

Designated Tithing

Magnificat Reflections

C.S. Lewis

November 15, 2015

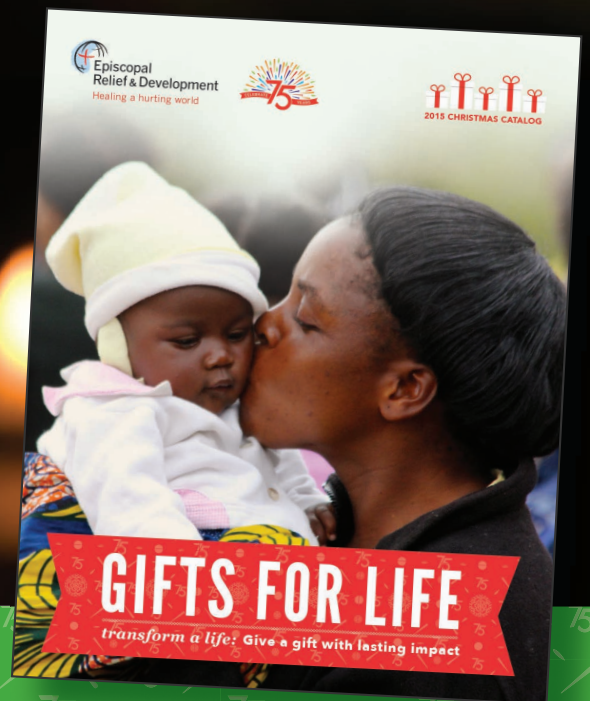
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ON THE COVER

“*For All the Saints* performs a valuable service by demythologizing [St. John’s] and thus, to some extent, large congregations in general” —Charles Hoffacker (see “Parish Life in St. Paul,” p. 18).

Image from *For All the Saints*, published by Afton Press

THE LIVING CHURCH

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LIVING CHURCH Partners

We are grateful to the Parish of St. Paul the Apostle, Savannah [p. 33], and St. Mark’s Cathedral, Shreveport [p. 35], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.

Global South Primates Accept Invitation

Archbishop Justin Welby's hopes for a well-attended Primates' Meeting in January received a boost when 11 representatives attending a Global South meeting in Cairo said their provinces would send their leaders.

A communiqué posted Oct. 18 on *Global South Anglican* confirmed this. The statement gave a "welcome" to Archbishop Welby's idea that primates suggest items of the agenda. "We appreciate this very helpful approach, one that gives us a sense of ownership and responsibility to our meeting."

The Most Rev. Nicholas Okoh, Primate of Nigeria, was absent from the meeting and the list of signatories.

Global South Anglican had published an earlier notice that the conference planned for Tunis (the Tunisian capital) had been cancelled for security concerns. The Cairo meeting was thus a scaled-down affair, with the government of Egypt arranging needed visas at short notice at the request of the Archbishop of Egypt, the Most Rev. Mouneer Anis, whose province includes Tunisia.

Lambeth Palace confirmed that



Seven Global South primates meet with Archbishop Foley Beach on October 14.

Archbishop Welby managed to reroute his travel from the United States to attend the meeting in Cairo. The primates appreciated his participation, the communiqué said, and "he was keen to listen to our concerns and share his own in a collegial atmosphere."

The meeting welcomed the Anglican Church in North America "as a partner province to the Global South, represented by its Archbishop, the Most Reverend Foley Beach." The meeting received and discussed a re-

port from Bishop Mark Lawrence of South Carolina, which receives primatial oversight from the group.

The communiqué added: "We were aware that we were meeting at a critical time in the history of our Communion. A time characterised by impaired and broken relations between Provinces." Unity, it said, "is based on the truth revealed to us in the scripture; it is a unity on the essentials of faith. We also believe in principled diversity in the non-essentials. 'In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity.'"

It singled out for criticism "unilateral decisions" by the last General Convention of the Episcopal Church to redefine marriage and to accept same sex marriage (Resolutions A036 and A054). These were "a clear departure from not only the accepted traditional teaching of the Anglican Communion, but also from that of the one Holy, Universal, and Apostolic Church."

The Global South Primates re-elected the current chairman, Archbishop Mouneer Anis, as well as the current Steering Committee. The cancelled Global South General Conference in Tunisia will be rescheduled, although a date and venue has yet to be decided.

John Martin

Heather Cook: 'I Am So Sorry'

Nearly a year after she caused bicyclist Thomas Palermo's death, former bishop Heather Cook has been sentenced to prison for seven years.

Police charged Cook with drunken driving and texting while driving when she drove into Palermo two days after Christmas near the Diocese of Maryland's offices in Baltimore.

Cook had pleaded not guilty since Palermo's death, but ultimately she agreed to a plea of automobile manslaughter, leaving the scene of an accident, and other charges.

Prosecutors sought a ten-year sentence in the death of the 41-year-old father of two young children.

The Baltimore Sun quoted Cook as telling Palermo's family at the hearing: "I am so sorry for the grief and the agony I have caused. This is my fault. I accept complete responsibility."

Then she said to Judge Timothy J. Doory: "I believe God is working through this, and I accept your judgment."

Archbishop Welby Pleads for Unity

“We will only endure — this building will only be what it should be — if we are built on Jesus. There is no compromise with that message. Without it this is a museum of interesting social anthropology. With Jesus as its focus and center, it is a channel of the breaking in of the kingdom of God.”

With these ringing words, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby set forth the purpose of Virginia Theological Seminary’s new Immanuel Chapel, which was consecrated at a grand celebration on Oct. 13. The Episcopal Church’s 25th, 26th, and 27th presiding bishops shared in leading worship at the consecration Eucharist and festival Evensong services, which gathered thousands of students, alumni, and friends of the seminary from around the world.

The preacher at the Eucharist and officiant at Evensong, Welby began with a stark reminder of the destructive fire that struck the former Immanuel Chapel nearly five years before.

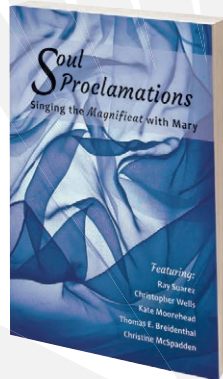
“In 2010, to the glory of God this chapel burned, and was rebuilt 2015,” he said, adapting words etched on the ruins of Coventry Cathedral. The destruction and rebuilding of the chapel provided, he noted, an invitation to enter more deeply into the mystery of Christ’s death and resurrection.

Standing at the center of the seminary campus, the chapel provides an opportunity to focus anew on how an “untidy crowd of pilgrims” from around the world is formed to serve in the ministry of the church, Welby said. The archbishop expressed his hope that the chapel would become a place where Jesus is revealed, “where confronted by that mystery and love we fall in worship, find ourselves reorientated through the liturgy, are captivated by God’s holiness, and sent out to do his will.”

The Very Rev. Ian Markham, who has served as the seminary’s dean

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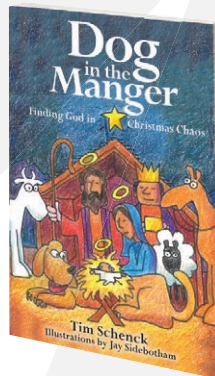
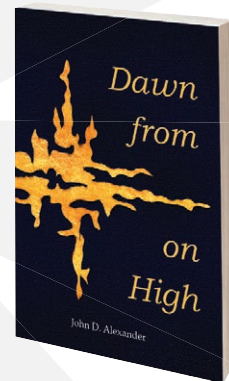
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Archbishop Welby Pleads for Unity

(Continued from previous page)

and president in what he called “a long hard journey” leading to this moment, echoed the archbishop’s words. “Worship of God is the reason for our being. A seminary must always have a chapel in which men and women who are striving for leadership in the church can struggle in prayer as the potter molds their clay lives,” he said. “We did not simply celebrate the consecration of a chapel, but we also celebrated the purpose of our chapel. We worshiped God. And we did so with the Archbishop of Canterbury present — representing the Anglican Communion. It was simply a fabulous celebration.”

The building’s architect, Robert Stern, said he aimed to make the structure look “as if it has always been here.” He chose an exterior of

red Virginia brick, a square Colonial-style tower with eight change-ringing bells, and ornamental cornices patterned on those of the surrounding buildings. The interior is a soaring and elegant yet surprisingly intimate space, designed in the shape of a Greek cross, with the altar placed on a central dais. An oculus floods white walls with natural light. The architect cited the Pantheon, Sir John Soane’s Bank of England, and Bernard Maybeck’s First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Berkeley, California, as inspirations.

An enormous double-decker iron chandelier dominates the interior and enhances a state-of-the-art lighting and audiovisual system. With flexible seating, simple fittings, and image projection on four screens, the space is designed to “invite the seminary to move into the church of the future,” accommodating many different forms of worship.

It also has superb acoustics and a large pipe organ, designed by the Virginia firm Taylor and Boody. A smaller Gothic-style oratory and octagonal meditation room, as well as a parlor, children’s room, and preparation rooms, flank the chapel’s central worship space. The building is surrounded by gardens and courtyards connecting to the main entrance of the campus and the ruins of the 1881 chapel, now a memorial garden.

The services, replete with incense and choral music, marked for some a distinctive break with the seminary’s evangelical heritage. The consecration service featured the dedication of the seminary’s first aumbry for sacramental reservation, and the Marian Evensong centered on the dedication of a prominent new icon of the Incarnation and a statue of the Visitation.

The Rt. Rev. Gregory Brewer, Bishop of Central Florida and a 1976 VTS graduate, quipped that “with the consecration of this chapel the high church-low church wars in the Epis-

copal Church are over.” The Rev. Mary Thorpe, the Diocese of Virginia’s transition minister and a 2009 graduate, said the celebration’s mix of traditions highlighted the way in which the seminary had grown “to embrace the length and breadth of the Anglican Communion.”

The Communion’s continuing struggle for unity was not neglected in the midst of the festive celebration. In a poignant and spontaneous moment in his sermon, Archbishop Welby said, “My heart breaks when I think of our divisions. How they offend Christ. ... O God, we need a united Church. Let this place orientate and shape those who will carry the torch of unity.”

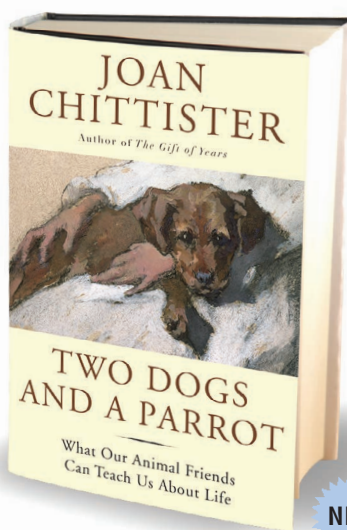
The challenge of reconciliation also emerged in a series of panel discussions hosted in coordination with the event by the seminary’s Center for Anglican Communion Studies. David Porter, the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Canon for Reconciliation, compared Anglican conflicts to the American Civil War and perennial violence in the Middle East. “Civil wars are the most difficult conflicts to put back together,” he said. “But you don’t have a generation or two to heal this civil war — we need to do this now.”

For current VTS student Jon Musser, the event marked out the seminary’s potential to play a significant role in that healing: “The archbishop’s presence highlighted our role in the Anglican Communion and that VTS is positioned uniquely in the Episcopal Church as an institution with lots of Anglican partners, and a history of global connectivity.”

The wounds of our common life, though, seemed far from minds of many alumni who returned to rekindle old friendships and to pray for a beloved institution at a uniquely blessed time.

The Rev. Margaret Peel (2013) shared her memories of standing in the seminary’s central grove as the fire engulfed the 1881 chapel and made the central stained-glass window explode. “We were without a full-time chapel for two years during my time here,” she said. “It’s good to

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know that the seminarians here will have a church home.”

For the Rev. Liston Garfield (1985), this new place evoked fond memories of the past. “The old chapel was such a center for our worship, a source of peace, deep reflection, and meditation. I wanted to come back to see if this place will do the same thing. They have recaptured what the old chapel was about. ... I really feel at home.”

The Rev. Mark Michael

Twenty Sixth PB Bids Farewell

A week before completing her nine-year tenure as 26th presiding bishop, Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori released a brief letter to the church.

