

MANDATE

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Our Time Is in Thy Hands

Teach me to live, that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed;
Teach me to die, that so I may
Rise glorious at the awful day.

I ncrease and multiply upon us thy mercy;
that, thou being our ruler and guide, we
may so pass through things temporal that
we finally lose not the things eternal.

Where can I find a church that uses the 1928 Prayer Book?



Here are listed parishes, that use the 1928 BCP, according to state or area; their ecclesiastical jurisdiction (Episcopal Church or one of the "Continuing Churches"); and all of their services, if from the 1928, or just the ones that use the 1928 BCP, if another prayer book is also used by that parish.

Our knowledge of these matters is limited,

so we would be happy to hear of parishes that use the 1928 BCP. An excellent reference is the *Directory of Traditional Anglican and Episcopal Parishes*, published by the Fellowship of Concerned Churchmen, but it does provide detail as to what prayer book is used. Please contact the editor, Mrs. Jane Nones, 4800 Dupont Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55409 if you would like to order a copy. For information call (612) 824 3933.

We are sorry that this column did not appear in the last issue of *Mandate*.

A number of readers have written to tell us of other parishes (not previously

listed) that use the 1928 Prayer Book. It makes us glad to know of such places, and also that folks are reading *Mandate*. Some have written to tell us of parishes that use 1928 that we have already listed. It might be a good idea to keep the issues of *Mandate* that have this column to use for future reference. We can only list a parish once.

It is possible for us to make a mistake, and for that we apologize. We have been informed that the times for services of Holy Communion at Mariners' Church in Detroit on Sunday are at 8:30 am and at 11:00 am. Please correct your copies.

Florida

Orlando area

• Cathedral of the Incarnation

(Anglican Church of America)

1515 Edgewater Drive · Orlando 32804

407 843 2886

Sunday 8:00 am Holy Communion

10:15 am Holy Communion

The Rt. Rev. Louis Campese, *Bishop Ordinary*

The Rev. Gary Marshall, *Canon to the Ordinary*

The Rev. Michael Eatmon, *Curate*

• St. Alban's Cathedral

(Anglican Province of America)

3348 State Road 426 (Aloma Avenue)

Oviedo, FL 32765

407 657 2376

Sunday 8:00 am Holy Communion

10:00 am Holy Communion

The Most Rev. Walter H. Grundorf, *Dean*

The Rev. Canon Erich A. Zwingert, *Pastor*

The Rev. Canon Kenneth Badger, *Assistant*

The Rev. David D. Clary, *Curate*

The Rev. Alton Witham, *Deacon*

• St. Francis Church

(Anglican Province of America)

2525 Fortune Road, Kissimmee, FL 34744

407 344 2525

Sunday 10:00 am Holy Communion

The Rev. Howard P.J. Underwood, *Priest-in-Charge*

• St. Matthew's Church

(Anglican Catholic Church)

600 North Wilkinson Street

(Garden Chapel Building)

407 282 9226

Mailing Address: 1426 Kingston Avenue

Orlando, FL 32805

Sunday 10:00 am Holy Communion

• Trinity Church

(Reformed Episcopal Church)

2990 Red Bug Lake Road

Casselberry, FL 32707

407 695 3114

**Sunday 9:30 am Holy Communion/
Morning Prayer**

The Rev. Kevin Burks, *Pastor*

Please write the Rev. David Kennedy, 1325 Cardinal Lane, Lantana, FL 33462-4205 if you know of parishes using the 1928 BCP. Needless to say it will take a long time to list them all! Praise God for that!!!

Jacksonville area

• Holy Trinity Church

(Anglican Catholic Church)

610 Florida Blvd., Neptune Beach

904 247 1442

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 50294

Jacksonville Beach, FL 32240

Sunday 8:00 am Holy Communion

The Rev. Robert C. Adams, *Priest-in-Charge*

• St. Michael & All Angels

(Anglican Church in America)

Lakeshore Drive West, Fleming Island,

Orange Park · 904 388 1031

Mailing Address: 2746 St. John's Avenue

Jacksonville, FL 32205-8261

Sunday 10:00 am Holy Communion

The Rev. Laurence K. Wells, *Rector*

THE MANDATE

July / August 2002

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The Members of the Board of Directors of the Prayer Book Society: The Rev'd Wayland Coe (Texas); The Rev'd Joseph S. Falzone (Pennsylvania); Mr. Michael W. Freeland (Pennsylvania); Dr. Herb Guerry (Georgia); The Rev'd David C Kennedy SSC (Florida);

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Reflections from the Editor's Desk

The Rev'd Dr. Peter Toon

Making a Will & Dying unto the Lord

The Book of Common Prayer, under the authority of Holy Scripture, provides teaching and services for the whole of the Church Year and for the major moments and aspects of our lives as pilgrims and sojourners on earth. It also has some important words of direction for the Minister in the rubrics for the various services.

The Book of Common Prayer (1662)

In the service entitled, "The Order for the Visitation of the Sick," we find this paragraph: "Then shall the Minister examine whether he [the sick person] repent him truly of his sins, and be in charity with all the world; exhorting him to forgive, from the bottom of his heart, all persons that have offended him; and if he hath offended any other, to ask them forgiveness; and where he hath done injury or wrong to any man, that he make amends to the uttermost of his power. And if he hath not before disposed of his goods, let him then be admonished to make his Will, and to declare his Debts, what he oweth, and what is owing to him; for the better charging of his conscience and the quietness of his Executors."



The Rev'd Dr. Peter Toon

And then there are added these two sentences:

1. **"But men should often be put in remembrance to take order for the settling of their temporal estates, whilst they are in health."**

2. **"The Minister should not omit earnestly to move such sick persons as are of ability to be liberal to the poor."**

Here the Minister (Rector, Vicar, Curate) is being directed to make sure that right up to the end of his mortal life, the baptized believer fulfils his duty to love God and his neighbour and provides for his family and for the needy.

The Book of Common Prayer (PECUSA, 1928)

For the last American edition of the *BCP*, the Office of "The Order for the Visitation of the Sick" was extensively revised and thus is rather different to the service in the *BCP* of 1662.

The rubrics directing the Minister read as follows: "As occasion demands, the Minister shall address the sick person on the meaning and use of the time of sickness, and the opportunity it affords for spiritual profit.

"Here may the Minister enquire of the sick

person as to his acceptance of the Christian Faith, and as to whether he repent him truly of his sins, and be in charity with all the world; exhorting him to forgive, from the bottom of his heart, all persons that have offended him; and if he hath offended any other, to ask them forgiveness; and where he had done injury or wrong to any man, that he make amends to the uttermost of his power....

