

Fr. Robert's Remarks



FR ROBERT MANSFIELD, SSC
VICAR GENERAL

Greetings, The Lord be with you!

This year is A.D. 2025. There may very well be many things that make or will make this year a significant date.

One of those things will be that it will be the 1700th anniversary of the First Council of Nicaea—this Council is the one that gave us a large part of the Nicene Creed.

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Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Candlemass



FR. DAVID MARRIOTT, SSC

Leviticus 12, 1-8: 'The Lord said to Moses, "Say to the people of Israel: If a woman conceives, and bears a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as at the time of her menstruation, she shall be unclean. And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. Then shall she continue for thirty three days in the blood of her purifying; she shall not touch any hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying are completed. And when the days of her purifying are completed, whether for a son or a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the tent of meeting a lamb a year old for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering, and he shall offer it before the Lord, and make atonement for her; then she shall be clean from the flow of her blood."'

This is what we commemorate this day: at this Mass of Candlemass. And it is important that we understand what it is all about.

First of all, let's talk about candles: why do we call this service of Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary Candlemass?

There is an old story from East Anglia in Britain, a legend one might say, that when the Blessed Virgin Mary went to the temple with Jesus, to receive her blessing, and to present Jesus to the priest, that she received a candle from Joseph to bear in procession along with Simeon and Anna, and they go together to the altar, where Mary lays the child, and Joseph offers the temple priest five pence. In Beverly in Yorkshire, this was a little different, when Mary, bearing Jesus in her arms, was accompanied by Joseph and Simeon, and two 'angels' each carrying a candelabrum, processed to the church, accompanied by members of the Candlemass guild, each bearing candles. At the church, Mary was to offer her Son to Simeon at the High Altar, and each guild member offered their candles, together with a penny apiece. (E. Duffy: The Stripping of the Altars)

So back to Leviticus: and there are some very serious questions to answer.

Why is a woman unclean when she has delivered a child?

All the Jewish law has a basis in fact, and the most remarkable thing about it is that often, it has

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been years later that man has understood why the law was the way it was. One of things about childbirth is the fact that the mother not only loses blood, but as a result of this blood loss, is also open to infection through the cervix. So she can pass on any disease she might have to another, as a blood to blood infection, but perhaps more seriously, she is liable and open to infection through the blood: which would render her chances of survival extremely poor. And at that time, if mother did not survive, then baby would probably not survive either. So: one way to protect the woman from infection is to declare her unclean: then she will not come into contact with any deleterious and infectious matter, especially that which might result from any intercourse.

The same premise: health care for the infant was also the rationale for circumcision: in that the risk of infection in the penis for the uncircumcised was very great, given the dusty and sandy environment: and there were no antibiotics. It is interesting to note that it was when the Christian faith moved beyond the desert states that the question of circumcision was challenged, and of course we have that wonderful defence of the change in practice by S. Paul to S. James and the elders of the church in Jerusalem in Acts 21.

But of course, Our Lord was brought up under the Law: and therefore He was circumcised on the eighth day according to the Law, and Mary came to the temple with Jesus and Joseph on the day after she had completed her purification: eight days after the birth, and a further thirty three days of waiting: by which time she was recovered from the risks of childbirth, and was ready to resume her role in society.

As they enter the temple, they are met by Simeon and Anna, and Simeon gives that wonderful prophesy: ‘Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (yea, a sword shall pierce though thy own soul also)’.

And of course, to make clear that this was not just some old fashioned idea which we commemorate out of a respect for tradition, look in the Book of Common Prayer right after the service of the solemnization of Matrimony, there is the service for the Thanksgiving after Childbirth, commonly called the Churching of Women: perhaps you will turn to page 574 now. While you do this, the rubric in the prayer book makes it very clear as to what we are doing in this service: ‘It is fitting that after giving birth to a child the mother, accompanied by her husband, should come to the church to render thanks to Almighty God’.

Let us read the responses at the foot of the page: as we accompany Mary, carrying Jesus in her arms, to the altar.

Minister. O Lord, save this woman thy servant;

Answer. Who putteth her trust in thee.

Minister. Be thou to her a strong tower;

Answer. From the face of her enemy.

Minister. Lord, hear our prayer.

Answer. And let our cry come unto thee.

