

The S. Stephen

EASTERTIDE 2016

Vol. 15, No. 4

From the Rector

My Dear People,

Recently I read a post on an Internet blog by a self-described “millennial pastor” offering his analysis of the phenomenon of declining church attendance in contemporary life. Unlike many such blog posts, which are eminently forgettable, this one struck me as well worthy of further reflection.

He began by acknowledging the most commonly offered explanation: attending church is no longer a social expectation. Within living memory, the wider culture encouraged people to worship on Sunday morning and participate in the life of a church community; by doing so they were fulfilling a social obligation. And most churches rose to the occasion of providing a variety of worthwhile activities to occupy the time and energy of those who showed up.

In the changed milieu of the early twenty-first century, however, very few people come to church for such reasons. So, this blogger suggested, if our efforts at evangelization and church growth are to bear fruit, the first question we need to ask is: What are we asking people to come to church *for*?

His answer was clear and straightforward: the only reason people of his generation come to church is *to follow Jesus Christ*. He then suggested a striking analogy. Many congregations today resemble a soccer club whose members once actually played the game, competing against other teams, but who have long since given that up and meet instead every Saturday to talk, drink coffee, and remember the glory days—all the while lamenting that fewer and fewer young people want to come and help set up for and clean up after the weekly meetings!

Just as a soccer team is most likely to attract new members when it offers a real opportunity to play the game, so a parish or congregation will attract new members when it offers a real opportunity to follow Jesus Christ. The mere invitation to be part of a distinctive social club is unlikely to be appealing in a world where rival opportunities for social connection and commitment abound. The invitation to follow Jesus Christ is far more appealing; genuine community will then coalesce around that shared purpose.

As I reflect on the analysis offered by this blogger (a Lutheran), it seems to me that Anglo-Catholics might perhaps describe the game a bit differently. “Following Jesus Christ” is indeed what we are about, but in the wider context of entering into the eternal life and glory of the Holy Trinity through sacramental participation in Christ’s Body, the Church ...

But still, the blogger makes a valid point. The analogy of the soccer team is a good one, perhaps in ways that go well beyond the blogger’s conscious intentions. Playing any sport effectively requires training, conditioning, commitment, and lots and lots and lots of practice. Once a soccer team starts competing, it will neither score many goals nor win many games unless and until it orders all its activities towards the end of developing its ability to play well. (Exactly the same principle applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to playing an instrument in a musical ensemble.)

This insight goes back to the New Testament itself. “Ascetics,” the branch of theology dealing with the disciplines of the Christian spiritual life, comes from the Greek *askesis*, which means athletic training or practice. In several places in his letters, St. Paul describes the Christian life using imagery drawn from the athletic contests of his day. For example: “*Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.*” (1 Corinthians 9:24-25)

The good news for us at S. Stephen’s is that we are still very much in the game. We are not a soccer club that has given up playing soccer. Worship of the Triune God is at the center of all that we do. So many of our parishioners make use of the opportunities our life together affords to follow Jesus Christ in prayer and worship, in study and service, in fellowship and community. The not-so-good (but



Continued next page

Continued from previous page

nonetheless still hopeful) news is that we still have plenty of room to improve our game.

A large part of the role of the clergy is similar to that of coaches in a sports team. When we exhort our congregations to more faithful practice of the basic disciplines of the Christian life, we're really trying to do what any effective coach does: commend the exercises and drills that build up the team's ability to play the best game it can. In the life of the Church, however, the game is following Jesus Christ and ultimately gaining heaven.

Not only the coaches but also all the players need to be involved in discerning and discussing together how the team may become more effective in achieving its goals. In the coming months and years, we can look forward to continuing in that conversation at S. Stephen's, as we seek to follow Christ wherever he leads.

With all best wishes and prayers, I remain,
faithfully,

Your Pastor and Priest
Fr. John D. Alexander

NEW WEEKDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Most of our weekday Masses at S. Stephen's have a small but committed following, attracting congregations of around four to six people. The exception consists of the weekday morning Masses on Tuesday and Thursday at 8:30 am (preceded by Morning Prayer at 8 am), which over the past year or so have not been attracting much of a congregation at all.

Effective Memorial Day, then, we are initiating the experiment of changing the times of the Tuesday and Thursday Masses to midday, as is already the case on Friday. Recitation of the Angelus at noon will be followed by Mass at 12:10 pm. The resulting weekday schedule will be:

Monday and Wednesday

5:30 pm	Evening Prayer
6:00 pm	Low Mass

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

12:00 pm	Angelus
12:10 pm	Low Mass

Saturday and Federal Public Holidays

9:00 am	Morning Prayer
9:30 am	Low Mass

As always, we will evaluate how well this new schedule is working after several months and decide whether to make the changes permanent. Remember, this schedule goes into effect on the Tuesday after Memorial Day, May 31st.

REMINDERS ABOUT PARKING IN THE DRIVEWAY

The driveway in front of the Guild House comfortably accommodates up to five cars—two the left row and three in the right row. Parishioners and others attending services or other church activities are welcome to park there. This hospitality is subject to certain understandings of which we all occasionally need to be reminded:

1. Please pull as far forward as possible to allow others to park behind you. (For some reason, certain drivers seem to think it's okay to pull halfway forward in the right row, so that there's room for one but not two cars behind them. That is not okay. Pull all the way forward.)
2. If you park someone in, stay readily available to move your car upon request. (E.g. don't go to Thayer Street for coffee or lunch.)
3. Conversely, on Sunday mornings, understand that whoever parks behind you not only needs to attend Mass but may also have other duties to attend to after Mass (Altar Guild cleanup, counting the collection, etc.), and will likely want to go to Coffee Hour as well. If you need to get away immediately after Mass, it might be better not to park where you will get parked in.

