



The S. Stephen

PRE-LENT

2014

Vol. 13, No. 3

Dear People of S. Stephen's,

From the Rector

At the time of writing, I have been back at S. Stephen's for a month following my three-month sabbatical at the end of 2013. It is good to be back, and I am excited about the programs and activities we have planned during the coming months.

During December, I spent nine days in London. During much of this time, I was ensconced at the Lambeth Palace Library doing research for my dissertation. Lambeth Palace is not only the London residence and headquarters of the Archbishop of Canterbury, but is also home to an extensive library that serves as the Church of England's official records center, going back centuries: a veritable treasure-trove of primary source documentation for Anglican history! Lambeth Palace is on the other side of the River Thames from the Houses of Parliament, and was just a fifteen-minute walk from my accommodation at Saint Matthew's Church, Westminster. From my room there, I could hear Big Ben chiming the hours.

Just days before my already-scheduled trip we received word of the death of my mother-in-law, Mary Morgan, so I was able to be present for her Requiem Mass at St. Augustine's Church in Kilburn. Elizabeth and the boys traveled to London, so the four of us were able to spend some time together in sad but not altogether unexpected circumstances. The vicar, Fr. Colin



Lambeth Palace Library

Amos, SSC, did a splendid job, and it was interesting to note the differences in American and British funeral customs. May she rest in peace.



On a more pleasant note, I visited with my old friend Fr. Andrew Sloane, until recently Rector of St. Paul's, K Street, Washington D.C. and now in his retirement assisting at St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, where he has a flat in the clergy housing. I also visited and made the acquaintance of Fr. Graeme Rowlands, Chaplain-General of the Society of Mary in the Church of England, at his vicarage at Saint Silas the Martyr, Kentish Town.

Returning to Providence two weeks ahead of Elizabeth, I spent the remainder of December writing at home, and assisted liturgically two Sundays and Christmas Day at St. John's, Newport, our sister Anglo-Catholic parish – now a mission – in Rhode Island. It was an interesting and somewhat refreshing change not to plan and run the liturgy but simply to arrive, vest, and do whatever I was told. The new Vicar, Fr. Nathan Humphrey, is off to a great start, and I look forward to more collaborative efforts between our two congregations in the coming months and years.

My official return to S. Stephen's was on New Year's Day, the Feast of the Holy Name / Circumcision. It was wonderful to make my first official duty back attending and helping out at the New Year's Day Dinner. It was also wonderful to be back at the altar and in the pulpit during our Sunday liturgies. I was warned that Rectors returning from sabbatical sometimes experience a sense of let-down and even mild depression when they re-enter the routines of parish life after an exciting time away, but for me this has not been the case! By the end of my sabbatical I was looking forward eagerly to returning and, now, after a

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month I am so happy to be back, enjoyable and rewarding as the sabbatical was.

The Sunday liturgies during January did have their comical side. On my first two Sundays back, the fire alarm went off at the beginning of the 10 am Sunday Mass; and we had to evacuate the building temporarily until the Fire Department came and gave us the all-clear to return. The problem was a faulty smoke sensor – which has now been replaced with a heat sensor – in the passageway under the organ pipes from the altar rail to the nave. Then, on the Sunday of the Annual Meeting, one of the organ pipes started ciphering in a disconcerting manner, so that we eventually had to abandon the music of the Mass and finish the liturgy as a “said service.” While we do our best to offer the finest liturgy and music we can, such little mishaps remind us to maintain a sense of humor and not take ourselves too seriously: crucial dispositions for the long-term health of our souls!

During my time away, Sexton Tom Kizirian resigned his position with the parish and I accepted his resignation. After my return, in consultation with the Wardens and Treasurer, I offered Parish Secretary Cory MacLean a new full-time position as Parish Administrator, which will incorporate her previous duties, together with the Sexton’s responsibilities of managing maintenance and repairs to the buildings and grounds, and also the new responsibility of supervising use of the Great Hall and Church by outside groups from the local community. She officially started on February 1. Let’s do all that we can to support Cory in this new and challenging position, for which no-one is better qualified.

This letter comes with all best wishes and prayers. I remain, faithfully,

Your pastor and priest,

Fr. John D. Alexander

Fr. John D. Alexander

A Prayer by the Rev’d George McClellan Fiske, DD

Almighty and living God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom the whole family in heaven and on earth is named; we beseech Thee to look with love and mercy on us, Thy children, throughout the day. Keep us in Thy faith and fear. Give us grace to resist the devil, and to renounce all his works and temptations. Guard us from the lusts and sins of the flesh. Shield us from the corruption of the world. Make us diligent and faithful in our appointed work. Keep us patient under trial. In anxiety and worry, help us to find trust and peace in Thee. To Thee we offer our thoughts, words, and actions of this day, and beg that Thou wilt bless them. In ills of the body and vexations of the spirit, be Thou our healing and our strength. Bless our friends and neighbors. Increase their joys and soothe their sorrows and their sufferings. Protect Thy Holy Church spread throughout the world, that it may abide with steadfast faith in the confession of Thy Name. Take the dying to Thy rest, and comfort the departed with larger and larger measures of holiness and happiness. Dwell in our hearts and guide us with Thy counsel, that after this life Thou mightest receive us with glory. All of which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen.

The Rev. Dr. George McClellan Fiske was rector of S. Stephen’s from 1884 to 1919. A leading Anglo-Catholic of his day, he instituted the daily offices of Morning and Evening Prayer in the parish in 1885, and the daily Mass in 1886. He also launched The S. Stephen, the first parish newsletter in Rhode Island. He was a notable preacher and speaker, a scholar versed in many languages, and an



THE REVEREND GEORGE M.C. FISKE,
S.T.D., eighth rector, 1884–1919

influence on the Episcopal Church in his capacity as a delegate to The General Convention. It was Dr. Fiske who persuaded Father Charles Chapman Grafton to move his recently founded order, The Sisters of the Holy Nativity, to Providence. With their help, Dr. Fiske was able to expand the work of S. Stephen’s both in the parish and in the community at large. Although elected bishop by several different dioceses, Dr. Fiske declined, preferring to spend the rest of his working life here. This prayer is characteristic of this great Churchman.

