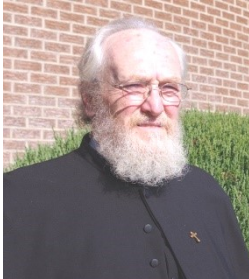


# THE TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN NEWS

MAY 15, 2020

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 5

## *Fr. Robert's Remarks*



FR. ROBERT MANSFIELD, SSC  
VICAR GENERAL

Alleluia, Christ is risen: / O come let us worship. Alleluia.  
Greetings; the Lord be with you!

I just came back in from our little backyard greenhouse. I was bringing plants back into the house for the night. While it is great in the daytime—to-day it got up to about 28-degrees C. inside; however the nights are still a bit to chilly for the plants to be safe just yet. We shall still have another 3 weeks before we can be reasonably assured that we shall not have frost again this spring.

Incidentally, a greenhouse can be a wonderful place to grow plants, but also can be a wonderful place to self-isolate for a while—with a book.

Recently, a Facebook contact brought back the memory of self-isolating with a book. That was over half a century ago. There was a field behind our home. The field at the edge of town was lying fallow awaiting a sale and a developer. Gratefully the developer did not arrive until well after I had moved away. I remember many times taking a book and heading across the field and into the bush on

(Continued on page 9)

## *Fr. David Marriott, SSC: A Sermon for Ascension Day*



FR. DAVID MARRIOTT, SSC

In this year of Our Lord 2020, we have seen and experienced some of the greatest changes to our lives that any could have ever imagined. As entire economies have been closed down for the duration – when nobody knows how long that duration might be – people left stranded away from home, in quarantine and with children not allowed, in some countries, to play outdoors, we have been living in an atmosphere where fear of the unknown aggressor is not fear of those around us becoming violent (although that too has occurred both in homes and in Nova Scotia), but of a virus which has encircled the world, effectually now preventing the travel to which we have become accustomed, a social life which many enjoyed and treasured.

The impact of these changes and chances which beset us in this transitory life has indeed, led some to wonder whether these are truly the 'end times', the initiation of the end of all things: no doubt there are those who anxiously watch out for the sun to rise and shine, or that the moon is still giving her silver light in the night: 'For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken...' (Matt. 24.27-29)

In the Gospel for this day, we read in the Acts of the Apostles the words of St. Luke: 'When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the

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*Fr. David Marriott, SSC: A Sermon for Ascension Day*

kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, 'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth'.

It is in these words that we can find our counsel on what it is that we, as faithful Christians, are called to do: indeed, in case that you might have forgotten, they are the same words which we have chosen for the motto for our part of the Anglican Catholic Church, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. (Mark 16.15) If you need further encouragement, Our Lord continued with these words: 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.' (Mark 16.16)

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There is no doubt that over the centuries, there have been many who believed that the end times were upon us: 'Prepare to meet thy doom!': in times of great conflict, in times of great sinfulness, in times of disease, of the plague, of the black death and the Spanish flu of 1918-19, of HIV/Aids & Ebola in our times. Terrible leaders like Genghis Khan, the Viking raiders, Hitler and Stalin, Mao Tse Tung and Pol Pot, have taken their nations into the most terrible situations, from the earliest history to the modern age: but none of these have been the global impact of this current virus pandemic. More recently, the Islamic State, a corruption of the Moslem faith, has intruded and harmed many.

There are many articles and opinions expressed if you make a Google search for the 'End Times': but the Washington Post argues that this is not now: "If a person were just completely ignorant about what the Bible says about the End Times, they may think this right now: This is it," said Jeff Kinley, a writer of books on biblical prophecy who lives in Harrison, Ark.

Kinley said he understands why Americans might see this time of fast-encroaching disease, isolation from loved ones and crashing stock markets as apocalyptic. Americans are primed to believe the end of the world might arrive any day now. In 2010, 41 percent told Pew Research Center that they expected Jesus to return by 2050.

