

The S. Stephen

CHRIST THE KING

2016

Vol. 16, No. 2

My Dear People,

From the Rector

The 2016-2017 Program Season at S. Stephen's is off to an excellent start. The Schola Cantorum is in fine form—their sound is as good as, if not better than, at any time that I can remember in my sixteen years as Rector so far.

It was our pleasure to host the early music group Blue Heron once again for their concert on October 16th, and it was gratifying to see a good number of visitors, many of them possibly in S. Stephen's for the first time. One visitor sought me out and thanked me for opening up our beautiful church to the community for such a wonderful

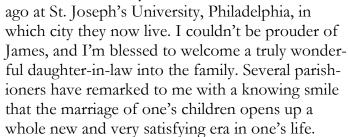
event. Clearly, we need to be doing more of this.

On November 2nd, we marked All Souls' Day with Requiem Mass for All Faithful Departed. The Mass setting was the Fauré Requiem, which has been one of my favorite

works of choral music since I first heard it performed live in London in the 1980s—at an All Souls Day Mass at St. Mary's, Bourne Street. The turnout of over a hundred exceeded all expectations; again, with God's grace we must be doing something right.

It was a great pleasure to officiate at the wedding of my older son, James, to Cristiane Barros, from Amazonas State in Brazil, on Saturday, November 5th. James was nine years old when our family first came to S. Stephen's, and some of you remember watching him and his brother Andrew

grow up—often serving as crack acolytes—until they both went off to college. James and Cris first met about five years



Bring it on.

Looking ahead, the season of Advent begins on Sunday, November 27th; that evening we offer our annual Lessons and Carols service, one of the highlights of our liturgical and musical year. Then, on Saturday, Decem-



ber 10th, we gather for our Advent Quiet Day. Giving the meditations this year will be my friend and esteemed colleague the Rev. Andrew Mead, Rector Emeritus of St. Thomas' Church, Fifth Avenue, New York City. Copies of Fr. Mead's book of sermons, *Catechesis*, will be available for sale on the day. Both of these Advent events are key components of our program year and merit the full support of our congregation.

Finally, if you have not already done so, please bring or mail in your Pledge Card for 2017. We

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

count on the financial support of our parishioners and friends to make possible the many dimensions of our parish's worship and ministry. Please do your part and be generous. Remember that all that we do here at S. Stephen's is offered to the glory of the Holy Trinity, and your offering is not just a charitable gift to a worthy organization but your expression of thanksgiving and praise to God for all his many blessings.

This letter comes with all prayers and best wishes for the remainder of 2016, I remain, faithfully,

Your pastor and priest Fr. John D. Alexander

ADVENT LESSONS & CAROLS



SUNDAY 27 NOVEMBER 5:30 PM

Music of Palestrina, Schein, Gibbons, Pizzetti, Gjeilo, Lassus, Lloyd & Bach



Mr. & Mrs. James Alexander

GUILD OF ALL SOULS Monthly Requiem 6 pm

5 December, 9 January, 6 February

The Guild of All Souls prays for the departed. If you have recently suffered a loss, find comfort in better understanding the mystery of the Resurrection.

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FR. YOST'S LETTER

In the Daily Office during November, we read from four prophets—Joel, Habakkuk, Malachi, and Zechariah. Although each has his own distinctive voice, these prophets share some common themes—the day of the Lord's coming, his judgment, and the consummation of all things. Towards the end of the Christian year, these voices of the Old Covenant speak to the Church about the fulfillment of the New. These lessons are part of a distinct shift that takes place in the liturgy at this time. Not only in the Daily Office, but also in the holy days of the season and the Sunday collects and readings, the emphasis becomes *eschatological*. We look to the Second Coming.

The first Christians believed that the Second Coming would occur in their own generation, and so they lived daily with an expectant sense of the Parousia, the immediate Presence of Christ. They were not entirely wrong in this, for truly we live in the "End Times," as have all men and women since the first coming of Christ. However, as the years of our Lord have drawn on, it has been a challenge for Christians to maintain the same level of ex-

Te look to the Second Com
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Frieze of Prophets John Singer Sargent—1895 Boston Public Library Murals

pectation as they had in the first century. There have been (and no doubt will continue to be) various apocalyptic movements that aim (often in misguided ways) to spur people to a greater sense of the immediacy of God's judgment. The Scriptures are clear that we can know neither the day nor the hour; but

the Scriptures are also clear that we must nonetheless be prepared.