FR. SAWICKY'S LETTER

One of my favorite artists is David Roberts, a Scottish watercolorist active in the first part of the 19th century. Along with a lot of other people of the period, Roberts had been affected by the resurgence in popularity of trips to the Holy Land. Since Napoleon's campaigns and political machinations in the Eastern Mediterranean, and since the British had defeated Napoleon, Europeans had "rediscovered" the Holy Land, and it became fashionable for people of means to make pilgrimages there. Along with the first waves of pilgrims went a number of scholars (mostly linguists) who were keen to identify which places in Turkish Palestine corresponded to places named in the Bible. Together, these pilgrims and scholars created a culture of rediscovery, which artists were quick to join. David Roberts was among them, and on a journey of many months through Egypt, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, painted a masterful set of wa-



View of Cana of Galilee
David Roberts (1796-1864)

tercolors depicting Biblical landscapes and other ancient sites. These were turned into a masterful set of lithographs by Louis Haghe for widespread distribution. Roberts' watercolors remain the summit of the art, and Haghe's best-selling lithographs are the high water mark of the culture of rediscovery.

There is an irony here, in that the land had never disappeared. It had always been there for the intrepid foreign adventurer to explore, and it had certainly always been there for the people who made it their home. "Rediscovery" is something of a misnomer. And yet it is also true that when anything (be it a place or object or

even a person) is lodged in the fabric of our daily experience for long enough, it tends to fade into the background. European Christians had been hearing place-names like Sinai, Bethel, Galilee, and Bethlehem read aloud in churches, schools, and monasteries every day for centuries. And yet the places themselves had faded into the background, like so much dusty, forgotten furniture littered around the sacred text. It took a movement of fashion to reawaken Europeans to the rich potential for increased understanding which these places offered. In the same way, it often takes a movement from outside ourselves to reawaken us to those treasures which we have forgotten we possess.

As the season after the Epiphany draws to a close, and as Lent draws near, I find that I keep thinking back to the visit of the Magi, and to T.S. Elliot's poem chronicling their journey. Theirs was a journey of discovery, through all the difficult way-stations of their route, to a place where they beheld a birth. A birth like any other, and yet, for them, a birth which also heralded a death. The way Eliot tells it, the death the Magi foresaw was their own, though they could not understand how — only that it was a welcome discovery, which changed the way they understood themselves and their place in the world. Their discovery of the Christ child was a rediscovery of something they had long known but could not have articulated. It was a discovery that not only did they have a part to play in the story of his birth, but that the birth entered their own stories, and led them to the gate of death. It was a rediscovery that the One who presides over death and life reveals himself to his creatures, and by that revelation, makes them his people.

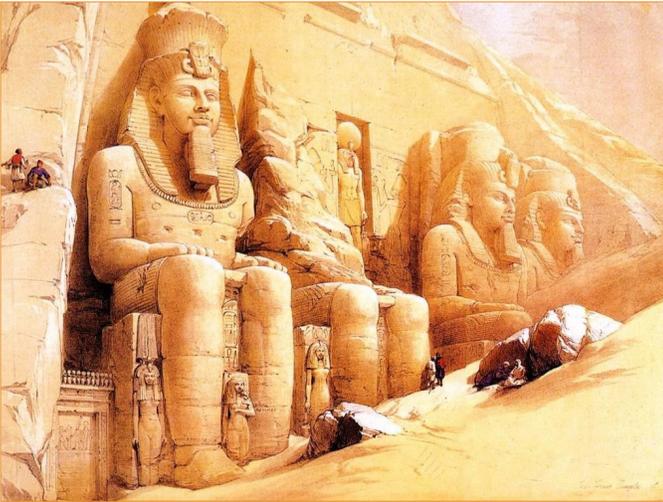
As we approach Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent, we are invited to make a similar journey, for a similar rediscovery. We hear the charge to keep a holy Lent, and we follow Jesus into the desert of fasting and temptation. What will we discover there?



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Recently I've been reading a lot of articles and blog posts lately which spotlight the treasures our Anglican tradition, treasures which have been with us all along but which are often in the background of more glamorous trends. The prayer book, with its disciplined rhythm of prayer pointing us always to the resurrection in ever-widening cycles. A theological worldview grounded in the Sacraments and the real presence of Christ. A history of mission, evangelization, and work



Abu Simbel Temples, Nubia, Southern Egypt

for the improvement of society. Attention to beauty and the value of dignity and transcendence in religious architecture, music, and liturgical acts. These are great treasures of our tradition, which people all over the church are “rediscovering” and bringing to the fore once again.

In addition to these, there are more personal treasures to rediscover, which belong to each one of us as individuals. During Lent, we are invited to recall them to mind, and let them shape our journey through fasting and penitence to Holy Week. These treasures are treasures of grace, which each of us have received. They mark both the great way-stations in our pilgrimage of faith, and the small, quiet moments of blessedness which encourage us on the way. Moments when we have known, unequivocally and overwhelmingly, the gift of forgiveness. Moments of clear-sightedness when we have perceived love growing in our hearts. Times of confusion too, and the faithfulness of friends and family. These and a million others are treasures of grace for each of us to rediscover, to recognize in them the face of God, lifting up the light of his countenance upon us.

T.S. Eliot ends his poem with the narrator saying, “I should be glad of another death.” We have died once in baptism, to be born in Christ. When death comes to visit us again, it will be our awakening to the splendor of life eternal. In the meantime, we embark with confidence on our journey through this life’s wilderness, encouraged by all the treasures which are ours by grace, even as we meet the millions of smaller deaths which happen along the way: injuries we suffer, wounds we inflict, things done and left undone, hearts broken, time lost, hard farewells, cold shoulders. We meet these with confidence that death for us is the gateway to life, just as the Cross issues on the empty tomb.