"The Minister is ordered, from time to time, to advise the People, whilst they are in health, to make Wills arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, and when of ability, to leave Bequests for religious and charitable uses."

This is very clear indeed and puts the responsibility upon the Minister to place the making of wills within the duty of Christians to love God and their neighbours.

In the latest official Prayer Book (1979) of the Episcopal Church, USA, that of 1979, the text of the final rubric on page 445, at the end of the service, "Thanksgiving for a Child" states: "The minister of the Congregation is directed to instruct the people, from time to time, about the duty of Christian parents to make prudent provision for the well-being of their families, and of all persons to make wills,

while they are in health, arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, not neglecting, if they are able, to leave bequests for religious and charitable uses."

In conclusion

When someone dies without preparing to meet the Lord, then they die foolishly for their eternal salvation is in the balance. And when someone dies without making a will, they die selfishly, leaving burdens for others to carry and problems for others to solve.

Many organizations, societies, schools, hospitals, churches and libraries would not exist, or would exist only minimally, without the provision of help through the disbursements of the last wills and testaments of well disposed people. The work of the kingdom of Christ in the providence of God is partly—perhaps much—dependent upon the provisions of the last wills and testaments of the baptized.

The Board of the Prayer Book Society thanks God for those who remember the Society in their wills.

A Final Offering to God:

The Christian Funeral

One of the great opportunities given to Christians in making preparation to die is to make sure that their Funeral Services are means of

grace, in that they are clear proclamations of the Christian Gospel, the Christian Hope and the priority of the kingdom of heaven.

Because the age in which we live is geared to what we may call the “horizontal,” seeking to master space and time and everything therein, and has few thoughts about the relation of the cosmos to its Creator & Judge, or of souls to their Judge, the temptations for those arranging and taking funerals are powerful but somewhat hidden.

Christian Hope

The Christian Funeral is in essence, and according to the traditional *Book of Common Prayer*, a proclamation of the Christian Hope of the resurrection of the dead unto eternal life with the Lord Jesus, together with the reverent committal of the body of the deceased, baptized believer to the grave in sure and certain hope of the resurrection of the dead. Comfort is conveyed to mourners by the message of Christian Hope, by the promise of the presence of the Spirit of the Lord who is the Comforter, and by effectual prayer.

The whole content of the Anglican Service in church and at the graveside (see the *BCP* 1662 or 1928) is Christ-centred and thus primarily “vertical.” The word of the Father concerning His Son and salvation in him is proclaimed and prayer is offered to the same Father through the Son in the Holy Ghost. It is both from God and God-ward.

In today’s culture, when we attempt to keep people alive as long as possible and without pain to the end, the felt need to die in grace a right death (pardoned and cleansed from sin and in a right relation to God and man) is minimized. Clergy visiting the dying are asked not to upset them for a good death today is seen as a painless death! And when it comes to the funeral, the tendency is to seek to make it a commemoration of the life, work and successes of the deceased. Thus it has more the character of a remembrance service than of a truly Christian funeral. Mourners are expected to celebrate that he/she lived a successful life and “died peacefully”; they are not to be concerned whether

he or she died in a state of grace and whether or not he/she has gone to be with the Lord. In fact they are generally told that all shall be well for the one who has passed from this life.

Of course, the modern use of funeral homes with all their commercial interests and psycho-therapeutical techniques, and the secular feeling (whatever the Bible, Creed and Funeral Service declare) present amongst the mourners that this world is really the true and the primary world,

milittates against the funeral as a proclamation of the Christian hope of the resurrection of the dead and life in Christ and the receiving of the comfort of the Gospel. These latter are taken to be “nice” and traditional things to say at such an event.



Preparing in advance

So the temptations unto mourners, arising particularly from the world in which we live (as aided and abetted by the devil and our own spiritual pride and weaknesses), are powerful and all too often we are not even aware of them and that we are submitting to them. But they should be expected and resisted; further, we should seek to make sure wherever possible that believers have the opportunity to die in a right relation to the Lord and that their funerals are proclamation of the Christian hope and not of their (imperfect) successes.

We need to prepare in advance for our funerals by talking to our families and friends about what kind of service we want and where it should take place. We need to write the details into our wills and get promises from our family that our requests will be honored. We need to be specific about the whole matter so that well-meaning relatives and friends will not allow it to be turned into, or in fact themselves turn it into, a celebration of this life only. We have a duty to see that it is a proclamation of the Christian hope of life everlasting in a body like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ and in the company of the redeemed in heaven.

Dying as a baptized believer

The teaching in the New Testament about life in and with Jesus Christ in the life of the age to come is set within the context of the expectation and

hope of the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ to raise and judge the dead. He shall come to complete the purposes of God the Father for this world and its people. Therefore, the fullness and finality of redemption in the glories of heaven are only reached after this Event.

The Church has taught over the centuries that before the Second Advent, life as a Christian in expectation of this Event is either (a) on earth as a pilgrim, watching and praying; or (b) as the dead in Christ, souls without bodies in what is called the intermediate state, looking unto the Lord Jesus Christ. However, the New Testament says very little about (b) being primarily taken up with (a).

As we would expect, most of the teaching of the Church in her special services for the Visitation and Communion of the Sick and Dying is set within the context of the imminence of death. Thus the proclamation of the Christian hope of life after death has two stages, first as a soul with Christ after death, and then, after the Resurrection of the Dead, life in a new body of immortality, in the age to come, heaven, with the Holy Trinity, the orders of angels and the redeemed.

The English Prayer Book (1662)

If we examine the classic edition of *The Book of Common Prayer* (1662) we see that the major theme of the Burial Service is the Christian Hope of the Resurrection of the Dead and life with Christ in the age to come. This is presented primarily through the reading of 1 Corinthians 15 and the Collects. At the same time it is presupposed that the baptized, Christian person who has died has departed to be with Christ as a Christian soul, and will be with him in appropriate joy and peace as such until the resurrection of the dead, when he will be given his full and final form of everlasting existence in an immortal, spiritual body. Thus there is no hint of prayer for the departed soul.

Turning to the Services for the Visitation and

Communion of the Sick in this same Prayer Book, we find that the Christian hope is naturally focused on the Christian soul departing to be with Christ in anticipation of the fullness of redemption at the Second Coming. It is assumed that what Jesus said to the penitent criminal on the Cross, "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise," he also says to all penitent believers.