Then the Minister may say:

O GOD, our heavenly Father, we thank thee and praise thy glorious Name, that thou hast been pleased to bless this thy servant, and to bestow upon her the gift of a child: Grant, we beseech thee, most merciful Father, that she and her husband may diligently lead this child In the way of righteousness, to their own great blessing and the glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP, <https://prayerbook.ca/bcp-online/thanksgiving-after-child-birth/>)





Bonnie's Reflections: CONNECTIONS



BONNIE IVEY (& LAD)

Imagine that you are in the first Century A.D.

Beside a Roman road you see a post station. There is stabling for many horses and oxen. Buildings hold covered wagons and a wheelwright's repair shop. Kitchens, dining areas and sleeping quarters accommodate riders, drivers, grooms, harness makers, and blacksmiths. This busy place is part of Rome's courier service. Apart from this land-based messaging, Rome also boasts maritime service for heavy

transport at sea.

The Roman Empire grew, and widespread regular communication was as vital then as now. The fastest service was by a chain of post riders, similar to America's Pony Express. Heavier parcels were carried by ox-drawn wagons. The biggest loads went by ship. Government, the military, commerce and private individuals depended on Rome's delivery system as the Empire expanded.

The early church used it as well. Newly established church communities started out small. Letters couldn't always be carried personally to those ministering in new places. Multiple copies of pastoral letters could be sent by the Roman courier system. Authentic teaching could be shared, and widely separated Christians could encourage one another.

Paul wrote to several new Christian congregations. It seems he used helpers to transcribe his messages. One example ends with, "The salutation of Paul, with my own hand, which is a sign in every epistle; so I write." There were already false teachers infiltrating new little churches, hence Paul's concern for validation of his messages.

Believers in later times faced the confusion of clashing societies. Populations with unfamiliar languages and religious beliefs were moving into new territories, and just as today, there were many voices claiming to possess the truth. At that time monasteries, with their libraries and liturgies, helped maintain a stable Christian presence and body of teaching. Copyists produced Old and New Testament books, as well as the collected writings of Christian scholars. Libraries were vulnerable to looting and burning during invasions, but some books, successfully hidden, were preserved for more peaceful times.

The later invention of the printing press set off an explosion of publication, both secular works and the scriptures. Even spurious religious teachings could be promoted. Arguments in print sprang up about the accuracy of different Biblical translations, as well as over doctrines. Individual opinions about truth began to spread. New denominations were formed as congregations became divided. In established monastic communities, daily worship continued, rooted in the Liturgy and prayers. Mission work spread internationally. Yet cruelty, sin and contempt toward indigenous populations by some religious workers diminished trust in Christian institutions.

In the twentieth century, two World Wars further challenged those who cared about the state of human society, and all who longed for order, beauty and peace. Nearly every family suffered loss or disruption. Many of the deaths seemed pointless; a bit of land won in battle would be lost again. Many survivors were maimed, and post-trauma mental illness caused by concussion or poison gas, called "shell shock", became recognized after

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World War I.

C.S. Lewis came back from the First World War wounded in body and spirit. He had lost most of his friends to death. Later, during the Second World War, he decided to present the case for believing in God, even in the face of the blows we suffer in life. He made a connection with those who grieved or doubted, through a series of "Broadcast Talks" on the radio. In these he laid out a case for trusting in God, answering common objections and outlining the reasonableness of the faith. The presentations were published as the popular book *Broadcast Talks*.

Dorothy L. Sayers was a British writer of mystery stories. She also had grown into such mature and articulate faith that she was invited to become a leader of Prayer Retreats for women. When the Second World War came, she continued to keep in touch with the women she had mentored. Their communication and function as a prayer community continued through letters, when gathering in person was not possible.

Sayers later wrote a series of plays on the life of Christ. Some performances took place in a cathedral, while others were done on conventional stages. The author was knowledgeable about theatrical work, both as performance and in technical details such as sets and lighting. She cast actors with a range of British accents to emphasize social differences in their characters: posh accents for the rich merchants, for example, and a countryman's accent for a shepherd. She drew her audience into a mix of nationalities, rich and poor; the Roman army occupiers of the land; the daily little conflicts between Pharisees and Sadducees, and the surprising arrival of foreign Kings. The plays drew contemporary audiences to connect with Bible accounts in a new, vital way.

Since the post-war period, Christians have seen their faith become diminished in the eyes of secular society. Church attendance is so sparse that many sanctuaries are now given up to secular functions. Only the churches offering entertainment-style services pull in large numbers.