Eliot begins the last stanza of another poem, “Little Gidding,” with these words: “With the drawing of this Love and the voice of this Calling / We shall not cease from exploration / And the end of all our exploring / Will be to arrive where we started / And know the place for the first time.” In a sense, this is what David Roberts’ “rediscovery” reveals to us about the land which Abraham knew and in which Our Lord lived. It is also the same kind of rediscovery which we make when we pray: the rediscovery of a landscape molded by God, touched with the challenges of life, enriched by the treasures of grace, and enlivened by the hope of eternal splendor before the face of God. This is the landscape of our hearts, from which we begin and to which we always return. As Lent approaches, let us commit ourselves anew to exploring its peaks and valleys, its meadows and deserts, its Sinai, its manger, and its Calvary. May this be the movement that reawakens us to the greatest of our treasures: the Triune God, who is ours by grace as we are his by Love.



*Ascent of the lower ranges of Sinai
David Roberts*

THE GESIMAS

By Bill Dilworth

During the last revision of the Book of Common Prayer, the practice of naming the Sundays before Lent was suppressed. Prior to 1979, the third Sunday before the start of Lent (or the ninth Sunday before Easter, if you prefer) was known as Septuagesima Sunday. The following Sunday was called Sexagesima Sunday and the next one after that, Quinquagesima. The attentive reader will have noticed a subtle pattern emerging from the names, and the attentive reader who has some Latin will have been able to make some sense from the pattern, because the names mean seventieth, sixtieth, and fiftieth, respectively.

Quinquagesima actually refers to the fifty days, more or less, before Easter, and the Sunday took its name from being *Dominica in Quinquagesima*. The other Sundays might have taken their name from their relationship to it, because they don't actually seem to point to any particular date: Septuagesima is not, in point of fact, seventy days before Easter.

Some authorities tried to fix a mystical meaning to the names, or rather the numbers, by pointing to Israel's captivity in Babylon.

Whatever their original meaning, these Sundays served as an early warning system for Lent. They were a countdown to the beginning of Lent, and signaled a need to prepare for that penitential season. Their arrival meant that it was time to start using up the foods you couldn't eat during Lent - meat, eggs, milk, and oil, among others - which gave rise to our custom of Shrove Tuesday pancake suppers. It also meant that it was time to prepare for a good sacramental confession

- to be shriven, from which archaic word comes our name for the Tuesday before the beginning of Lent, Shrove Tuesday.

These Sundays were not in support of any theological assertion (in the way Trinity Sunday is) or of an historical event (as is Easter Sunday), so their removal from the calendar doesn't mark any change in the Faith of the Church. However, they were part of what might be termed the broader Western Christian culture; thus their removal did represent a loss of a tradition. I suppose the Prayer Book revisers can't be held responsible, though, since the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council had begun their own, very influential, calendric vandalism some fourteen years before, in which they abolished the pre-Lenten Sundays. Of course, among traditionalist Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Lutheran groups that rejected the starker aspects of the 20th century's Liturgical Movement, the



And as for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience. —Luke 8:15

“gesimas” live on. As long as those groups survive, it's too early to completely write off the pre-Lenten season.

Society of Mary

Our Lady of Providence Ward meets on the first Saturday of each month, following 9:30 am Mass and Recitation of the Rosary for a light breakfast, meeting, and fellowship. Join us.



LENTEN QUIET DAY

On Saturday, March 15, Fr. N.J.A. Humphrey, vicar of the Zabriskie Memorial Church of Saint John the Evangelist in Newport, will offer "Three Meditations on Hebrews 4:14". The first meditation is entitled, "For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses..."; the second "...but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are..."; and the third, "...yet without sin." Participants will be invited to reflect on the mystery of God's redeeming love in the person of Jesus Christ and challenged to approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the light of Hebrews 4:14. This Quiet Day is appropriate whether you already avail yourself of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, are preparing to receive it for the first time this Lent, or have no intention of utilizing it but wish to gain a deeper appreciation of the Christology and soteriology behind both the Epistle to the Hebrews and Catholic sacramental discipline. Fr. Humphrey will be available for conferences and confessions between meditations.

Fr. Humphrey began his ministry at Saint John's in August 2013. Prior to coming to Saint Johns, he served as Priest-in-Charge at Saint Paul's Parish, K Street, in Washington, DC. Fr.



Humphrey previously served as curate at Saint Paul's, as well as at Saint James Parish and Academy, Monkton, Maryland, where he also taught in their day school. Before his ordination, he served as chaplain and religion teacher at Washington Episcopal School in Bethesda, Maryland.

Fr. Humphrey grew up in Southern California and attended Saint John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, in the 1990s. He is a graduate of the Berkeley Divinity School at Yale University. Fr. Humphrey is married to Anne Stone, originally from Newburyport, Massachusetts. She was

formerly a senior editor at National Geographic and is currently a freelance communications consultant; they have two elementary-aged children, a girl and a boy.

Fr. Humphrey is most recently the author of "Rowan Williams, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and the Future of the Anglican Communion: Ecclesiological Reflections on *Dostoevsky: Language, Faith, and Fiction*," published in *Pro Communion: Theological Essays on the Anglican Covenant*.



Parishioners and friends of S. Stephen's are cordially invited to join a weekend retreat at the Stonecrest Retreat House at Glastonbury Abbey in Hingham, Massachusetts from Friday, April 25th through Sunday, April 27th, 2014 (the weekend of Low Sunday).

Addresses will be given by Fr. Nicholas, OSB, of Glastonbury Abbey. We will be joining the monks for their celebrations of the Divine Office in the Chapel, but will have our own Masses (Saturday and Sunday) in the Retreat House.

The cost of \$140 per person includes accommodation and meals from dinner on Friday through lunch on Sunday. To reserve your place on the retreat, please send a check for the full amount to Saint Stephen's Church, 114 George Street, Providence, RI 02906, payable to "St. Stephen's Church" with the notation "Retreat" in the memo line. Please also include a note with your name, mailing address, phone number, and email, so that we may send you further directions closer to the time.