Kinley pointed to Revelation 6:8, which forecasts deaths all over the globe "by sword, famine and plague," and Jesus' words about the events before the end times in Luke 21:11: "There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven." (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/2020/03/17/not-end-of-the-world-coronavirus-bible-prophecy/>)

But for us, in the here and now across Canada, it might be better to go back to what we hear in the Gospel for the day: 'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.' And Jesus has also made very clear what it is that we are to do, and this is simply to bear witness to our faith, everyday of our lives, that in doing this, in being faithful, we might earn the glory of eternal salvation, which is why, each morning and evening, we are called on to pray the prayer of St. Chrysostom: 'Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be

*Fr. David Marriott, SSC: A Sermon for Ascension Day*

most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. *Amen.*'

The most frequent words which Jesus has left for us to consider are 'Fear Not': as Jesus Ascended into heaven, we read, in the words of St. Luke: 'And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come, in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.'



*Bonnie's Reflections: The Bigger Picture*



BONNIE IVEY (& LAD)

and go to the Father..." (John 16:16ff)

Jesus' disciples never imagined that worldly powers could kill their Messiah. They certainly did not foresee his resurrection.

Today, we know the "happy ending". But if we are unaware that there is an enormous plan, of which the resurrection is one part, we are missing something. We are like those perplexed disciples, Cleopas and his unnamed companion, plodding along the road to Emmaus on the day Jesus rose from the dead. The risen Jesus also was walking on that road, although they were not able to recognize him at first.

He joined them, asking about the news from Jerusalem they were discussing. They stopped and stood there looking wretched. They had believed that in Jesus, they had found the promised Messiah, they explained. A misplaced hope. It all ended on a Roman cross. Oddly, that very morning, some women had claimed to have been told by angels that Jesus had risen from death. They didn't know what to make of this.

Patently, Jesus explained the Scriptures to them, "from Moses through all the prophets," reminding them of everything written about himself. (Luke 24:13-33) It was a seven-mile journey on foot, with plenty of time to present the bigger picture. At this time of the church year, we are given readings that similarly take us back for a closer look at God's plan for his Only Begotten Son.

Materialists, whether they be outside or inside the church, may subscribe to the "Good man, revered teacher" definition of Jesus. "How sad that he was misunderstood

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### *Bonnie's Reflections: The Bigger Picture*

and his life was cut short, when there was so much more he had to teach us." Liberal believers might suggest that the Jewish leaders and Roman officials had interrupted Jesus' courageous campaign to enlighten humanity and make a better world. If we apply ourselves to learning the Scriptures, we will know that even death on a cross was part of the Father's plan.

In Genesis we read how, in the wreck of the Fall, God pronounces sentence on Satan, the serpent. One born of a woman shall come, who will, though wounded, crush the serpent's head. Prophets write of this One, through the centuries. Aged Simeon recognizes the infant Jesus as the One, the Salvation promised to our forefathers.

Almost two centuries ago, a young English Jew, a rabbinical student, was asked by a fellow-student, "Isaac, isn't it strange that the 53rd chapter of Isaiah is never read out in worship?" Isaac began to study that chapter. The rabbis traditionally interpreted "The Suffering Servant" of that book as the personification of the nation of Israel, but Isaac began to see parallels with Christian doctrine. "He was despised and rejected...we esteemed him not...we considered him stricken by God...By his stripes we were healed... All we like sheep were gone astray, we were turned every one to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaac Hellmuth perceived God's plan and became a Christian. Ordained in 1846, he later became the second bishop of the Diocese of Huron in London, ON.

In John chapter 10, Jesus speaks of himself as the good shepherd who cares for the sheep. He does not abandon them when the wolf comes to kill them, but lays down his life for them. "And I have other sheep, they are not of this fold; I must bring them also. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason my Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This charge I received from my Father." (John 10:16ff)

The "other sheep, not from this fold", are the Gentiles, non-Jews, who would come to believe and follow Jesus. So we ourselves are written into God's plan.

These verses from Isaiah show that torture, trial and death were not imposed upon Jesus. He foreknew it and accepted it all as his "charge" i.e. assignment. He had power within himself to die: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit;" and power to rise from death.

On the third and fourth Sundays after Easter, the readings lead us into chapters 21 and 22 of the Book of the Revelation to St. John. There is a glimpse of the strange and beautiful place prepared, as promised by Jesus, for those who love and have followed him. "Behold the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes...Let him who is thirsty come, let him who desires take the water of life without price."