One of the blessings of the liturgy and the Church calendar is that the mystery of God's dispensation is unfolded for us at the



best time and in the best way. The Christian who attends carefully to the Church's worship has a spiritual diet that is always full and balanced. All

Saints' Day gave us a glimpse of Heaven. On All Souls' Day we remembered those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith, praying that the Lord would grant them a place of refreshment, light, and peace. The last Sunday of the year, celebrated as the Feast of Christ the King, places before us the ultimate triumph of God in Christ. The Kingdom of God on earth will one day

find its fulfillment in Heaven. The liturgy at this season calls us to contemplate our place in that Kingdom, to prepare for our own end, and to live in expectation of the End of all things. "Surely I am coming soon." *Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!*

MERE ANGLICANISM: THE CHICAGO-LAMBETH QUADRILATERAL AND THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION PART TWO: HOLY SCRIPTURE

By Phoebe Pettingell

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scripture to be written for our learning: Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them; that, by patience and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast to the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. —Collect for the Sunday closest to November 16. Written by Thomas Cranmer

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor

may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.

—From Article 6 of the Articles of Religion: Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation

The first of the four essentials for Christian unity, as adopted by the bishops of the Episcopal Church in 1886, was "The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the revealed Word of God." Two years later,

at the 1888 Lambeth conference, this was revised as follows: "The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as 'containing all things necessary to salvation,' and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith." This change reflects the wording of the Thirty-Nine Articles, which were still binding for the Church of England, although not for the Episcopal Church.

American Episcopalians had several reasons for preferring their wording. In the first place, the original aim of the Chicago Quadrilateral had behind it the dream of unifying Christians in the United States, thus creating a quasi-State Church, somewhat like the Church of England, but designed as a bulwark against growing secularism. By the 1880s, many Protestants were increasingly accepting principles of the Higher Biblical Criticism—such as that the books of the Bible were not necessarily written by the ascribed authors, and that some had multiple authors and described events that had taken place



The Council of Trent Artist unknown, late 17th century

centuries earlier which might not be literally factual. To say that Scripture was, nonetheless, "the revealed word of God" would bridge the gap between adherents of modernism and those more conservative by avoiding two contemporary extremes. One end of the spectrum deplored any use of historical criticism in regard to the Bible. While the term"fundamentalism" did not come into being until the 1920s, the movement had its

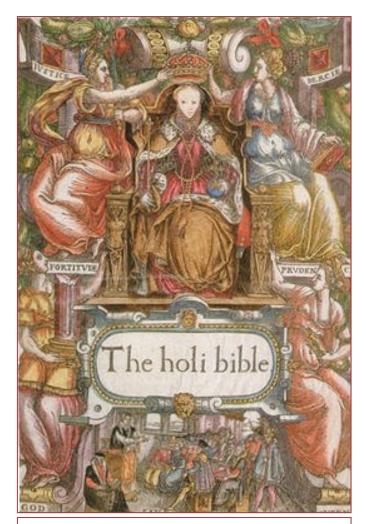
roots in a series of conferences beginning in the late 1870s. The other pole was rationalism, which debunked the miraculous in both the Old and New Testaments, together with the denial of the Virgin Birth of Jesus. However, the Thirty-Nine Articles had once provided the Church of England a way of maintaining fellowship with Continental Protestants in Middle Europe and Scandinavia, so their wording

on this point was ultimately incorporated into the Lambeth Quadrilateral.

The notion that Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation arose out of Protestantism at the time of the Reformation. Despite the Thirty-Nine Articles, Anglicanism also embraces "the Tradition of the Church." This includes such items as the "threefold orders" of bishops, priests and deacons. Although all three are, in fact, mentioned in the New Testament, their historic functioning is based on the operations of the Church in the early centuries after Christ. Martin Luther, however, declared that anything not specified in Scripture was adiaphoral (literally meaning neither commanded nor condemned) and thus not an essential of the faith. Calvin more radically revised the understanding of Church, claiming it to be an institution of human origin whose operations were subject to change because the principal focus of Christianity was the salvation of the individual soul. To unpack the distinctions here, it will be necessary to say something about the Canon of Scripture and its relation to Christian belief.