Parking on the streets around S. Stephen's can be difficult, especially during the week, but on Sunday mornings with a little circling around it's usually possible to find a space within a block or two of the church. If worst comes to worst, there's a Brown University pay parking lot open to the public three blocks away at Thayer and Power Streets. But if you do park in the driveway, please exercise the courtesy, consideration, and common sense of the three points outlined above.

The S. Stephen is published by S. Stephen's Church in Providence, 114 George Street, Providence, Rhode Island; Phone: 401-421-6702, Email: office@sstephens.necoxmail.com; Editor-in-Chief: The Rev'd John D. Alexander, Rector; Copy Editor: Phoebe Pettingell, Phoebe1446@aol.com; Layout and Design: Cory MacLean; Photography: Cory MacLean

FR. YOST'S LETTER

May is Mary's month, and I
 Muse at that and wonder why;
 Her feasts follow reason,
 Dated due to season—

Candlemas, Lady Day;
 But the Lady Month, May
 Why fasten that upon her,
 With a feasting in her honour?

From "The May Magnificat",
 Gerard Manley Hopkins

The month of May has been long associated in popular devotion with the Blessed Virgin Mary. The reason for this is not immediately evident, for, until recently, no Marian feast was celebrated this month. (The Feast of the Visitation, now on May 31, was moved thence in the 1970 Roman Missal from its old date on July 2 and added to the 1979 Book of Common Prayer in order to place it "logically" between the Annunciation and the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist.) However, the piety of ordinary Christians in past ages seems quite naturally to have grasped the way in which at this season the natural world points to Mary's place in the spiritual life. Why May? Hopkins says:

Ask of her, the mighty mother
 Her reply puts this other
 Question: What is Spring?—
 Growth in every thing.

At this time of the year, creation itself seems to be a hymn of praise. "All things rising, all things sizing / Mary sees, sympathizing," as Hopkins puts it.

Their magnifying of each its kind
 With delight calls to mind
 How she did in her stored
 Magnify the Lord.

This expresses a profound connection, natural and supernatural, between the Mother of the

Lord of Life and the renewal of life in spring. In Mary we behold the fullest possible growth of grace in any human soul. Mary is not only the Mother of the Lord; she is the Mother of the Church, his Mystical Body, and the Mother of all Christians.



Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary is sometimes regarded as an optional "extra" for those whose piety leads them in that direction. The truth however is that Mary is necessarily present in the redemptive relationship of the Church and the individual believer to Christ, not merely as a symbol but as particular person, so that there is no redemptive relationship with Jesus Christ that does not include also a relationship with Mary. The Church has always had a deep sense of what might be called a "Marian consciousness," an awareness of her singular presence in the mystery of salvation. Mary is present in our worship, in our hymns and prayers, in the feasts and seasons of the Church year, and, most importantly, in Holy Scripture. This last point must be emphasized, for it is the Christ attested to in Scripture—and no other—who is the Savior; and it is in the saving relationship to this scriptural Christ that we find also a relationship with his Mother.

Our tradition of reverence for the Holy Scriptures as containing "all things necessary for salvation" will, if we are true to our heritage, include a comprehension of a Marian consciousness that is an indispensable part of the scriptural witness. An authentic relationship with Mary can never take away from a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. Indeed, without Mary's presence in the Church, without a recognition of her scriptural presence, the person of Jesus Christ in Scripture is incomplete.



RITUALISM: PART FOUR ANGLO-CATHOLICISM IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

By Phoebe Pettingell

While innumerable books have been written about the history of Anglo-Catholicism in the Church of England, relatively little scholarly attention has been paid to its development in the Episcopal Church. Most accounts have amounted to a few paragraphs in studies of Anglicanism in the United States, and too many of those have repeated the same material from earlier, incomplete accounts, or lumped the movement with the High Church, even though the latter party was often at odds with Ritualists. In fact, one might argue that a Catholic dimension to our Church in this country began not with the influence of the Oxford Movement, but of Lutheranism.

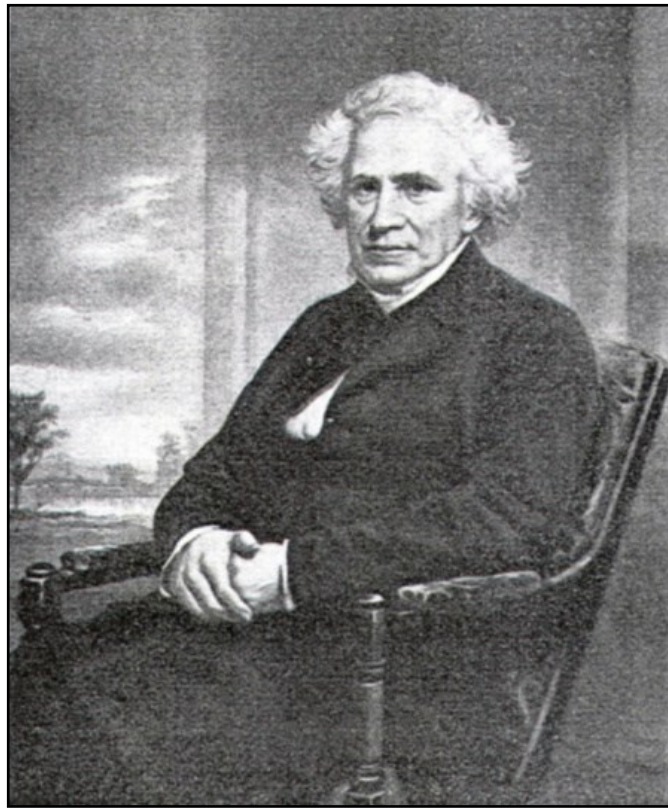
Even before Keble gave his Assize Sermon in 1834, Lutherans in Germany and Sweden felt distress over the effect of Calvinism and the Enlightenment on their tradition and the teachings of its founder. There began a revival of Ritualist practice in Germany, which Pusey observed when he studied on the continent between 1825 and 1827. One significant fruit growing out of this movement was the revival of deaconesses, an important office in the Early Church but laid aside after Constantine. Pastor Theodor Fliender (1800-1864) was appalled at the lack of care for sick people who were not wealthy. Their illnesses were compounded by poor nourishment, lack of access to medical help and unsanitary conditions. In his travels he had met with Elizabeth Fry in England—a

