



# The S. Stephen

## Corpus Christi

### 2013

Vol. 12, No. 5

My dear people:

*From the Rector*

It is perhaps a truism that we no longer live in a church-going society. Some of us can remember times and places in which going to church on Sunday was a cultural expectation. Many if not most churchgoers were sincere believers, but a good number went to church simply because it was the socially respectable thing to do, regardless of what they believed.

Those days are gone. Nowadays, churchgoing is more the exception than the rule, and those who come generally do so out of a conscious commitment to it as something important and worthwhile.

It is the responsibility of the clergy – albeit a responsibility shared with the laity – to exhort and encourage people to come to church: both to evangelize those who have no religious affiliation; and to encourage existing members to come more regularly and to participate more actively in the life of the church community.

Down through the years, clergy have attempted to motivate their flocks in different ways. Within living memory, the appeals have moved through three stages, which I like to label “pre-modern,” “modern,” and “post-modern.”

The first stage, which I call “pre-modern,” was an old-fashioned appeal to duty based partly on fear. Clergy would tell their flocks that if they wanted to go to heaven when they died then it was their duty to come without fail to church every Sunday and principal holy day of the year. A number of other minimum duties had to be fulfilled – enumerated in the list known as the “precepts of the Church.” So, at a time when people took seriously damnation and hell as very real possibilities, one chief motivation for attending worship and participating in the life of the church was the salvation of one’s soul.

That at least was the Catholic version. The more Protestant or Evangelical version taught that salvation came by way of repenting of one’s sins and putting one’s faith in Jesus as Savior. But the outcome was the same. The external evidence that one had been saved was that one *wanted* to glorify God by coming to church and worshipping. Missing church too often was seen as

evidence that one was backsliding and “losing one’s faith,” or perhaps that one had never had true faith to begin with.

I don’t want to dismiss this “pre-modern” approach out of hand. Its Eastern Orthodox version is particularly appealing. We have been created to share in the divine nature and live forever. The life of the world to come is continuous worship and adoration. The church’s worship on earth is thus a foretaste of – indeed a window upon – the eternal liturgy in heaven. Thus, through regular worship, prayer, meditation, and participation in the fellowship of the Christian community we prepare ourselves for heaven by doing here and now what we shall be doing there eternally in the company of all the angels and saints.

Many years ago, I knew a rector who would try to motivate his congregation to be more regular at Mass by impressing on them that if they thought about how great a gift and privilege it was, they wouldn’t ever want to miss it. His wife, the daughter of a distinguished priest, would then say, “Dear, you should just tell them that if they don’t come to Mass on Sunday they’re going to hell.”

The problem – even if one believed that to be true – is that in a culture where most people no longer take the possibility of hell seriously – indeed where one of the worst things the clergy can be accused of is preaching “hellfire and brimstone” – such an approach loses its persuasiveness. In response, over the past several decades at least some clergy and church leaders have adopted a second approach, which I call “modern.”

Clergy and lay leaders attempted to foster church attendance and church growth by a frankly consumerist approach: Come to church and have your needs met! We’ll do our best to make you feel welcome. We’ll do our best to make our liturgy and music

*Continued on page ten*



## THE CURATE'S CORNER

*Fr. Blake Sawicky*

I am writing this from the road as I travel with my father from Denver to Providence. The route we have chosen is a somewhat winding one, stretching 2,500 miles. As of this writing, we have already traversed the Great Plains, crossed the Midwest and the Appalachians; and we are about to make our turn north on the inland route, to travel along the edge of the mountains to the Hudson Valley before making our way across Massachusetts to Providence. We are passing historic sites from Lewis and Clark to the so-called “Indian Wars,” from colonial American churches to Civil War battlefields, from Depression-era public works to modern storm levees. We have observed every conceivable expression of our economy, from high-tech aeronautics to industrial farms to local markets to manufacturing plants to subsistence agriculture to the vast number of law-enforcement, medical, and construction professionals that make cross-continental ground transport possible. Before the drive is over we will have crossed nearly every major interior river in the nation, including the Platte, Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Mississippi, Ohio, and Hudson; and we will have experienced nearly every major climatic and environmental category between the two locations – high desert, prairie, rolling hills, low-land plains, river bottom, temperate forest, alluvial plains, the coastal interface. We are constantly facing something new, and constantly broadening our horizons of the people and environments of which our country consists.