**"So you have sorrow now, but I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you." (John 16:22)**



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)



## *Current Flooding in the Democratic Republic of Congo*

Bishop Steven Ayule-Milenge has written to Fr. David Marriott, recently, saying,

“The rain which fell on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2020 did a great deal of damage to Kasenga commune, as well as to Kilomoni, which is at the border between Bujumbura, in the Republic of Burundi and Uvira. At the same time, a large flow of water came down from the hills when the rain fell. The town of Uvira, with 500,000 inhabitants in three communities, is situated between Lake Tanganyika and the Mitumba mountains. The community in which our second chapel (church), the Parish of Saint Mary of Uvira, is one which you visited during your visit to Uvira, Democratic Republic of Congo.

The 5000 families there are left without shelter and have found refuge in the schools and churches. There is no water supply because the



pipes which supplied the water treatment centre have been carried away by the flood. An epidemic of cholera has been declared in five sites between Uvira as far as Fizi. The road between Uvira and Fizi is also closed between Uvira and Fizi where the water level of Lake Tanganyika has risen by 1 metre across the road at Lwahanga, some 12 km. from Uvira: you might recall that we travelled through that area during the night when we were returning to Uvira from Fizi.”



Are YOU able to help out?  
See The Africa Appeal info to the right.



### **The Africa Appeal**

Donations are tax deductible and may be sent to :

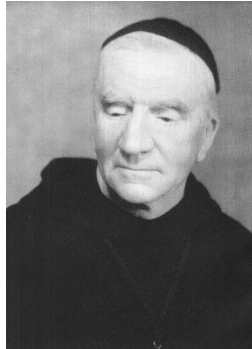
The Parish of St. Bride  
c/o 20895 Camwood Ave.,  
Maple Ridge, BC V2X 2N9

*Please make a note on the front of the cheque that the funds are for the Africa Appeal. Tax receipts will be issued.*

Contact Info:

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## *Fr. Andrew, SDC: Meditations for Whitsun Eve, Whitsunday, and a couple more*



FR. ANDREW, SDC

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ALWAYS WITH US.

### WHITSUN EVE — GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

*'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.'* - S. LUKE 1. 35

THERE is in the Divine Nature a Fatherhood and a Sonship, and we may certainly think of the Holy Spirit under the figure of a Motherhood. It was through the power of the Holy Spirit that our Lord was born of Mary, through His overshadowing that our Lady conceived and that of her and in her was created the Sacred Humanity.

Through His operation the Church came into being. After the Gospels come the Acts of the Apostles: those who had seen the Light were to live as children of the Light: those who had heard the Word were to preach the Word. But to do this they needed light and strength. There were many things our Lord had said they would forget, many they would not understand, many they would fear to act upon. They needed that things should be brought to their remembrance and interpreted, and they needed the courage of love to act upon them. All this the Holy Ghost brought them. He filled the apostles with power for their ministry. As He brought the world out of chaos, brooding over the waters, so He brooded over the sinful world, and brought the Church into being, and will at last bring it to perfection.

It is through the power of the Holy Ghost that the Eucharist is consecrated. Even as by His power the Divine Son became present on earth, so by His power our Lord becomes present on the Altar. We must remember that the Holy Ghost Who accomplishes this mystery is Himself always with us. It is the Holy Spirit Who mothers a soul. He bears with us patiently, checks us quietly and sometimes sternly, but, if we *will* go wrong, like a patient mother He goes with us where we go.

### WHITSUNDAY THE HOLY GHOST THE COMFORTER

*'I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever.'* - S. JOHN xiv. 16

GOD the Holy Trinity has had three great dealings with the world: God the Father in creating it, God the Son in redeeming it, God the Holy Spirit in bringing to fruition the work of redemption.

We are living under the dispensation of God the Holy Ghost. He is the power within us that fights against sin. The yearning after God in prayer, all the soul's travail as it searches after God, is His secret. Through Him we feel contrition, and triumph over the temptation to despair. Through His grace we make good

*Fr. Andrew, SDC: Meditations for Whitsun Eve,  
Whitsunday, and a couple more*

confessions. It needs a good deal of patience to be a true penitent. We get so tired of falling. It often seems as if we were going back instead of forward, as though it would have been much better if we had never started. But the Holy Spirit gives the strength of true penitence, which will not stay in that state of acquiescence with sin, and helps us to get up again, however many times we fall.