“The Episcopal Church has come a long way in the last 10 years,” Bishop Jefferts Schori wrote. “We are no longer consumed by internal conflict over various social issues. We are clearer about who we are — a multinational church, with congregations in 17 nations, worshipping in countless different languages, thriving in international, immigrant, and multicultural contexts everywhere, and discovering the abundant life that comes in turning outward to love the neighbors nearby and far away. We are far more conscious about our vocation as partners in the mission of God to reconcile and heal the world, particularly shaped by the Five Anglican Marks of Mission. We are holding our identity as Episcopal Christians a bit more confidently, even in the midst of our diversity. We are also more willing to hold that identity lightly and gracefully in engaging other Christians and people of other religious traditions, searching for what we dream of in common — shalom, the Reign of God, a more just and peaceful world, with abundant life for all creation.”

She added: “I am deeply grateful for what God has been up to in the midst of our journey together, and I look forward to seeing how this church of the middle way will continue to lead and partner as we travel

the road home, into God’s fullest dream of abundant life for all. I thank the people of this Church and beyond for your prayers over the last nine years — especially in recognition that we do this work together, never alone. May God bless the next chapter of The Episcopal Church’s engagement in God’s mission, as we go together into Galilee!”



Bell

Bishop Bell’s Troubling Sin

News that the Rt. Rev. George Bell (1883-1958), former Bishop of Chichester, was a pedophile has shaken the Church of England, and already there is debate whether public commemorations of him should be erased. He has been one of the most revered names among 20th-century leaders of the Church of England.

Bell is remembered on Oct. 3, the anniversary of his death, on the Church of England’s calendar, the nearest Anglicans come to recognizing someone as a saint. He is lionized as a pioneer ecumenist and supporter of the German Confessing

Church during the Nazi era. He had close links with theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-45), who was executed for a plot to assassinate Adolf Hitler.

The Rt. Rev. Martin Warner, Bishop of Chichester, released a lengthy statement Oct. 22 in which he expressed remorse for child sexual assaults committed by George Bell. The apology indicated that the church has reached a settlement with an individual whom Bell abused as a young child. The individual’s sex and name remain anonymous.

The angst is deepened by revelations that the survivor first approached the Diocese of Chichester with allegations in 1995, to no avail; the victim approached Archbishop Justin Welby in 2013.

Bishop Warner said in his statement that the response of the church “fell a long way short” of what should have happened and was a “devastating betrayal of trust.” Police sources now say the evidence available would certainly have justified Bell’s arrest.

Tracey Emmott, the survivor’s solicitor, said a “new culture of openness in the Church of England is genuinely refreshing,” but her client remained bitter that the original complaint was not heard properly.

“For my client, the compensation finally received does not change anything,” Emmott said. “How could any amount of money possibly compensate for childhood abuse?”

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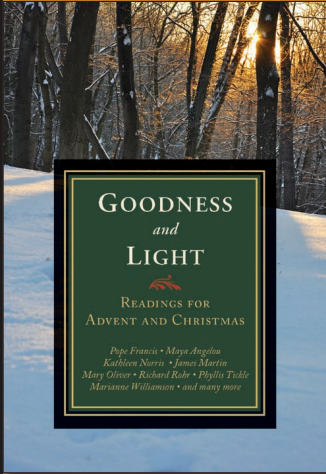
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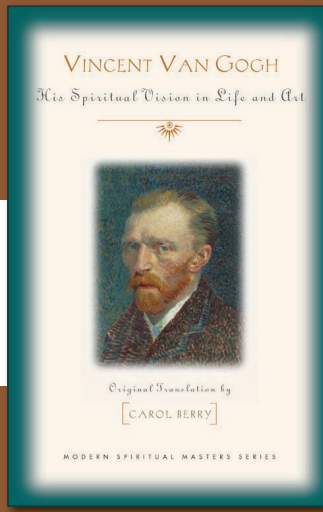
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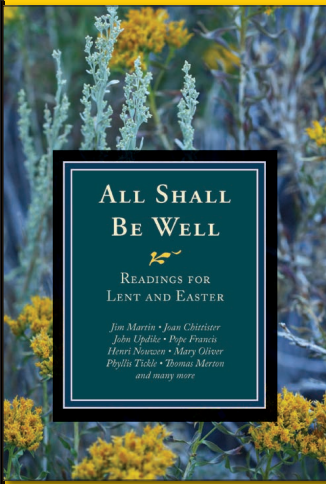
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A Bishop's Troubling Sin

(Continued from previous page)

Bell was considered a favored candidate for Archbishop of Canterbury after the untimely death of Archbishop William Temple in 1944. Archbishop Rowan Williams is on record saying he thought Bell would have been a better choice than Geoffrey Fisher.

He had all the credentials: chaplain to Archbishop Randall Davidson and later Dean of Canterbury. He had a high profile role as an initiator and promoter of the still-young ecumenical movement, in particular the influential Life and Work project and later the World Council of Churches.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill blocked his path to Canterbury. Both in the press and in his House of Lords speeches, Bell had opposed Churchill's war policies of bombing German cities.

Around Chichester, where Bell was bishop from 1929 to 1958, two buildings commemorate him: a boarding house of Bishop Luffa School and George Bell House, situated in the lane just before the entrance to the cathedral gardens. A charity representing survivors of abuse has already taken up the issue of renaming these sites.

Arun Arora, the Church of England's national director of communications, confirmed that the removal of Bell's name from the Church of England Calendar required a General Synod resolution. Parishes have the option of omitting Bell's name from their prayers on Oct. 3, but campaigners are unlikely to leave the matter there.

The Diocese of Chichester has been the center of a series of high-profile sex-abuse cases involving clergy. Most recent was the jailing of the Rt. Rev. Peter Ball, suffragan Bishop of Lewes, this month for assaults against 18 boys. Ball had been allowed to resign his subsequent job as Bishop of Gloucester, and he escaped prosecution for 22 years.

John Martin

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Global Briefs

Two Bishops courts: The Diocese of Sydney has agreed to a further attempt to sell Bishops court, the 16-room neo-gothic house built in 1841 that has been the residence of archbishops of Sydney since 1910. The 6,216 square meter estate failed to reach a \$A20 million reserve price at auction after a Diocesan Synod vote to sell it in 2012. Across the Tasman Sea, civil authorities agreed earlier this year to the demolition of the Diocese of Christchurch's former Bishops court. Built in 1926, for some years it has formed part of a care-home complex. The building, damaged in the Christchurch earthquake in 2010, is considered unsafe. Its owner, Anglican Care, is unable to fund repairs.

KJV Draft: Seventy pages of notes, much of them almost illegible, found at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, are part of the earliest draft of the King James Bible. Jeffrey Miller, the American scholar who announced the discovery, says it will throw new light on how the KJV, published in 1611, came to be. The notebook belonged to Samuel Ward, one of a team of seven men in Cambridge working on the translation. It includes biblical commentary written by Ward with Greek and Hebrew notes. King James commissioned the KJV to achieve a more "Anglican" Bible than others in circulation at the time, but few realized that the committee producing it relied heavily on the work of William Tyndale (1494-1536), and many of its famous and most colorful phrases were his.

Christmas and Easter Churches: A new report claims that one in four rural Church of England parishes, 2,000 in all, attract less than 10 regular worshippers. Nearly 1,000 rarely surpass 20 worshippers on a Sunday. The church building review group says parishes together spend around \$160 million (\$US250 million) a year maintaining their buildings. Church buildings constitute about half of all the Grade One-

listed buildings in the country. The committee suggests that with dwindling numbers to contribute to upkeep, many churches should be downgraded and used only on special days such as Christmas and Easter. Critics point out that the call for wide church closures cuts across endeavors to stem the tide of decline.

Cricket Diplomacy: The Vatican's cricket team won its return match against the Church of England team played at the Capannelle Ground in Rome on Oct. 24. More than 1,000 people turned out, including Archbishop Justin Welby and the Papal Nuncio. The match, which took place at the conclusion of the Synod on the Family, raised funds for the Global Freedom Network, an anti-trafficking initiative. St. Peter's XI scored 147 for 6 wickets, with the Archbishop's XI all out for 105 runs.

South African Primate Joins Fees Dispute: Nationwide student protests in South Africa against rises

in university fees have prompted Archbishop Thabo Makgoba to appeal for a constructive resolution of the dispute. "I appeal to bishops and parishioners in all our dioceses to support students and staff at tertiary institutions, and to pray for an amicable resolution to the crisis," said the South African primate, whose son was arrested in a Cape Town protest. "Apart from holding prayer vigils, I appeal to our churches to give practical help to students in distress."

Refugees Welcomed: Offa House, a Georgian retreat house in Warwickshire that belongs to the Diocese of Coventry in England's midlands, is accommodating refugee families. The 27-bedroom mansion, with a chapel and conference suite, is the biggest single property so far to be set aside in the Church of England's response to the refugee crisis. The church's stance places it at odds with the U.K. government.

John Martin

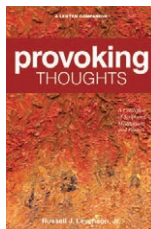
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Designated Tithing

Trends in giving and their implications for churches

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald

The Rev. Wayne Nicholson donates 10 percent of his income, but not all of that 10 percent goes to the church. It's a fact he explains regularly when encouraging his flock at St. John's Church in Mount Pleasant, Michigan, to work toward tithing as a spiritual discipline.

"Someone will inevitably ask, *Do you tithe?*" Nicholson said. "I'll say, 'I don't tithe to the church, but I do tithe to charitable giving.' I give 5 percent of my income to the church and 5 percent to various charities."

Since 1982, General Convention has repeatedly affirmed tithing as "the minimum standard of giving for Episcopalians."

In spreading his donations around, Nicholson reflects a long-term national trend with major implications for churches. Three decades ago, 53 percent of Americans' charitable giving went to religious organizations. In 2014, that percentage has dropped to 32 percent and continues to decline annually, according to the 2015 edition of *Giving USA*, an annual report compiled by the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy.

The good news for church groups is that Americans still give more to houses of worship than anything else. They set a record in 2014 with \$114.9 billion in religious giving. The second-largest beneficiary, education, was still a distant second with \$54.6 billion.

But religion's year-to-year increases lag behind those in nearly every other sector, from the arts to animals and the environment. Religious giving and international affairs, which saw gross donations fall, are the only ones not keeping pace with inflation.

Relying on an ever-smaller slice of



Photo courtesy of St. George's Church

Members of St. George's Church in Maplewood, N.J., load the results of their Food Drive Challenge in October. In stewardship campaigns, the church emphasizes its many outreach projects.

the philanthropy pie means congregations have their work cut out for them. Among the chief tasks: explaining why their missions deserve priority at check-writing time.

"It becomes even more important than ever for religious charities to be able to make their case and sell the vision," said Rick Dunham, a Dallas fundraising consultant to faith-based organizations and member of the Giving Institute's board. "A lot of the challenge within the church in particular is that it's often relegated to taking up the offering on a Sunday. There's very little selling of the vision of what your charitable giving is helping to support other than keeping the operation going."

Across the country, shifts away from religious identification and church attendance are hampering religious giving, according to *Giving USA*. But another dynamic is also at play: donors, including people of faith, are looking for organizations that resonate with them. Values and results, more than organizational format, are what matter to those holding the purse strings.

"People are giving more to organizations with religious values that match their own, instead of, or in addition to, congregations," *Giving USA 2015* says. These can be schools, hospitals, environmental groups, or human service organiza-

tions, among others, according to Dunham.

But showcasing effectiveness and championing the church above other causes can be inherently awkward for congregations. Spiritual transformation is central to church life, yet a changed heart is hard to quantify or measure. That which can be measured, such as baptism numbers or meals served at a soup kitchen, is not always trumpeted in communities that strive to be humble. What's more, rectors often want to encourage giving to a range of worthy causes. Some especially enjoy touting enterprises that have no connection to their own paychecks (unlike the parish).

But Episcopal organizations are learning to adapt to competition for dollars once earmarked for the offering plate. Organizational cultures are emerging in which tracking and reporting results feel normal and necessary, not boastful or excessively worldly. And congregations are learning to articulate what makes the local church worthy of disproportionate support.

"The message becomes: *Won't you prioritize our parish over other giving opportunities?*" said Erin Weber-Johnson, program director for strategic resources at the Episcopal Church Foundation. "The 'why' is different depending on who you speak to."