There are observable patterns to all of these categories of phenomena. Deserts often appear in rain shadows created by mountains; generals in the American civil war placed a premium on controlling access routes across the Appalachians and between river systems; a cross-continental network of roads requires certain kinds of interchanges and personnel to keep it functioning. But what keeps impressing itself on me

as we drive is how random it seems for us to see an empty factory next to a historic re-creation of a Revolutionary War era fort, followed a few miles further on by an international Call Center for Ama-

zon.com, all as we descend out of the coal mountains of West Virginia. Each category of site has its own set of patterns and explanations. But as we drive past them, the only “scarlet thread” tying them together is the simple fact of our drive, from Point A to Point B.

Real life as we live it is a strange hodgepodge of memories and current events, cultural inheritances, and hopes and plans for the future; of greetings, farewells, and reunions. In our experience, moment by moment, all of them flow into and out of the other. We are tempted in life to connect the dots in such a way that we perceive a shape which suits our fancy, answers our questions, and fulfills all our desires. But this is not the way life works. Our lives are unified in living them. As my father and I drive, it seems to me that this

might be a little like the communion of the saints: it makes no sense to any earthly eye, it covers every conceivable spectrum of wealth, influence, popularity, intelligence, attractiveness. And yet its shape is clearly discernible by its ongoing life as it continues on earth and in heaven: conformed to the image of the Savior, who gave up his life that we might live, and sent us the Holy Spirit that we might be with him always. Our lives in this fellowship, by God's grace, will be conformed to this same image; and our lives will be at unity with his life who lives forever and feeds us with his body and blood.



## BISHOP LINDSAY URWIN AT S. STEPHEN'S

S. Stephen's was privileged to host a two-day festival for the annual Mass and Meeting of the Society of Mary, American Region. Visitors came from all over the East Coast and from Wisconsin. The Guest Speaker and Preacher was the Right Reverend Lindsay Urwin, OGS, Administrator of the Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in England. Members of the congregation who participated in our 2010 pilgrimage there had already met the Bishop, and knew him to be genial and a skilled evangelist. His topic Friday evening was "One Faith, Two Shrines: The Challenges and Joy of Life in Walsingham." The talk was full of entertaining anecdotes, but ended on a serious note—that the existence of the two modern shrines in Walsingham, Anglican and Roman Catholic, remains a sign of the scandal of divisions within Christianity. A panel discussion followed with responses from Father Henry Bodah—Roman Catholic Chaplain at Brown University—and the Rev. Canon Arnold W. Klukas, Professor of Liturgics and Ascetical Theology at Nashotah House. A lively question-and-answer period followed. Our Lady of Providence Ward provided a reception. The evening concluded in the chapel with Vespers of Our Lady, beautifully sung by S. Stephen's Schola Cantorum.

Saturday morning, at the Solemn High Mass, Bishop Urwin preached, proclaiming that "a right emphasis on Mary safeguards right believing about Jesus" because she reminds us that Christ was both fully divine and fully human. "Is it a coincidence that the Church of England dribbled into Deism in the centuries after Mary began to be dishonored?" He added, "Mary stayed close to Jesus and we must surely do the same. We know the places to find him: above all, at the Eucharist and in the Confessional.... In staying close we will inevitably be drawn closer together. The Church is so fractured. It can only mean we are not staying close enough." After the Mass, which featured the *Missa Super Regina coeli* of Ioannis non Papa sung

by the Schola Cantorum, we followed the flower-bedecked statue of Our Lady in an outdoor procession on George Street. Christarie and Keira scattered rose petals before the platform borne on the shoulders of Tom Oakes, George Ryan, Simon Newby and Louis Verdelotti. A brass band accompanied our singing of "Ye who own the faith of Jesus" and the Lourdes hymn. The route of the procession through the Brown University campus attracted many spectators, some of whom followed it back to the church.