We know how hard it is to witness for Christ. S. Peter broke down before that test. It is not strange if we find it very hard. Yet if we do witness to Him how happy we feel, and that happiness is the joy of the Holy Ghost. The supreme witness is that of the martyr. Often in life we are faced with a choice. Shall we spare ourselves and live quietly, keeping ourselves free of troubles and toil, or shall we deliberately choose to do that which we know will in the end wear us out and shorten our life? Since the Holy Ghost came at Pentecost the same power is with us that enabled our Lord to set His face as a flint and go up to Jerusalem.

MONDAY IN WHITSUN WEEK — THE HOLY GHOST THE ILLUMINATOR

*"We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." - 2 Cor. iii. 18*

THE Holy Ghost is the interpreter of the Word of God. Many people saw Jesus, many people touched Him. Many saw Him heal the sick and do beautiful things, and many saw Him die. Only three saw Him transfigured, only some saw Him risen, only a few saw Him ascend into heaven. The power by which the apostles saw Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of the living God, was the power of the Holy Ghost. Only love can see the true beauty of the beloved. So Simeon and Anna, when He was a child, beheld Him. So the shepherds and Wise Men beheld His glory, as did the penitent thief, by the power of the Holy Ghost. Not to all men, or any particular class of men, was this power vouchsafed, but to any who had eyes to see and to whom the vocation was given.

The Holy Spirit illuminates the Church. The Church is composed of very human people, as the Bible is composed of very human stories. People can read the history of the Church without getting any profit, as they can read passages of the Bible to their hurt. None the less, the Church is the Body of Christ, and the Bible is the Word of God, and it is the Holy Spirit Who enables us to see this. The Church is the one kingdom which has an aristocracy of holiness, and holiness only, and the Bible is the one book that shows in all life the purposes of God and the education of conscience.

The Holy Ghost enables us to see the world as the world for which Christ died. Souls are always lovable, however much they sin. The Holy Spirit, Who pleads with souls, teaches us never to despair of souls.

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## *Fr. Andrew, SDC: Meditations for Whitsun Eve, Whitsunday, and a couple more*

### TUESDAY IN WHITSUN WEEK — THE CHRIST OF POWER

*'ALL power is given unto Me.' - S. MATT. xxviii. 18*

IT was in the spring-time in Galilee, when the flowers appeared upon the earth, that the Resurrection of our Lord took place, and it is in the spring that, to nations of the Western world, the tidings of the Resurrection always come. Just then, when all nature is chanting songs and shouting messages of life resurgent, in the midst of the young leaves, with a gay carpet of glad flowers, set in a scene of blossom and beauty, is given to us the vision of the Risen Christ. Later, when the promise has been fulfilled and spring has become summer, and the blue sky already holds the secret of the Ascension, comes the message of the revelation of Pentecost and the power of the Spirit, to rouse those who believe in Him to think of the Christ of power and prevailing purpose.



It is the gospel of the rise of man that is being preached to us now. Goethe once said to a friend, 'Tell me of your faith. I have doubts enough of my own.' To us, weary with the knowledge of our many falls, comes our Lord to tell us of a power to rise that may be ours. His end in coming was not to judge but to save the world, 'that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.'

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The Church is not just an ark of escape from a drowning world, or a place of refuge from a merciless conflagration. It is the power-house wherein we have sacramental points of contact with the Life behind our life. The power behind life is not just force, but purposive creative Personality, and our sacramental communion is contact with the Resurrection life of Christ our Lord.

### WEDNESDAY IN WHITSUN WEEK — THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH

*'Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God.' S. LUKE VIII. 10*

WHY should one think it necessary to belong to the Church at all, and not content oneself with any group of Christian-minded people whose ways suit one's temperament? There is, for instance, something very attractive about the methods and manners of the Quakers, with their direct sincerity, their really wonderful history, and their succession of saintly souls.