At St. John's in Mount Pleasant, the

congregation's 140 members hear often (not just in the fall stewardship season) how their dollars are making a difference. They are reminded, for example, how giving helps parishioners take turns providing shelter for homeless families, to help struggling neighbors with basic needs, and to sustain a vibrant worship life.

The descriptions can be quite specific. They hear about individuals and families who get by with help from the John H. Goodrow Fund, which gives \$1,500 per week to people falling through the cracks. The fund recently bought three tires for a woman who could only afford one. For a man who works at Walmart but supports family members and cannot make ends meet, St. John's provides \$40 once a month to fill his car with gas.

"We fill in the blanks," Nicholson said. "We help people who nobody else is helping."

To keep ministries in the forefront of parishioners' minds, leaders at St. John's use the practice of habitually giving thanks. For instance, when the choir sings a moving piece, Nicholson thanks not only the singers but also the congregation.

That's because donations pay for both a part-time choirmaster and eight choral scholars, who sing in the choir while they work toward music degrees at nearby Central Michigan University. Their \$40 weekly stipends help students on tight budgets make ends meet, Nicholson says. By routinely thanking the congregation, St. John's makes sure benefactors never forget what they support and why it matters.

At St. George's Church in Maplewood, New Jersey, this fall's stewardship brochure reflects the tensions of the times. A pledging chart shows how much a tithing person would give to the congregation weekly based on annual income. But the next page defines tithing as giving 10 percent of income "to the parish and other charitable institutions."

St. George's revamped its appeal this year to provide more detail on where the money goes. Building expenses, salaries, and church pro-

(Continued on page 31)

ERD's Evolving Priorities

The cries of refugees streaming across European borders this year ring eerily familiar to Episcopal Relief & Development, which traces its roots to 1940, when the church rallied to help World War II refugees in the same region.

True to its origins as the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, ERD now works with Episcopal Migration Ministries and supports congregations as they tend to migrants' immediate needs in Europe and the Middle East. The Presiding Bishop's Fund became Episcopal Relief and Development in 2000.

But in a reflection of how ERD has evolved over time, the organization is also taking new proactive steps that could help prevent more refugee crises in the future. Programs aimed at building economic security for the vulnerable in developing nations rank among the priorities.

"After moving from making small-targeted grants to focusing on long-term development, we are now better able to leverage our resources and deliver results for those we seek to serve," ERD president Robert Radtke said via email.

This year, ERD has been celebrating its 75th anniversary by recalling responses to many a difficult or disastrous situation and inviting fresh engagement from supporters. Thirty-five venues have stepped up to host a traveling exhibit of more than 30 iconic photos from the group's history. Donors have given \$6.3 million toward ERD's \$7.5 million goal for the milestone year. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry is scheduled to preach at ERD's anniversary Eucharist on Nov. 11 at St. James' Church in Manhattan.

As the anniversary year winds down, the agency is charting new paths to shape a world with more financial security for children and adults on society's margins. Such a world would have fewer refugees. Microfinance is evolving from a lending enterprise into one that helps beneficiaries keep more of what they earn.

"This means that people are being encouraged to save, instead of taking out loans and incurring more debt," Radtke said.

ERD is also exploring possibilities associated with social-impact investing. The practice channels capital into projects with dual goals of fixing social problems (poor education systems, lack of access to capital, and so on) and delivering financial returns for investors.

And the group hopes to build on past successes. With a \$20 million annual budget that comes mostly from individual Episcopalians' donations, ERD wants to be strategic with its influence. One model: Nets-for-Life, a joint program that uses nets, insecticide, education, and monitoring to protect children and others from the spread of malaria. Pioneered by ERD and its partners, the program has become policy in several African countries.

"That's huge," Radtke said. "Where can we do this again?"

At this milestone in its history, ERD focuses on providing disaster relief, alleviating hunger, supporting health, and encouraging economic opportunity. If the mission succeeds, refugees might not be as much in the news when the next big anniversary rolls around.

G. Jeffrey MacDonald



Episcopal Relief & Development traces its roots to 1940, when the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief came to the assistance of Europe's World War II refugees.

Episcopal Relief & Development photo



Sometimes we seem invited simply to rest in God, or quietly to take in an insight or fresh truth.

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Forms of Christian Meditation

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another.

—2 Cor. 3:18

By Julia Gatta

Repeated exposure to Scripture in the Eucharist and Daily Office prepares us for the most ancient form of mediation practiced in the church: *lectio divina*, "sacred reading," or meditation on Scripture. Monks, their days saturated with Scripture through praying the psalms and listening to the lessons in the Office, have for centuries come to know many biblical texts by heart. These formed the basis of continued rumination on them throughout the day, and especially in hours given to quiet prayer. The slow, attentive reading of Scripture, often issuing in prayer, is also a devotional exercise practiced in many Protestant communities.

In scriptural meditation we begin by reading a short passage of Scripture slowly. It could be as long as a story or as short as a single verse. We might choose our text from the Sunday or Daily Office lectionary, or read an entire gospel through the course of several weeks, or we can select a passage that seems to speak to our current condition. As we read, we notice what becomes stirred in us: an identification with one of the characters, or a strong emotion, or a difficulty. Memories and other associations might be set in motion. We allow ourselves to feel all these things and to engage them in relation to whatever is going on in the text. Above all, we try to notice how God may be speaking to us through the scriptural text as it addresses the text of our lives.

Out of this mix of thought and feeling, memory and imagination, comes prayer: direct address to God. Our meditation might have brought us to a place of thanksgiving, praise, or confession. We might be moved to ask God a question or engage in intercession or colloquy. We might seek for guidance or strength to respond unreservedly to grace we have received. What we have to say might be brief but heartfelt; or it could entail a real pouring out of pent-up emotion.

Often, this is how meditation ends, and we could round it off with a brief prayer of praise or thanksgiving. But sometimes we seem invited simply to rest in God, or quietly to take in an insight or fresh truth. An image from the text — and the Bible is full of images — may compel our contemplation: a silent, simple gazing with the eye of the heart.

Some people suspect that meditation on Scripture requires us to jettison whatever we have studied about the Bible or learned from higher criticism. The Bible, however, like all great literature, operates on multiple levels at once; and good biblical criticism, like all good literary criticism, can clear away misunderstandings in our reading of the text and enrich our appreciation of its artistry and message. With that enhanced background, our meditation on Scripture can yield even greater profit.

Yet biblical meditation is not the same thing as biblical study. As a form of meditative prayer, *lectio divina* seeks exposure to the Risen Christ, who continues to engage us through the surplus of meanings in the scriptural word. By frequent encounter with the living Christ, especially through meditation on the gospels, we come to know Jesus not as a figure from the past, but as an abiding presence. Because the Holy Spirit animates our meditative prayer — the same Spirit who enlivens the proclamation of Scripture in Eucharist and Office — the biblical story spills

into our lives. Dietrich Bonhoeffer explains: “The fellowship of believers is woven into the Christmas story, the baptism, the miracles and teaching, the suffering, dying, and rising again of Jesus Christ. It participates in the very events that occurred on this earth for the salvation of the world, and in doing so receives salvation in Jesus Christ.” In meditation, he goes on to say, “We expose ourselves to the specific word until it addresses us personally.”

For some people, simply resting in a word or brief phrase from Scripture, or gazing upon a verbal image, may become habitual. This is not how their meditation ends; it is the whole process. Many arresting verses lend themselves to this simplified form of meditation: “Your life is hid with Christ in God,” for example, or “I am the living bread.” In this case, the meditation consists in sinking into the truth, beauty, comfort, or challenge of the words without extensive analysis. We might repeat the words from time to time. We let them take hold of us, and prayer may then arise spontaneously.

Other simplified forms of meditation consist in gazing upon an icon or sacred image, a practice Western

We might repeat the words from time to time. We let them take hold of us, and prayer may then arise spontaneously.

Christians have learned in recent years from Eastern Orthodoxy. Since Christ is “the image (icon) of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15), his incarnation has opened the way by which these images, themselves the fruit of the artists’ meditation, provide a means of access to his Presence.

With or without a sacred image before them, many people lovingly direct their attention toward God in silent communion for short or extended periods of time. This can be done anywhere, but often a sacred space is helpful: in church before the Reserved Sacrament, in a prayer corner in our room, or alone in nature. The Curé of Ars, a sainted, early 19th-century priest, once asked an old peasant in his parish what he did, sitting for hours in church. The peasant replied: “I look at him, and he looks at me, and we are happy together.”

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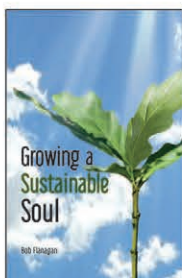
**Forms of
Christian
Meditation**

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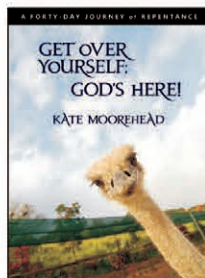
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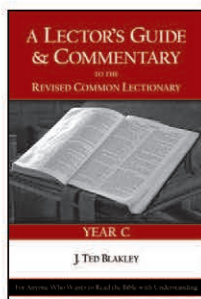
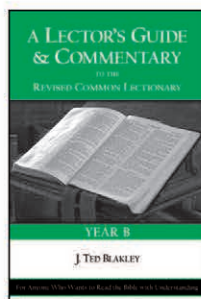
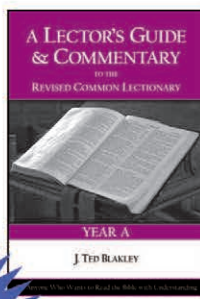


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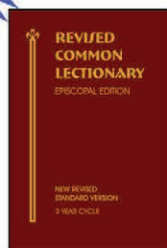
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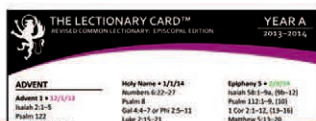


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A more austere form of meditation consists in deliberately setting aside all thoughts, words, and images of God in order to seek God in the darkness of unknowing. This practice, firmly based in Christian tradition, rests on the insight that all human notions of God are inadequate to the Divine Reality; God is always beyond our concepts. St. Thomas Aquinas is one among many to acknowledge that “the highest knowledge one can have of God in this life is to know him to be above every thought we are able to think of him.” Apophatic (Greek, *apophasis* = denying) prayer and meditation presses this logic into practice. Among the mystics of the “negative way” are the sixth-century Syrian monk known to us as Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, the anonymous 14th-century author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*, and St. John of the Cross. Apophatic theology does not deny the truth of divine revelation or the validity of the liturgy and sacraments. Rather, it engenders humility and reserve in the face of the mystery of God by underscoring the limitations of our knowledge.

When discussing the grace of seeing Christ reflected in the pages of Scripture, St. Paul bursts out in wonder at the transformative power: “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another.” Encounter with Christ, whether in liturgy or sacrament, prayer or meditation, changes us. We begin to enter into his glory, transformed into his likeness. And in ways we can scarcely imagine, it may even transform the world.

The Rev. Julia Gatta is professor of pastoral theology at the University of the South's School of Theology in Sewanee. This is the last in a series of articles.

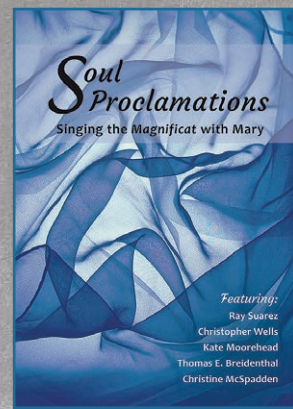
Excerpts from

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New Church-Year's Readings

Watching and Waiting

By Ray Suarez

1 Advent, November 27 (Luke 21:25-36)

It is, after all, the beginning of the new church year. I guess Jesus' strongly worded concern about knowing what time it is, what day, and the momentous things to come only makes sense. I love this part of the lectionary because we see and feel urgency in Jesus. He knows, as we now do, that his time on earth is short when he says these things to his friends and followers. Jesus appears to be insistently warning us about what appears to be not only the end of his earthly life but also the end of human history as it was known. Indeed only a few decades later a Jewish uprising brings down Rome's punishing hammer, resulting in the destruction of the temple and the scattering of the Jewish people.

That's why this passage, for all its passion and fire, leaves me unsure of what Jesus wants us to be ready

for. We may not know exactly what is coming and when, but Jesus begs us to pay attention to everything, to hear the urgency of Creation, groaning with the birth pangs of his Second Coming. Jesus asks us to lift up our heads — encouraging us not to be fearful of these changes because our perseverance ends in our being delivered to stand before him, in awe and adoration.