Yet although it is presumed in the Prayer Book Service that those visited are baptized Christians there is a tremendous emphasis on preparation

to die aright as a true believer. In fact so strong is the wording that there seems to be real doubt concerning the future blessedness of the departing soul if he/she does not truly repent of sin, make appropriate amendment of life, and believe trustingly in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour.

One rubric states: "Then shall the Minister examine whether

the sick person repent him truly of his sins, and be in charity with all the world; exhorting him to forgive, from the bottom of his heart, all persons that have offended him; and if he hath offended any other, to ask their forgiveness; and where he hath done injury or wrong to any man, that he make amends to the uttermost of his power..." The receiving of the sacramental Body and Blood of the Saviour is seen as being unto the health of the soul and for its cleansing before it enters the disembodied state. "He doth eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ profitably to his Soul's health." However, it is made clear, that the receiving of the Sacrament, though preferable, is not absolutely necessary for the receiving of this health and cleansing. The key is right repentance and true faith energized by the Holy Ghost.

A Prayer for a sick person who is expected to die very soon contains the teaching of the reformed Church of England on what happens at the death of a faithful believer:

"O Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of just men made perfect, after they are delivered



from their earthly prisons [mortal bodies]; We humbly commend the soul of this thy servant, our dear brother/sister, into thy hands, as into the hand of a faithful Creator, and most merciful Saviour; most humbly beseeching thee, that it may be precious in thy sight. Wash it, we pray thee, in the blood of the immaculate Lamb, that was slain to take away the sins of the world; that whatsoever defilements it may have contracted in the midst of this miserable and naughty world, through the lusts of the flesh, or the wiles of Satan, being purged and done away, it may be presented pure and without spot before thee...."

In similar vein, a Prayer for a sick person who is not expected to live very long asks:

"O Father of mercies and God of all comfort...look graciously upon him/her, O Lord; and the more the outward man decayeth, strengthen him, we beseech thee, so much the more continually with thy grace and holy Spirit in the inner man. Give him unfeigned repentance for all the errors of his life past, and steadfast faith in thy Son Jesus; that his sins may be done away by thy mercy, and his pardon sealed in heaven, before he go hence, and be no more seen...."

Here again the baptized Christian person is expected to be fully repentant and totally believing in order to be the recipient of the everlasting life, given by the Son of God.

From the pastoral angle, we may also note that one aim of these services is to call from us all that which God requires and commands of us. On visiting the dying the Minister must call for a total repentance and a full faith! To call for anything less would be to be an unfaithful pastor.

The American Prayer Book (1928)

The Burial Service is based upon that in the English *BCP* but it contains certain additions and changes. For example there is a choice of Bible Reading (1 Corinthians 15; Romans 8 or John 14) and then there is the addition of Collects for use in church and at the graveside which contain petition for the departed soul. No such prayer is found in the classic English Prayer Book because of (a) its commitment to the Reformation teaching of justification by faith; and (b) its total opposition to any identification of the intermediate state with the catholic doctrine of purgatory. (Yet we may note that the proposed revision of the *BCP* 1662 made in 1928 and which failed to get Parliament's

approval did contain petitions for the souls of the departed as in the American 1928 *BCP*.)

In the American 1928 *BCP* the petitions for the departed assume that the life of service in the heavenly realm [the intermediate state], no less than in the earthly realm, is one of growth and increase in the knowledge and love of God. Thus:

"Remember thy servant, O Lord, according to the favour thou bearest unto thy people, and grant that, increasing in knowledge and love of thee, he may go from strength to strength, in the life of perfect service in thy heavenly kingdom...."

"Unto Almighty God we commend the soul of our brother departed, and we commit his body to the ground...."

And, provision is made in the 1928 *BCP* for the Celebration of the Holy Communion as part of the Offices of the dead. And this Communion Service has the character of a Requiem by reason of the content of the appointed Collects:

"O Eternal Lord God, who holdest all souls in life; Vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to thy whole Church in paradise and on earth, thy light and thy peace...."

"O God, whose mercies cannot be numbered; Accept our prayers on behalf of the soul of thy servant departed, and grant him an entrance into the land of light and joy, in the fellowship of thy saints..."

In the English 1662 *BCP* there is no provision for a Communion Service at the Burial of the Dead in order to avoid any idea that it would be a Requiem Mass!

The service of the "Visitation of the Sick" in the 1928 *BCP* is much revised from

that of 1662 for it includes "A Litany for the Dying" and "A Commendation" and "A Commendatory Prayer when the Soul is departed." The latter to be said when the person has died prays:

"Into thy hands, O merciful Saviour, we commend the soul of thy servant, now departed from this world. Acknowledge, we beseech thee, a sheep of thine own fold, a lamb of thine own flock. A sinner of thine own redeeming. Receive him into the arms of thy mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light. Amen."

The reason given for the use of petitions for departed souls is usually not directly from the Bible but from the practice of the Early Church, where in the Liturgy prayer was offered that the souls of the departed through the mercies of God may rest in peace until the Resurrection of the Dead.



The Dead in Christ:

Life in the Intermediate State

What happens to the souls of baptized believers, members of the Body of Christ, between the death of the body and the general resurrection of the dead and the glorious life of the age to come?

Here are some biblical passages that give us insight into the intermediate state.

1. Luke 23:42-43: the conversation between the penitent thief and Jesus, as they are being crucified. The thief asked to be remembered when Jesus comes into his kingdom, and Jesus replies, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise." Here "Paradise" is a way of speaking about heaven (cf. Revelation 2:7) and Jesus is promising this penitent believer that he, without his crucified body, will be with Jesus in God's heaven.

2. Philippians 1:21-23: the apostle Paul's statement of faith and hope. "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If it is to be life in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better." Paul calls death "gain" because by it there is achieved a closer, deeper relation to the Lord Jesus Christ. To die into Christ is to enter a life that is "far better." And yet it is a life in Christ that is yet to be completed for the resurrection of the dead is yet to be.

3. 2 Corinthians 5:6-9: Paul speaks in the first person plural of his confident hope. "So we are always of good courage; we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith and not by sight. We are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are home or away we make it our aim to please him." To be "away from the body" is to be "at home with the Lord" in the intermediate state waiting for the fullness of redemption at the general resurrection of the dead.

4. Luke 16:19-31: the parable told by Jesus of the Rich Man and Lazarus, where the word "Hades" is used not merely as a designation of the realm of the dead but as a place/sphere of punishment and torment, and the phrase "Abraham's bosom" is used of a place or sphere of blessedness; and both of these places/spheres refer to the intermediate state. This division in the realm of departed souls into the righteous and unrighteous, the accepted and the condemned, is found in Jewish teaching and was taken over by Jesus and his Church.