For the earliest Christians, those living in the first decades after Christ, Scripture was the Old Testament. Initially, in the Church in Jerusalem, this would probably have been Tanakh: the twentyfour books of Hebrew Scripture. However, in the Greek-speaking world, this became the Greek translation of the Old Testament known as the Septuagint: the word means "seventy" and refers to a legend that seventy-two rabbis simultaneously translated the Five Books of Moses about 300 BC, each of the individual translations identical because inspired by God. The translations continued over several centuries, ultimately resulting not only in a Greek Bible consisting not only of the original twenty-four books, but also including later ones written in Aramaic or Greek. These books have become known as deuterocanonical (a second canon). Some of these books appear in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox canons of Scripture. In late antiquity, mainstream Judaism repudiated them, but by then they had already become part of the Christian Bible.

While not officially formalized until the Council of Trent (1545-1563), a working canon of the



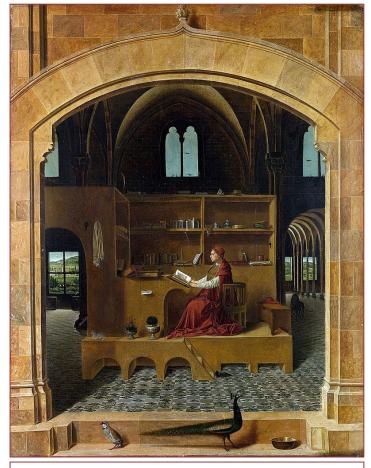
The Bishops' Bible, c. 1569

New Testament had come into existence sometime in the second century. The Pauline Epistles were in circulation by the end of the first century. Iranaeus referred to the four Gospels near the end of the second century, calling them the "memoirs of the Apostles." At the beginning of the third century, Origen listed the current twenty-seven books, although he included a few others. Subsequent lists continued to include a few books that ultimately did not make the final cut, such as the First and Second Letters of Clement, and the Didache of the Twelve Apostles (part of which is paraphrased in the 1982 Hymnal, #302), while other lists omitted several that ultimately did make it in—Revelation remained controversial for some time, and disputes about Hebrews, Jude, the Second Letter of Peter, and the Second and Third Epistles of John persisted.

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Luther began a revision of canon in his German Bible (1522-1534). He revised the Old Testament to follow the Jewish Hebrew Bible by omitting the deuterocanonical books from their order in the Septuagint, and placing them in a section following the Old Testament called Apocrypha, meaning they might be considered edifying, but not inspired by God. He also tried to reorder the New Testament by removing Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation, on the grounds that each contradicted what he considered to be the main theological message of Scripture. His followers strongly objected, so he subsequently restored the books, but again placed them in their own section. Although Luther was a brilliant Bible scholar for his time, his idea was dangerous, in that it placed his own theological judgment against centuries of agreement among orthodox Christians. Calvin followed his lead in the placement of the Apocrypha, and so did the two great English translations: the Bishops' Bible in 1568, and the King James Version in 1611. The existence of Protestant Bibles with a slightly different canon widened the breach with Rome. Some branches of Anglicanism, including the Episcopal Church, have now restored passages from the deuterocanonical books to our Lectionary, although our Bibles continue to place them in a separate section of Apocryphal or "intertestamentary" writings, acknowledging the lateness of their composition compared to the Hebrew Scriptures.

Despite arguments about the authority of these intertestamentary writings, what is remarkable is how soon the basic canon of Scripture took shape in the early Church, and how much more the respective canons of the Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Anglican, and Protestant Churches agree than they disagree on the contents of Scripture. By the time of the 1979 Prayer Book, mainstream Western Churches, including Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, etc. were using the "Common Lectionary" (now replaced by the Revised Common Lectionary), which includes many deuterocanonical readings. There is a growing ecumenical convergence on the contents of Scripture, regardless of whether the



Saint Jerome in his study Antonello da Messina (c. 1430—1479)

deuterocanonical books are printed in the order found in the Septuagint or are placed in a separate section between the two Testaments as Apocrypha.