My longed-for ideal is that God's people are always wide awake, always on guard. For a 21st-century Christian, the world should not be a just-so story — with an endless train of confirmation bias, of seeking information that simply confirms our own preconceived notions. Neither should the world be blandly accepted as it is, a toxic, slow-moving river that leaves us shaking our heads and muttering, "That was then; this is now."

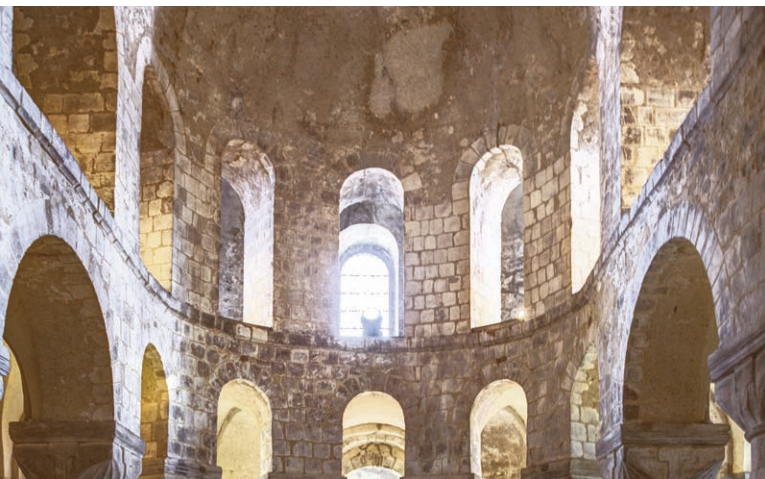
If your eyes are open and your head is up, you'll be ready for Isaiah's "new thing." Let us be Advent Christians, wide awake, prepared, aware, always interrogating the times we live in. Catch some of the spirit of "Truro," one of my favorite hymns:

*Christ is alive!
No longer bound,
To distant years in Palestine,
He comes to claim the here and now,
And conquer every place and time.*

(Feel free to do your own processional march to start your day — and this season of Advent.)

Rafael (Ray) Suarez Jr. is an American broadcast journalist and host of Inside Story on Al Jazeera America. He is active locally and nationally in the Episcopal Church.

(Continued on next page)



New Church-Year's Readings

(Continued from previous page)

Preparing the Way

By Christopher Wells

2 Advent, December 6 (Luke 3:1-6)

In Advent, the Christian year begins again. What does this mean for us personally? It means that we have another chance to walk with Jesus and find that he is walking with us, along the way that God has “prepared for us to walk in” (The Book of Common Prayer, p. 339). In this way, on this road, God the Father helps us to “make his paths straight” by being born again with his Son, listening to his word, taking up our cross, dying every day, rising again to new life, and receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit.

As they are lived and followed by Christians, the original order of the events in Jesus’ life no longer particularly matters. Every aspect of the story is true, and each interprets the other. From our perspective in history, as we meditate on his passion and death, bearing the sins of the whole world, we know that he is also already risen. In moments of fear or sadness, in the throes of depression, or facing terrible pain and suffering, we may cry for this cup to pass from us — and find that the Holy Spirit has gone before, guiding our prayer, interceding “with sighs too deep for words” (Rom. 8:26). If we do not know Jesus, we may anticipate meeting him for the first time, but he was always with us! In each way, God graciously shapes us into the form of Jesus; and because we are mortal and sinful, with so much to learn, God in Christ comes to us again and again, making everything new. As the psalmist exclaims: “All my fresh springs are in you” (Ps. 87:6).

Along this pilgrim way, God gives us friends with whom to practice the praises of God, given in the glorious company of the apostles and the fellowship of prophets, with noble martyrs, and the holy Church throughout the world. With John the Baptist, the Blessed Virgin Mary, Elizabeth, and our own faithful companions, both those who are living and those who have passed away, we sing in gratitude to God: “My soul magnifies the Lord!” That is, I am in awe of you, Lord, and in awe of what you have done. I am in awe that you created me and grateful that you hear me when I call. This is the beginning of the response of every disciple: our preparation for the Word made flesh, again, in our own hearts and lives.

Christopher Wells serves as executive director of the Living Church Foundation.



Proclaiming Good News

By Kate Moorehead

3 Advent, December 13 (Luke 3:7-18)

I wish I could sit down with John the Baptist and ask him to tell me about his life. What an autobiography it would make!

John is a fascinating character. In the Gospel of Luke, we hear of his birth to Zechariah and Elizabeth, prestigious Jews who lived in Jerusalem. Zechariah was a high priest in the temple. His son John would have had the best education, a solid religious upbringing, good food, and beautiful clothing. John was born into the elite class of Judaism.

The next time we see John, he is dressed in camel's hair and eating bugs. Obviously, there was some major break between his childhood and adulthood. He gave up a life of privilege to serve God. For John, proclaiming the good news is about shedding all the social privileges of this world in order to rightly see and live into the kingdom of God.

John does not seem to be concerned with what anyone thinks of him. He has let that all go. For John, it is not important to please anyone but God. He always tells the truth about what he sees. When people come to him to be baptized, he can tell that they come only for security and not for discipleship. Their cowardice and selfishness make him angry. John is fiery, untamed, and insistent in his mission and message.

What would John say to you if you came to him to be baptized? Are you ready to give your life to God? Are you ready to be hated by others if that is necessary? John said goodbye to a life of privilege and had the courage to say yes to God.

The Very Rev. Katherine B. (Kate) Moorehead is the tenth dean of St. John's Episcopal Cathedral in Jacksonville, Florida.



Be Not Afraid

By Thomas E. Breidenthal

4 Advent, December 20 (Luke 1:39-55)

Today we are brought alongside Mary, as she races through the hill country to visit her cousin Elizabeth. She has just been informed by Gabriel that she is to give birth to the Messiah by the power of the Holy Spirit. No doubt she is motivated by the need to share what has happened to her, to seek the advice and encouragement of a trusted adult, and to sort out what is real from what she may have imagined in her impressionable heart. But Mary's driving emotion is excitement: any self-doubt is the byproduct of her whole-heartedness.

Mary has received a call — one so sudden and so new that even now she cannot know for sure whether new life has been conceived within her. When she questions Gabriel — “How can this be, since I have not known a man?” — he says she will be overshadowed by the Holy Spirit. Luke uses that expression only one other time in his Gospel, when he describes the cloud that envelops Peter, James, and John as they see Jesus transfigured in glory on the mountaintop (Luke 9:34).

Some have identified this overshadowing cloud with the dark night of the soul, the “dazzling darkness” we enter into when all the normal props of life are removed, and we are simply in the presence of the living God. Luke notes that Mary was among the disciples when the Holy Spirit lighted on them on Pentecost. Was this a reprise for her? Or perhaps nothing noticeable happened after her yes to Gabriel: I am the Lord's servant — be it to me according to your word. In any case Mary believed what she had been told by Gabriel and proceeded accordingly. Can we who have been promised so much do the same?

The Rt. Rev. Thomas E. Breidenthal serves as bishop of the Diocese of Southern Ohio.

Being and Belonging

By Christine McSpadden

1 Christmas, December 27 (John 1:1-18)

Conversations about religion held in diverse and pluralistic settings often focus on the commonalities between faith traditions. But highlighting the similarities often tempts a reductive downplaying of real differences. I often hear the statement that all religions are really saying the same thing at their core. But different faith traditions actually do embody very different conceptions of God, of the human condition, and of salvation. Various faith traditions prescribe their characteristic paths as they journey toward the consummation of their particular conception of salvation. And those conceptions of salvation, those distinct salvations, can vary markedly.

Christianity's path, for instance, implores particular commitments and devotion to a singular savior. Mary cries out in the *Magnificat*: “My spirit rejoices in God my savior,” placing her personal faith and trust in the great I AM who was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. She stakes her life in the triune Blessed One of Israel, the Word of God, the Holy Spirit who is known in sacred scripture, in the breaking of bread, in the faithful people of God gathered, and in the midst of the lowly being lifted up.

In song, Mary's explosive joy as the bearer of that same Holy One in the flesh catches us up in its fidelity to the living God who ever seeks relationship with us — a God whose very constitutive essence is relationship and who is the source and ground of all relationship.

And in engaging that relationship, we open ourselves to the fulfillment of our mortality and to the willingness to be wholly transfigured and continually changed. Choosing to follow in the way of Christ, and accepting him as Lord and savior, we pledge ourselves to belonging to a particular way of being.

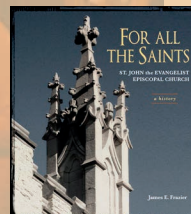
The Rev. Christine McSpadden lives in London, where she is a member of the clergy team at St. Paul's Cathedral.

These essays are published with the permission of Forward Movement, from Soul Proclamations: Singing the Magnificat with Mary. Pp. 77, \$5.

Parish Life in St. Paul, Minnesota

Review by Charles Hoffacker

This large, attractive book invites perusal. Everyone who had a hand in producing this model parish history deserves to be commended. James E. Frazier served for nearly a decade as organist and director of music at St. John's. A seven-person parish committee, as well as numerous members and friends of the congregation, also contributed information. Dozens of donors enabled *For All the Saints* to be sold at a reasonable price.



For All the Saints
St. John the Evangelist
Episcopal Church: A History
By **James E. Frazier**.
Afton Press. Pp. 309. \$40

“St. John’s parishioners built a church and also a city!”

Founded in 1881, St. John the Evangelist in St. Paul, Minnesota, has been a large congregation throughout much of its history. Current membership is almost 1,000. Many prosperous and prominent citizens of St. Paul have been members; hence the good-natured boast on the book’s back cover: “St. John’s parishioners built a church and also a city!” The gospel as proclaimed at their church must have shaped the civic and business efforts of these parishioners, even if the details are beyond recovery.

Like many parish histories, this one includes a new chapter for each successive rector. Well-selected photos, many of them in color, appear throughout the chapters. Occasional sidebars provide background about parish leaders, major projects, and other topics. *For All the Saints* provides details on the construction, renovation, and use of parish properties and clergy residences through the years. The book spans many parishioners, their church participation, and their professional and community endeavors. A nine-page index in small type, devoted mostly to personal names, makes it easy to locate these references.

Perhaps the most prominent parishioner listed is Frank B. Kellogg (1856-1937), a diplomat, U.S. Senator, and U.S. Secretary of State. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1929 for his work on the Kellogg-Briand Pact, a treaty that renounced the use of war as an instrument of national policy except in self-defense and called for settling disputes peacefully.

For All the Saints demonstrates admirable candor about parish shortcomings at different moments in history. St. John’s was one of the last Minnesota congregations to stop renting pews. It was not a pioneer in adopting 1979 Book of Common Prayer. Sometimes parish leaders challenged the membership as a whole to more lively participation and more generous financial support. Like many big churches, St. John’s faced occasional accusations of seeming cold to newcomers.

In this account, however, shortcomings are far outweighed by instances of loyalty, service, and effective leadership by laity and clergy alike. Countless members of the parish engaged in quiet, steady discipleship in decades past and

continue to do so today.

Among the many ministries of St. John’s, two deserve mention here for their scope and longevity.

No single feature of parish life “affected the lives of more young boys and girls as deeply and as memorably as the annual summer camps for choristers.” Camps were held in various rural locations from 1901 to 1974. The children came from the neighborhood and beyond, some were poor, and some had no other connection with the parish.

(Continued on next page)





Parish Life in St. Paul, Minnesota

(Continued from previous page)

In 1915 the Church Club House was established with dormitory rooms for young men, meeting rooms, a dining hall and kitchen, an auditorium seating almost 600 people, a swimming pool, gymnasium, bowling lanes, a billiard room, and equipment for showing movies. For 30 years it functioned as a community center for the wider neighborhood, a diocesan and national model for parish engagement in the community.

Several ministries of the past anticipated current social issues. At various times the parish assisted Cuban and Hmong refugees and other displaced persons. During the 1960s, projects supported civil rights and racial equality.