We can state that there is one Christian Hope which has two parts to it for those who die before

the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus. There is the interim blessed existence of being dead in Christ (which is to be alive in Him) and then there is the existence of being raised with Him and having a body like unto his glorious body within the communion of the saints and angels in the service of the Holy Trinity.

In the semi-official English Catechism of 1570, known as **Nowell's Catechism** the scholar (pupil) tells his Master (teacher) the faith of the Church of England in these words:

"We certainly believe not only that our souls, when we depart out of this life, being delivered from the company of our bodies, do by and by fly up pure and whole into heaven to Christ, but also that our bodies shall at length be restored to a better state of life and joined again to their souls, and so we shall wholly be made perfectly and fully blessed; that is to say, we doubt not that both in bodies and in our souls we shall enjoy eternity, immortality and most blessed life, that shall never in everlasting continuance of time be changed. This hope comforteth us in our miseries. Endued with this hope, we not only patiently suffer and bear the incommodities and cumbrances that light upon us in this life, but also very departure from life and the sorrows of death. For we are thoroughly persuaded that death is not a destruction that endeth and consumeth all things, but a guide for us to heaven, that setteth us in a way of a quiet, easy, blessed and everlasting life."

That is, the communion with Christ, which baptized believers enjoy immediately after death, consists in their souls being made perfect in holiness, and received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies. Further their bodies on earth even in death continue united to Christ, and rest in their graves as in their beds until at the last day they be again united to their souls.

The Intermediate State as Purgation

In the exposition of the Intermediate State as being existence in and with Christ, the Protestant Churches were consciously rejecting that doctrine of the Intermediate State taught in the medieval Latin Church and then by the Roman Catholic Church and known as "Purgatory."

Let us briefly note the origin of the doctrine of purgation after death.

We begin with the Early Church, which appears to have possessed a profound sense of the unity of the Church be She militant on earth, expectant in the intermediate state, or triumphant in heaven. There is One Body, One Head and many members under the Head and in the Body. There is the “communion of saints” not only through space and time but also between earth and heaven.

As the years went by, they expressed the belief that some of the Christian dead (called “martyrs” and “saints”) were in a special relation of proximity to the Lord Jesus Christ and thus their prayers could be requested—“Pray for us.” At the same time, the Church (militant here on earth) believed that it was perfectly natural—due to the unity in Christ’s one Body, to pray for the generality of the Christian dead (Church expectant) that they would “rest in peace” until the Day of Resurrection.

In the Western Church, but not in the Eastern, the doctrine of the intermediate state gradually became by the early Middle Ages the doctrine of purgation or purgatory. That is, it was conceived as the sphere wherein the generality of the Christian dead (those who had died forgiven but not inwardly cleansed) by expiation and satisfaction, were being fully cleansed and perfected in their love for God and devotion to Christ Jesus. And to assist the Christian dead, who belonged to the Church Expectant, there developed in the Church Militant on earth the practice not only of offering prayers and the sacrifice of the Mass but also works of piety for their brethren in Christ, to alleviate the pain and duration of the expiation of their sins.

Yet, only in the late Middle Ages was the doctrine of purgatory defined by Church Councils. Here is the statement from the Council of Florence (1439) on the eternal fate of the dead:

“And, if they are truly penitent and die in God’s love before having satisfied by worthy fruits of penance for their sins of commission and omission, their souls are cleansed after death by purgatorial penalties. In order that they should be relieved from such penalties, the acts of intercession (suffragia) of the living faithful benefit them, namely the sacrifice of the Mass, prayers, alms and other works of piety, which the faithful are wont to do for the other faithful according to the Church’s practice.

The souls of those who, after having received baptism, have incurred no stain of sin whatever, and those souls who, after having contracted the stain of sin, have been cleansed, while in their bodies or after having been divested of them (as stated above), are received immediately (mox) into heaven, and see God Himself, One and Three, as He is, though some more perfectly than others, according to the diversity of merits.

As for those who die in actual mortal sin or with original sin only, they go down immediately (mox) to hell (in infernum) to be punished, however, with different punishments.”

In Western Catholic theology, the remission of sins related first to the forgiveness of the guilt of sin. After the giving of pardon, there remained the need for expiation and satisfaction to be made through appropriate penance. So, when a baptized Christian died without having fully completed his penance for his sins, then the satisfaction he owed, and the cleansing of the stain of sin in his soul, had yet to be completed. Thus purging occurred in the intermediate state before he could by grace be led on to experience the beatific vision of the glory of God the Father in face of Jesus Christ the Lord.

In late medieval Europe it was very widely held that there is a Purgatory where the vast majority of [previously nominal] Christians are, and that a major task of the Church is to do all She can, by every possible means, to relieve their pain and to assist them on their movement towards the beatific vision. Thus praying and working for the dead in Christ was a major occupation! And it was open to all kinds of excesses and abuses.

At the reforming Council of Trent, what was left of the western Catholic Church (the Roman Catholic Church), declared its commitment in 1563 in the “Decree on Purgatory” to the doctrine of Purgatory but, in the context of the Reformation, urged that abuses and excesses be removed from teaching and practice.

At the Second Vatican Council there was a major attempt to set the doctrine of purgatory in a dynamic eschatological context (see *Lumen Gentium*, 1964, 2311-4). In developed R.C. theology there are two kinds of suffering in purgatory: penal and medicinal. The former is by way of making amends for the temporal consequences of one’s sins, the latter is suffering consequent on the process of healing the soul from the effects of sin. And, in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994) there is this brief definition of purgatory:

“All who die in God’s grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven. The Church gives the name ‘Purgatory’ to this final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned.” [Paragraphs 1030-1031]

In modern times, there have entered some Anglican Liturgies (e.g., the American 1928 *BCP*) brief and general prayers for the dead. However, they are so low-key that they may pass unnoticed except by those who are familiar with the English editions of 1552 and 1662, wherein there is a decidedly obvious avoidance of all prayer for the dead in Christ. However, in traditional Anglo-Catholic parishes there is a commitment to the doctrine of purgatory, as witnessed by the votive candles, the explicit prayers for the dead and the oft repeated, “May the souls of the faithful departed by the mercies of God, rest in peace.”

Limbo:

Where are Infants who die before Baptism?

In days past two pressing questions led some theologians (but never a Church Council) to offer answers in terms of theological opinions in doctrines and these gained wide currency.