But when we take up our New Testament, it is altogether impossible to escape the conclusion that our Divine Lord revealed Himself to a society. Christ did not broadcast certain sentences for the crowd to interpret, each in his own way. He did not give to the world disjointed teaching about the Father, and leave the world to form its own conclusions about that teaching. He did quite certainly reveal Himself to a group of people, to a society. He had an inner circle of disciples, and an innermost circle of apostles. He prepared these latter for the catastrophe of the last days, and



## *Fr. Andrew, SDC: Meditations for Whitsun Eve, Whitsunday, and a couple more*

admitted a chosen three to the innermost sanctuary of His soul, letting them see Him transfigured in His prayer on the mountain and disfigured by the agony of His prayer in the garden. When the catastrophe had accomplished itself, and He had been crucified, and they had forsaken Him and fled, it was back to them that He came in the power of His Resurrection life and continued to teach them in the light of that Resurrection the true significance of the darkness of Calvary. When, with the august ritual of the Ascension, the Sacred Humanity was withdrawn from the sphere of sight and sense and sound, it was upon this group, whom our Lord had trained and to whom alone He had manifested Himself in the great forty days between His Crucifixion and His Ascension, that the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost.



## *Fr. Robert's Remarks*

the other side. There was a creek beside which I could sit under a big shade tree and read. Occasionally, at high school exam time, I might study there too—though that was usually a bit iffy. While I certainly enjoyed going off like that and reading, I do not particularly remember those times as contributing much to personal growth.. That was to come later.

Some of those more productive times were on camping trips; some were on personal retreats.

Recently several things converged. One was related to Bishop Stephen Scarlett's talks at Provincial Synod in January and some related follow up reading; a second to an interview I listened to shortly after Synod; another to a sermon I preached on Ash Wednesday for our community Lenten Series; the COVID-19 protocols regarding isolation; and lastly to a request for information that I sent to Bishop Scarlett prior to Lent. In the sequence I used the word "lastly"; but, the way things have been going lately, there is a distinct possibility that something else will join the convergence.

Bishop Scarlett's two brief talks on Mission at the Provincial Synod seem to have started this for me. (Those particular talks are available on our website—TraditionalAnglican.ca in the Resources section.) Among other important things, the Bishop reminded us that Bishop Wilson Garang of South Sudan had mentioned in about 2013, "If you want your churches to grow, you must fast and pray."

"Fast and pray". The interview to which I listened was on a series called "Hank Unplugged" Hank Hanegraaff—known as "the Bible Answer Man"—was interviewing Dr. Jay W. Richards, OP, a research assistant professor at the Catholic University of America, about a book Richards had written. The book is entitled *Eat, Fast, Feast: Heal your Body While Feeding Your Soul — A Christian Guide to Fasting*. The author of the Foreword to the book, Dr. Jason Fung, a Toronto nephrologist, wrote "Jay Richards has woven together the Christian tradition's rich teaching and practice with the



## *Fr. Robert's Remarks*

growing scientific case for fasting. Almost anyone can benefit from fasting, but Christians have many good reasons to make it a permanent part of their lifestyle.” For me, it was a timely and helpful introduction for Lent. I recall, in the fallout from Vatican II, hearing about the end of fasting and that “we don’t have to eat fish on Fridays, anymore.” As I got older and read the Bible and the Prayer Book more closely, I was struck by the fact that both the Bible and the Prayer Book take the subject quite seriously.

“Fast and pray”. As I mentioned, I preached on Ash Wednesday at an œcumenical Lenten Service in our community. The principal reading that I was using was Matthew 6.1-16 which includes the “when ye” verses—when ye give alms, when ye fast, & when ye pray. It’s part of the Sermon on the Mount and is the chapter with the Lord’s Prayer in it. My title was “Not Transactional But Transformational” and as usual my principal target was me. In retrospect, it certainly seems pretty obvious that to “fast and pray” for church growth is not about transactions with God that he will make our churches big and prosperous and important; it is about transformation—personal transformation, changing me, transforming me, so that the effect of my fasting and praying is evident in the way I live and relate to others and that that is evident to others in an attractive way.



The Gospel for Rogation Sunday (p. 197—St. John 16. 23 ff) speaks of Jesus saying to his disciples, “Verily, verily I say unto you., Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” In the past I have had more than one person comment on the fact that they pray in Jesus name and nothing happens; God does not hear their prayer. It seems to me that, in one sense, that a prayer ends with the words, “in Jesus name we ask it” is almost irrelevant or at least it is not the point.

