meaning of "so long as ye both shall live" as a result of a longer and more thorough preparation.

The Church does continue to be "influenced by secular society," but We, the Church, must hold firm to that which has always been, an unchanging, unalterable Faith. This means that in matters such as Divorce and Remarriage we do all that we can to prevent them through sound biblical and moral teaching in both pre-marital preparation and frequent post marital instruction on the sanctity of the marital bond.

# # #

Reflections on the State of Marriage in Contemporary Law

by Stephen Baskerville Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Government, Patrick Henry College

We in the Anglican Church and throughout the Western world are not facing the marriage crisis. The destruction of marriage has gone far beyond cultural decline. It is today's most urgent and far-reaching crisis of church-state relations and the greatest test facing the church.

Same-sex marriage is only one manifestation. The crisis runs much deeper, and by calling attention to the much more destructive divorce epidemic *Mandate* is doing an important service. Most Christians would be shocked if they knew what takes place today under the name of divorce.

Under "no-fault" divorce laws, the vows we take to one another before God and our congregations are worthless: The state can simply dissolve them. The state can tear up the contract and the covenant (and marriage is both, the one unable to survive without the other) at the mere request of one spouse without giving any reason and without any "fault" by the other spouse. Once they dissolve the marriage, state officials then seize control of the private lives—children, home, savings, wages, movements—of all family members, however innocent of any legal wrongdoing. In fact, the state typically rewards the guilty spouse and punishes the innocent one, who may be removed from the home, separated from the children, expropriated of all goods, and jailed without trial.

It is hardly surprising that our pews stand empty when we stand mute in the face of this desecration of a sacred covenant. A parishioner who approaches his pastor or congregation with such an experience in virtually any church in the Western world is advised to find a lawyer or marriage counselor. Pastors habitually plug their ears and avert their eyes as their congregants report their marriages dissolved, their children taken away, and themselves facing incarceration. Terrified of losing parishioners, preachers carefully leave their listeners an "out" in any sermon criticizing divorce, and almost none condemn it outright.

Imagine how we would respond if government officials forced us to deny our baptismal vows or the faith we pledge whenever we take communion, if they broke up a sermon or dispersed a charitable activity. Yet, on a matter that involves the churches' own ministry, we allow a fellow Christian's marriage to be dissolved by state officials without a word of protest.

Marriage today has become the test of our faith and of the strength of our Christian witness. For many Christians and potential Christians, marriage is the one instance when the church exerts a direct, tangible, and measurable impact on their lives. When the state then steps in and abolishes that marriage, without any objection or resistance from their church or fellow Christians, is it any wonder they see no purpose to the church or doubt the sincerity of our faith when it is put to the test?

We rightly challenge government officials who permit the killing of the unborn or the redefinition of marriage to include same-sex unions. But we do not challenge the state when it abolishes marriages altogether—marriages we have witnessed and pledged to support. When the marriage contract is left unenforceable in law, it amounts to nothing less than, in Maggie Gallagher's phrase, the "abolition of marriage." As long as we tolerate this, our strictures on marriage and our preaching (in the negative sense of "nagging") about its sanctity will earn us nothing but contempt.

Christians can act to change this. Recognizing that the state has effectively abolished marriage, perhaps it is time to acknowledge that fact ourselves and in the process to demonstrate the value we place on marriage in a way that would cost us something. As a thought exercise, imagine what it would say to the world if the churches refused to consecrate marriages until the state stops tearing them up. Given the state of marriage today, what do we have to lose?

Some points in this article are described more fully in the January-February issue of Touchstone *magazine and in* Taken Into Custody: The War Against Fathers, Marriage, and the Family *(Cumberland House, 2007).*

The Great Commission

A Description of a Real Anglican Christian

by Fr. J. S. Patterson
Rector of a mission church (AMiA) in Asheboro, NC.

C. S. Lewis, in his introduction to an English translation of St. Athanasius' great treatise *On the Incarnation* (*De Incarnatione Verbi Dei*) admonishes the reader to resist the temptation to read modern books only. A book written recently, says Lewis, is still on trial. "It has to be tested against the great body of Christian thought down the ages, and all its hidden implications (often unsuspected by the author himself) have to be brought to light." That is because we are fallible creatures and, left to ourselves (if no outside voices are allowed a hearing), we will not only err individually, we will also err collectively.