For Christians, Scripture is the primary vehicle of God's revelation to us, the basis of our faith. This includes the Old Testament as well as the New. It is heresy to reject the former, or make it of lesser status. Our Lord proclaims that he came to fulfill and not to abolish the Law and the Prophets. When we say that we accept Scripture as "the rule and ultimate standard of faith," we do not pretend to understand all that it says. We acknowledge that certain passages seem to contradict others. There are sections that appall us. We live in trust that in the fullness of time God will reveal their meaning. Picking Scripture apart to put a higher valuation on some words rather than others ultimately projects our own preconceptions on the text. As the old rabbis loved to point out, life isn't long enough to fully understand Torah.

The canon of Scripture provides a key platform of ecumenical dialogue with other Christian bodies that similarly accept it. At the same time, it complicates or even cuts off the possibility of conversation with those who either reject all or part of the canon, or who practice what is called "open canon"—the notion that other books may be added indefinitely. Mormons, for instance, include the supposed revelations to Joseph Smith from the Angel Moroni in the Book of Mormon. More recently, certain scholars have argued that various other "gospels," such as the Coptic "Gospel of Thomas" or the "Gospel of Judas"—both second-century works—might be considered part of Scripture. However, the latter is certainly a Gnostic writing, while the former, a collection of sayings attributed to Jesus, also seems to infer secret knowledge revealed only to enlightened disciples—an idea contrary to the earliest Christian teaching. The Middle Ages considered even various later "gospels" edifying, but not essential to the

faith in the way the canonical gospels are.

Obviously, a common acceptance of the canon itself does not necessarily imply a common understanding of meaning. Father Alexander's Lenten talks last year on different applications of the ethics of war sharply illustrated this. The practical application of Scripture to our society invariably causes disagreements of interpretation. The Old Testament allows men to divorce their wives (though not women their husbands), while Jesus calls divorce and remarriage adultery. Churches have developed different ways of resolving the problem, which still erupts in acrimony. It is always difficult

to separate our cultural preconceptions from God's Word, since often we associate the former with the latter. The current partial rift in the Anglican Communion over what the Bible may say about homosexuality has resulted in impaired communion be-

tween the Churches of the Global South and the Episcopal Church, with similar ructions on the horizon with Anglican bodies in Canada, the British Isles, and probably Australia and New Zealand. Yet interpretive and theological differences were no less an issue for the Early Church than they are today. The Fathers of the Church early developed the principle of trying to maintain unity in the face of disagreements. Heresy is a sin, but so is schism. With the goal of unity among Churches, the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral calls for us all to continue to wrestle with what the Spirit is saying to us in charity and patience.

While disagreements get a lot of attention, it is more remarkable that the basics of the faith have remained the same among Christians throughout the world and across the ages. God is One in Trinity of Persons, and chose a people to spread his word throughout the earth; the divine Logos (Word) became incarnate as Jesus of Nazareth,

> suffered and died for our sins, and rose again on the Third Day, overcoming death than we might rise with Him; the Holy Spirit remains with us until the end of Time. Most of the doctrines over which different branches of Christianity quarrel would seem petty to those outside the faith, hardly worth understanding, compared to the essential beliefs. The very existence of the canon of Scripture creates certain problems of interpretetation—particularly when different texts within it seem to contradict one another. But, as we shall see in the subsequent installments in this series, this is where

the other three elements of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral come in. As a distillation of core doctrine, the Creeds provide the key to the right interpretation of Scripture. The practices of Bap-



Lancelot Andrewes (1555-1626) Artist unknown

THE POLITICS OF REPENTANCE

By Fr. Alexander

The question that must be

asked is how the various

collectivities we belong

and locally-have fallen

short and bear responsibil-

ity for the ills that beset

us. And how might we be

called to change collective-

nationally,

to—globally,

ly as a result?

B y the time this issue of *The S. Stephen* is published and distributed, the 2016 Presidential Election will have taken place. At the time of writing, it still lies in the future. My hope and prayer is that when you read this, the election results will have been settled beyond all question, with the country leaving this wretched campaign season behind and moving forward into the next four years with a new President.

As is usually the case, the clergy of S. Stephen's have been reticent about expressing political opinions from the pulpit or through official church communications. There are several reasons for this. Endorsing one candidate versus another in an election could lose the parish its tax-exempt status.

And the public expression of political opinions by the clergy can be woundingly divisive in the life of a congregation. Those who honestly disagree with the clerical opinions thus expressed can draw the (usually false) inference that they're being told that God is not on their side.