William Temple the wartime Archbishop of Canterbury wrote, in his *Readings in St. John’s Gospel* (p. 298),

It is a new experience of worship that is offered. *Until now ye did not pray anything in my name.* They were men of prayer; but they had prayed as devout Jews, not as disciples checking each desire as it suggested itself for presentation to the Father by reference to the Mind of their Master. That is the prayer that will always be answered, and answered with consequence of a joy that is complete; *pray (sc. in my name) and you will receive, that your joy may be fulfilled.*

On the topic of “the name”, another comment that is pertinent, is that of the Rev. M.F. Sadler who, in his *Commentary on St. Matthew* when discussing Matthew 28. 18-20—The Great Commission—wrote,

Baptizing them into [not ‘in’] the Name of the Father,” &c. *Into* the name is much more than *in the name*. For “into” the Name signifies into the power, into the protection, into the participation of all the good offices of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. It signifies into the family of the Father, into the brotherhood of the Son, into the fellowship and guidance of the Holy Ghost.

## Fr. Robert's Remarks

(Continued from page 10)

“The Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” This is now the Name of God. This is the faith of God, for the disciple is taught to realize the Name into which he is baptized. “God is One. It is the Father Who commands, and the Son Who obeys, and the Holy Ghost Who gives understanding. The Father Who is *above* all, and the Son Who is *through* all, and the Holy Ghost Who is *in* all. And we cannot otherwise think of one God, but by believing the truth in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Word of the Father, therefore, knowing the *æconomy* and the will of the Father, to wit, that the Father seeks to be worshipped in no other way than this, gave charge to the disciples after He rose from the dead, ‘Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’ For it is through the Trinity that the Father is glorified. For the Father willed, the Son did, the Holy Spirit manifested. (Hippolytus against Noetus).

But Baptism into the Name of a Divine Person implies dedication, and dedication implies worship and service. “This is the Catholic Faith, that we *worship* one God in trinity, and Trinity in unity.”

And all this speaks to what Jesus was saying to his disciples in our Rogation Sunday Gospel. And it all speaks to our need for transformation throughout our lives from our baptism on, that we may demonstrate an attractive personal holiness.

An example of transformation of the Apostles can be found in Acts 4 where St. Luke writes, “When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.”

I mentioned that Ash Wednesday was about the time that we finished the book on fasting. I say “we” because Joyce and I usually have a book on the go for reading together after dinner. This brings us to the last thing in my sequence.

At the end of January, having heard and read Bishop Scarlett’s talks at the Synod and some other related material, I contacted him asking about a book by an Anglican on the subject of persons and personhood. In a prompt reply, he allowed that his recommendation was not Anglican but that he liked the writings of David G. Benner.

I had not heard of Benner before but to “test the waters”, so to speak, I ordered a copy of one of his books—the first of a trilogy—*Surrender To Love: Discovering the Heart of Christian Spirituality*. We were not more than a chapter into the book and I ordered the other two books in the trilogy. As I write this we have read the first, the second and then the third and we are currently reading the series again through rather more slowly. The other two volumes in the trilogy are *The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery* and *Desiring God’s Will: Aligning Our Hearts with the Heart of God*. All three are published by InterVarsity Press. These are not complex unreadable theological or psychological treatises. They are short books of about 100 pages with suggestions

“... THEY  
MARVELLED; AND  
TOOK KNOWLEDGE  
OF THEM, THAT THEY  
HAD BEEN WITH  
JESUS.”

(Continued on page 13)

## *The Church Mouse: Keep Your Balance*

“Well, this is very strange,” I said to myself. I was just mousing around in the church, waiting for Fr. Palmer to get set up for the children’s Bible class. He always puts out a plate of cookies, you see, and breaks off a mouse-size serving for me and leaves it under the radiator. Where was he? Oh! Outside on the steps. What’s he doing? Cutting up colored paper in the shape of big human footprints? Now that’s just weird! He is putting them down in a line, along the sidewalk, up three steps, into the church, up the aisle, right to the altar. And now he’s gone back outside to greet the kids.