Consider three excerpts from Lewis' introduction:

> The only safety is to have a standard of plain, central Christianity ("mere Christianity" as Baxter called it) which puts the controversies of the moment in their proper perspective.
>
> Every age has its own outlook. It is specially good at seeing certain truths and specially liable to make certain mistakes. We all, therefore, need the books that will correct the characteristic mistakes of our own period. And that means the old books.
>
> None of us can fully escape this blindness, but we shall certainly increase it, and weaken our guard against it, if we read only modern books. Where they are true they will give us truths which we half knew already. Where they are false they will aggravate the error with which we are already dangerously ill. The only palliative is to keep the clean sea breeze of the centuries blowing through our minds, and this can be done only by reading old books.

This strikes me as terribly good advice upon which I might expand by suggesting that for the same reasons, the use of the historic Book of Common Prayer (i.e. 1662, 1928) affords us many of the same benefits. That is, the reasons that Lewis gives for the reading of old books is an argument which may also be applied to the use of the *old* liturgy over and against a modern one.

In other words, we do not advocate the use of the English Book of Common Prayer (1662) and its American counterpart (1928) owing to an antiquarian love affair with old English or a simple minded distain for the new. Rather, we contend for the use of the historic BCP owing to our conviction that the historic BCP contains and teaches true doctrine. We furthermore believe that the theology of the liturgy which one uses will shape one's understanding of and thus one's worship of God. Perhaps these seem the most basic and obvious of statements, and yet it seems to me that many well meaning and otherwise "orthodox" Anglicans act as though these statements were not true.

And thus, when we contend for the use of the historic BCP, we are not simply attempting to win allegiance to our favorite variety of prayer book. We understand ourselves to be acting out of obedience to such commands of our Lord as that of the Great Commission: "Go ye therefore, and teach 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 . . ." (Matthew 28:19-20a).

When we consider first Jesus' commandment that His disciples should teach and obey right doctrine and then, the fact that the liturgy communicates doctrine, it becomes paramount that we use a liturgy that contains the truest doctrine available.

The liturgy is, inevitably, going to teach us doctrine and we are desperately in need of teaching that is removed from the errors which are particularly prevalent in this age. This is especially important in the areas of human sexuality and marriage. Let us thank God that the historic BCP challenges the prevailing spirit of our age in these areas (and more)!

Who can read *The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony* in the BCP 1662 and not be struck by the fact that it contains a different understanding of the nature of marriage than does the 1979 book written by the Episcopal Church USA?

Speaking now as a pastor, I must say that the use of that service has been and continues to be a powerful teaching tool in my ministry. It has been my experience, as a parish priest, that those whose understanding of marriage is shaped by modern thinking (as opposed to the teaching of the Scriptures and the Church) are positively *scandalized* by what that liturgy teaches about the nature of Christian marriage. For some, the offence of the historic BCP's doctrine of marriage results in the conclusion that they do not want a Christian marriage. It is always sad when that happens, but it is also appropriate. In such instances at least there is clarity as to what the Church says marriage is. Thankfully, however, it is not always the case that the initial scandal of our doctrine of marriage ends

in that way. More often the doctrine of the historic BCP, after challenging presuppositions, awakens in the betrothed a godly longing that the vision of marriage set forth in the liturgy would characterize their marriage.

Such moments are, I think, examples of "the clean sea breeze of the centuries blowing through our minds", correcting the errors peculiar to our age.

We are presently witnessing remarkable changes in the Anglican world. It is likely that more remarkable changes are coming. Some of these changes are good, others not so good. As Anglican clergy and laymen make decisions about how to move forward as faithful and orthodox Christians, let us not neglect our heritage. Let us be careful to consider our duty to embrace and to teach and practice that which is consonant with reformed-catholic doctrine. And let us consider the importance of hearing from the "old books," that is, let us consider the importance of using and believing our historic Anglican liturgy.

The Society for the Preservation
of the Book of Common Prayer
(The Prayer Book Society)
P.O. Box 35220
Philadelphia, PA 19128-0220

EASTER

RISE heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise
Without delayes,
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
With him mayst rise :
That, as his death calcined thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold, and much more just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part
With all thy art.
The crosse taught all wood to resound his name
Who bore the same.
His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key
Is best to celebrate this most high day.

Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song
Pleasant and long :
Or since all music is but three parts vied,
And multiplied ;
O let thy blessed Spirit bear a part,
And make up our defects with his sweet art.

I got me flowers to straw thy way ;
I got me boughs off many a tree :
But thou wast up by break of day,
And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

The Sunne arising in the East,
Though he give light, and th' East perfume ;
If they should offer to contest
With thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,
Though many sunnes to shine endeavour ?
We count three hundred, but we misse :
There is but one, and that one ever.

George Herbert (1593-1633)