So we must be careful. But this does not mean that the Church can have nothing to say about political matters. God is

concerned with the whole of human life, not just selected parts of it. Politics are a vital and necessary ingredient of collective human existence. It follows that the Church often not only has the right but also the duty to offer guidance on political, social, and economic questions as much as on matters of personal morality and spirituality.

There is, however, another reason for our reticence: namely, that it is best not to speak unless we have something useful and worthwhile to say. This point can be expanded a bit. The Church's contribution to the public conversation will be useful and worthwhile if it meets three conditions. First,

it should be informed by authentically Christian principles—such as love, justice, compassion, and concern for the most vulnerable members of society. Second, it should offer some distinctively Christian insight or perspective that would otherwise be missing from the secular political discourse. And third, it should make practical recommendations that might actually be helpful to those charged with formulating public policy or making political decisions.

This third condition is notoriously difficult. Some expressions of Christian public ethics are incontestable—for example, we ought to "work for justice, love, and peace"—but are so vague and nebulous as to be of no practical value. At the op-

posite end of the spectrum, Christian advocates of this or that cause make policy prescriptions that are so specific and detailed that their opponents can rightly challenge them on a variety of technical grounds. Hence arises the canard that Christian leaders are "well meaning but naïve" with respect to public policy. In the 1930s, some Christian ethicists developed the term "middle axioms" to express the ideal of rec-

ommendations that are both general enough to express universally valid Christian moral principles and yet specific enough to be practically helpful.

These conditions set a high bar. Over the past several months, I've wondered what as a priest I could possibly say about the current state of American politics as reflected in the 2016 Presidential Campaign that might even come close to being useful and worthwhile according to the criteria sketched out above.

O ne observation is that the rhetoric on both sides follows a similar narrative pattern. A number of social scientists have pointed out that

the divide between Clinton supporters and Trump supporters has little to do with traditional predictors of political affiliation such as social class or economic interests. It is much more a contest between competing sets of cultural values—or indeed, between competing worldviews.

According to New Testament scholar and sometime Bishop of Durham N.T. Wright, a basic component of any worldview is an identity narrative that answers four critical questions: Who are we? Where are we? What is the problem? What is the solution? Learning how the members of any nation, re-

ligion, ethnicity, political movement, religious organization, or interest group answer those questions is the first step towards understanding their worldview.

Trump supporters and Clinton supporters would typically give very different kinds of answers to all four questions, and no doubt within each

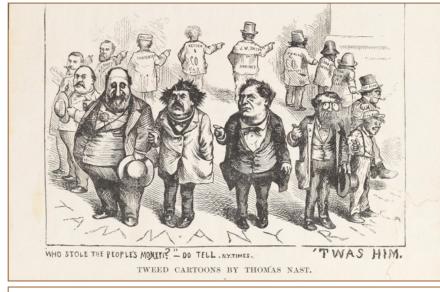
camp the answers vary enormously as well. But with respect to questions three and four—What is the problem? What is the solution?—one feature that they both have in common is that they almost always describe what's wrong as the fault of someone else.

Each competing worldview identifies some version of the "Other" to blame for all the nation's problems. On one side, this "Other" might be cast as traditional political and financial elites who are too incompetent, self-serving, and corrupt to deal with threats posed by immigration and radical Islamic terrorism. On the opposite side, it might be cast as forces of racism and xenophobia fighting an ultimately futile battle to cling to an already by-

gone world of white male privilege. Little if any blame is ever attributed to the mistakes of one's own group but always to the malevolence of one's perceived enemies. A politics driven by such competing narratives inevitably becomes polarized, bitter, vindictive, and nasty. Political contests become zero-sum games. No quarter is given, no prisoners taken.

In this context, the Church's best contribution might be to hold up a widely neglected practice of its own heritage: namely, self-examination and repentance. At the individual level, the Church's

spiritual tradition bids us examine our consciences and confess our sins on a regular basis: at the end of each day if possible, and certainly before receiving Holy Communion. But selfexamination and repentance are not just individual actions; they have a corporate dimension as well. The question that must be asked is how the various



Thomas Nast (1840-1902). Two Great Questions. 1871. Museum of the City of New York

collectivities we belong to—globally, nationally, and locally—have fallen short and bear responsibility for the ills that beset us. And how might we be called to change collectively as a result?