Who will read *For All the Saints*? Parish members and their families; people interested in Episcopal history or the development of St. Paul, Minnesota; but also anyone seeking an approach to parish history more comprehensive than the all-too-common sketchy summary of rectors and building projects. By presenting a host of parishioners and parish activities, Frazier has succeeded in depicting each period in a way that is spacious, realistic, and engaging. Reading through the chapters, I found myself imagining what life was like among the people of St. John's during each successive period and I came to appreciate their humanity.



It's easy to fantasize about big-steeple parishes. *For All the Saints* performs a valuable service by demythologizing this parish and thus, to some extent, large congregations in general. Frazier implicitly reminds us, time and again, that the current St. John's did not appear overnight. It required time and commitment for the church to be built, a rectory established, an endowment fund organized. Stained-glass

When a broad historical progression is seen from the perspective of a single congregation, the specific and the general illuminate one another in ways that accent the reality of each.

windows and other ornaments appeared only gradually, many of them memorials to children and other beloved family members. Like any other congregation, St. John the Evangelist had to move ahead in faith year by year, and still must do so.

By recounting the history of this parish across more than 125 years, Frazier also reveals something of the course of American Christianity and the Episcopal Church during that time. When a broad historical progression is seen from the perspective of a single congregation, the specific and the general illuminate one another in ways that accent the reality of each.

Even people far from the great state of Minnesota will find *For All the Saints* a book worth exploring and worth giving to others. James E. Frazier and his team have produced a carefully composed and beautifully illustrated history of one of the Episcopal Church's major urban congregations.

The Rev. Charles Hoffacker is rector of St. Paul's Parish Church, Brandywine, Maryland.

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Biblical Women Writ Large



Chris
13
Pollon



By John Martin

Durham Cathedral was the most recent host of *Incarnation, Mary, and Women from the Bible*, an intriguing exhibition of 17 paintings exploring the searing pain of women in the biblical pages.

These huge canvasses are the work of Chris Gollon, partly inspired by *The World's Wife* (1999), a collection by Scottish poet Carol Ann Duffy. The themed poems imaginatively reconstruct the stories of mostly unnamed women in myth and history who are overshadowed by men. They are now a text in the senior school syllabus in England and Wales.

A talking point of the exhibition is Gollon's depiction of "Judas's Wife." This painting, created especially for the exhibition, captures the anguish of a woman contemplating the suicide and permanent degradation of her husband, the betrayer of Jesus.

Gollon also portrays Job's feisty wife, who in the biblical story questions the justice and goodness of God in the wake of her husband's suffering and loss. Hannah's desolation at being unable to conceive is etched on her face and posture. Salomé is overcome with crushing guilt as she lives with her part in the killing of John the Baptist.

In "Madonna and Child," Mary dangles an apple before the Christ child, a statement of how the Theotokos holds in her arms the One who would overcome what went awry with the Fall. "Women of Jerusalem" witnessing the crucifixion weep and pray but evidence an inner strength that is so often characteristic of people living under the oppression of military occupation. The collection ventures beyond the Bible's pages to St. Lucy (Lucia), martyred at age 21 during the persecutions of the

emperor Diocletian in 304.

Gollon blends realism and abstraction in paintings that use brush, rag, and spray cans. He has made a name for himself among contemporary British artists. He worked with Bill Viola, Tracey Emin, and Craigie Aitchison in the exhibition *Images of Christ for the Third Millennium* at St. Paul's Cathedral, London (1994). From 2000 to 2008 he painted *Fourteen Stations of the Cross*, now installed in the Church of St. John on Bethnal Green in east London. Several of his works are in the British Museum. He has exhibited at Art Chicago and worked with Yoko Ono and David Bowie.

For more images from *Incarnation, Mary, and Women from the Bible*, visit <http://is.gd/GollonMary>.



Both Mother and Kirk

Review by Andrew Petiprin

“I dreamed of a boy who was born in the land of Puritania and his name was John.” These are the first words of the first literary offering of a new Christian, Clive Staples Lewis, in 1932. David Downing, editor of the excellent new Wade Annotated Edition of *Pilgrim’s Regress*, notes that Lewis’s homage to Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* and his beloved medieval allegories is not only “his first Christian book” and “his first book of fiction,” but “one of Lewis’s least read and least understood books” (p. xvii).

Indeed, it is difficult reading, but well worth the effort, greatly helped now by Downing’s extensive marginal notes, complementing Lewis’s notes inscribed in a copy given to a student a few years after the work’s publication (hence the Wade edition). Not only is the genre unusual (try reading *The Romance of the Rose*, for example) and the text infused with assumed philosophical and poetic references, but it has a deeply personal meaning for Lewis. What else would a literary scholar do upon converting to Christianity than look at the experience through the lens of his academic specialty? As Downing notes in an introduction, “Lewis seemed almost to be writing for an audience of one” (p. xvii). This may be the case, but peering into the mind of this one reveals deep insight into his later, greater hits, particularly with regard to the role of the Church — a topic that Lewis himself minimized in his apologetics, but that is often present anyway.

The pilgrim, John, becomes aware of the hypocrisy of his homeland, and he catches sight of an island that he is compelled to look for. His quest becomes at first a matter of settling for the next best thing, the poten-

tially problematic “brown girls” who represent lust and the pursuit of worldly pleasure. As their appeal wears off, John wanders farther, encountering a variety of allegorical figures with different explanations of the island he longs for. The pilgrim wades through one worldview after another until he arrives at the Grand Canyon in Book Five. At this stage he has committed himself to a traveling partner, Vertue, who will come, go, and mostly stay with him. But can the Canyon be passed and the island reached? Can Lewis’s vision of joy give way to eternal life in the presence of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

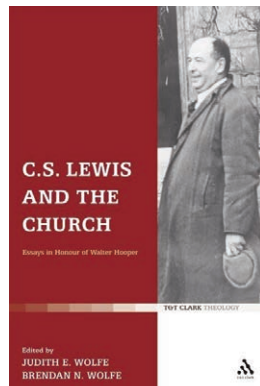
Enter the character Mother Kirk, whom Lewis describes as “Traditional Christianity” (p. 73). Lewis also adds a note about the choice of Mother Kirk’s name in the “Afterward to the Third Edition,” included here by Downing:

The name ... was chosen because “Christianity” is not a very convincing name. Its defect was that it not unnaturally led the reader to attribute to me a much more definite *Ecclesiastical* position than I could really boast of (p. 217, emphasis Lewis).

The stage is set early on for “mere” Christianity, which is more (not less) than the Church. The pilgrim cannot get across the canyon to salvation without her, and for Lewis this meant the Church of England — a theoretically big tent with room enough for “Mother” and “Kirk” alike. The most useful function Mother Kirk plays in the book is in telling the succinct but powerful story of the Landlord, his possessions, and his tenants’ rebellion against him. Mother Kirk speaks with both certainty and humility, traits that none of the pilgrim’s other interlocutors possess together.



The
*Pilgrim's
Regress*
CS
LEWIS



The Pilgrim’s Regress

Wade Annotated Edition
By **C.S. Lewis**. Eerdmans. Pp. 263. \$25

C.S. Lewis and the Church

Essays in Honour of Walter Hooper
Edited by **Judith Wolfe** and **Brendan N. Wolfe**. Bloomsbury T&T Clark. Pp. 208. \$34.95

The Pilgrim's Regress is an intricate *essai* in what will become Lewis's most effective apologetic strategy: invite readers into an imaginative world in which they may come to feel the truth of Christ. It is hard to envision the heartfelt, magisterial *Great Divorce* without this earlier literary exploration. Life with God (now and later) is a journey. Obstacles and lifelines are often one and the same thing, depending on how one approaches and uses them. The pilgrim is in one place and knows he cannot remain there. Lewis's notes, expanded and supplemented by David Downing, make a difficult book readable to the point of great enjoyment in parts and useful in the extreme in evaluating and appreciating Lewis's overall contribution to championing the Christian faith. This effort is arguably unmatched in the English language.

In Lewis's life, the pilgrim's island could be reached too. The insights into Lewis's theological journey in *The Pilgrim's Regress* are hashed out à la Augustine's *Confessions* in the 1955 memoir, *Surprised by Joy*. Lewis grew up in Northern Ireland, gave in to certain temptations of the flesh, and pursued various philosophies into an atheistic dead end. Then he became a Christian and a faithful Anglican. *C.S. Lewis and the Church*, a collection of essays, delves into the role of the Church in Lewis's life and work. These reflections dedicated to Walter Hooper, Lewis's longtime literary estate manager, contain some gems that are quite appropriately read alongside *The Pilgrim's Regress*. If John the pilgrim came to rely on Mother Kirk, Lewis the pilgrim came to rely on the Church of England and the wider Church Catholic — but with neither

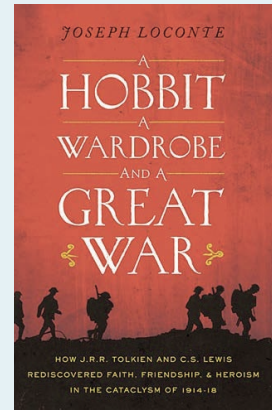
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Refined by Fire

A Hobbit, a Wardrobe, and a Great War

How J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis Rediscovered Faith, Friendship, and Heroism in the Cataclysm of 1914-18

By **Joseph Loconte**. Thomas Nelson. Pp. 256. \$24.99



A *Hobbit, a Wardrobe, and a Great War* is a very enjoyable book about the well-documented friendship of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien. Both served in World War I, and their writings comprise not merely impressions of their experiences but an alternative to the shattered worldview begotten after the Armistice. Tolkien's faith withstood the tribulation of the Somme, and Lewis's faith (with Tolkien's help) rose mightily from the rubble.

Joseph Loconte sketches a helpful picture for the uninformed (or forgetful) of the intellectual climate leading up to the war. The world had almost deluded itself into ignoring the most self-evident of Christian doctrines: the Fall. Neither Lewis's nor Tolkien's experiences on the front made pacifists of them; but they longed for a world of honor, which must in dire necessity (and at great cost) be fought for and redeemed. When the two medievalists met each other in 1926, a holy alliance was born that lacked one piece.

Loconte writes: "A deep friendship was taking root. And yet for all their mutual interests in literature, the two men could not agree on the nature of myth and its relationship to belief in God. The argument came to a head on Saturday evening, September 19, 1931" (p. 130).

This was the night of the famous conversation on Addison's walk and in Lewis's rooms at Magdalen College. On this night, two colleagues became brothers in Christ, similarly equipped to offer the world a mythological vision of salvation from the meaninglessness they had fought through in the trenches of France.

Loconte demonstrates that both Lewis's and Tolkien's writings are the opposite of escapism. Rather they are a pathway to engagement with post-war reality: "They became convinced there was only one truth, one singular event, that could help the weary and brokenhearted find their way home: the Return of the King" (p. 193).

Loconte does a superb job picking out key themes and characters that tie Lewis's and Tolkien's projects together. Tolkien may have played Gandalf to Lewis's Frodo at first, but both become Puddleglum in the end. This book is easy and illuminating reading, a valuable contribution to our appreciation of two Christian literary giants.

*The Rev. Andrew Petiprin
Orlando*

The stage is set early on for “mere” Christianity, which is more (not less) than the Church.

(Continued from previous page)

an exclusive ecclesiastical claim nor a fierce ecclesiastical pride.

As Andrew Cuneo notes in an introduction: “I began to learn that C.S. Lewis was not a ‘subject,’ an academic hypostasis, but a real person about whom it mattered to get things right” (p. 2). Mark Edwards points out Lewis’s lack of background in patristics paired with an almost innate Augustinianism that suited his temperament well for Anglicanism. Similarly, Jonathan Herapath notices no direct references to the Oxford Movement or Victorian religion in Lewis’s writings, and yet finds him to be largely in sympathy with both, particularly with regard to the danger that liberal theology among the clergy poses to the faithful in the pews. We may remember here the scathing portrayal of the liberal bishop in *The Great Divorce*, itself a finished version of the buffoon-like prototype of Broad Church in *The Pilgrim’s Regress*, Book VII. About the latter, Lewis notes in his annotation, “You will hardly fail to recognize him!” (*Pilgrim*, p. 116). Downing adds to this a long, informative note for those unfamiliar with Anglican ecclesiastical parties. He focuses in particular on Lewis’s concern not with High Church or Low Church

piety, but the importance of “the supernaturalism of Christian orthodoxy” over the new religion of “Liberals and Modernists” (p. 116). Broad Church’s motto that “the seeking is the finding” is never going to move John across the canyon and onto the island (p. 117). It did not move Lewis anywhere either.