Please make your reservation no later than Wednesday, April 9. In the event that the retreat is canceled due to an insufficient number of reservations, your check will be returned to you.

For more information, please speak with Fr. Alexander or Fr. Sawicky at 401-421-6702.

FROM THE SACRISTY: KEEPING LENT

By Phoebe Pettingell

A number of years ago, a woman joined the Anglo-Catholic parish where I was then a member. She found herself powerfully drawn to the choreography of the liturgy. Her senses were exhilarated by changes of seasonal vestment colors, the incense and bells, all so unlike her experiences in non-liturgical Churches. For months she couldn't stop talking about how rich and full her spiritual life had become since she discovered our form of worship. It was a foretaste of heaven! Then, suddenly, in the second week of Lent, she disappeared. Our vicar called on her to make sure she was well and to ask if anything was wrong. She explained with some belligerence that Lent was a "downer" that made her feel bad. She simply couldn't be part of a church that was going to spend six weeks "dwelling on sin and penance," when the Christian life ought to be filled with joy and peace and feeling good about ourselves as God's creatures.

Those of us who've grown up in a liturgical tradition take Lent for granted. The solemnity of Advent, with its emphasis on Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell, and Christ's Second Coming, readies us for the joy of Christmas and Babe in the manger. In the 40 days (not counting Sundays) leading up to the Triduum, we try to join Christ in the wilderness, fighting temptation and disciplining ourselves so that we may understand the full glory of the rising from the tomb, the conquest of Sin and Death, and the rejoicing that comes with new life in Him. Many of us enjoy such devotions as Stations of the Cross, and look forward to the solemn rites of Holy Week.

And yet, if we are honest with ourselves, we too may have moments of shirking the disciplines of Lent. We tell ourselves that stress entitles us to deserve indulgent treats like a special dessert even if in a time of abstinence. All of us fear facing up to our sins, especially those that show us to be self-centered, disloyal, deceitful. A wise confessor once remarked that it can be easier to confess splashy sins like adultery and mur-

der than the everyday petty meanness of gossiping about friends or telling small, self-serving lies to get out of unpleasant obligations. These are the faults we cringe from, refusing to face up to what kind of a person they make us. Most of us either refuse to look squarely at such aspects of our behavior, excusing ourselves with "Everybody does them," or "I wasn't really criticizing her—I'm concerned for her" or similar self-evasions. Contemporary culture colludes with us in this. In the old BCP General Confession for Morning Prayer, we acknowledged that we were lost sheep, offending against God's holy laws, "And there

is no health in us." This kind of language is considerably softened in the 1979 Book. Yet those who recite the Psalms every day, cycling through all 150 each month, find even stronger penitential language—interwoven with expressions of hope, humility, faith, adoration of God, and every other strong human emotion, even including bursts of anger, self-pity and desperate longing.

Depression is not sorrow for our sins. It is a feeling of

worthlessness that traps us inside ourselves so that we wallow in hopelessness. True penance allows us to stop running away from our faults, to resolve to try to do better (even when we know how often we have slipped back). Most of all, penance teaches that if we cannot help ourselves through our own efforts, God can give us grace to live more and more according to his ways by breaking through those habits and false beliefs that keep us from doing so.

The cycles of the Church year stress different aspects of life in Christ, and the more we live into each one, the greater our anticipation as we enter each season once again, and practice its particular prayers and disciplines. The woman who left my parish because she believed that life in Him ought to bring peace and joy was partly right, but like most of

We try to join Christ in the wilderness, fighting temptation and disciplining ourselves so that we may understand the full glory of the rising from the tomb, the conquest of Death and Sin, and the rejoicing that comes with new life in Him.

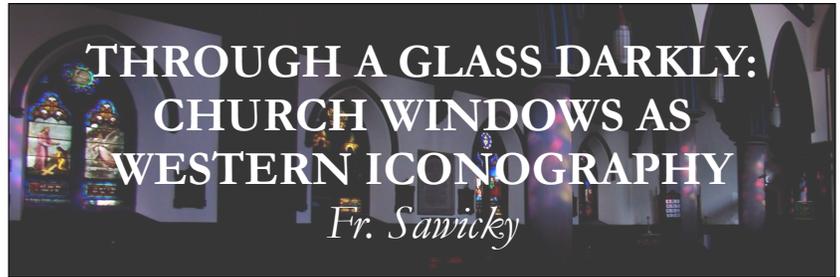
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us wanted to deny that in this life none of us are going to “feel” it all the time, and even less so when we try to push away the notion that we often fall short of the mark and need to repent so that we may fix our hearts “where true joys may be found.” An honest appraisal of our own sins helps us to learn charity toward others by acknowledging that with all our faults we are in no position to sit in judgment on them. And if I truly wish to help those “less fortunate than myself,”—and it is the Christian duty of all of us to do so—I must also come to realize that, in God’s eyes, my soul may well be poorer and more in need of redemption than theirs.



*Detail from Narthex Window
Jesus at the wedding at Cana*



One of the joys of our tradition is being surrounded by an architecture of devotion, in which we carry out the Liturgy, say our prayers, work in the world, and hope for the future. This architecture consists of many different kinds of materials, from the Holy Scriptures, to the lives of the saints, to the prayer book, to our own experience of grace in the world.

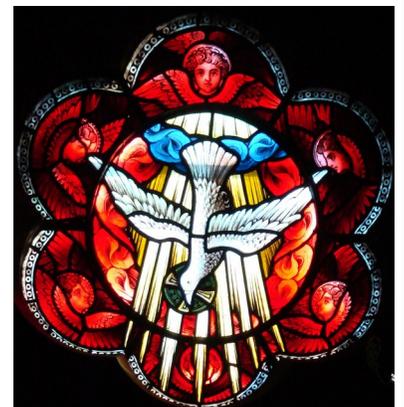
One of the most visible elements of this architecture of devotion is the physical architecture of church buildings. We are familiar with its basic elements (doors, aisles, font, altar) and with its basic patterns (nave, choir, sanctuary, chapel). We can recognize broad categories of style (Romanesque, Gothic, Classical, Contemporary). But one element essential to the physical architecture is often overlooked as mere decoration: windows.