Such corporate self-examination is a characteristic feature of our Anglican tradition. During both World War I and World War II the Church of England organized "National Days of Repentance." In both wars, the Church's leaders supported the nation's war effort. In the Second World War in particular, they recognized and taught that Nazism was an evil that had to be confronted and defeated at all costs. But at the same time, they never lost sight of the question: How did *our side* contribute to the conditions that allowed this evil

Continued from previous page

to arise? How might God be calling us to change so that such wars will be less likely in the future?

Within living memory, the Roman Catholic Church has put the same principle into practice in some remarkable ways. At the opening of the Second Vatican Council in 1962, addressing the his-

toric schism of the Eastern and Western Churches Pope Paul VI asked "pardon of God ... and of the separated brethren" for ways in which the Western Church may have offended them through the centuries. Later, during the Jubilee Year of 2000, Pope John Paul II urged the Church to take responsibility for its past wrongs and to ask pardon of its

contemporaries, a process he called "the purification of memory." During his papacy, John Paul issued a number of apologies for past actions of the Catholic Church. Most notably, while affirming that Nazi anti-Semitism was grounded in a pagan racialist ideology thoroughly opposed to the principles of Christianity, he nonetheless acknowledged that centuries of Christian anti-Judaism made Nazi persecution of the Jews easier, and he apologized for the indifference and inaction of many Christians during the Holocaust.

Some argue that the Pope went too far in these apologies, others that he did not go far enough. Such questions are beyond my scope here. My point is simply that such Christian willingness to engage in corporate self-examination and repentance stands in stark contrast to the self-righteousness and demonization of opponents that characterizes so much contemporary political discourse. The Christian tradition challenges us to ask ourselves how we share in the responsibility for the evils that threaten us, rather than fixing all the blame externally on perceived and real enemies. In addition to "Whose fault is this?" we need to be asking, "How is this our fault?"

Resistance to this proposal will come from one direction in particular. Some will argue that this approach leads to the cardinal sin of "blaming the victim" or, worse, encouraging victims to blame

themselves. And we live in a culture where, rightly or wrongly, many people see themselves either as victims or as advocates for victims. So, let me freely acknowledge that genuine victims should not be blamed or made to internalize the blame for their victimization. But we cannot all always be victims, all the time. Even those who have suf-

Each side needs to ask itself how its own omissions and failures contributed to the strength of popular support for the other side.

about how to fering, along those choice of responsible self-examinal Was our responsible the best we will be the strength of the

fered grave injustices have choices about how to respond to their suffering, along with responsibility for those choices. And this dimension of responsibility opens the door for self-examination and repentance: Was our response to the situation the best we were capable of? How might we have responded differently if we knew then what we know

now? How can we respond more effectively now and in the future?

This year's election campaign has been hard and nasty: the most uncivil presidential contest that I can remember. It has uncovered deep cultural and ideological cleavages in American society. Some hard and searching questions need to be asked in the aftermath. In particular, regardless of who wins, each side needs to ask itself how its own omissions and failures contributed to the strength of popular support for the other side. It just may be that the Christian tradition of self-examination and repentance can furnish some useful models for engaging in that exercise. In this way we can begin the necessary process of building bridges of understanding, reconciliation, and cooperation across our present political divides.



Society of Mary

Join us for the Holy Rosary, breakfast and an informal meeting at 10 am on the following Saturdays:

December 3, January 7, February 4

MERE ANGLICANISM

Continued from page seven

tism and the Eucharist express the Church's obedience to the Lord's commands in the New Testament. And the Historic Episcopate indicates the presence of a succession of bishops in the Church charged with the responsibility of authoritatively interpreting Scripture's teaching to new generations in everchanging historical circumstances. Most fundamentally, the canon of Scripture itself answers the question: What are the authoritative writings that need to be interpreted? Where do we seek the revealed Word of God? Anglicans put Scripture at the center of our worship, basing what we do upon its teachings. Scripture unites us among ourselves, and unites us in fellowship with other Christians because it gives us a sure basis of God's revelation to the world he created and loves, and his promise of a new creation to come.



EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

Saturdays following Low Mass 17 December, 21 January, 18 February





FOR THOSE IN NEED SUNDAY 1 JANUARY 2017

SET TABLES, COOK, SERVE, CLEAN, DONATE NEW SCARVES, MITTENS, HATS, SOCKS, PERSONAL HYGIENE PRODUCTS.