1. Where were the souls of true believers in the God of Noah and Abraham [the faithful of OT times] after they died?

2. And where are the souls of infants who die unbaptized?

The first question is raised when one treats the O.T. as Scripture and considers the Christian claim that heaven came into existence by the exaltation of Christ to the Father, for he went to prepare a place for us. And the second is raised all the time where there is a high infant mortality rate. Perhaps also it ought to be raised where there is a high abortion rate—as in the USA!

The answers were in terms of doctrines concerned LIMBO (= ablative form of *limbus*, border; thus border of Hades) a special portion or sphere of Hades [the place of the departed souls]. These doctrines do not belong to Roman Catholic dogma but to theological opinion and this means that the faithful are not required to believe them, but may do so if they so choose.

Let us recall that in Catholic teaching the full beatitude of heaven is to see with purified eyes and mind the glory and beauty of the Blessed, Holy and Undivided Trinity of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost—the beatific vision. This glorious vision is reserved in Catholic teaching to the baptized faithful who are both forgiven and sanctified by grace.

To be in Limbo is not to be in oblivion but neither is it to enjoy the beatific vision. It is an everlasting but imperfect state of existence.

It is the abode of souls excluded from the full blessedness of the beatific vision but not suffering any other punishment. They enjoy the happiness that would have been human destiny had human beings not been elevated in Christ Jesus to a supernatural destiny.

One form of Limbo (*Limbus patrum*) that was, is no more. It existed from the creation of man until the Exaltation of Jesus Christ and was made up of the true believers in the LORD GOD

of pre-Christian times—Jewish saints. They waited in Limbo for the creation of heaven for believers by the ascended Lord Jesus Christ and then, embraced by Him and in turn embracing Him, left their Limbo to enter his abode and there to enjoy the beatific vision.

The other form of Limbo (*Limbus infantium*) has been the more controversial theological opinion. Here it is said are those infants who have died in original sin (because not baptized) but with no personal guilt.

Since it is an article of the Roman Catholic Faith

that no one can enter heaven without being baptized (or having baptism supplied by an alternative means—e.g., martyrdom, the baptism in blood) for baptism is the sacrament of then new birth, Catholic theologians have had to deal with the special case of infants who have not committed personal sins but who have not been baptized before their untimely death. The majority of theologians and Popes have taught that these infants in Limbo know and love God

intensely by the use of their natural powers and thus they enjoy full natural happiness—but do not enjoy the higher blessedness of the beatific vision. They are happy but not truly blessed!

There appears to be no discussion of Limbo in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and it is given very little if any space in modern theological dictionaries. Perhaps little is said about it in the modern Catholic Church and by Catholic people because they are taught to trust in the mercy of God and believe that he will take care of unbaptised infants who die, and especially if those infants are the children of Christian believers and thus within the covenant of grace.

It perhaps can be said that the Atonement of Jesus Christ is large enough to cover the original sin of infants, born or aborted, and that they will be raised to heaven, where they will be also given in their resurrection body the maturity of what they would have been as a 30 year old person (even as is Christ in his humanity).



The One Certainty:

Remembering my brother's dying

I stood there with the rest of our family on a blisteringly cold Monday morning, watching as they lowered the casket containing my brother into the grave, grieved

that the face we had known and loved so dearly would no more be seen, at least not in this world of space and time. For him it marked the end of his suffering. For twenty-two long years he had been partially paralyzed, spending most of his time lying on his back and in constant pain. Now he was at rest, no more suffering, no more pain. Sleepless nights were a thing of the past. Such were the thoughts with which our grief was tempered while our hearts were broken and the tears streamed down our faces.

The finality of death—how horrible it is! Whatever the extenuating circumstances, the consoling thoughts and the comfortable words, its dreadful horror is not diminished. I remember how two days before I could not face going into the chapel to see his lifeless body lying there, and I stood outside, uncertain of what to do. Yet I had to go in; I had no choice and summoned all my courage and strength to face the inevitable.

It was not that I feared death or that the helpless body reminded me of my own mortality. It was the fact that those twinkling eyes (he had a great sense of humor) were closed, the caring, loving voice was silenced, the hand that always reached out to share something, was still. We had all lived with the knowledge that his time with us could end at anytime. In the early days after his stroke at the age of forty-five which put him in a coma for one whole month, we thought many a time that he was at death's door and funeral arrangements were set in progress. But he regained consciousness and endured with great fortitude his suffering and died peacefully one night without waking up to see another day.

During that seemingly long month when he was in a coma, he was also silent but his body was not still. It pulsed with life. He could hear and understand all that was said in his presence. But now there was no such awareness, no such consciousness.

Had all that “evaporated” with the cessation of organic activity? Is consciousness a mere “epiphenomenon,” a by-product of our organic, physical body?

What had become of the person we knew—the self-conscious communicating being we knew as our brother? Like a leaf, had he withered and died, leaving no trace behind him? Had he faded as the memories of his life that were flooding our minds would fade with the passing of time? Where was he, what state was he in? Will we surely meet again on another shore and in greater light?

Death may silence the body but it cannot silence the questions it raises. Its very negativity challenges all our strivings. When they cease,

do we not ask ourselves, what were they all about? What was their point and purpose?

Death is the one “thing” that no living thing can avoid. It may be delayed; it may be avoided for long periods of time; but in the end it comes with its inevitable, shattering force. It is the one certainty in a world of uncertainty, in the constant sea of change and decay. Is it not ironic that the one certainty in life is yet the one great unknown? What is it like to die? What does it mean to die? Is there anything beyond it? The fascination with those who claim to have “tasted” death, who had a glimpse beyond the grave, is eloquent witness of the deep desire within the human heart to unravel



the mystery of death, to have some insight into the one mystery which awaits us all.

Reflection upon death

Looking at my brother lying still and silent, there was also the thought that “he” was not there. This was only the shell, the form in which we knew him. He had gone from us. Is it not interesting how we speak of the “body” of someone who has died, rather than the person? By implication we infer that there is a separation. The underlying assumption is that we, whoever or whatever we are, are not just bodies, which begin to be, live, and then die. Somehow the idea that we are only that reduces us to being less than human beings.

Austin Farrar, philosopher and theologian, wrote “As a rational being man cannot be satisfied with going the way of the beast—live, suffer, and die. His very being demands another destiny.” Is this true? Because we are human beings with rational minds, must our destiny inevitably be different to that of all other living creatures?