Windows, and the sense of light and space they create, are often one of the chief design elements of a completed structure. They are especially important in churches, where the stained glass tradition has been particularly well developed as an integral component to the overall role of windows.

S. Stephen’s is fortunate to have a number of stained glass windows, of varying styles from various studios. They play a very significant role in our liturgical life, even if we don’t always notice them.

This Lent, I will lead a series of discussions on stained glass, paying special attention to our windows at S. Stephen’s. What do they mean? How do they function? What role do they play in the liturgy? What role can they play in our own prayer lives? We’ll consider these questions with an eye towards the broader context of the development of the art. But even more importantly, we will consider them with an eye towards our own trek through Lent and our approach to Holy Week and Easter, when the Sun of Righteousness will be gloriously risen, shining new light through all the panes of our lives.

Father Sawicky’s program will take place on the five Sunday evenings in Lent. There will be a light soup and salad supper beginning at 6 pm in the Great Hall, followed by his talk with slides and videos.



ON THE DIACONATE

By Deacon Mello

The letters of Ignatius of Antioch provide a major source of information on the orders of bishops, priests and deacons in ancient Church. Ignatius, the third Bishop of Antioch, wrote several letters of encouragement and farewell to churches on his final journey to Rome for his martyrdom. In them he reflects on the orientation of each of the three orders: “the bishop presides over the local church in place of God, and the presbyters in the place of the council of the apostles while the deacons are entrusted with the Diakonia of Jesus Christ.”

When I was ordained this past June, at the examination Bishop Kinsely proclaimed, “As a Deacon of the Church, you are to study the Holy Scriptures, to seek nourishment from them, and to model your life upon them. You are to make Christ and his redemptive love known, by your word and example, to those among whom you live, and work and worship. You are to interpret to the Church the needs, concerns and hopes of the world. You are to assist the bishop and priests in public worship and in the ministration of God’s Word and Sacraments, and you are to carry out other duties assigned to you from time to time. At all times, your life and teaching are to show Christ’s people that in serving the helpless they are serving Christ himself.”

The ministry of Deacons is sometimes described as having three dimensions: prophetic, administrative and pastoral. The prophetic ministry challenges us to bring forth justice in the world, just as the prophets were called to bring about change for God’s people. Deacon Buck Close’s ministry in Haiti is a perfect example of a prophetic ministry. Deacon Close’s ministry makes the plight of Haiti’s people known to the church and brings about change for the Haitian people by creating jobs and a self sustaining purpose.



As deacons, we are often given a commission by our bishop or rector to start or oversee a ministry, and to help others in the congregation discover their ministries. An example of someone exercising this administrative ministry would be our own Archdeacon, Jan Grinnell, currently assigned to St. Augustine’s, Kingston. She is helping the parish discover what their ministry as a church adjacent to the campus of URI might look like.

The pastoral ministry of a deacon includes work among people on the fringes of society, like prisoners and the homeless. My visits to the people in the geriatric psyche ward at Eleanor Slater Hospital is an example of this.

Recently, the Deacons of Rhode Island have created a blog which can be found at: episcopalrideacons.blogspot.com. There you can find an interview with Bishop Knisely on the diaconate in Rhode Island as well as profiles of deacons. Bishop Knisely says in the blog; “I’ve said in other places that I believe the deacon’s voice is the

distilled voice of the church, I believe that the deacon’s ministry is lived out on the fringes of the church and the world and as such is a sign of what God expects of every Christian.”

This a great message to us and for the continued growth of the diaconate in Rhode Island. If you are interested in reading more about the history of deacons, there are several books that delve into the history of this order in the church and how it came about, along with its modern revival and how it is being shaped at present. They include *Deacons and the Church* by John N. Collins, *Many Servants* by Ormonde Plater and *The Diaconate: A Full and Equal Order* by James Monroe Barnett.

SUNDAY SCHOOL



*Current Members of the Sunday School
as they appeared at the 2009
Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper.*

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper Fun, Food, Fellowship

4 March 2014
5:30—7:30 pm
In the Great Hall
\$6 per ticket.
All you can eat!

From the Sunday School: Epiphany Soup Kitchen

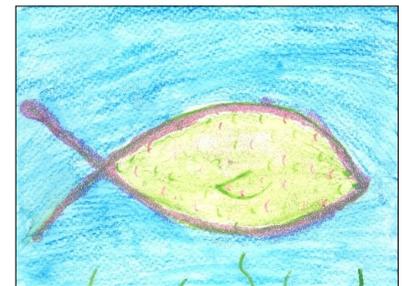
By Devon and Rose Callanan

An important part of our job as Christians is to help others in need. That is exactly what the Epiphany soup kitchen, here at S. Stephen's Church, does every Saturday. Volunteers give food, clothing, toiletries, and a hot meal to anyone who shows up. The soup kitchen can always use more volunteers and it is a great experience. Several members of the Sunday School have recently spent their Saturday afternoon helping out at the soup kitchen.

Laura and Katie both said they enjoyed serving at the soup kitchen and Laura added that she "felt good about doing this good deed" and would do it again. Katie also had the same sentiment and continued on to say that she enjoyed meeting other people who also wanted to help those in need. Another Sunday School member who recently participated is Cailyn. She worked as a server and even brought along her entire Girl Scout troop to help out as well.

At the soup kitchen, volunteers peel, chop and arrange food on trays under the direction of a professional cook. Other tasks include setting up chairs and tables, setting out utensils and plates, laying out the food, and organizing clothes. Clients begin eating around 3 pm while soup kitchen volunteers serve the food.

Sometimes it can be hard to see that so many people don't have enough to eat. People just like you and me come to the soup kitchen because they need help. It is great that we can be there for them in their times of need as others are there for us when we need help.