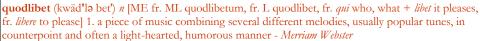
IF YOU CAN HELP, PLEASE CONTACT THE PARISH OFFICE AT 401-421-6702, EXT. 1 OR SEND EMAIL TO OFFICE@SSTEPHENS.NECOXMAIL.COM

For I was hungry, and you gave me food: I was thirsty, and you gave me drink: I was a stranger, and you welcomed me... Matthew 25:35



Quodlibet

by James Busby





With the choral season off to a start in excellent vocal fettle it seems appropriate to note some changes in personnel I haven't yet observed and to offer wel-



Frank Pisaturo

come as well, where appropriate ... Frank Pisaturo seems drawn liturgically eastward in church and has begun serving as occasional member of altar parties. I was so happy to see him as sub-deacon recently and look forward to hearing him sing Epistle as well in the future, should it

be his call on that rota. Frank's presence has been an all-round blessing since his arrival out of college a few years ago.

New in the alto section is Dylan Hillerbrand, who, though just out of Swarthmore College, has been doing this sort of thing in Episcopal churches for many years. He got his start as a treble at St. Phillip's Cathedral in Atlanta, Georgia, and has been singing regularly ever since, including a stint at St. James Cathedral in Chicago. Dylan works at a Boston homelessness prevention project in development and community engagement. When he's not working or singing he likes to maximize his time outside by running or cycling, or in the kitchen where he purportedly bakes up a storm.

By now many of you will have heard Fauré Requiem on All Souls', I trust, and will have noted new baritone Devon Morin. His credits follow:

"Celebrated for his "brilliant" and "booming" baritone, Devon Morin performs frequently as a soloist and ensemble member in Opera, Contemporary Music, and Early Music throughout the United States. Most recent performances include Nahant Music Festival, The Oratorio Society of New York, the Berkshire Choral Festival, as well as Opera in Williamsburg, Opera Providence, Salt Marsh Opera, the Masterworks Chorale, and Harvard pro Musica. This season he will be performing the baritone solos in Haydn's Paukenmesse with the Nashua, New Hampshire Choral Society and Orchestra and Vaughan William's Fantasia on Christmas Carols and Finzi's In Terra Pax with the Blacksburg Master Chorale. Devon has performed in many venues including Carnegie Hall, Boston's Symphony Hall, Jordan Hall, the Boston Opera House, Cathedral



Devon Morin, baritone

Church of St. John the Divine (NYC), Marsh Chapel at Boston University, the Temple of Dendur at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and at Tanglewood. A passionate educator, he is currently a part of the voice faculty at South Shore (Massachusetts) Conservatory and the Rhode Island Philharmonic



Dylan Hillerbrand, counter-tenor

Music School. Devon earned his undergraduate degree in Vocal Performance and Music Education from the University of Rhode Island and a Master in Vocal Performance from the Manhattan School of Music."

I welcome the "newbies" and am pleased

to report they seem to be settling in to my demands and quirks as if they've been here for ages and I am grateful.

Former alto Steven Serpa, still at work on the Ph.D. in Texas, writes that his one act opera *Thyrsis and Amaranth* received its professional premier in St. Louis on a double bill with a work by Lin-Manuel Miranda whose Broadway hit Hamilton is nigh onto impossible to see. Criticism held Steven's work in high acclaim: "With the gorgeous music and wrenching lyrics of Steven Serpa, *Thyrsis & Amaranth* becomes the main feature of the evening managing to even trump the wildly entertaining final piece by [Lin-Manuel] Miranda." And: "truly beautiful ... magnificent little story jammed full of thought and feeling and meaning." And again: "it is the high point of the evening (the high point of the week, as far as I'm concerned)." Kudos, Steven!

Of note, coming up so soon is Advent Lessons and Carols, on 27th November at 5:30PM. The first Sunday in Advent, the only appropriate Sunday to



Steven Serpa, composer and counter-tenor

schedule this, is also Thanksgiving week-end with all the inherent conflicts. Please note your calendars, tell your friends, and get the word out on this. As previously, it'll be sung in memory of late Schola member Morgan Stebbins and her son Cameron. Those regulars of you may remember that for years it was sung solely in memory of young Cameron and funded by a grant in his memory from Rhode Island Trust. To say that I'm indebted in both their memories being perpetuated is understatement, and it's a wonderful start to the church year. —Excelsior, James

JOIN THE SOCIETY OF MARY ONLINE

The Society of Mary American Region's website has now been updated to allow new members to join, pay dues, and order medals online. (Previously an application form had to be downloaded and printed, and sent with a check in the mail.) To learn more about joining the Society of Mary, please visit the American Region website at somamerica.org.