Francis Warner describes Lewis’s participation in a translation of the Psalter, with particularly interesting anecdotes about working with T.S. Eliot, something of Lewis’s nemesis. Kallistos Ware concludes that Lewis “has indeed a strong claim to be considered an ‘anonymous Orthodox’” (p. 152), a statement that many of us may find more than a little encouraging to hear. Ian Ker argues in a highly personal essay that “mere Christianity” is for Lewis nothing other than the Roman Catholic faith (“Mother”). Christopher Mitchell stretches Lewis very carefully to see a view of the atonement suitable for Reformed churches (“Kirk”). Philip Ryken, president of Wheaton College, which seems to be producing the very best Anglicans these days, testifies in a charming piece of writing to Lewis’s place as the patron saint of evangelical churches.

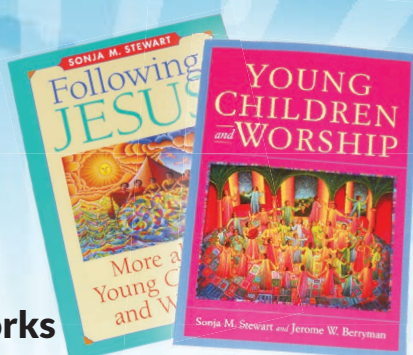
The remaining essays in the volume (the long Part II) explore in

greater detail what Lewis wrote about the Church in his nonfiction and how he depicted the Church in his fiction. The authors often adduce *The Pilgrim’s Regress* to make their points, focusing in particular on the character of Mother Kirk. Michael Ward, in the best essay, reminds us of the role of the Church in *The Screwtape Letters*, in which the demons conspire to make an idol of the Church. Lewis avoided drawing attention to “the Church as manifest in its buildings and services,” of creating in it an end instead of a means (p. 72). In this way, John in *The Pilgrim’s Regress* would have found himself farther off the path to the island if he had concerned himself more with the identity of Mother Kirk than with the journey she helps him complete. Ward most helpfully reminds of something we see throughout Lewis’s writings, including *The Pilgrim’s Regress*: God is full of surprises, a realization that Lewis regarded as “a key ecclesiological truth” (p. 87). Thus Lewis and the Church remains a slippery subject, but one that deserves our time and efforts.

The Wade Annotated Edition of *The Pilgrim’s Regress* belongs on every Lewis devotee’s shelf, with gratitude to Downing for his valuable labors. *C.S. Lewis and the Church* is well worth our attention too, particularly among those of us raised on Lewis that have come to a deeper spiritual maturity with the discovery of ecclesiology. Both books provide surprises amid familiar territory. Both remind us that the dream of a boy from Puritania came true, and the faith of the Church offers us the same promise.

The Rev. Andrew Petiprin is rector of St. Mary of the Angels Church in Orlando.

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The Craft of Preaching

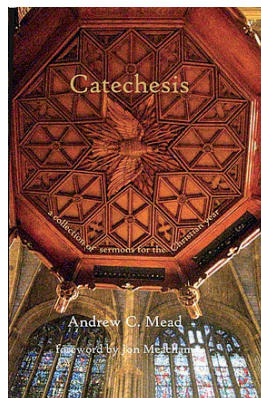
Review by Daniel Martins

A sermon in the context of the Eucharist is an eminently liturgical act. Its mission is to place the Liturgy of the Word — the appointed readings from Holy Scripture, or, more broadly sometimes, the particular feast or occasion being observed — in the breach between the concrete, mundane lives of those in the congregation and the eschatological hope into which the ensuing Liturgy of the Table will shortly subsume everyone. But within this overarching rubric, sermons may be deployed in the service of other ancillary ends, among which is catechesis. A homily is not inherently a teaching event, but a good homily can certainly convey good teaching, and the cause of the gospel is undoubtedly well-served when this happens.

Andrew Mead retired in 2014 after 18 years as rector of the iconic St Thomas' Church, Fifth Avenue, New York City, and 43 years of ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church. This short volume collects the texts of 37 homilies delivered by Fr. Mead in the course of his ministry — necessarily, then, a quite small sampling of the entire corpus. In deference to the subtitle, “Sermons for the Christian Year,” there are relatively few from the “green” Sundays of ordinary time and relatively more from feast days and seasonal nodal points: All Saints, Christmas, Epiphany, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Easter, Pentecost, Corpus Christi, Ascension, Assumption, and the like. These are intended to be teaching sermons — which, in fact, they are — and, moreover, teaching at a fairly basic level, ever focusing on the fundamental building blocks of Christian faith and discipleship.

On digging into a collection of sermons, particularly sermons that endeavor to teach, one is perhaps predisposed to treasure-hunt the material, casting about for the homiletical pearl of great price, the preaching equivalent of *haute cuisine*, the arresting metaphor, the outside-the-box penetrating insight. It is without the slightest intent of impugning Fr. Mead's work when I say that what he serves up here is not beef Wellington but oatmeal, not poetry that sets our hearts ablaze but prose that is clear, simple, direct, and grounded in the tradition of Scripture and the Church's teaching.

It is not soaring oratory, but a rather old-fashioned, pastorally and circumstantially sensitive (one selection was delivered on Sept. 16, 2001) manifestation of the craft of preaching. That said, Mead will occasion-



Catechesis

Sermons for the Christian Year
By **Andrew Mead**. St. Thomas Church.
Pp. 168. \$15

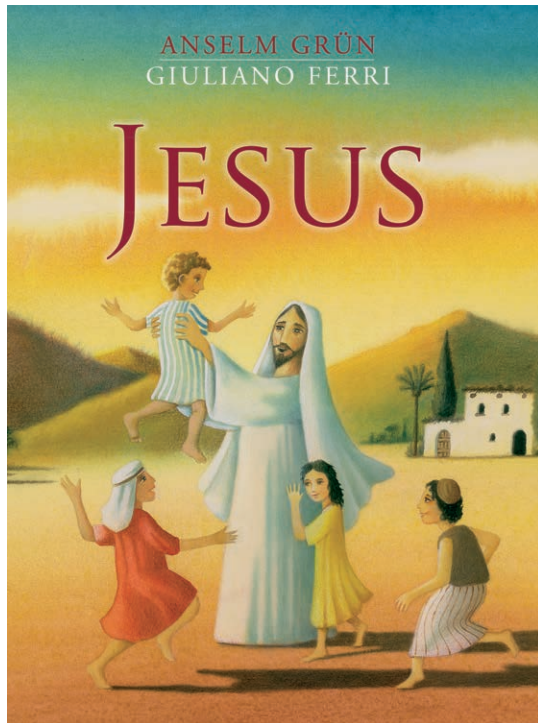
ally sprinkle some brown sugar on the hearty whole grain, such as when he offers this comment about prayer in the context of preaching on Our Lord's Ascension: “When we pray ‘through Jesus Christ our Lord,’ we are literally calling home. We are laying claim to Jesus' place in the heart of God, to the eternal Son who has finished his journey from heaven into our far-away country like a shepherd seeking his sheep, to bring us home to safety” (p. 142).

As one might expect, these homilies are short; most would probably clock in right around the ten-minute mark, and they can be read in less time than that. Some might argue that it is difficult to say very much of substance in such a short time. Perhaps so, but what this collection points toward is the practical reality that, insofar as preaching is an expression of pastoral care, it is not about an isolated homiletical event — one sermon on one Sunday — but about a relationship. It is about sheep in a flock getting to know their shepherd's voice for a period of weeks turning into months and months turning into years. Over that time, they invariably hear the same core truths expounded over and over again, and not necessarily in particularly different ways, but ways that, nonetheless, inure to the glory of God, the sanctification of their souls, the edification of the Church, and the life of the world. As expressed in (St. Thomas' parishioner and renowned author) Jon Meacham's foreword: “Taken together, the sermons collected here record a priestly life spent in pursuit of the simplest yet most profound truths of Christianity” — as fine a valediction as any priest marking the conclusion of full-time ministry could desire.

The Rt. Rev. Daniel H. Martins is Bishop of Springfield.

Lectio Divina for the Whole Family

Review by Caleb Congrove



Jesus

By **Anselm Grün** and **Giuliano Ferrri**

Eerdmans. Pp. 26. \$16

How do you communicate the gospel to your children? This question likely holds much of your deciding and doing as a Christian parent. Parents will find help for the task in this book for ages 4-8.

In telling children about Jesus, it can be easy to fall into telling some other story, substituting some account of what Jesus does or accomplishes for Jesus himself. As Karl Barth said about theology, it is easy to make the Christian story about Jesus *and something else*. This book does an admirable job of simply telling the gospel story.

Translated by Laura Watkinson, Grün's text uses ordinary, not elevated, language, but it is always nimble and never clunky. Ferrri's illustrations offer an appealing and coherent visual context for the telling. I think my favorite illustration is the one of the Prodigal Son. The picture is mostly just the two figures locked in an embrace, but the son's grief and the father's grip are both palpable.

A selection of episodes from the Synoptic Gospels, *Jesus* is both summary and harmony, but the book avoids adding to the gospel stories. True to the

Gospels themselves, much of *Jesus* presents episodes in no particular order or sequence at all.

Rather than introducing some other story made up and thrown in only to hold together these episodes, this more occasional telling sketches out a cumulative portrait: Jesus tells people about God. He preaches and tells stories and he teaches. He performs wonders, healing the sick and even raising the dead. Eventually, he is betrayed and killed but he defeats death too, rising alive from his tomb.

I especially admire the adept touch with which this book hands on the many stories of Jesus' miracles. Miracle stories account for most of its pages, but they never get flattened. By that I mean to be saying a lot. Miracles are easily squished because explaining them can explain them away. And children often expect us to do exactly that, to tame what they do not know or understand and transmute it for them into known and understood reality.

Grün's telling doesn't explain miracles away. Colored throughout by a sense of wonder, the book offers little "because." Without explanation or apology, Jesus' wondrous deeds remain wonderfully untamed, and they appropriately inspire amazement. His final act in the story inspires faith too: "the women had told the truth: Jesus lives and has triumphed over death!"

The Legend of Saint Nicholas

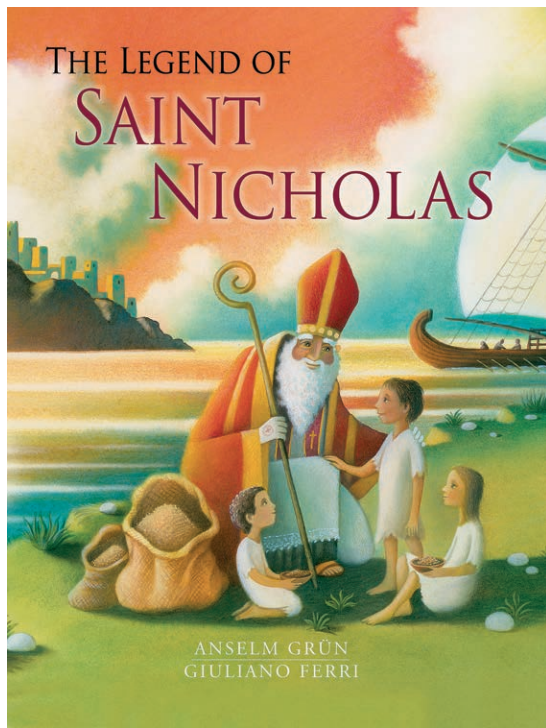
By **Anselm Grün** and **Giuliano Ferrri**

Eerdmans. Pp. 26. \$16

If "art and the saints are the greatest apologetic for our faith," as Pope Benedict has famously said, then illustrated books about the saints should be cheered with special enthusiasm by Christian parents. *The Legend of Saint Nicholas*, for ages 4-8, tells the story of one of the ancient Church's best-loved saints. Beloved in both East and West, and by children especially, Nicholas promises an ideal subject for a children's book.

The Legend of Saint Nicholas portrays the saint in a variety of roles. Nicholas is a priest and bishop who cares for his flock. As a shepherd, he is a ready helper for any who need him, using his own wealth to care for the poor and distressed. But his care for the vulnerable also extends beyond the limits of his own resources.

St. Nicholas is remembered and venerated in the



Church precisely as a *wonder-worker*, a saint whose ministry was accompanied and characterized by miracles.