At the luncheon, the Board of the Society of Mary honored the Reverend Dr. Richard Cornish Martin for his devoted service and wise leadership as Superior over the last forty-six years. Father Martin is a longtime friend of this parish, and it was a privilege to have him so commemorated in our Great Hall. The members of The Society of Mary then elected Father Alexander to succeed him as Superior. Thanks to all the members of Our Lady of Providence Ward for helping with the festive luncheon and hospitality to our many visitors on this occasion.

The Society of Mary is one of several Catholic devotional societies within the Anglican tradition, honoring Her whom God has honored, the

Virgin Mother of His incarnate Son, Jesus. This witness to and emphasis on the Incarnation, is expressed in devotional and liturgical practices designed to enhance the discipleship and spiritual lives of our members, and the worship and mission of the Church. Father Alexander is now not only Superior of the American Region, but also local superior of Our Lady of Providence Ward. Come join our monthly meetings on the first Saturday of each month (unless otherwise announced). Morning Prayer at 9 am is followed by Mass at 9:30 and recitation of the rosary. Afterwards, we adjourn to the Great Hall for breakfast and a program. We also make many pilgrimages to interesting places in the area. For further information, please speak to Father Alexander, Phoebe Pettingell or Bill Dilworth.



*The Rt. Rev. Lindsay Urwin, OGS*



## FROM THE SACRISTY: CORPUS CHRISTI

*By Phoebe Pettingell*

The Feast of Corpus Christi, while not celebrated in all Anglican parishes, is of major significance to S. Stephen's. It witnesses belief that Jesus is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament, and that the Eucharist (Mass) is not merely a memorial act of His presence once on earth. Maundy Thursday celebrates the institution of the Eucharist, but because it leads into Good Friday, it has many somber qualities. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, a desire for a joyous celebration of the Blessed Sacrament arose. The resulting festival quickly became a favorite throughout Europe. In addition to the Mass celebrated on that day—the first Thursday after Trinity Sunday (now often transferred to the Sunday following)—outdoor processions usually accompanied it. At first, this was simply the carrying of the Sacrament in a monstrance under a canopy, but gradually floats representing the life of Christ were added. Bands often accompanied the marchers, sometimes dancers in local costume, or beves of children. [For some contemporary celebrations of Corpus Christi, see Bill Dilworth's piece in this issue].

In England, a feature of the day in large towns became the cycles of "Mystery Plays"—four complete texts of these survive, along with fragments of others. They continue to be performed. Generally, these plays begin with Adam and Eve, tracing much Biblical history significant to the coming of Christ and concluding with His Resurrection and appearances to the disciples, although a few begin with the Fall of Lucifer and end with the Coronation of the Virgin. Eamon Duffy in *The Stripping of the Altars* vividly describes the dismay and resentment caused by the suppression of Corpus Christi by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer in 1548, especially in the north where Catholic customs died hard. Initially, many of the Protestant Reformers continued to affirm Christ's Real Presence in the Eucharist, but felt that Exposition of the Sacrament encouraged superstition. However, within a gen-

eration the Real Presence itself was condemned by many Protestants, and blasphemous parodies of the Mass and Benediction proliferated. The term "Hocus Pocus" is one such mockery of the words of Institution in Latin: *Hoc est Corpus Meum*. But times change. The latest Church of England prayer book, *Common Worship* (2000) once again contains lessons for Corpus Christi. Our 1979 BCP, while not mentioning the feast, includes a collect and lessons for a "votive mass" of the Holy Eucharist.