But a new element has been added to Christian communication. The Internet allows free access to the words of historic Christian teachers. Services can be recorded for distant members. Mission churches can report their news and express their needs in real time.

Canadians have just been through a weeks-long strike by postal workers. Even now, there remains a backlog of mail, as non-government courier companies could not keep up with demand. Throughout the strike, the Internet has allowed scattered church members to communicate. We have worshipped and studied together in real time. We can see each other, react to one another's facial expressions and tone of voice. This regular contact has allowed us to pray and worship together, though with our timing a bit off. (Our group is several time zones wide and the internet signal lags a bit.)

Most importantly, this connection reinforces our desire to be members of the body of Christ, with a common purpose; to be obedient in life and prayer. We have access to other people too, through study groups and our Synod. This encourages us to seek to grow in our discipleship, and to support one another. Our Canadian online meeting members could fit in one elevator, but we are united, through Christ, with the whole body of believers. We are much blessed to have this connection in worship, study, and prayer.



Fr. David Marriott, SSC: The Africa Appeal: January 2025



*Republic of
Cameroon*



*République
Démocratique
du Congo*



*Republic of
South Sudan*



*Republic
of Kenya*



Rwanda

Cameroon.

On November 27th, Bishop Alphonse wrote that the electricity company Eneo Cameroun (<https://eneocameroun.cm/index.php/fr/>) required 'improvement of our three-phase power line each house must give the energy office 150000 XAF tomorrow morning passing through the traditional chiefdom. I'm just missing 41000 XAF about \$90.'

I replied that the Appeal could not send funds 'urgently', as was this situation: that we needed more information, to which he replied on December 1st: "Just as I gave you the explanations so that your team could accept that you help me with \$90 support tonight for the light. Candles do not allow you to work well in all areas of life. Please, I can wait for your email tonight. May Jesus bless us. Thank you very much later.'

We sent the \$90.00 on December 2nd. Bishop then asked about a Christmas gift 'after a difficult year'. On December 23rd, we sent him, I just sent you a 'Christmas present' for your family: from Cdn\$100, [Pin 12301220233](https://www.pins.com/12301220233), which gives you 42152 XAF. We wish you a Blessed Christmas, and a healthy New Year for you and your family.

Congo.

Last month, I wrote about the son of the leader of St. Matthias Mission in Goma, Nord-Kivu, who had been shot in the leg by armed bandits. Bishop Steven replied on December 6th: 'Through this e-mail I would like to inform you that M. Wetemwami called me today to say that the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) agents have come to the hospital where his son and the other wounded victims are being interned to see how they can help half of the bill for the wounded. They said the bill is \$700. They paid half and the other part the patient's family could pay. I asked him to send us a copy of the invoice, he replied that it was ICRC who left with the invoice, and he will see if the billing department can allow him to take a photo of the counterfoil so that we can forward it.'

On December 23rd, I wrote to Bishop Steven: 'Cher Mgr. Ste-



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ven, I just sent you CDN\$1350.00, MTCN: 276 - 902 - 0048, which gives you 877.04 USD. We hope that the amount could pay for the school's funds, to provide help in Goma with medical expenses, and will be enough to give you a 'Christmas present'...

From all our team in St Bride,
In Christ,
David+

To which, Bishop Steven replied on Christmas Eve: 'Thank you very much, the fund has already been recovered and the children are very happy to have their school fees paid at the opening of the second term. Also, M. Wetemwami's family says thank you, he will be with us on Thursday morning in (Bukavu, with) the Wetamwami family (for) the retreat, because he will be ordained deacon for the Saint Mathias Goma Mission. Me and my family say thank you very much for the Christmas gift your team sent us. Thank you so much again and Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2025.

+Mgr Steven Ayule-Milenge

Congo East.

We had planned to send funds for the purchase of land for the Sebele health centre, so that those unable, because of their condition, to walk to the hospital in Fizi in temperatures approaching 30 Celsius, with no transport available, although the Appeal would not have funds for the construction of the health centre. We had sent the translated proposal for the centre to Fr. Edlin at the Diocese of the Holy Trinity, for their consideration. We were delighted to hear from Bishop Mtundu in June 2024: 'Hello father, Thank you for your information. Father Edlin asked me for the projects, and I provided two projects: the project for the construction of a health centre and the construction of a future training centre. I confirm the construction of a health centre. We can start with this money and finish it next year. Thank you, I have my trust in you fathers. In Christ, +Bishop Lameck.'