UNDERSTANDED OF THE PEOPLE: THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Today we are accustomed to a plethora of Bibles translated into English: Study Bibles with copious notes, and variant texts; so-called Paraphrase Bibles, rendering the text into a more popular idiom; Bibles tailored for specific groups including parents, women, men, or teens. However, until the fourteenth century, there was no complete English translation. The earliest known Anglo-Saxon Bible, from the Seventh century, contained a Psalter, Gospels, and paraphrases of the first five books of

the Old Testament. Educated people of the time spoke and read Latin, but since printing had yet to be invented, those lucky enough to have access to a library read from scrolls.

The first English Bible is attributed to John Wycliffe (1320-1384), member of a proto-protestant sect, the Lollards. He certainly supervised a translation from the Latin of St. Jeromeknown as the Vulgate—into Middle English. Because his views were consid-

ered heretical, the book was banned. In consequence, there were no further English Bible translations until the sixteenth century, although translations into other European languages proliferated on the continent. Nevertheless, certain phrases from this work have been preserved throughout the tradition of Authorized English Bibles, i.e., those approved as lectionary bibles by the Church of England.

The first Bible in modern English was translated by William Tyndale (1484-1536). He worked from the Hebrew and Greek texts, as well as the Latin. Again, he preserved certain phrases from the Wycliffe translation. Tyndale worked on his translation from 1525 through 1534. A master of rhetoric as well as a great scholar, much of his phraseology remains in the great tradition of English Bibles. Although King Henry VIII had Tyndale arrested in Europe for opposing the annulment of his marriage to Catherine of Aragon,

and executed as a her-

etic in 1536, in the previous year he authorized a translation by Miles Coverdale, much of it based on Tyndale's translation. This was the first printed Bible in English and so was widely available in affordable copies. The Psalter used in all Prayer Books through 1928 is Coverdale's. In 1539, a further revision was issued, called The Great Bible. However, this was soon superseded by The Geneva Bible (1560), a largely



Window: King James Bible Translators St. Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, New York

new translation with more vigorous phrasing, which proved more popular, especially among the growing number of Puritans. Its strong Protestant leanings, however, bothered many of the bishops, so Queen Elizabeth I ordered a revision in 1568: The Bishops' Bible. Nonetheless, the Geneva Bible continued to be popular because of its copious study notes and memorable phrasing. Despite the Queen's edict that the Bishops' Bible was to be read in churches, not

all clergy obeyed her. The Geneva Bible is quoted by Shakespeare, and was brought by the Pilgrims to America.

In the meantime, English-speaking Catholics produced their own translation: Douey-Rheims (1610). Since it was illegal to worship as a Roman Catholic at the time, it was printed in France, from which the English Catholics in exile ran their clandestine mission to the British Isles.

King James I hated the Geneva Bible, less for its language than for its Calvinist study notes. He therefore convened a commission to provide an authorized translation that would reflect the theology of the Church of England, especially in regard to the threefold order of ministry: bishops, priests and deacons. Under the direction of the Bishop of Chichester, Lancelot Andrewes, forty-seven scholars worked on this translation from the original texts in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, as well as looking at St. Jerome's Vulgate. Once again, some of the language followed Tyndale and even Geneva, but also added its own considerable scholarship

and rhetorical power to create a Bible that remained the authorized English text not only for Anglicans but for the majority of English-speaking Protestants well into the twentieth century.

Translating the Bible into a language "understanded of the people" (as the first introduction to *The Book of Common Prayer* phrases it) shaped the subsequent development of the English language. The decision to avoid words derived from Latin in favor of ones derived from Anglo-Saxon continues to influence the way we speak, even now. Furthermore, the great tradition of English Bible translation, which continues in The Revised Standard Version (1946 – used here at S. Stephen's), and The New Revised Standard Version (1989) – although the latter remains controversial in certain respects – helps make passages memorable so that they will stick in people's minds and become part of the way in which we see the world. —Editor

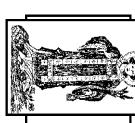




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