Founded as a "Tractarian" parish on the Anglo-Catholic principles of the Oxford Movement, S. Stephen's was a pioneer among Episcopal Churches in offering frequent communion services. Although 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century Anglicans abandoned the use of the "mixed chalice" (wine and water) our clergy were among the first to revive the practice. S. Stephen's had one of the first Wards of The Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament in this country. Father Fiske was reserving the Sacrament by 1896. According to Father Catir, it is unclear how much earlier he may have begun the practice before the Bishop of Rhode Island formally sanctioned it in that year. The revival of these rituals necessitated the formation of altar guilds and the making not only of vestments but of the various "small linens" that are normative today throughout most of the Anglican world: the lavabo towel for the



drying of the priest's hands after washing them; the purificator used to wipe the chalice after each administration; the pall which covers the paten and chalice before the Eucharistic prayer; and the corporal, explained further below. Since there were, as yet, no companies manufacturing these items, altar guilds sewed them. We were most fortunate to be taught how to do such things by The Sisters of the Holy Nativity who also, for many years, made our communion wafers.

Of all the items used on the altar, the most important one—next to the chalice and paten—is the cor-

poral. Writings attributed to Pope Sylvester I (314-335) decree that the holy Sacrifice must be celebrated on a plain linen square, undyed, “sprung from the earth, as the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ was buried in a clean linen shroud.” Because of its proximity to the consecrated host and the likelihood of small fragments sticking to it, the corporal must always be washed by hand, never in a machine, and the water that has washed it must be poured on the ground or down the piscina in the sacristy, never into pipes leading to the sewer.

Periodically, it is argued that such details don’t really matter—surely God can take care of himself and Christ’s body is not defiled by contact with unclean articles. Alas, throughout the history of the Church, disregard for the rituals surrounding the handling of sacred objects leads our frail human nature to disregard their holiness. As all ritual religions know, the ceremonial treatment of them keeps us mindful of the mystery. We are not disembodied spirits, so we honor Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar by genuflecting to the tabernacle in which His Body rests, and by treating the corporal and sacred vessels with the reverence we would have brought to the Last Supper had we been present. Not only is Christ risen from the dead, He is present with us every time we come to communion, and every time we approach the tabernacle. Corpus Christi is indeed a joyous festival, full of thanksgiving, and it should deepen our love for this greatest of gifts—the Holy Sacrament of the Altar.



**This is the final issue of  
The S. Stephen for the 2012—2013  
academic year. Thank you  
to all our contributors.**

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## PARISH REQUIEM

On Monday 3 June at 12:10 pm  
we will say  
Requiem Mass  
for our departed parishioners whose  
Year’s Mind falls in June.

## FROM OUR JUNIOR WARDEN: GREAT HALL PLANS

*By Susan Brazil*

As of May 17, 2013, Case Construction and Palmer River Associates—also known as VASCO construction—the two contractors who decided to submit bids, did so. Currently the vestry officers are reviewing these bids with the help of our consultants at LLB Architects. We will be meeting with the contractors in the near future and deciding which company will complete the work.

This is a very exciting time around St. Stephen’s. By the end of summer, we will see the fluorescent lights in the Great Hall replaced with very pretty twenty-first century hanging lights. Not to worry, we have also included room for fans to circulate the air on hot days. There will be a new stage at the front of the room where performances can take place. The old tired mint green will be replaced with clean new colors that will light up the room and give the Great Hall a new, crisp, clean appearance. The floor will be sanded, and several coats of polyurethane applied.

Some have asked whether during construction we will be able to continue hosting the Epiphany Soup Kitchen and having coffee hour in the Great Hall? Both contractors assure us they will do everything within their power to leave at least one bay open on Saturday and Sunday for these activities.

In a very short time, LLB Architects will deliver a picture board to display in the Great Hall. It will help us more clearly visualize what the finished work will look like. I urge everyone to walk up to the second floor and admire it.

I hope everyone is as excited to see the finished product as I am. I look forward to sharing this new space with each and every one of you.

## “LET US FOREVER ADORE...”

*By Bill Dilworth*

Last year at Corpus Christi we held an outdoor procession with the Blessed Sacrament, walking to the ends of the block and back inside. Since it was summer and the Brown students were gone, the neighborhood was empty and quiet. It was just us, the brass band, and Our Eucharistic Lord. How different it was from other Corpus processions I have taken part in abroad.