Follow me, and I will make you
fishers of men.
Matthew 4:19



Now abide faith, hope, love, these
three; but the greatest of these is love.
1 Corinthians 13:13



Quodlibet

by James Busby

quodlibet (kwäd'lə bet') *n* [ME fr. ML quodlibetum, fr. L quodlibet, fr. *qui* who, what + *libet* it pleases, fr. *libere* to please] 1. a piece of music combining several different melodies, usually popular tunes, in counterpoint and often a light-hearted, humorous manner - *Merriam Webster*



Sometime get me alone and ask me what I really think of brass at Eastertide! This is such a difficult thing as they are so hard to contract, pin-down for rehearsal and prone to whim at the next offered better paying job! While I'm not purporting the sound of celli proclaiming *Et resurrexit* there's something mighty cheery in the sound of oboi tootling away and they are ever so grateful for the attention!

Now that that's off my chest I must write that Grant Randall and I are in the process of recruiting brass Quintet for Solemn Mass at Easter. I've planned the Louis Vierne *Messe Solennelle, Op. 16* - originally for two organs and choir - and we'll use the splendid arrangement utilizing brass quintet instead of the Grand Orgue; this was done skillfully by Tobias Andrews for us and first heard at Easter 2011. I am so thankful for Grant's help with this contracting as his tromboning skills are quite the equal of his tenoring and he's an excellent resource for this. This will be done through a gift in memory of long-time senior warden Alan Reniere.

As you might know, Vierne was organist at Notre-Dame de Paris and his *Messe* was first performed there. Interestingly our last pre-Lent Mass before a long patch of Plainsong in Lent is also from Notre-Dame and is by Count Léonce de Saint-Martin, who succeeded Vierne at his death in 1937 and remained titulaire until his death in 1954. This, on Epiphany Last.

Alto rumblings.....

Mezzo-soprano (*cantoris side*) Jessica Harika will leave us a little early before season's end as she's been offered a contract as the Gerdine Young Artist at Opera Theater of St. Louis. There she will assume

the rôles of Third Spirit in Mozart's *Magic Flute* and Old Woman in Poulenc's *Dialogue of the Carmelites*. Forthcoming performances in Boston include the alto solo in Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* in Jordan Hall and the rôle of Arnolta in Monteverdi's *Coronation of Poppea*, as well as her Master's Degree Recital on Thursday 6 March.

She recently sang in public master class with the renowned Mezzo-soprano Marilyn Horne (see photo) who was extremely encouraging and assured her of "no problem having a fabulous career." I can attest that she's always good sport in the 6:30 am commute to rehearsal on Sundays and is a paradigm of cheer and preparedness and good grooming.

Counter-tenor (*decani side*) Steven Serpa writes "...A lot has happened to me as a composer over the last year. I was invited to participate in the composers' symposium of the Oregon Bach Festival and write a new choral work for them last summer. I was also the runner-up for the American Prize in choral composition, bolstered largely by *Psalm 30: O Lord my God I will extol Thee*, the work I composed to celebrate James Busby's return to duty. The judges loved the combination of organ and English horn, a suggestion of James'. Another recent work, *Of Birds*, has just won 1st Prize in the annual Cerddorion Vocal Ensemble Emerging Composers Competition. *Of Birds* will be premiered by that ensemble in New York City on March 1st with a repeat of the program on March 8th. I've also got



Jessica Harika with Marilyn Horne

some exciting things on the horizon including two new commissions: a duo for violin and harp for the Providence Premieres new music series that will be premiered this spring; and also a piano quartet that was commissioned for performance by composer Bunita

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Marcus, protégé of Morton Feldman and curator of a concert series in Brooklyn.”

My congrats to both Jess and Steven for fine work, perseverance and devotion to what we do.

This season I've busied myself conducting a once a month Compline service with the fourteen voice men's group Beneficia Lucis under the wing of Nightsong. This consists of 16th and 17th century motets and Plainchant alternating with jazz improvisations, usually with piano, french horn or saxophone. This seems a worthwhile pursuit, so much so that we've been asked to sing the opening worship service of the National Convention of The



Steven Serpa

American Guild of Organists (Boston) in June after the organ concerto concert at Symphony Hall. This will take place at St Cecelia's Church nearby. Guest appearances have been made this season by our good-natured thurifers Bill Dilworth and Louis Verdelotti, and I'm pleased to report neither has set off smoke detectors at First Church Cambridge where the services are usually held. For more information about this and the two other choral groups participating monthly go to Nightsong.org.

For now, I remain,

Yours, James

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WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sundays

Morning Prayer 7:30 am

Low Mass 8 am

Solemn Mass 10 am

Evening Prayer 5:30 pm

Mondays & Fridays

Angelus 12 noon

Low Mass 12:10 pm

Tuesdays & Thursdays

Morning Prayer 8 am

Low Mass 8:30 am

Wednesdays

Evening Prayer 5:30 pm

Low Mass 6 pm

Saturdays

Morning Prayer 9 am

Low Mass 9:30 am

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WHAT MAKES OUR PARISH DISTINCTIVE? (AN ESCHATOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE)

By Fr. Alexander

Over the past few years, we've been hearing a good deal of talk about a crisis of identity in the Episcopal Church. In a rapidly secularizing society, with declining church membership and attendance across the board, many church leaders and members give the impression of being somewhat confused, as though we're not quite sure anymore of who we are and what we might have to offer those who come through our doors.

This sense of uncertainty is most apparent in the section of our denomination known as the Broad Church. That term signifies that part of the Episcopal Church that is neither very high nor very low: neither Anglo-Catholic nor Evangelical but somewhere in the middle.

Often Broad Church Episcopalians seem surer of what they're not than of what they are. On one hand, they say, we're not like those Roman Catholics, with their authoritarian hierarchy and oppressive rules and regulations. On the other hand, we're not like those nasty Bible-thumping Fundamentalists, who tell everyone else that they're going to hell. But simply defining ourselves by what we're not is not exactly what the Anglican *via media* is really all about.

One attempt at defining a contemporary Anglican identity that I've heard a lot in Broad Church circles lately goes something like this: God loves everyone, without exception and without reservation. That is the message: God loves you, just as you are. You don't have to do anything to make yourself worthy, because God's love is unconditional and all-inclusive. And we don't need to worry about whether we're going to hell, because God loves us all so much that we're all going to heaven automatically.