You may say why bother to ask questions about the one certainty of human existence. If it is certain, then we should just leave it alone and face it when it comes. It is often claimed that western society has anaesthetized death, surrounding it with a ritual that keeps its darkness hidden and the questions it raises suppressed. Why does it do this we wonder? Is it because the questions would disturb our peace and make life seem intolerable? Maybe, but can we afford not to face such questions? This one certainty raises so many uncertain questions

Life is strewn with “mini-deaths” all along its way. There is often a feeling of emptiness, a sort of death, when some long cherished ambition is not realized, when hope for something deeply desired fades and eventually disappears altogether. For example, when after long disciplined hours at training the body for a particular athletic function the athlete breaks his leg accidentally and that upon which his heart was set dissipates before his very eyes as he grimaces under the pain in his leg.

With superstitious fear, plans are laid yet an unplanned event may cause all the well-laid plans to crumble in the dust. Does there not seem to be a foretaste of death in every experience, however happy it may be? Does not the experience fade into the background and become a memory to be relived but which is never quite the same again? The desire “to make memories” to create situations and experiences so that there will be memories to recall, is this not merely a desire to live in a fantasy world, a world of make-belief, reliving the past in the hope of finding happiness in the present?

Looking back to the source of happy experiences sometimes creates pain rather than pleasure for even in the process of recalling there is a sigh, a wish, that life could be like that again but by

the very nature of these very experiences it could never be. The past could never be regained. It is gone forever. It is the future that should concern us and in that future we know at least for certain that the time will come when we shall die.

Does the mystery surrounding death invite unraveling? Does the inquisitive mind of man make it inevitable? Is it because of this very inevitability that we deliberately go out of our way to avoid it and provide distractions for ourselves? Would we not be paralyzed, rendered helpless if we were to be drawn into the unrelentless search for meaning in the face of it? What good we ask ourselves, would be served by dwelling upon the unpleasantness the subject evokes?

Sometimes it is true we are forced to face it but does not time soon come to our rescue? Human beings are resilient creatures—at least the majority seem to be. When the agonizing heartbreak has been endured stoically, time begins its healing process. Unfortunately time runs out for us too and we cannot ultimately avoid the threat, which hangs like a dark cloud even in the midst of the most brilliant sunshine enveloping our lives. The fear this creates can send a chilling wave down our spine. But when we look more closely it would seem not to be death itself, which does this, but the pain and suffering which may accompany it.

As long as we live in this world where the tyranny of death reigns, we may reflect upon the comparative brevity of life and groan under the weight of the agonizing questions death raises for us. But in this vale of tears comes the resounding victorious message of the Christian Gospel: *Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come the resurrection of the dead.* (1 Cor. 15: 20-21) Henceforth, for the Christian believer, this tyranny is shattered by a glorious certainty: We shall live again and in the blessed presence of Almighty God.

It was in this hope that my brother died peacefully, knowing with a certainty this world can never give us, that our physical death is not the end of us. The Word of God never left his bedside table. He truly meditated on it night and day. He had no doubts about his destiny. The glorified, exalted Lord Jesus was waiting to receive him.

PLEASE
REMEMBER THE
PRAYER BOOK
SOCIETY IN YOUR
WILL.

All Saints' v. Bennison

Pennsylvania Parish Battles Bishop

by David W. Virtue

A third traditional parish in the Diocese of Pennsylvania, All Saints', Wynnewood, is gearing up for a legal battle with Charles E. Bennison, the Bishop of Pennsylvania. The issues are theological differences, broken promises, unfulfilled obligations, failure to license a priest and a threat to turn the parish into a mission.

"The parish has vowed to fight tooth and nail to keep the parish from getting into Bennison's hands," said Paul Bartle, Rector's Warden and a Pennsylvania attorney.

Friction with the diocese over the bishop's moral and theological positions has been simmering for months and recently climaxed with the departure of the former Rector, Fr. Richard Upshur Smith, for the Roman Catholic Church.

The Rev. Edward L. Rix, the parish interim became the priest-in-charge. Bennison, however, refused to license him. Rix has been functioning administratively in the parish since then. The Rev. Joseph Falzone, formerly rector of St. Stephen's in Whitehall in the Diocese of Bethlehem and the Rev. Samuel Murangi, a Ugandan priest, have been conducting Sunday services and daily offices.

Tension between Bennison and the parish came to a head in July, 2001, when Bartle and the vestry agreed to enter the Public Conversation Project, (PCP) a Boston-based reconciliation organization designed to help parties in disagreement find ways to reconcile without going to litigation.

In his letter Bartle also stated that he hoped, in lieu of the beginning of the "good faith dialogue" the bishop would not make a planned visitation July 29, 2001. Bennison did not respond.

On November 1, 2001, Bartle again wrote to Bennison requesting he comply with the agreement not to make an official visitation until both parties had performed with the PCP.

On January 11, 2002 Bennison wrote to Bartle unilaterally canceling the PCP meeting. Bennison accused the parish of failure to enter into the agreement with himself, Rix and the parish over Rix's appointment as Interim rector. Bartle responded saying that it was Bennison, not themselves who "undermined the trust needed for a good faith conversation." It was, he said, "Another unilateral decision without foundation."

Bennison, Bartle and Lynne Freeland, the parish's accounting warden then met for lunch on May 2. Following lunch Bennison told Freeland he would insist on making an official visit in late

July, 2002. Freeland again reiterated the parish's position and the bishop's promise to enter into dialogue with the PCP and not make an enforced and unwelcome visitation.

Bartle later wrote to Bennison: "You mentioned at the lunch that you would be willing to devote 8 or 9 days of your time to meet with the Vestry or a smaller group at All Saints' church. After discussion with the Vestry, we believe that a better method is the original agreement [to engage the PCP] that we made, and we now ask you to honor."

Bartle requested again that Bennison license Rix in the Diocese of Pennsylvania as he is canonically resident in the diocese of Lusaka, Zambia.

Bartle wrote: "[Rix] is a godly priest who has served our parish well. There is no reason for you not to permit him to serve, particularly since you agreed to a mediator, the Public Conversation Project. While we discuss reconciliation, Father Eddy should be allowed to perform his priestly duties."

On May 14, in a phone conversation between Bennison and Bartle, Bennison said he would invoke Canon 13.4 and reduce All Saints' to a "mission parish" if he was not permitted to come and preach, administer Eucharist and confirm.

Outraged, Bartle wrote Bennison asking two questions: "In what way has All Saints' Wynnewood violated the Constitution, Canons, Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of the Episcopal Church and the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese? Secondly, under what authority do you understand that the Church Foundation can take our property, which is titled in the name of the All Saints' Church, a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, without redress in the civil courts?"

Bartle, a US Navy veteran, added that he considered Bennison's actions as a "torpedo across our bow."