My first exposure to such a procession was the summer of 1999, in Querétaro, Mexico. I was taking part in a language program for foreigners at the University of Querétaro. Quite by chance I happened to be at a colonial church downtown when the procession passed down the street. To say that it was colorful would be a restrained use of language: there were people in Indian clothing, dancing and waving bowls of smoldering copal, a botanical resin used as incense in Mexico and Central America; there were diocesan clergy, choirs, and confraternities, each appropriately attired according to their rank, order, and organization. All of these people walked over a “carpet” of flowers and, I think, colored sawdust arranged in intricate patterns. The most impressive part of the procession, however, was a parade float carrying the bishop, who knelt on a prie-dieu in front of an elaborate, glittering monstrance. The float paused for a few minutes in front of the church, Indian dancers whirled in front of it, wreathed in copal smoke, the bishop blessed the spectators with the Blessed Sacrament, and the procession moved on.

Some years later I had the opportunity to spend two summers in Lisbon, Portugal, where Corpus Christi is a favorite public holiday as well. The Portuguese celebration is a bit less colorful than the Mexican, but what it lacks in spectacle it makes up for in numbers. Both processions I witnessed there drew crowds that

literally packed the streets and squares of the old part of the city. Diocesan clergy processed in Lisbon as well as in Mexico, but the only organization I could see taking part was an honor guard made up of the city’s firemen and a contingent of Boy Scouts. The rest of the participants – and there were myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, or so it seemed – were ordinary laypeople. I have read that this pro-



cession takes place on a colorful carpet of flowers, too, but if that is the case I was nowhere near enough to see it because of the crush of people. At the end of the procession (if such a huge mass of people can be called a procession or be said to have an end) came the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon, shaded by a canopy and carrying a monstrance. Besides the number of people, the aspect of the processions that struck me most was the enthusiasm of the residents of the streets through which the Sacrament passed. There were people in the win-

dows and on the small balconies of the apartment buildings, and almost every window was decorated – not with brocade but with bed-sheets, table cloths, and other pieces of fabric, some snowy white but others in bright colors. Flowers appeared in many windows, too.

In comparison, our procession was extremely small scale and subdued. But in spite of the lack of crowds, sheet-festooned streets, and temporary carpets of flower petals, our procession had the one thing necessary: the Sacrament. It seemed the first step in reclaiming the streets of the East Side for Christ, and it was a joy to take part in it. I hope that I can take part in many more such processions in years to come. *Adoremus in aeternum Sanctissimum Sacramentum!*



## THE TREASURER'S CORNER

*By Ransom Widmer*

It's great to be back! There is nothing like open-heart surgery, six weeks in Rhode Island Hospital and three weeks at Hallworth House to make you appreciate our community at S. Stephen's. I would like to thank everyone for their prayers, visits, cards, gifts and those who sacrificed themselves on the chess board. I was especially delighted by the get-well wishes from our Sunday school children. All of these activities really speeded my recovery. I have been home a little more than two weeks, receiving physical and occupational therapy at home. On my days off, I come into the office at St. Stephen's and wade through the almost three months of paper and emails.

In this edition of the Treasurer's Corner, I want to update our readers with respect to the Capital Campaign's finances. Sue Brazil, Co-chair of the campaign, discusses the progress of construction plans for the Great Hall and other matters in her article elsewhere in this issue.

As you know, the Capital Campaign has solicited pledges from parishioners and friends of St. Stephen's. These pledges may be paid at the convenience of each pledger over a three year period (2013, 2014, 2015). In addition, certain individuals have requested attendees of funeral services or weddings at this parish to contribute to our Capital Campaign. As of May 20, 2013, we have received pledges and one-time gifts in the amount of \$115,140 and contributions in the amount of \$49,396. This is a good start, but not sufficient to fund all the proposed projects: remodeling the Great Hall, refurbishing our stained glass windows and repairing the floor in the sacristy.

We still have over two years to fully fund these important projects and your parish leadership continues its search for additional funds outside the parish. There also are opportunities to sponsor specific parts of a project. For example, if you are interested in the preservation of our historic stained glass windows, you might wish to fund the refurbishment of your favorite one.