Quaker who devoted her life to serving the poor in prisons, and Mennonite women in India who ministered to Untouchables. In 1836, Fliender and his wife founded a motherhouse for deaconesses at Kaiserwerth on the Rhine. Unmarried women served there as nurses. They were “consecrated” in a rite devised by Fliender, and wore a habit so they would be easily recognized for what they were. Florence Nightingale trained there, and social re-

formers from many countries came to observe the movement. The idea spread rapidly to other Protestant Churches. In Anglicanism, it produced both orders of deaconesses (though they were not officially recognized at first) and religious orders following the Roman Catholic model.

William Augustus Muhlenberg (1796-1877)—great-grandson of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, the “Founder of American Lutheranism”—converted to the Episcopal Church as a boy. In 1845, he founded The Sisterhood of the Holy Communion: a cross between the dea-

conesses of Kaiserwerth and the first female religious orders being founded in England. These women did not take permanent vows, nor were they cloistered, but worked among the disadvantaged. By 1858, they had established St. Luke’s Hospital in New York City. Muhlenberg’s Lutheran heritage affected his practices as a priest. The



William Augustus Muhlenberg
1796—1877

Evangelical Catholic movement, which he founded, revived the practice of daily Morning and Evening Prayer said in parishes, and a weekly celebration of the Eucharist instead of limiting it to principal feast days. His Church of the Holy Communion in New York had a cross, candles, and flowers on the altar. All these were unprecedented innovations for the Episcopal Church, which had been even more strongly influenced by Calvinism than the Lutherans. (The “Easter Parade” began with his parishioners walking from their church to St. Luke’s Hospital, carrying flowers to its patients.) A singularly original figure, Muhlenberg’s achievements are too numerous and varied to discuss in this article, but like John Mason Neale and the Ritualists in England, he understood that if the Church was going to impact society it needed to meet the social needs of the poor by providing free schools and hospitals, shelters and orphanages. Instead of the ubiquitous “pew rents,” from which the 18th and 19th century Episcopal Church derived its revenue—and which ensured that the wealthy were segregated from the needy—his parish supported itself by asking a tithe from its members. Bankers and washerwomen might sit in the same pew, and the well-off members of the parish helped alleviate the needs of those with fewer means. Its worship also needed to “do,” rather than merely expect congregations to sit and listen. Rites meant ceremonial, not talk. For instance, he celebrated Christmas Day by decorating the church with greens, as was done in Lutheran Germany, and having a crèche. Other festivals brought adornments and processions or other festivities foreign to Anglicanism of the time. In his theology, Muhlenberg, in common with Neale, favored the Eastern Orthodox model over the Roman. He was also an influential hymn-writer in his day, a staunch Abolitionist, and fiercely patriotic. His family had been instrumental in the establishment of the United States, his grandfather being a member of the First and Second Continental

Congresses, and first Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Although the Sisterhood of the Holy Communion followed the deaconess model, four of its former members, led by Harriet Star Cannon, formed the first order of nuns in the Episcopal Church (1865), the Community of Saint Mary. The current Sisters in Greenwich, New York, some of whom have visited S. Stephen’s, are its Eastern Province. A pupil and disciple of Muhlenberg’s, James Lloyd Breck, traveled out to the wilds of Wisconsin to establish a male religious order at Nashotah. While the community of monks did not last, the seminary they founded endures to this day and continues its Anglo-Catholic tradition. Breck also founded the Episcopal school named after him in Minnesota, as well as Seabury Seminary, which eventually became Seabury-Western in Evanston, Illinois. Breck was particularly concerned with mission work to the Native American tribes in the northern Midwest, many of whom were Anglican.

By the end of the Civil War, an Anglo-Catholic party established itself in the Episcopal Church. Some of its members had been educated at Muhlenberg’s schools. All were now following events in the Church of England, and had read the writings of the Tractarians and Neale. They also were beginning to hear about the



Harriet Star Cannon

work of the Slum Priests. There had long been a High Church movement, but it eschewed ritual, and opposed Ritualism when it developed. While the early East Coast “shrine parishes”—including the Church of the Advent in Boston, St. Clement’s, Philadelphia, and S. Stephen’s—held their own, sometimes in the face of strong disapproval from their bishops—the evangelization of the Midwest provided further growth for the Catholic movement. The first Missionary Bishop, Jackson Kemper (1789-1870), established schools to train young men for the priesthood in Missouri, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, and became the Provisional Bishop

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

of the newly formed Diocese of Wisconsin. One of his ordinands, James DeKoven (1831-1879) became a fiery and controversial leader of the movement. Like Muhlenberg, he was celibate: something abhorred by family-centered 19th century Protestants as too “Roman” and unnatural in males. DeKoven was nominated as a bishop in