In a phone call to me, Bartle said that All Saints, which uses the 1928 Prayer Book, would seek redress, if necessary, in the court system.

The Diocese of Pennsylvania is currently in litigation with two other traditional parishes; The Church of the Good Shepherd in Rosemont and St. James the Less in Philadelphia.

Note from the Editor: the Board of the Prayer Book Society met for its June Half-Yearly Meeting at this parish, and I was the Celebrant and Preacher on the Sunday.



Nave, All Saints, Wynnewood

Worshipping the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness

Do dress, deportment and style matter?

Everyday casual clothing, everyday casual speech, popular music and a generally informal attitude seem to characterize many church services in 2002.

And it seems to matter little what is the denominational affiliation of the local church. To be relevant, acceptable and accessible are deemed appropriate values.

In R. C. lay ministers of the Blessed Sacrament hold the Chalice, dressed in tea-shirts and shorts; and in Protestant churches men and women wearing jeans take up the offering or go forward to read a lesson or give a testimony. And in both situations, the organ has usually given way to the music group.

Before the Mass or the Service there is usually incessant chatter and laughter and this is often resumed in the walk-about, chatabout and hugabout that is called the Greeting or the Passing of the peace.

And with this easy-come and easy-go attitude and action, there usually goes a similar attitude towards that which is offered to God

by way of words, music and deeds. Is not the Deity our great Friend and Therapist and does not this Deity want us to feel comfortable in our worship services? And the kind of music that is generally popular within the general culture is thought the best kind to offer to this Deity in church.

It is clear that many Americans of varying backgrounds and economic circumstances actually like this situation where "church" is different from ordinary life only in certain, limited respects. They feel happy within the experiential and casual atmosphere and are willing to pay their tithe to keep it going. They want "church" to be a place where they are affirmed and accepted and where they are made to feel that God is on their side and watching out for them. And they are willing to shop around

to find what is for them the best form of "church." The clergy and staff of such churches work hard to ascertain where people are and what is their felt need so that they can trim the Gospel to sail in these waters and be accepted. They are as much therapists and managers as pastors/teachers.

The LORD our God is full of loving kindness to his people and Christ the High Priest is magnanimous in mercy towards us; and thus our second class offerings of worship and service, whether "contemporary" or "traditional" become acceptable to the Father Almighty because they are purified and completed in the intercession of the One Mediator and High Priest, the same Jesus Christ.

BUT should we allow the DIVINE MERCY and GRACE, given to undeserving sinners, to cause us to offer less than the very best that we are and have to the Blessed, Holy

and Undivided Trinity of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Should not we dress for worship on the basis that we are to meet with the King of kings, the Lord of lords, and be in the company of the archangels and cherubim and seraphim? Should we not use a form of words and music that is the most excellent we can find and use and does not bring with it the spirit of the world around us? Should not our general attitude in divine service be one of great reverence and awe as we stand, bow and kneel before the LORD our God? Is anything less than the best good enough for worship of the sovereign Majesty?

Of course, what is the best varies from culture to culture and from time to time and from economic group to economic group. And God does



West Front, Canterbury Cathedral.

most certainly look on the heart—but not without noting the outward form.

The point is that God the LORD, Creator, Redeemer and Judge, is worthy of absolute glory and praise and adoration and service. Why are we content to give to this Deity less than our best? “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve.” “Worship the Father in spirit and in truth.”

The most difficult and yet the most glorious thing that we are called to do in this world—in anticipation of the next—is to worship the LORD our God, the Blessed, Holy and Undivided Trinity. As the congregation of Christ’s flock, we are called “to enjoy and glorify God, the Holy Trinity, for ever and ever, even unto the ages of ages and world without end.”

We may note four major temptations arising within western culture which both undermine the true purpose of Christian WORSHIP and reduce IT or change IT into something else. Professional and amateur liturgists, clergy and worship committees face these temptations and, regrettably, seem not always to resist them.

1. Satan comes along and, with excellent examples and/or stories, presents the thesis: that “a worship service” is (at least in part) to keep people interested and in an acceptable and dignified way to entertain them. So the people sit as the audience and the performers are at the front FACING the audience. God is assumed to be the friendly, non-judgmental Onlooker who blesses the occasion for the people are sincere in their desire for religious activity, performance and entertainment. Satan’s aim as the tempter is to make the people feel welcome, happy and emotionally satisfied/fulfilled. What he wants to cause them to avoid is to fear God the Father, to bow before His Majesty and to seek His Face through and in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Satan comes along and using telling phrases and ideas created by the modern therapeutic culture suggests that how people feel and their sense of self-worth are of major importance in true and vital religion. So he presents the thesis: that “a worship service” and all other church activities must have as a major aim the purpose of making people feel good about themselves. Folks need to know that God actually loves everyone unconditionally and wants each one to feel affirmed as His child, and this despite whatever they have done and whatever be their position or state in life. What Satan wants to avoid is the idea that it is much more important to be obedient to the Lord of glory and to seek His holiness through bowing before His Majesty than to be nice and to feel good about one’s individual faith.

3. Satan comes along and with moving illustrations suggests that people are alienated from one another and even from themselves in modern soci-

ety and thus they need a real human community to which to belong. So he presents the thesis: that it is necessary to make the church of God in this place into a “community of faith” where the “worship service” is truly a community celebration. Alienated and lonely souls need to find soul-mates and soul-companions so that they feel they belong and that their existence is meaningful. So each person’s “faith and feelings about God, Jesus and religion” is affirmed and the church is seen primarily to exist as the place and sphere of affirmation one of another and each one by all. Satan wants to make sure that the idea of belonging to the local group and affirming each other rather than belonging to the communion of saints of earth and heaven is the ethos here. He is most happy when a lot of emphasis and time is spent on the “passing of the peace” with its walkabout to embrace as many people as possible.

4. Satan comes along and demonstrates that many people are ignorant of the basics of religion and of the meaning of the liturgy. So he presents the thesis: that “a worship service” is basically a teaching opportunity for instruction (they may not stay for Sunday School but they are here as a captive audience). Instead of the liturgy flowing naturally according to its own inherent ethos and logic, it is interrupted often in order for the “worship leader” or the clergy person to use the opportunity to add comments to whatever is being sung or said or prayed in order to further the education of the people. The service is treated as an evangelistic or missionary opportunity. Satan is most happy when a congregation is engaged in learning about religion rather than involved in knowing God as GOD, the LORD, and experiencing communion with the Father through the Son and with the Holy Spirit.