The result is a recasting of the Church's mission in entirely this-worldly terms. Our task is simply to proclaim God's love to all people. Once we realize how much God loves us, we can let go of all the guilt and emotional baggage that makes us feel unlovable, and then turn around and love others as God loves us. Our calling, then, is to show God's love to those in this world who need it most: the poor, outcast, homeless, hungry, destitute, marginalized, and oppressed.

Moreover, once people out there finally realize that *this* is our message – once they realize what broad-minded, intelligent, well-educated, tolerant, and progressive people we really are – then they're bound to come flocking to our churches and clamoring to join us! (But I wouldn't hold my breath waiting for that to happen.)

Now, my problem with this formulation is not so much that I disagree with it, as that I find it incomplete. It omits large parts of the faith. Back in 1937, H.

Richard Niebuhr wrote a book called *The Kingdom of God in America*, in which he summed up the implicit creed of nineteenth-century liberal Protestantism in the memorable lines: "A God without wrath, brought [people] without sin, into a kingdom without judgment, through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross." The new "Gospel of God's Love" promulgated by the Broad Church resembles nothing so much as that old liberal Protestant creed.

What, then, is the alternative? Specifically, what vision of the Church, its identity and mission, do we as Anglo-Catholics have to offer contemporary people in today's world?

I've thought about this question on and off over the years, and the answer that keeps coming back to me is what might be called an "eschatological perspective." That means that everything we do in Church finds its truest and deepest significance in the context of eternity. The ultimate fulfillment of the purpose of all our activities as the Church is found in the life of the world to come. It's a radical point of view when you think about it.

Notice in today's Gospel (Matthew 4:12-23) that when our Lord begins to preach at the beginning of his ministry, his message is not, "God loves you," – those words occur nowhere in Scripture, by the way – but rather, "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" In the parallel passage in Mark's Gospel, the wording is, "*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the Gospel!*"

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This proclamation of the nearness of the Kingdom of God calls for a twofold response on the part of the hearers consisting of faith and repentance. The message is that God has a wonderful future in store for us on the other side of the grave. It's nearer than we think, and we need to live our lives in such a way as to be ready and prepared for it.

In the Catholic vision, moreover, the Church is a divinely-established institution, founded by our Lord himself to provide the setting within which, by God's grace, we can live lives of faith and repentance and so be prepared for the life of the world to come. This is not to say that there is no salvation outside the Church, but simply that the Church is the community established by God to make the means of salvation freely available to all.

Recently, I've noticed that the institutions in our society with the clearest sense of their identity and mission are often schools, colleges, and universities. They typically understand their mission in terms not only of what they want to teach and what kind of learning environment they want to provide but also, most of all, what kinds of graduates they want to turn out. The ultimate purpose of all they do is fulfilled in life *after* graduation.

During my recent sojourn at Nashotah House in Wisconsin, this was emphatically the case. Everything done in the classroom, chapel, and refectory was geared towards priestly formation – it would find its ultimate fulfillment not during the three years spent in seminary but afterwards, in the exercise of the priesthood by the graduates of the House over the rest of their lives.

So it is with the Church. It is a school for eternity. The real point of everything we do here together finds its fulfillment hereafter, in the life of the world to come. Of course, this does not justify turning our backs on this present world and its needs. On the contrary, serving the poor and working for justice in this world are precisely ways in which we prepare ourselves for citizenship in the next.

This eschatological focus *does* mean that worship is central to Anglo-Catholic identity and mission. We offer our very best in liturgy and music because we believe that in doing so we're joining with all the angels and saints who continuously praise God in the heavenly liturgy. Occasionally, in the beauty of holiness, we catch glimpses of the eternal.

The architecture of the church building symbolizes this truth. When we come forward for Holy

Communion, we leave behind the nave, which represents this present world. We pass through the rood screen, which represents the grave and gate of death (that's why it's surmounted by the image of Christ on the cross). Passing along through the Choir, which represents Purgatory, we arrive at the Altar Rail and the Sanctuary, representing the kingdom of heaven (that's why the images on the reredos depict Christ reigning in majesty with the saints). So, every journey from the pew to the altar rail is a symbolic rehearsal of the journey we must each make to our heavenly home; every time we receive the Sacrament we're granted a foretaste of the heavenly banquet that awaits us in the Kingdom of God. In worship, we stand at the threshold of mystery.

Now I say all this simply because if we're to grow and flourish as a parish, we need a clear sense of who we are and what we have to offer. What needs are we able to fulfill that no other institution or organization in our society can? When the Church's focus becomes purely this-worldly, it loses any real justification for its continued existence and survival. In the Anglo-Catholic vision, however, the Church is a training ground for heaven. That's an awesome mission, and one definitely worth sharing with anyone and everyone who comes our way.

This is the Annual Meeting Address which, because of time constraints, Father Alexander decided not to give at the 2014 Annual Meeting on January 26, 2014 - Editor



THE TREASURER'S CORNER

By Ransom Widmer

The Capital Campaign is alive and well!

We have completed the renovation of the Great Hall and duly blessed and celebrated the occasion at a wonderful parish luncheon in September. As of this date, we have received enough capital pledges to fully fund this project by the campaign's end. Now we are in a position to implement the parish development plan, which calls for making S. Stephen's a more visible part of the community by having select groups make use of our new space. Cory MacLean will be coordinating this effort as part of her new position as Parish Administrator.

Having completed work on the Great Hall, the second objective of the Capital Campaign is the restoration of the stained glass windows in north aisle. For the past year, we have been researching this project and interviewing vendors. After careful review, it was decided that, because of the historical value of the windows and the different glass techniques used on each one, it would be prudent to engage an expert in this field. The Vestry has authorized the retention of Julie L. Sloan LLC Consultants in Stained Glass.