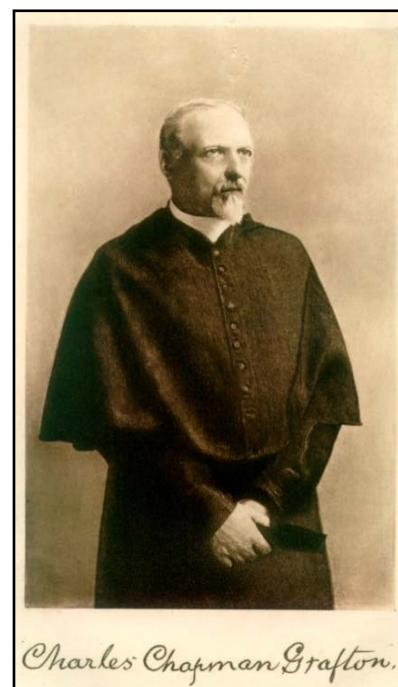
James DeKoven

Massachusetts (1873) and Fond du Lac (1875), and elected as bishop in Wisconsin (1874) and Illinois (1875). The Standing Committees of both dioceses rejected him on the grounds that his views were too extreme. He remained as War-

den of Racine College, turning down calls to Trinity Wall Street, the Advent Boston, and St. Mark's Philadelphia. De Koven fought mightily for the Ritualist “six points” (see my previous article), for Confession, and for the centrality of the Eucharist in worship. A magnificent orator, his efforts at the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in 1874 helped curb anti-Ritualist resolutions of the sort that so plagued Lowder and Mackonnochie and sent Arthur Tooth and his cohorts to jail in England. The canon that passed in 1856 merely obliged bishops to visit all their parishes at least once in three years—which had the effect of forcing a diocesan to make his visitation, no matter how much he disapproved of a parish's Churchmanship. (It also obliged him to experience what went on, rather than merely listening to hearsay.) In 1866, Presiding Bishop John Henry Hopkins published *The Law of Ritualism*, in which he urged that a wide variety of usages be permitted, and accurately predicted that many practices then considered controversial would eventually become the norm.

In 1865, a young priest named Charles Chapman Grafton (1830-1912), who had been serving in the Diocese of Maryland because its bishop was friendlier to Anglo-Catholics than the bishop of his native Massachusetts, sailed for England to study the monastic movements there. He sat at the feet of Pusey, but also befriended John Mason Neale. In a poor neighborhood in Oxford, he met the vicar of Cowley, Richard Meux Benson, and in 1865, together with Simeon Wilberforce O'Neill, they became the first members of the Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE). While several previous efforts at founding male religious orders had emphasized Medieval-style habits and tonsures, SSJE wore cassocks in the course of their work, like the London slum priests. The original three members were quickly joined by others, including an American friend of Grafton's, Oliver Prescott. While Benson remained at Cowley, working in his parish, Grafton sometimes extended his mission work elsewhere. He became the spiritual director both to the Society of St. Margaret and the All Saints Sisters of the Poor—both Orders soon established branch houses in the Episcopal Church. During an epidemic, Grafton helped out at Charles Lowder's St. Peter's, London Docks. During his seven years in England, he had not only seen the Ritualist Movement at work in England but become one of its significant players.

In 1872 Boston's Church of the Advent called him as its next rector. Grafton had become an Episcopalian there in his youth. His family had been prominent in the area since before the Revolution. Six years later, Prescott was called to St. Clement's, Philadelphia.



Charles Chapman Grafton.

Both men hoped to found a branch of SSJE in the Episcopal Church, and some of the English members of the Society came with them. Unfortunately, Benson continued to rule the Order from Cowley with an autocratic hand. The English clergy did not feel bound by those American bishops in whose dioceses they worked, nor did they respect the authority of Grafton and Prescott as their rectors. This proved too much for Prescott, who resigned St. Clement's in 1881. The more politic Grafton stayed on at the Advent, but resigned from SSJE the following year. Not only did this cause a rift in his congregation; the Sisters of St. Margaret who had followed him to Boston to run a children's hospital there would no longer accept him as their chaplain. Immediately three American nuns who had joined in Boston, along with seven novices, went to him asking to be formed into a new order.

Thus began the Sisters of the Holy Nativity. From his study of English Sisterhoods, as well as the deaconesses in the US, Grafton felt they all spent too much time running hospitals, orphanages, and similar institutions. He wanted the new Order to emphasize Christ's Incarnation, and to work in parishes, helping the clergy evangelize and teach. They were also to spend significant time in private as well as corporate prayer, molding themselves on "the Interior Life of our Lord." Without their own sanctification, they could hardly hope to assist others toward theirs. The new Order proved so successful that within a few years the congregation at the Advent grew from 250 to 600. The Sisters also labored tirelessly among the poor in their neighborhood, many of whom were black refugees from slavery in the South. Grafton argued that the American model of Democracy ultimately derived from religious communities, which are autonomous, and where the Chapter (all fully professed members) elects its leader.



Grafton Window
Nashotah House

In 1888, Grafton resigned from the Advent, desiring to spend the rest of his career founding new religious communities, preaching and teaching around the country. For several years, his close friend, the Rev'd Dr. George McClellan Fiske, had been begging for some Sisters to help him in his work at S. Stephen's, Providence. Grafton relocated both himself and the Sisters there, and their labors

resulted in significant growth in the parish, along with the founding of five chapels in other parts of Rhode Island. That same year, both he and Fiske were candidates in the election for the second bishop of Fond du Lac in Northeast Wisconsin. Fiske was elected, but declined. The diocese then elected Grafton. As with DeKoven, there were attempts to block his confirmation, but these failed as Grafton was more diplomatic, as well as a distinguished member of an old East Coast family with alliances to many powerful leaders, both ecclesiastical and political. As Bishop of Fond du Lac, Grafton became the preeminent Ritualist in the Episcopal Church, tirelessly writing books about the

movement, and preaching across the country. Trained as a lawyer, he knew how to build a logical and persuasive case for Anglo-Catholicism, appealing to the romantic instincts of the time. Where Muhlenberg had attempted to forge alliances with other Protestant groups, Grafton pushed for ecumenical relations with the Orthodox and Old Catholic Churches. Within the Anglican Communion, he became a significant player at the Lambeth Conferences. He brought the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament to these shores, and became its American Superior. Reading his bishop's log, one is astounded at the energy with which he built up his diocese, helped Ritualism become a mainstream movement, and wrote incessantly. For Grafton rites were ordained by God. Here is one of his descriptions of this theology:

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

“About the Altar the Ritualist placed two lights, which witnessed to the night of the Last Supper and of His two-fold Nature Who was the world's true Light. Also, in celebrating he thought it seemly to use the vestments which traditionally represented the two worn by our LORD. When asked for his authority for a Service liturgical, or-nate, choral, he replied that so GOD had revealed His Will in the preparatory dispensation, and had never repealed it. On the contrary, He had shown that by such a service He was worshipped where unquestionably He was most perfectly worshipped in spirit and truth. For, as after He had led the Hebrews out of Egypt, He took Moses up into the Mount and showed him the pattern for their worship, so after the latter exodus from Judaism, GOD took St. John up to Heaven and showed him the present heavenly worship as the general model and directory of the worship of the Christian Church. There, upon the Altar Throne, filled with living light, arched by the protecting bow of the Covenant, radiant with all the colors of His Attributes, St. John beheld the Lamb as It had been slain. He saw the High Priest standing in the midst of the golden candlesticks, clothed with His priestly vestments, and girt about with a golden girdle. There, too, was the Angel of the Covenant, offering the golden censer with much incense in front of the Altar and before the great white Throne, where the seven lamps of sacred fire, even in the presence of the dazzling splendor issuing from the Incarnate GOD, burn on in the eternal noonday. He saw the crowned elders of

the heavenly hierarchy prostrate themselves, and cast their crowns in mystic adoration, amidst the harpings and hymnings of the white-robed choirs, as, standing on the sea of mingled glass and flame, they antiphonally responded one to another, and accompanied the Divine Liturgy with their Allelu-jah anthem and credo and thrice holy hymn.”

Churches influenced by Grafton focus on Christ in glory, as the book of Revelation describes him, enthroned and surrounded by angels and the saints. You can see this in the reredos at S. Stephen's, in the painting above the chapel altar at St. John's, Newport, and at the cathedral in Fond du Lac where worshippers pass the Angels of Life and Death on their way to the communion rail, and enter a sanctuary resplendent with angels, archangels and all the hosts of heaven adoring their blessed Lord, risen and triumphant, just as communicants encounter His person in receiving the Sacrament.

When he joined SSJE, Grafton took vows of holy poverty, which, even when he resigned the Order, he kept. He gave away his rather large fortune to religious and charitable endeavors, also persuading his own wealthy family and friends to endow institutions that improved society, spiritually and otherwise. His works are still worth reading,

especially *Christian and Catholic*, and his autobiography, *A Journey Godward*. Even those contemporaries who disagreed with Grafton's vision of the Church admired his immense dedication, while those who knew him well felt he had brought them closer to God. In his memorial sermon, Father Fiske told the story of a dissatisfied priest pouring

Continued on page eleven



Detail, High Altar Reredos
S. Stephen's Church

KEEP THE PASCHAL FLAME BURNING: WHY EASTER IS FIFTY DAYS

By Fr. John D. Alexander

Easter is not only one day—the glorious Sunday of the Lord’s Resurrection—but also a whole season: Eastertide. Another term for the season is “Paschaltide,” from the Greek and Latin word for Easter, *Pascha*, which derives in turn from the Hebrew *Pesach*, or “Passover.”

During the Easter Season, the Church continues the liturgical celebration of the Lord’s Resurrection in a variety of ways. Extra “Alleluias” are added in the Daily Office and in the Eucharist. The most visible sign of the Easter Season, however, is the Paschal Candle standing in a prominent place in the sanctuary and lighted for all principal services during the fifty days from Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost.

It was not ever thus. Up until the liturgical reforms of the 1960s, Eastertide was reckoned for many centuries in the Western Church as the *forty* days until Ascension Day. After the Ascension Gospel, the Paschal Candle was extinguished and, following Mass, removed from the church altogether. The understanding was that Eastertide had ended and the separate ten-day season of Ascensiontide had begun.

The Book of Common Prayer, 1979, clearly states, “It is customary that the Paschal Candle burn at all services from Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost” (p. 287). The wording of this rubric—“It is customary”—does allow wiggle room for those who want to keep the previous custom of extinguishing the Paschal Candle on Ascension Day. But the rubric also expresses a clear preference for the more ancient view of Eastertide as lasting the full fifty days until Pentecost.

Such seemingly technical details of the liturgy *are* worthy of our attention insofar as they express important theological and spiritual principles. Some of my more traditionalist colleagues pour scorn on the idea of Eastertide lasting longer than forty days, and remain passionately committed to the practice of extinguishing the Paschal Candle on Ascension

Day. In the old rites it *is* a dramatic moment, visually symbolizing the end of the Risen Lord’s appearances to his disciples and his return to his Father in heaven.

The traditionalist concerns perhaps run even deeper than that. It could be argued that keeping the Paschal Candle burning through the Day of Pentecost effectively downplays the theological significance of the Ascension. In the face of Modernist criticisms that the Ascension imagery has lost credibility or meaning now that we no longer believe in a “three-story universe”—with heaven up above, hell down below, and a flat earth here in the middle—traditionalists may understandably want to reassert the theological truth stated in both the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds: “He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father.” Extinguishing the Paschal Candle immediately following the Ascension Gospel makes a powerful visual statement of this core Christian doctrine.

While I respect traditionalist sensibilities on this point, however, I want to argue the case for the still more ancient understanding of Eastertide as fifty days, with the corresponding practice of keeping the Paschal Candle burning through the Day of Pentecost.

We begin with the disciples themselves. We must never forget that both our Lord and his disciples were observant Jews. Jesus’ death and Resurrection took place at the beginning of Passover (*Pesach*), the annual Jewish commemoration of the deliverance of the children of Israel from slavery in Egypt. And the descent of the Holy Spirit took place fifty days later, “when the Day of Pentecost had come” (Acts 2:1).