It is worth noting this description of what awed Russian diplomats saw and felt when they first experienced the Divine Liturgy at Byzantium.

“The Byzantine Liturgy was not a way of teaching doctrine and not intended to be. It was not a display of the Christian faith in a way acceptable or attractive to onlookers. What impressed them as onlookers about the Liturgy was precisely ITS UTTER LACK OF AN ULTERIOR PURPOSE, the fact that it was celebrated for GOD and not for spectators, that its sole intent was to be before God and for God, pleasing and acceptable to God...”

In the Anglican Way the celebration (in spirit and in truth and in the beauty of holiness) of the historic Liturgy for the Lord’s Day—Matins, the Litany, the Order for Holy Communion and finally Evensong—also has no ulterior purpose for it is celebrated for God and not for man. No doubt man is blessed by rightly celebrating, but this does not change the basic purpose of the [Divine] Liturgy, celebrated for the glory of the One, Holy, Blessed and Undivided Trinity.

Psalm 95, the Venite, and Our Daily Worship

by The Rev'd Fr. Wayland Coe, President of the Prayer Book Society

The practice of reciting the Daily Offices is an important discipline that appears to have drifted out of the modern church. In saying or singing

the Daily Offices, we are first and foremost worshipping the blessed and undivided Trinity of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. We are also training ourselves in sound, practical theology through recitation of the Scriptures and Christ-centered prayers. At the same time, we come to know God at a deeper level, acknowledging him at work in our lives.

At St. Thomas' Church and School in Houston, where I serve the Lord, the clergy, teachers and students sing the daily office of Matins each day during the school year because we believe in the importance of worshipping the Lord in the beauty of holiness. God is to be first in our minds, hearts and souls and we begin our day with worship.

The question is often asked, "Why do we sing or say the same things every day?" We reply that, in singing and/or saying the offices on a daily basis, we are fulfilling our bounden duty as Christians to worship God. And our hearts, minds and souls are being shaped in godly ways by holy language which, in turn, shape the words we speak, the thoughts we think and the deeds we perform.

Every part of the morning office has its own impact upon the worshipper. Let us look at the Invitatory psalm. The rubrics instruct us that Psalm 95 may be used in its entirety in place of the American form of the *Venite*, and at St. Thomas' we make use of this provision.

In the English *BCP* of 1662, Psalm 95 is the Invitatory Psalm and is called *Venite, Exultemus Domino*. But the American Prayer Book of 1789 calls the *Venite* what is a combination of parts of Psalms 95 & 96. In fact, while the proposed prayer book of 1786 retained Psalm 95 in its entirety, the American Church eventually chose to substitute

Psalm 96:9,13 for the last four verses of Psalm 95. Only with the revision in 1928 was the option given which allowed for the use of Psalm 95 (the original *Venite*) in place of the American revised *Venite*.

Psalm 95 reminds us daily of our Christian duty of offering to God praises for the blessings that he

has so freely given to us. It reminds us that we sing our praises to God who is our hope, our strength, our maker and our redeemer. We acknowledge him to be the only God whom we are to worship as we fall down before his divine majesty. God is our shepherd and we are his sheep. We belong

to his fold and in his care we find great safety and comfort.

If we pay careful attention we will see that the final four verses of Psalm 95 speak to the issues of immediacy and judgment. "Today, if ye will hear his voice..." speaks of the urgency of hearing the voice of the Lord. God speaks to us in the midst of our worship and in many areas of our lives. As we worship the King of Kings in his royal court we stand in his presence in the here and now, not looking to tomorrow but focusing on him. his immediate presence and his word spoken to us in the hymns, lessons, canticles, and prayers.

The Psalm speaks of Israel's turning from God in the days when God called her to be his people. She hardened her heart toward him and as a result she suffered for her disobedience. These are words we truly need to hear today especially in light of the many ways the Church has turned from God and seemingly hardened her heart toward God.

In conclusion, let me affirm that the Daily Office—at home, in church or in school—helps us to stand in God's royal courts and to return thanks to our great King. Let us make full use of it.



St. Thomas' students singing in Chapel.

The Book of Common Prayer: *Why Does Its Language Work So Well, and Where May I Obtain a Copy?*

First published in 1549 and, in revised and edited forms, published many times since, *The Book of Common Prayer* is still in print and still works in a dignified and efficient way for public worship. Why so?

It is written in a formal, not informal, language and is composed of texts produced to be spoken/chanted aloud either by a single person or by the congregation. Further, it is characterized by being

the address of an inferior to a superior, never of an equal to an equal. Then also its purpose is not primarily the communication of information but the vocal expression of the inner convictions of faith, hope and love. Finally, it is designed to be read out not once only but often, week by week or even day by day, and become the more meaningful by this constant use.

Obtaining a Prayer Book

1. Copies of both the English 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* and the American 1928 *Book of Common Prayer* (in leather and cloth) may be obtained from Oxford University Press in New York City (1-800-334-4249, Bible Department). Discounts for bulk orders from churches.

2. A pew edition of the 1928 *Book of Common Prayer* is also available in red binding from the Anglican Parishes Association, 225 Fairway Drive, Athens, GA. 30607 for \$19.95 including postage; a box of 14 copies is available for \$195.30, postage included. Call 706-546-8834.

Obtaining a CD of a 1928 BCP Service

Recordings on a CD of: (1) Morning Prayer with the Litany from St Thomas' Church Houston, and of (2) Evening Prayer with Anthem from St John's, Savannah, are available from the Prayer Book Society in Philadelphia at \$12.50 each, postage included.

A Prayer of Thanksgiving for the BCP

(Prepared by a Committee of the House of Bishops and authorized by The Presiding Bishop for use in 1939 during the 150th Anniversary Celebration of the Adoption of The American Prayer Book which took place in Philadelphia, October 16, 1789.)

O God, by whose spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified, we give Thee hearty thanks that by Thy holy inspiration Thy Church hath from its foundation ordained rites and ceremonies, prayers and praises, for the glory of Thy name and the edification of Thy people.

More especially do we thank Thee that when, in the course of Divine Providence, these American States became independent, this Church was moved to set forth the Book of Common Prayer in a form consistent with the Constitution and laws of our country, yet in agreement with ancient usages, and adapted to the spiritual needs of new times and occasions.

We beseech Thee to help us so to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest Thy teaching as set forth in this Book, that Thy name may be glorified, Thy Kingdom hastened, Thy Church increased, and Thy people strengthened in faith, courage and devotion to Thee. All this we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with Thee and the Holy Spirit be all honor and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

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of the Book of Common Prayer
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