Our goal is to have each parishioner of St. Stephen's make a contribution, no matter how large or small, to the Capital Campaign! We hope that watching

the improvements funded by the Capital Campaign will inspire you to make a pledge or increase the amount of a pledge already made.

We will continue working with you over the next two and one-half years to make the Capital Campaign a success (all three projects funded). Hearty thanks to all who have supported the Capital Campaign by making a pledge or one-time gift!



*The Robert Hale Ives, Jr. Memorial Window*



# 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*



## QUOD PRO QUO.....

As the choral season approaches close I'll take this issue just for a few observations and to report on goings on within the Schola Cantorum.

As usual, our "goings on" were dispatched with cheery good humor to a person in spite of sometimes tight rehearsals and the director's penchant for frantic behavior when I sense musical trouble around the corner. Of the extra services, a couple of things need be mentioned before annual report time.

It was with sadness and certainly personal loss for me that we were called to sing Requiem for good friends: alto Morgan Stebbins and former Senior Warden Alan Reneire. Both brought such geniality and unfailing generosity into our lives and their support is irreplaceable. *Requiescat in pace.*

The two Society of Mary events in which we participated recently were a source of great joy to us. The Friday Vespers sung by the men was musically shaped as elegantly as I required, and I owe much of that to tenor Joel McCoy who was cantor and who set a fine paradigm for the other ten chanters. The Solemn Mass on Saturday was as grand as Vespers was contemplative, and I'm glad our occasional visitors got a glimpse of what we offer week by week and is easy for us to take for granted. More than once I heard the question: Is Mass always like this at S. Stephen's?

I'm so pleased to report anonymous donors have offered to redecorate the third floor music office which I have been complaining about since my arrival nineteen years ago. The lighting is utterly impossible there for evening rehearsal and that as well as general

sprucing (drapes that would make Dickens' Aurelia Havisham of *Great Expectations* quite at home) will be addressed over the summer months when we are out of session. I feel such gratitude to my nameless "angels" and actually look forward to the upheaval of reordering the library and culling outmoded and deteriorating editions of things not used for many generations.

## A FEW GOINGS ON FROM THE STAFF.....

Hillary Nicholson, alto, whose tenure at S Stephen's predates mine, writes...

*I spent last weekend with the Rhode Island Civic Chorale and Orchestra as alto soloist in the Beethoven **Mass in C**. It's almost a shame that the **Missa Sollemnis** is so monumental, since it results in Beethoven's other mass being unfairly dwarfed by comparison even though it is substantial (c. 50 minutes) and, in my opinion, a wonderful piece. Maybe I'm just prejudiced because the*

*alto actually gets some great licks to sing, rather than just filling in the chords? Also, I did get to sing a couple performances of the **Missa Solemnis** a few years ago with the New Bedford Symphony and the Providence Singers, so I don't feel deprived. Daniel Harp of the St. Dunstan's Consort was the principal 'cellist. And the lovely, rumbling **Corey Mulvey** was bringin' up the bass section.*

Ever capable Cory MacLean has the unenviable job of assuming music librarian duties, in addition to



*Mr. Busby conducts the Schola during the Society of Mary Annual Mass  
Photo by Karen Vorbeck Williams*



so many tasks in the parish office. She's the person to do this as she seems to be able to pre-guess my (and consequently *our* needs) and she is indispensable to our ease of operation. In July Cory will participate as soloist in the opening concert of the Newport Music Festival at The Breakers and among her musical responsibilities will be the singing of Purcell's "Dido's Lament"...one of the most eloquent solo invocations in the English language. I'm so happy for her chance to expand a little past her beloved sacred polyphony.

Alison Zangari, soprano, was heard at Mass recently in the duets in Sauguet's *Petite Messe* and writes that she

*joined the Schola in February. She lives on the East Side, and works in Human Resources for a physicians' group. Alison received her master's degree in voice from the Boston Conservatory in 2012. She is getting married in June after her fiancé Tom graduates from Brown Medical School. She is thrilled to have found such a wonderful church and choir in Providence!*

We are so happy she found her way to us as she is a splendid addition.