“Stop!” he said to them. “Today we are learning a new song, and we start right here outside. It’s sung to the tune of ‘Joshua Fought the Battle of Jericho.’ Here’s how it goes.” And he began to walk on the footprints as he sang:

“Oh, I’ve two feet to walk upon, walk upon, walk upon,

I’ve two feet to walk upon, on my way to Heaven!

My duty to God my Father, in sacrament and prayer,

My duty to my neighbor, helping everywhere!”

The children always like new songs, and quickly picked this one up. After they had repeated it several times, Fr. Palmer told them, “Now this is a marching song, so we have to step on the paper footprints as we sing. We start here, go up the steps, and just follow the footsteps.” They really enjoyed this part, clumping up the steps in time to the song, through the church to the altar. I followed along under the pews (so I would not get stepped on of course.)

“Do you remember what a duty is?” asked Fr. Palmer.

“Something I must do!” answered several voices at once.

“That is correct. And this song reminds us that we must take care to walk on both feet as we go through life. Your duty to God is one foot, and your duty to your neighbor is the other. How far do you think you could hop on one foot without losing your balance? Try now!” The children started hopping all around, laughing and stumbling and trying again on the other foot.

“We can’t get very far at all!” said Jenny, the new girl in the group.

“Very true,” said Fr. Palmer. “Sometimes people forget that duty to God and duty to our neighbor are equally important. They try to get along just doing one or the other.”

“Jesus told a story about a man who was travelling up the road to Jerusalem. Robbers attacked him, beat him up, and ran away with all his things, leaving him







## *The Church Mouse: Keep Your Balance*

to die. Soon another man came along and saw him. Well, this man was on his way to worship God in the temple. Maybe he was a singer and didn't want to miss his chance to sing a solo. Anyway, he walked on without stopping. Soon another man came along on his way to the Temple. He saw the poor victim, all bloody and bruised. Now maybe this man was going to do an important ceremony in the Temple. He would get dirty and bloodstained if he helped the injured man, and would not be clean enough to go to the Temple. So he hurried on his way also. Finally, a third man came along. This one was a foreigner, who was not very welcome in Jerusalem and the places around. But he stopped! He kindly gave first aid to the man. He lifted him onto his own donkey and took him to a safe place. Now which of the three men did his duty for a neighbor?"

"The third man!" shouted Kevin, and everyone agreed. Fr. Palmer nodded.

"The third man. The other two were hopping along on one foot, the foot of doing their duty for God, but they were off balance. They thought they were pleasing God, but neglected their neighbor, a man who was made and loved by God."

"Fr. Palmer," asked Jenny, "What does sacrament mean?"

"Well, Jenny, you have asked an important question, so in order to have time to talk about it, we will save it for our next lesson. For now, let's sit around the table for prayers and cookies."

That is always my favorite part!



## *Fr. Robert's Remarks*

*(Continued from page 11)*

for reflection and meditation. Each has a pair of appendices with discussion starters for groups meeting over several weeks to discuss the book and also another set of starters for those who want to meet for one session for each book.

I want to commend these books to you. Whether it be for personal reading or exploration or whether it be for a parish book study, the concepts discussed in these books are an essential part of our lives.

Early in the first book, the author refers to A.W. Tozer and comments that

"A.W. Tozer notes that most of us who call ourselves Christians do so more on the basis of belief than experience. We have, he argues, "substituted theological ideas for an arresting encounter ; we are full of religious notions but our great weakness is that for our hearts there is no one there."



*(Continued on page 14)*

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### *Fr. Robert's Remarks*

*(Continued from page 13)*

Any authentic spiritual journey must grow from direct, personal experience of God. There is no substitute for a genuine encounter with Perfect Love. "Knowledge by acquaintance," Tozer affirms, "is always better than mere knowledge by description." Knowing God is not simply a matter of believing certain things about him. Personal knowing goes beyond objective knowing."

Think for a moment about knowing your spouse or best friend. If this is a genuinely intimate relationship, you would never confuse knowing this person with holding correct views about her or him. Genuine knowing—personal knowing—involves much more than head knowledge. It involves a relationship, it involves the heart.

I have said enough for now, but I do commend these books for your consideration as a tool or an instrument in your search for a closer relationship with God.

Please continue to pray for our Synod scheduled for October.

Till next month; God Bless!

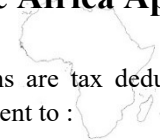


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