From the beginning, the Christian Church discerned numerous parallels between Passover and Easter. Three of the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) identify the Last Supper as a

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

Passover meal. The slain Passover lamb foreshadows Christ slain upon the cross. The passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, and their deliverance from death at the hands of the pursuing Egyptians, anticipate Christ's Resurrection, as well as the Christian believer's passage from death to life through the waters of baptism.

Passover lasts a week—in some Jewish traditions it is eight days and in others seven. Also, beginning on the second day of Passover, Jews begin counting the fifty days until the next great feast of the Jewish calendar, *Shavuot*, or Pentecost. In Hebrew *Shavuot* means “weeks,” and signifies “a week of weeks,” that is, seven times seven, or 49 days. The Greek word “Pentecost” simply means “fiftieth.” The “Day of Pentecost” is thus “the fiftieth day” after Passover.

The fifty days between Passover and *Shavuot* were marked by distinctive ceremonies and known as the “Days of the Omer” (*Sefirat HaOmer*). An “omer” (or “sheaf”) is a measure of grain. At Passover, which coincided with the barley harvest, an omer of barley was offered in the Temple. At *Shavuot*, which marked the end of the wheat harvest, an omer of wheat was similarly offered in the Temple.

To this day, after nightfall on each of the fifty days between Passover and *Shavuot* observant Jews offer prayers to accompany the counting of days beginning with the formula: “Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to count the Omer.” The count is then given in terms of both total days and weeks and days (for example, on the 23rd day: “Today is twenty three days, which is three weeks and two days of the Omer”). In contemporary Judaism, Psalm 67 is then recited.

Although *Shavuot* originated as a celebration of the grain harvest and the offering of the first

fruits, accompanied by the beautiful prayer recorded in Deuteronomy 26:5-10—“A wandering Aramean was my father...”—at some point (possibly several centuries after New Testament times) it also acquired the meaning of a commemoration of the giving of the Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai. In this sense, *Shavuot* follows logically after Passover.

At the Red Sea, the Israelites are set free from bondage in Egypt and begin their journey towards the Promised Land. At Mount Sinai, however, they become a people, uniquely set apart for God by the gift of his Law. According to one Jewish source, *Shavuot* is “the birthday of Judaism.”

The parallels between Jewish *Shavuot*, thus understood, and Christian Pentecost, “the birthday of the Church,” are striking. The sound of the rushing wind and the tongues of fire descending upon the apostles in the upper room hark back to the thunder, lightning, and thick clouds that enshroud Mount Sinai when the LORD descends upon it in fire (Deuteronomy 19:18). The gift of the Law supplies the Israelites with a comprehensive guide to living in accordance with God's will; the gift of the Holy Spirit supplies the Church with God's law written on the human heart. We can even discern the image of Moses ascending Mount Sinai to bring back the Law as a foreshadowing (or “type”) of Jesus ascending into heaven to send the Holy Spirit down upon his Church on earth.

What, then, of the Ascension? It is clearly an ancient feast. In about 380, the pilgrim nun Egeria describes its celebration in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost—the Ascension of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit being treated as two sides of the same coin. But also in the late fourth century, St. John Chrysostom and St. Augustine of Hippo attest to the separate celebration of the Ascension elsewhere at the time familiar to us, ten days earlier, and they regard the feast as of great antiquity, perhaps going back to the apostles themselves.



According to Acts 1:3, after his Resurrection, Jesus presented himself alive to his apostles “for forty days.” The Church thus fixed the Feast of the Ascension on the fortieth day after Easter, the Thursday after the sixth Sunday of the season. (For the disciples, it was the fortieth day of the Omer.) Immediately before the Ascension, Jesus instructs the disciples, “stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). In other words, they are to remain in Jerusalem and complete the fifty days of prayer and preparation for *Shavuot*—when the Holy Spirit will descend upon them in fulfillment of the Lord’s promise. According to Acts 1:14, they did just that: “constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.”

The Christian “Great Fifty Days” of Easter thus has its origin in the disciples’ counting of the Days of the Omer between *Pesach* and *Shavuot* in the year of the Lord’s death and Resurrection—probably 30 or 33 A.D. According to the French liturgical scholar A. G. Martimort, “Almost as soon as the Christian Easter made its appearance in history, it presented itself as a feast that went on for fifty days.”

It is fitting, then, for the contemporary Church to keep Eastertide as a fifty-day celebration culminating in the Day of Pentecost. This practice enriches our faith by reminding us of the origins of Easter and Pentecost in the Jewish Feasts of *Pesach* and *Shavuot*. Within the Great Fifty Days, we continue to celebrate the all-important feast of the Ascension, but with the understanding that Ascensiontide is part of Eastertide and not a completely separate season.

Finally, keeping the Paschal Candle lighted during the ten days from Ascension to Pentecost need not be understood as downplaying the Risen Lord’s return to his Father in heaven. On the contrary, the flame of the Paschal Candle signifies the light and life of Christ—which at the Ascension is not extinguished but rather lifted up to a whole new level of being, ascending “far above all heavens, so that he might fill all things” (Ephesians 4:10). We do well to keep the flame burning.

Note: In the coming weeks we shall celebrate the Ascension with Sung Mass in the Lady Chapel on Thursday 5 May at 6 pm, and Pentecost on Sunday 15 May.

RITUALISM: PART FOUR

Continued from page eight

out grievances about his ungrateful congregation. “Finally, turning to [Grafton], he said; ‘Now, Bishop, what can one do with a people like that?’ With warmth and energy, the Bishop replied, ‘*Love them, love them.*’” This Christlike nature continues to shine through Charles Grafton’s works to this day.