I'm appalled I haven't written of Decani side tenor Joshua May and am glad to include this from him:

*Joshua May has sung two seasons with us at St. Stephen's Church. In addition to his singing with the Schola Cantorum, Josh is a doctoral student at the University of Connecticut. Josh has just successfully completed his comprehensive exams and course work requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree. He will be defending his dissertation,*

*"The Mozart Tenor: An examination of training methods for the modern tenor in the Mozart repertoire through a pedagogical and historical analysis of Mozart's tenor roles in his operas and concert arias" this summer. While at UConn, Josh sang five leading roles in their opera department. In addition, he presented three recitals and traveled abroad to Ireland and France to sing in the select conservatory exchange program. Josh sang his final performance of "Tamino" in Mozart's **Die Zauberflöte** at the University of Connecticut in April. Upcoming summer perfor-*

*mances include "Laurie" in Adamo's **Little Women** with Hartford Opera Theater in May and "Ferrando" in Mozart's **Così fan tutte** in June."*

Congrats on that arduous work, Josh.

We all look forward to a little rest from rehearsal and I'll use this time to finalize next season and get to press with the music prospectus for 2013-2014. See you at Mass nonetheless.

Yrs., JB

GOD WILLING

THE RT. REV. W. NICHOLAS KNISELY

BISHOP OF RHODE ISLAND

WILL ORDAIN

*Mary Ann Mello*

TO THE SACRED ORDER OF DEACONS

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### The Rector's Letter continued

*Continued from page one*

accessible, user-friendly, and in line with contemporary tastes. We'll lay on lots of activities and support groups to meet every possible therapeutic, recreational, or social networking need you may have.

The problems with this second approach are too numerous to mention; and those who have attended S. Stephen's for any length of time have heard me rail against it periodically from the pulpit. Suffice it to say that there are many other organizations out there that can meet such consumer needs far better than the church can. Moreover, this approach encourages a pick-and-choose attitude to churchgoing: I will attend worship when I feel the need for it; I will support only those parish activities that interest or appeal to me personally. In other words, the individual self is left firmly in the driver's seat, whereas according to the Gospels our greatest need is death to self so that we can receive new life in Christ. Moreover, giving ourselves to the worship and life of the church – especially when we don't feel like it, or when doing so requires personal sacrifice – is ultimately the way to having our truest and deepest needs met – the needs we never knew we had.

Given the problems with both approaches sketched out above, many of my colleagues and I have been instinctively and intuitively working out over the years the contours of a third approach, which I will call "post-modern." I cannot give a comprehensive description of this approach, because I'm not sure that any of us fully understands it as yet. But some of its key features include emphases on tradition, group identity, and collective responsibility.

When I was young, one of the attractions of the Episcopal Church for me was the sense it offered in a rootless and transient world of belonging to a tradition – of doctrine, liturgy, music, spirituality, art, and architecture – that spanned generations and indeed centuries. And all the indications are that young people today are likewise seeking a sense of rootedness in tradition.

At S. Stephen's we are Anglicans and we are Catholics. That is our tradition and our identity. Our formation in this identity is as yet incomplete. But the tradition commends to us certain defining practices – Sunday and weekly Masses, Daily Offices, Saints Days, pilgrimages, retreats, personal devotions, meditations, works of mercy in the world, and so forth – which, to

the extent that we give ourselves to them and yield to their discipline, help us grow into the tradition's identity and see the world through its lenses.

One consequence of this formation is a growing willingness to assume collective responsibility for the perpetuation of the tradition itself. This point came home to me forcefully this past Maundy Thursday when I announced from the pulpit that too few people had signed up for the Watch before the Altar of Repose to keep the church open until midnight, and that if we wanted to continue this practice in future years we needed to support it by our active participation now.

To my great pleasure, as soon as the liturgy was over a good number of people went straight to the sign-up sheet in the narthex and filled in all the available half-hour slots until midnight. To me, this action represented the parish taking collective responsibility for a spiritual practice that we want to continue and hand on to those who come after us. As a priest, I felt relieved by the salutary reminder that we're all in this together and that it's not up to me single-handedly to preserve and perpetuate the Anglo-Catholic traditions of the parish.