Finally, the saint's story does not end with his time here among us. From heaven, St. Nicholas intercedes to help those on earth. As pastor, miracle worker, and heavenly patron, the saint's kindness shines through the variety of his roles and holds the whole portrait together.

The book connects the episodes from the saint's life to his role in the life of the Church: "People all over the world love Saint Nicholas because of the many miracles he performed during his lifetime, and even from heaven after his death."

The Legend of St. Nicholas concludes with some popular customs surrounding this saint. The final page recites a children's song from Germany. For readers of the original German, this conclusion served to relate the stories of the legend to their own familiar customs. English speakers may not be familiar with the same customs, but the ending can introduce readers to a wider world of Christian practice.

However much you know or do not know about Nicholas, you and your children will be sure to love him — or love him more — after reading this book.

Thank You, God

By **J. Bradley Wigger** and **Jago**. Eerdmans. Pp. 26. \$16

"How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you made them all." This line from Psalm 104 does not appear

in *Thank You, God*, but it would be a very fitting coda.

Written for ages 3-8, it is, as the title suggests, a prayer of thanksgiving. It is an immensely inviting prayer, and even adults may find in it an unexpected invitation of their own. Jago's illustrations are vivid and they invite their own share of thoughtful pauses.

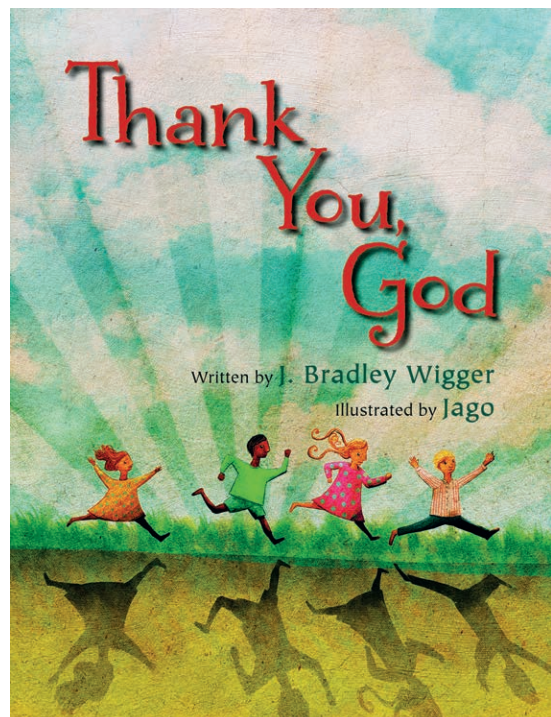
Thank You, God makes good on the hymn's counsel to "count your many blessings, name them one by one." Each page proposes another object for our thankfulness (*food* or *home*, for example) and develops it in concrete connections of appreciation. There are some lovely turns of phrase and striking connections in the details of the meditations.

Thank You, God does not just lay out a word of thanksgiving, but savors it, lingering on the details: "Thank you, God, for meals together, with good food to smell, to taste, and to fill my belly."

Parents too can learn something from reading this book with their children. When we remember to be thankful for the food on our tables, how often are we really meditating on what is there, given to us? Usually we are likely only reminding ourselves that we could be going hungry.

Thank You, God invites us to linger on the many good things we have received and to receive them with delighted, thankful hearts. *Thank You, God*, indeed! When will we outgrow this exercise? For kids from 1 to 92, this book is delightful.

A father of three, Caleb Congrove is a high school teacher in Ohio and a contributor to TLC's weblog, Covenant.



LETTERS

Déjà Vu on Sub-communities

I read with interest “We Too Are the Other” by George Sumner [TLC, Oct. 18]. His stated goal was “to offer a series of theological arguments for the importance of a sub-community of Episcopalians who espouse a traditional view of Christian marriage.” I found myself both sympathetic and saddened: sympathetic, because I and many others struggled for precisely this kind of “sub-community” that “espoused a traditional view of Christian” priesthood and episcopate. Saddened, because this effort of ours was so completely rejected, and I fear the same potential results for Fr. Sumner’s efforts.

It seems to me that the definitive theological outlook that doomed efforts to retain a space for the historic priesthood and episcopate was the conviction that if any baptized Christian is forbidden to ordination by virtue of a natural condition, they are being treated as second-class, and denied full rights of membership. In this view, the denial of equal rights could not be tolerated. I fear that this same logic (used recently in the related decision by the U.S. Supreme Court) will ultimately doom Fr. Sumner’s hope regarding the

reservation of marriage for heterosexual couples only.

I do not believe that I am seeing this effort merely through the lens of my own sadness. The logic of the parallel seems clear: How can one church be allowed to deny sacraments to church members who are welcomed to receive them by the church as a whole? Nevertheless, I will pray that Fr. Sumner’s attractive proposal meets with a better outcome.

*The Rev. Canon Lawrence D. Bausch
Holy Trinity Parish
San Diego*

Recognizing Benedict

Thank you for Dennis Raverty’s article on the resurgence of iconography in the contemporary world [TLC, Oct. 4]. It was good to read of the ways that Christians beyond the Byzantine tradition are reappropriating the traditional iconography of the Christian East in an ecumenical way. The article states that St. Benedict is “not recognized as a saint by the Eastern Church.” This is incorrect. St. Benedict is certainly numbered among the Orthodox saints. His feast day in the East is March 14 for both the Orthodox and the Byzantine Rite Catholic churches.

*Geoffrey Mackey
Trinity School for Ministry
Ambridge, Pennsylvania*

What’s in an Image?

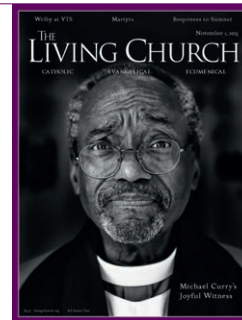
THE LIVING CHURCH’s cover portrait of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry [Nov. 1] prompted many and varied responses: phone calls from two disappointed bishops, similar Facebook posts, and a call from a priest who ordered 100 copies because he found the cover story and photos so compelling.

“Everyone who knows our Presiding Bishop-elect knows him to be full of love and joy,” the Rev. Vickie Geer McGrath, rector of All Saints’ Church in Millington, New Jersey, wrote on Facebook. “This photo does Bishop Curry and the Church a great disservice.”

“I wholeheartedly challenge TLC to publish a front cover picture of the PB elect that’s flattering,” wrote the Rev. Sean Ferrell, rector of the Chapel of St. John the Divine in Champaign, Illinois. “There are so many good ones, and it is not lost on me what you’re doing. I call foul.”

The Rev. Beth Maynard, rector of Emmanuel Memorial Church in Champaign, wrote that she and her husband, Mark, “both found this cover picture beautiful and tender. I was immediately reminded of the deep, real, weathered joy one sees in the silent parade of monastic faces in *Into Great Silence* — to me one of the most memorable photographic witnesses to non-naive hearts alive to the Spirit. We were moved by it.”

“Michael photographs well,” wrote the Rev. John A.



Photographer Asher Imtiaz with Bishop Curry

Russell, a friend and colleague of Bishop Curry’s father in Buffalo, New York. “The absolute icon-power feeling of compassion and faith in this photo is so wonderful, absolutely Christlike, that it is photographic art at its best. The photographer ... knew what he saw and recognized and captured it in his art.”

Fr. Russell, retired from active ministry, attends St. Philip’s Church in Buffalo, the parish in which Michael Curry first served as an acolyte and his father, the Rev. Kenneth Curry, served for many years as rector.

Photographer Asher Imtiaz, an Anglican from Pakistan, took the pictures of Presiding Bishop Curry in the Nov. 1 edition, and many others during General Convention during the summer.

“My goal was to have a portrait that would be rich and would capture the sensitivity of his character,” Imtiaz said. “I think this one was the best I got.”

Trends in Giving

(Continued from page 11)

grams consume 77 percent of the \$400,000 budget. The remaining 23 percent goes to justice and relief work in Maplewood, the Diocese of Newark, and the world. This mission category is increasingly emphasized in an effort to connect with a rising generation that values signs of success, according to member Dan Austin, who has led stewardship campaigns at St. George's.

"Our members, including — and maybe especially — newer ones, are very interested in what the parish does for others, inside and outside the church walls," Austin said via email. "So we're trying to respond, and are seeking to put those efforts in a Christian context."

What motivates givers to give the church priority can vary a lot from person to person, Weber-Johnson says. Nicholson agrees: no one gives just to keep the lights on. Even a visible result is not always the ultimate driving factor for an individual.

"We give because this has an opportunity to transform you [the giver] in the process," Weber-Johnson said. "We give because you are in relationship with people who are leading these ministries. ... These are all ways in which a story can be adapted."

Still, documenting results matters more than ever across the philanthropic landscape, and congregations are not exempt. Observers say they can learn from Christian aid organizations, which must distinguish themselves every day among a sea of alternatives.

"The charitable giving space is competitive and increasingly more focused on delivering results," said Robert Radtke, president of Episcopal Relief & Development, via email.

Tracking results helps organizations tell their stories. For the past decade, Episcopal Relief & Development has been making sure donors know how their dollars are taking the sting out of malaria. Since 2006, the NetsforLife program has distributed 22 million malaria nets, which protects people from disease-carrying



Malaria Control Agents perform their duties as part of NetsforLife, a joint program of Episcopal Relief & Development and five partner organizations. Episcopal Relief & Development photo

mosquitos. More than 111,000 trained malaria control agents monitor the program.

With independent verification of results in hand, Episcopal Relief & Development has numbers to share when describing the agency's effectiveness. Donors receive assurance that the nets, combined with education and monitoring, have saved more than 112,000 young children's lives and reduced malaria rates by 45 percent in participating communities. Equally rigorous monitoring and evaluation criteria are now in the works for all ERD programs.

"It is about moving the discussion from *What are we putting into the program?* to *What kind of impact is the program having?* and then telling that story," Radtke said.

Even in today's competitive charity landscape, some still make the local church their top priority. Retired engineer Bruce Pollock and his wife, Alice, give 10 percent of their income to St. Aidan's Church in Hartford, Wisconsin, a suburb of Milwaukee. Even 10 percent of a family inheritance went to establish a church endowment. They spread an additional 4-5 percent of yearly income among other nonprofits such as Milwaukee Public Television, the Hartford Lion's Club, and Bruce's alma mater, the University of Wisconsin.

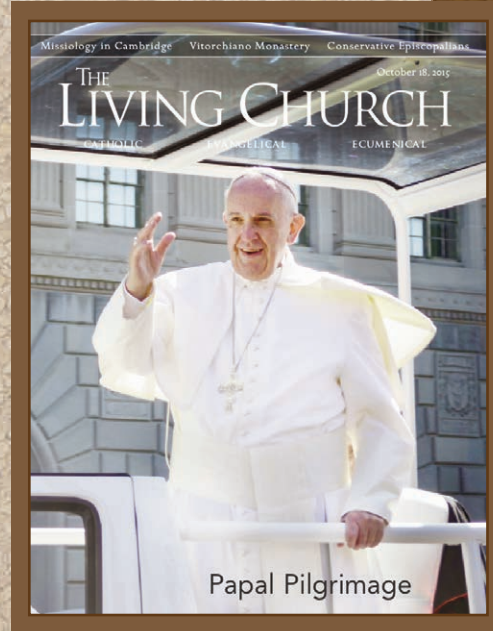
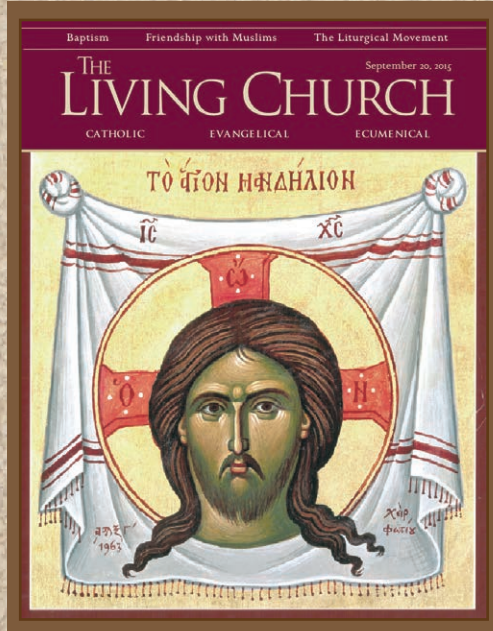
"I do the church the first; it's an au-

tomatic," Pollock said. "I've backed off on other things. We were up to 15 or 20 percent that we were giving away. But 10 percent still goes to the church. That's off the top."