Just as the polity of the Episcopal Church differs from that of the rest of the Anglican Communion, modeling its General Convention on our bicameral legislative houses, and electing bishops by vote rather than appointing them, so Ritualism developed differently. Kemper, Breck, DeKoven and Grafton helped establish the Anglo-Catholic “biretta belt” in the Upper Midwest, as they evangelized a developing part of the country. Unlike the majority of English Ritualists, who looked back toward an earlier era of “Christendom,” their American counterparts looked to a brighter and more ecumenically minded future. Both Muhlenberg and Grafton believed that the age of denominationalism would wane in favor of a new kind of Catholicism based on the Early Church, where Christians would work and worship together until, gradually, we united in a common purpose to evangelize the world and fulfill Jesus’s prayer in Gethsemane “that we all may be one.” In 2008, when I last spent several months in Wisconsin, I noted how similar the worship seemed in Roman Catholic, Anglo-Catholic and Lutheran services, and how easily members of one participated in the rituals of the others. This is what the mainstream of American Ritualism strove towards, and it is continuing to work itself out even now.



A HERETICAL MOVEMENT, A HOLY QUEEN, AND FREE BEEF: THE FEAST OF THE HOLY GHOST AMONG THE PORTUGUESE

By William Dilworth

If you saw or read Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*, you remember the Spirituals, those Franciscans who thought that their Order had separated itself from the love of Holy Poverty taught by Saint Francis of Assisi, their founder. The Spirituals found inspiration in the writings of Joachim of Fiore, a twelfth century Cistercian abbot. Joachim developed a view based upon three great "Ages" of humanity, each connected with a different Person of the Holy Trinity. The Age of the Father revealed itself in humanity following rules and commandments imposed by God, and corresponded to the Old Testament. The Age of the Son took in everything from the birth of Christ to the year 1260, the year by which Joachim predicted its replacement by the Age of the Holy Spirit. This last Age would be marked by universal love and equality, and the abolition of social and religious hierarchies. Although Joachim himself remained a Catholic in good standing, the Church condemned his teachings as heretical after his death.

After Rome rejected his ideas, a variant of them found a home in Portugal in the fourteenth century thanks to the interest of St. Isabel (Elizabeth) of Portugal, the *Rainha Santa* (Holy Queen), who was the consort of the troubadour-king D. Dinis. The plight of Christ's poor was St. Isabel's main concern, and the most famous miracle associated with her has to do with her sneaking bread past her more economy-minded husband; under her influence the Joachimites came to Portugal.

Another group that received protection in Portugal under D. Dinis and his queen were the Templars. Elsewhere the Order suffered suppression, its members murdered by the State under the Church's direction, and its property confiscated because of trumped up charges of blasphemy and heresy. Because of their help in reconquering Portugal from the

Muslims, and their assistance with rebuilding the country after the wars, D. Dinis reconstituted the Templars as the "Order of Christ," with their headquarters in the town of Tomar. Eventually they received responsibility for the religious oversight of new Portuguese territories. Significantly, the ideas of Joachim of Fiore also found acceptance with the Order of Christ.

The Feast of the Holy Ghost took root in Portugal under the influence of Joachimism. Its earliest forms included the rather gruesome death of a bull (symbolizing sin) at the hands of a mob; its meat contributed to a sort of beef soup for the poor, and distributed along with bread.

The community crowned a representative of the Holy Ghost in the person of a commoner, who reigned as the Emperor of the Holy Ghost. With its center in the city of Alenquer, the celebration spread to other parts of the country. In the fifteenth century it spread to the Azores, with the help of Franciscan friars and



Procession, Feast of the Holy Ghost, Our Lady of the Rosary Church in Providence

Continued on page fifteen



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*



A pair of forthcoming events and a concern will be the focus of this issue's written meanderings from yours truly.

Seven Times Salt

On 1 May at 4 pm an interesting program will be held in Great Hall at S. Stephen's, in conjunction with Brown University, by Seven Times Salt, a Boston-based early music ensemble specializing in repertoire of the 16th and 17th centuries. Praised for their creative programming and an "impeccably balanced sound," the group has performed since 2003 at venues across New England. Seven Times Salt delights in blurring the lines between "art music" and folk tunes, and is at ease performing in the concert hall, the dance hall, or the beer hall!

This spirited musical celebration honors the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare's death.

You'll hear excerpts from the plays interspersed with songs the Bard mentions by name, plus works by his skilled musical contemporaries including Thomas Morley, William Byrd, Ferrabosco, and more, all performed on period instruments and with historic pronunciation. Presented by S. Stephen's Church and Brown University in conjunction with Brown's exhibit "First Folio: The Book That Gave Us Shakespeare" on loan from The Folger Shakespeare Library. More information on the exhibit can be found at: <https://library.brown.edu/create/firstfolio/programming/other-events/>.



Seven Times Salt

This promises to be a highly entertaining hour and I'm doubly pleased it's in conjunction with The University as well as the first use of the re-furbished Great Hall as a musical venue. The acoustics seem splendid and this'll be the test! The performance has a suggested donation of \$10; students with ID are welcomed free.

Memorial Recital

My annual recital is given this year on Mother's Day, 8 May, at 5:30 pm. As usual, I try to program things you wouldn't hear at Mass, either because of duration, or just the very nature of the music. The music with which I ornament the Mass tries to be of a kind exceedingly appropriate with as little self-indulgence and as much beauty as possible. (I know, I know, highly subjective choices and not every one likes strawberries or chocolate either!)

The works on this program will include the rarely heard *Cantata Dies Natalis* by Gerald Finzi, for high voice and strings, which I've transcribed for organ accompaniment and will be sung by Tenor Jason Connell, a mainstay of the Schola since Spring of 2010. This substantial work has as its text poems and prose by the 17th century Anglican mystic Thomas Traherne. Of this work, Jason writes:

"It's fitting that we're performing *Dies Natalis*, which literally translates to 'Natal Day' or 'Day of Birth', on the day we honor those who

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

gave us birth. I for one will be dedicating this to my mother, who will be in attendance and who was baptized at Saint Stephen's with me last year! I find the poems especially touching, as it depicts the views of the world through the eyes of a new-born; it's an innocent and sublime view that I'm sure many of us wish we could experience again."