This third, "post-modern," approach has its limitations as well, for the ultimate purpose of our Catholic disciplines and practices is not merely to gain a sense of identity rooted in a traditional worldview, but, much more importantly, to grow in holiness and in the knowledge and love of God, with a view to eternal life. So we come full circle back towards the first approach. Nonetheless, I suspect that the third approach has a contemporary appeal that the previous two approaches lack; and for this reason I am eager to continue exploring its possibilities.

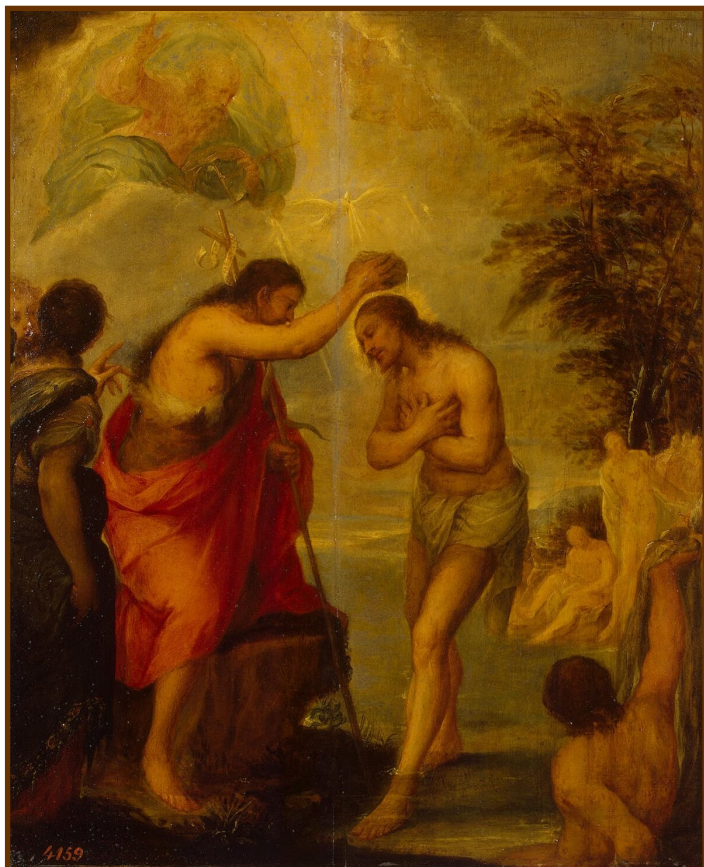
With all best wishes and prayers for the summer, I remain, faithfully,

Your pastor and priest,

*Fr. John D. Alexander*

Fr. John D. Alexander

## FROM THE NEWLY BAPTIZED AT PENTECOST



*The Baptism of Christ*  
by Juan Carreño de Miranda  
1614—1685

Hi, my name is Laura Rejto and I got baptized on May 19. It was fun and exciting. The Deacon poured holy water on me and my sister Katie. St. Stephens is a very good church. They do the Holy Communion every Sunday. If anyone is looking for a good church to go to then I would recommend St. Stephen's.

*Laura Rejto*

Hi, my name is Katie. I was just baptized on May 19. Also I had my first communion. It was all very interesting. My favorite part was when I had to say, "I do," and "I renounce them."

Father Alexander was very nice. I learned a lot about the church and Christianity. At the service were my grandparents, aunt and cousin. My best friend was also there and goes to St. Stephen's regularly. I am very glad that they were all there to support me.

St. Stephen's is a beautiful church and I am proud to be a part of it. Today I thought that the music was especially good because there were drummers and African music which I love and because today was a special day for me.

*Katie Rejto*

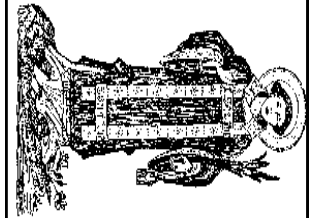






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