The first phase of Julie's work was completed last August. She has provided a detailed technical description of each window, what would be required to restore it, and its history. Julie and her company are now well into preparing technical specification for vendors and the documents necessary to obtain bids for the restoration. Once bids have been received, her firm will work with S. Stephen's to select appropriate vendors and then will insure that their work conforms to the specifications for each window.

To help us into a deeper awareness of the importance of stained glass windows in art, with particular emphasis on the north aisle windows, Father Sawicky will be presenting a series of programs on this topic for our Lenten series. Everyone is encouraged to attend and to bring with them anyone who has an interest in stained glass.

We are now in the process of planning the funding of this significant project. It will require your continued generosity and searching out individuals or organizations with an interest in stained glass who might be able to make a significant contributions towards the restoration.

We will continue to keep you informed of the Capital Campaign's progress.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES

**Morning Prayer &
Blessing of the Ashes—8 am**

In the Lady Chapel

**Low Mass with
Imposition of Ashes—12:10 pm**

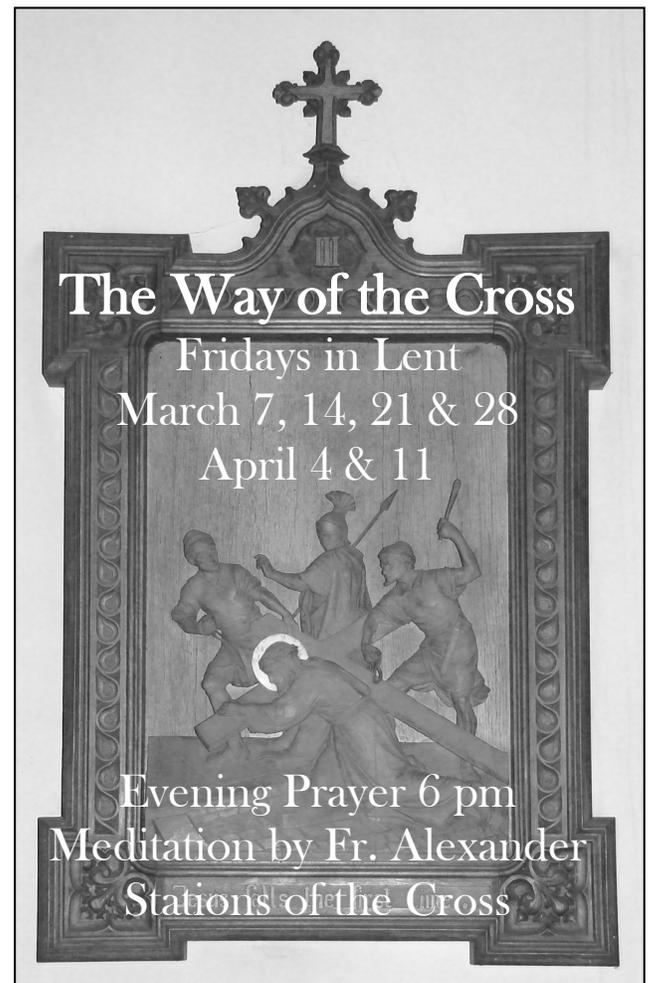
In the Lady Chapel

Evening Prayer —5:30 pm

In the Lady Chapel

**Sung Mass with
Imposition of Ashes —6 pm**

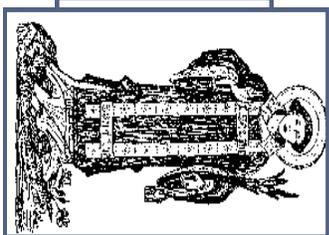
In the main Church



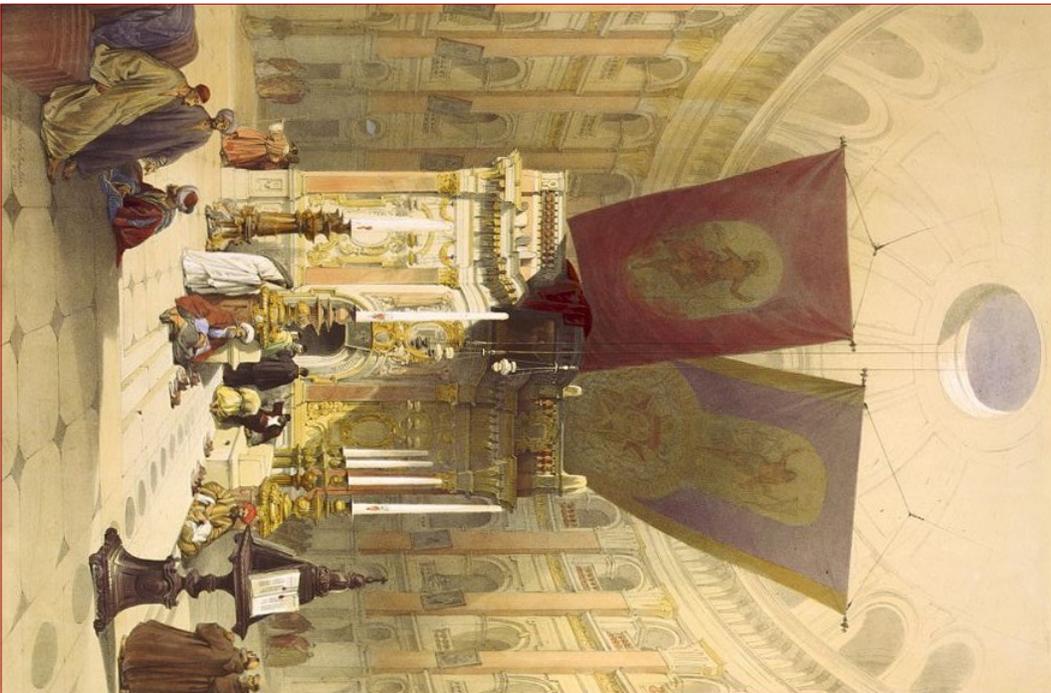


S. Stephen's Church in Providence
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*The Shrine of the Holy Sepulchre
David Roberts (1796 - 1864)*