That spirit from a stewardship leader in the congregation has helped St. Aidan's climb out from under a \$320,000 debt that lingered after a fire in the mid-2000s. Pledges from members, coupled with matching funds from the Diocese of Milwaukee, have put the church on track to pay off the debt as soon as recent pledges are fulfilled. No one gave large gifts to the campaign, Pollock said. The key instead was to generate 100 percent participation from the congregation.

Pollock says he's motivated by all the church does within and beyond its own walls, from a free monthly lunch that draws 100-plus to Bible study and Sunday school. He encourages fellow parishioners to be daily stewards of all they have: not just money, but also time, energy, and other resources.

"I give to things first, and then if I don't have money for a vacation or a new TV set, then I don't do it," Pollock said. "I've had my tax man say, 'That's a bunch. You're giving more away than most people.' And I'd say, 'Well, that's fine. I've been blessed. So that's okay.' That's just how I'm cooked, I guess." □



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PEOPLE & PLACES

Appointments

The Rev. **Lesley Adams** is parish priest at Christ Church, 1393 Main St., Willard, NY 14588.

The Rev. **Diana Akiyama** is rector of St. Augustine's, 54-3801 Akoni Pule Hwy., Kapaa, HI 96755.

The Rev. **Ted Blakley** is rector of Grace, 2 Hyde Park Dr., Hutchinson, KS 67502.

The Rev. **Trace Browning** is rector of All Saints, 1710 Foothill Dr., Salt Lake City, UT 84108.

The Rev. **Thomas R. Cook** is rector St. Stephen's, 4439 W. 50th St., Edina, MN 55424.

The Rev. Canon **Chad Jones** is priest-in-charge of St. Augustine's, 12954 Joor Rd., Baton Rouge, LA 70818, and remains rector of St. Patrick's, Zachary.

The Very Rev. **Christoph Keller III** is dean and rector of Trinity Cathedral, 310 W. 17th St., Little Rock, AR 72206.

Debbie Kremers is missioner for transitions of the Diocese of Kansas, 835 S.W. Polk St., Topeka, KS 66612.

The Rev. **Christopher R. Morck** is rector of Grace, 133 School St., New Bedford, MA 02740.

The Rev. **Michelle A. Ortiz** is assistant rector for family ministry at St. David's, 1015 Old Roswell Rd., Roswell, GA 30076.

The Rev. **Elizabeth Papazoglakis** and the Rev. **Tom Papazoglakis** are priests-in-charge of St. George's, 912 Rt. 146, Clifton Park, NY 12065.

The Rev. **Michael Steven Patterson** is pastor of Gift of Grace Lutheran, 290 S. West St., Fernley, NV 89408.

The Rev. **Ezgi Saribay** is curate of St. Michael and St. George, 6345 Wydown Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63105.

The Rev. **Blake Sawicky** is assistant rector of St. Michael and St. George, 6345 Wydown Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63105.

The Rev. **Elizabeth "Beth" Rauen Sciaino** is priest-in-charge of St. Bernard's, 88 Claremont Rd., Bernardsville, NJ 07924.

The Rev. **Masud Ibn Syedullah**, TSSF, is priest and pastoral consultant at St. Andrew's, 26 Prospect St., Brewster, NY 10509.

The Rev. **Jeff Wallace** is rector of Calvary, 408 S. Lee St., Americus, GA 31709.

Ordinations

Deacons

Georgia — **Johnny Tuttle**

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Maryland — **Frank Bailey**

Retirements

The Rev. **Richard A. Ginnever**, as rector of Christ Church, Columbia, MD; add: 595 Grant Dr., Gettysburg, PA. 17325.

The Rev. **George V. Porter**, as team minister at Trinity, Cochran, GA.

The Rev. **Lloyd E. Prator**, as rector of St. John's in the Village, New York, NY.

The Rev. Canon **Howard K. Williams**, as rector of St. Augustine's, Brooklyn, NY.

Deaths

The Rev. **James P. Crowther, Jr.**, a former missionary to Liberia, died Sept. 9. He was 82.

Born in New York City, he was a graduate of Florida State University and the University of the South. He was ordained deacon in 1957 and priest in 1961. He served in West Africa at the Liberian Mission of the Order of the Holy Cross from 1958 to 1960, teaching theology and history to high school students. He served congregations in Georgia, Massachusetts, and South Carolina until his retirement in 1986.

Brother **Derek Ford**, SSF, a former Episcopal chaplain at the San Francisco Jail and a founding member of St. Gregory of Nyssa Church, died at St. Francis Friary, Los Angeles, Sept. 4. He was 83.

He learned of having terminal cancer only ten days before his death. He is survived by a brother, John Ford, of the United Kingdom.

The Rev. Canon **William Chester Rhodes** died Sept. 2 at his home in Phoenix. He was 67.

A native of Philadelphia, he was a graduate of Yale University and General Theological Seminary. He was ordained deacon in 1976 and priest in 1977, and served parishes in Arizona, California, and New York. As rector of Christ the King Church, San Francisco, he served a congregation devastated by HIV/AIDS. During a decade, he said in a 2014 sermon, he presided at the funerals of 328 parishioners, which he described as horrific. Rhodes was an advocate of deacons and a member of the faculty in the deacon formation program in the Episcopal Diocese of Arizona.

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In Jesus' day none of the modern means to assist the natural but sometimes dangerous process of childbirth existed. "Birth pangs" vividly portrayed the pain and anguish suffered by the mother and, by extension, her family.

In the Gospel reading today our Lord gives a rather grim prediction of the future. There will be war, earthquakes, famine. Frauds will pretend to be the Messiah and will draw people away from true religion and virtue. Their predictions that the end is coming will be disproved as time goes on, leaving them behind. Christians are not to be afraid. These are the birth pangs of a new creation.

Jesus made these predictions quietly to his closest friends. They had been in the Temple, and his friends had marveled at its wonder, its huge stones and pillars. Today we can only find a hint of the grandeur of the place when we stand at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. The glories the disciples saw vanished when the Romans, led by Titus, destroyed the Temple and most of the city in A.D. 70. Some speculate that the destruction of Israel's holy place decisively turned the mission of the Church toward the Gentiles.

Jesus tells his friends that the Temple will be destroyed so that not one stone will be laid upon another. Some suggest that Mark wrote this after the fact, putting into Jesus' mouth a description of what happened. They suggest that to Mark the new Creation had been realized in the life of the swiftly expanding Church, which survived the wars and all the destruction as Jews took on the might of Rome and lost everything, to become marginalized and scattered. If, as most scholars believe, Mark's Gospel was written around the time of the Temple's destruction, there is no reason why the predictions ascribed to Jesus are untrue. Winston Churchill predicted the Second

World War years before it happened and even he did not claim to be the Messiah.

Christians may believe that, in a sense, Jesus' prediction about the fall of Jerusalem and the survival of the Church was an accurate reading of the signs of the time. The tragedies, wars, famines, and false teachers we see as we look back and expect in the future are the birth pangs of the coming kingdom. It is not for us to know when or how God will restore all things unto himself. We can know and believe that the kingdom will come.

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Look It Up

Read, mark, and learn Mark 13:1-8.

Think About It

How do you embrace the blessed hope of everlasting life?

First reading and psalm: 2 Sam. 23:1-7 • Ps. 132:1-13(14-19)
Alternate: Daniel 7:9-10,13-14 • Ps. 93 • Rev. 1:4b-8 • John 18:33-37

Priests of the King

What do you want to be when you grow up? Occasionally a child will answer, "President of the United States." Perhaps it's better after all for children to stick to attainable futures as teachers, scientists, or firefighters. Yet, beginning at baptism a Christian learns to praise Jesus by saying, "To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." All the baptized are ordained as priests, priests in a kingdom, in which Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Rev. 4:1b-8).

Perhaps we would rather be a firefighter after all. We would much rather let the ordained carry the title and responsibility of priesthood, to offer the sacrifice by which Jesus frees the sins of the world, to speak to the world for God, and to speak from the world to God. This vocation is that fulfilled in baptism, and like it or not, the Church and its members bear the weight of being a royal priesthood.

The confrontation between Jesus and the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate is dramatic. Pilate was born into a family of hereditary knights, a military family. As prefect of Judaea, he represented the tyrannical Emperor Tiberius as commander of the Roman legions in the area, as administrator of the area, and with limited judicial power. He exemplified naked power, repression, and force.

Jesus too had a noble lineage, tracing his family tree to King David, the great Jewish hero. But he was born in a cave. His human father was a carpenter. True, the village carpenter was a valued and honored member of the village, as he made tools, furniture, the beams that held up roofs, doors, and window frames. Such utilitarian labor in no way compared with being a hereditary knight, let alone the representative of an em-

peror who claimed to be divine. Pilate asserted the power of perhaps the greatest empire the world had known.

Jesus says that his kingdom was from above. State and faith clash in these persons. Today Tiberius and his empire are long gone. Pilate lives on in the Creeds, but not as a man of power. Jesus lives. He is King of kings. His kingdom from above is to come but is foreshadowed in the Church as Christians serve God's empire as a royal priesthood. The power of this kingdom is love, compassion, and mission. Through the Church and its members, God works his purpose out as year succeeds to year until the earth becomes full of the glory of God as Jesus returns to claim his own.

Almighty and everlasting God, whose will it is to restore all things in your well-beloved Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords: Mercifully grant that the peoples of the earth, divided and enslaved by sin, may be freed and brought together under his most gracious rule; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Look It Up

Read the lessons appointed for this day.

Think About It

Reflect on how you exercise your priestly ministry at home, at work, and to those in need.



Focused Outward

Fellowship, worship, and service are joined closely at St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport. Newcomers are welcomed at breakfast once a month before the 10:30 service. On Wednesday nights, supper is served before the evening's choir practices, youth programs, and a short conversational lecture for adults on Scripture and the spiritual life.

The cathedral's choral program includes the Boys and Girls Choir, dedicated to the highest musical standards, to educating and forming young people through music, and to enriching the cultural life of Shreveport. Adults participate in the Cathedral Choir, which sings a repertoire from Gregorian chant to 21st-century sacred music for the 10:30 service. The Evensong choir is an auditioned group made of up staff singers and adult volunteers who sing for weekly Choral Evensong, joining the Boys and Girls Choir.

The Community Ministries is particularly concerned with meeting the needs of children, the homeless, elderly, and the victims of poverty, crime, and religious persecution, not only locally but around the world. The Cooking Crew prepares meals together monthly for several area groups. In 2014, the Cooking Crew made approximately 7,400 meals, not including those for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

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It is anticipated that the three appointees will work collegially beyond their primary appointments in developing the musical life of the University.

A letter of application and a comprehensive curriculum vitae should be sent to the cognizant dean, by December 15, 2015 for fullest consideration. References and supporting documents will be sought at a later stage in the search process.

Addresses are as follows: Office of the Dean, All Saints' Chapel, 735 University Avenue; Office of the Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, 735 University Avenue; Office of the Dean, School of Theology, 335 University Avenue; all located in Sewanee, TN 37383.

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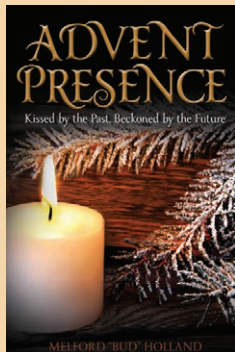
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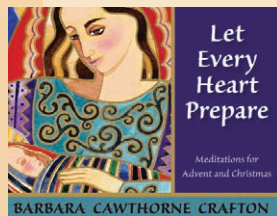
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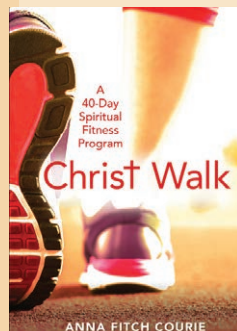
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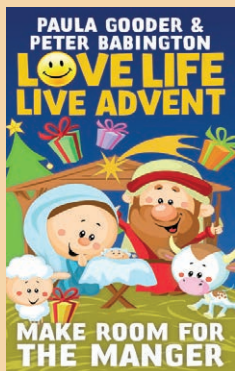
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