For about four decades I've thought Ravel's *Introduction and Allegro* for Harp, Strings, Flute and Clarinet would sound just wonderful with harp and the organ playing the rest of the score. What I've managed to do is create some work that is all labor intensive but I hope imbued with some charm. Af-

ter all, there isn't that much musical impressionism for the organ!

Joining me in Ravel is Megan Sesma, harpist, a new friend and a most elegant colleague. Her performance venues range from Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow to Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles and she has worked on movie sound stages, teaches at the University of Connecticut and



**Megan Sesma,
harp**

Wesleyan and is the first commissioned harpist in the US Coast Guard Band.

A new friend and new in Providence is Kevin Darrow who will be English horn soloist in Leo Sowerby's *Ballade*, a work that's been on my mind for some time as well. As a teen-ager it was Dr. Sowerby's suggestion that I pursue work in church music and except for a detour or two this has been a most pleasant pursuit!

Kevin Darrow writes of his life ".....[he] began playing the oboe at the age of 12 when a band director duped him into believing it was a

mini bassoon." Despite this dubious start, Kevin has since built a career playing an instrument he eventually discovered he loved. After graduating with a degree in Oboe Performance from the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, he attended the Oberlin College Conservatory as an Artist Diploma candidate. In 2002 he was appointed Oboe soloist to The Premiere United States Air Force Band in Washington, DC, in 2002 where he served for 12 years. As a member of the USAF Reed Consort and the USAF Woodwind Quintet he performed extensively as both chamber musician and clinician at numerous colleges and universities throughout the United States.

Kevin and his family moved to Providence in 2015. He can be found freelancing throughout Southern New England, practicing his avid amateur chef skills in his home kitchen, or digging in the garden with his partner Drew Walker, Associate Director of The Pembroke Center of Brown, and their infant daughter Dorothy.

I'll close the concert with another Sowerby work, his *Toccata*. Dating from 1941, it's the sort of work that late composer/critic Virgil Thomson wrote of as "opening the heavens and bringing down the house." I hope.

Fully cognizant that Mother's Day is fraught with social commitment, our effort is late enough to take a mother to brunch and then come for *un po' di musica*. We'll do our best to please!

Special Music Fund

The above mentioned Memorial Recital was established by vestry vote in 1955 to honor the memory of Robert Hale Ives Goddard whose widow paid to have the large and colorful organ in the parish church restored in his name. The annual event fell through the cracks over the years; it's not chroni-



**Kevin Darrow,
English Horn**

cled why, but it simply did. Reading of this in Father Norman Catir's book, *Saint Stephen's Church in Providence*, I decided to re-establish the event almost immediately after my appointment. At the suggestion of some of the Goddard family it was made simply the Memorial Recital (or concert) in memory of all those who had contributed to music and the music fund at S. Stephen's. This seemed such a fitting thing.

A great deal of what we do is the gift of individuals, without which, this season alone, we would not have had Advent Lessons and Carols, an anonymous gift in memory of Morgan Stebbins, a devoted Schola member. Christmas Eve was paid for by a trust left at Rhode Island Foundation by Richard and Edith Nutt to be spent only on Anglican church music. The Bruckner Mass on Easter IV was given anonymously to the Glory of God and in honor of a significant wedding anniversary, and just today, as I write, I've received a promise

of funds to cover honoraria of our guest players at the Memorial Concert. Again, an anonymous donor and accepted with gratitude.

I'd be happy to chat with anyone concerning gifts for special music outside the regular round of Sunday Mass, which is part of the parish's operating budget. The Rector and I work so well together with programming,

out of mutual respect and practically alarming similarity of taste. I am indebted to those who have made these extras possible and grateful that these gifts don't come with much stipulation, leaving us free to do what we do.

Welcome gifts would include the occasional instrumental addition as at Easter, or for the band in Mary or Rogation processions outside, or more costly, the occasional Solemn Evensong.

Please think on these things. I've approached this before in these pages but it seems now is the time to give it good thought if we're to continue that to which we've become accustomed and by all accounts, enjoy.

Thanks for reading this far, and I hope to see you at those May events.

—All good, James



FEAST OF THE HOLY GHOST...

Continued from page twelve

the Order of Christ. While the feast faded on the mainland, it survived in the isolated Azores and spread with the Portuguese diaspora.

Over the years the festival changed somewhat. The bull no longer meets death by dismemberment by the crowd, but the priest still distributes its meat, along with bread, to those present. Theoretically the Feast of the Holy Ghost is coterminous with Pentecost, but in reality occurs on any Sunday between Easter and then – or even later. In the Azorean communities of Southern New England local feasts take place through the summer, with the Great New England Feast of the Holy Ghost in Fall River held on the last Sunday of August. This year in Providence, the local Feast of the Holy Ghost held by Our Lady of the Holy Rosary parish (near Benefit and Wickenden Streets) falls on the weekend of May 14 and 15, with traditional processions, food, and entertainment. Participants have all but forgotten the radical egalitarianism at the heart of the feast's origin, so don't expect any abrupt social changes or rabble-rousing there. It's still an excellent way to get a taste of Portuguese Catholicism (and food), and to take part in a centuries-old celebration.

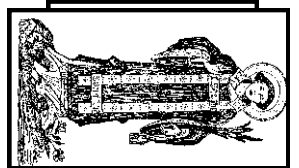


Jason Connell,
tenor



S. Stephen's Church in Providence
114 George Street
Providence, RI 02906

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PROVIDENCE RI
PERMIT NO. 1122



The S. Stephen

EASTERTIDE 2016



Christ Enthroned from the Book of Kells, c. 800
Trinity College Library, Dublin