In November 2024, the Bishop wrote: 'Hello father, greeting in the name of Jesus Christ our lord and saviour. I sent the photo for you to look for us the sheets to cover this church. Our hope is yours, this building seems difficult to us to cover it because of poverty. +Bishop Lameck.'. As it seems that the health centre project will now receive funds from the Diocese of the Holy Trinity, the Appeal has now sent, ' CDN\$600.00, which gives you 389.85 USD, MTCN: 452 - 694 - 4723.

We hope you can buy roofing sheets for the church in Baraka with the 300.00USD, with the 89.85USD as a small Christmas gift for you and your family. We hope that the exchange rates with the USD and Canadian \$ will improve in the next year, which will allow our support to buy even more sheets. I wish you a Blessed Christmas full of the joy of the faithful. In Christ, David+'

We hope to send more funds for roofing sheets as needed during this year.

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Kenya.

Bishop John Ndegwa has sent this comprehensive report: ‘ Epiphanytide greetings.



We are fine and I have been busy, lastly being yesterday, when I made a trip to Kirinyaga for mission work. Please allow us to share progress of our mission work as of today January the 10th 2025

1 **On Christmas and Eve.** On 24th December 2024, we held a night vigil at Resurrection Church, Kayole and we sang carols and prayed as we waited for the Hour and all were pleased for the experience.



2. **On Kinangop farming.** Father Geoffrey is catching up well, with availability of manure from the Kayole farm; he has grown a successful kitchen garden. *(Please check a photo of the Archdeacon on the new kale farm).*



3 **Still on Kinangop,** this time we had an excellent harvest of potatoes, we carried a pickup full of potatoes and maize to Nairobi and were able to leave behind enough seeds for the next season and enough for Father Geoffrey to eat and sell in small portions so that he does not lack basic needs. Since this was the first time that the vehicle was carrying more than capacity,

we experienced a major tire burst that is beyond repair but we thank God that we were within the regulated speed, we simply slowed down with neither injuries nor damage to the car, but we surely will need to source for a spare tire replacement.

4 During the **festivities** *(Christmas and New Year)*, we were busy distributing gifts to those who really needed it and through a gift of Christmas from friends and enough yield of potatoes, we shared as God guided us to.

5 Since **the potatoes** were enough to be distributed to Christians and friends and still have 9 full bags to sell, Esther is selling the potatoes from our Kayole centre at the comfort of her phone and chair and as a result, we have raised some cash to repair a leaking roof slab upstairs, which by sealing the leaked roof through a smooth waterproof floor, a unit below that was leaking can now create room for a new chick brooder.

6 **On education,** we have 2 major reports to make. As **Ednah Munyiva** *(Studying Health care*

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Assistant)(Nursing course) opens school for her second term this January, she has been joined by my son **Jackson Ngahu**, who had been admitted on the basis of his last year's result and has been able to join classes for the same course on 7th January 2025. I was able to lobby for him to be admitted as we wait for the final results and we thank the college because although Jackson was admitted on 7th January 2025, through his last year's 2 terms report, the official Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examinations (KCSE) result were release yesterday by the government and he duly qualified. Praise be to God. *(A later detailed report on Jackson is coming to you shortly)*

7 Also on Education, through a generosity of friends **Karen Wairima** who is also the daughter of our Archdeacon was able to report for her second year in high school with all her annual 2025 fees and a balance from last term all paid. *(Again, we thank God for His provision).*

8 On the **goat and maize project in Kirinyaga**, I was able to travel there this week and the goats arrived safely, the organization mandated to sell the goats to us did us a big favour. Instead of selling us 2 goats that would give birth in 2 months time as we had booked, they gave us one that has a 2 months kid and is being milked and the second one which is 2 months pregnant. Therefore instead of having 2 goats, we actually have 3 and after 2 months we shall have 5 since one of the 3 is pregnant. We thank the Lord again for His favours to us.

9 I was also able to visit the **maize farms** since most of the goat fodder will come from the maize stalks and chaffs. There was delay both in the first rains that allowed farmers to plant but late and the second rains which they are still waiting for in order to weed. There is therefore going to be a delay in harvest and scarcity in yield but with our 2 acres, we shall have enough fodder for the goats.



10 **On missions.** We held an annual work plan for Resurrection, Kayole Church on 5th January 2025 and critical decisions were made. Among the major decisions is planning for the forthcoming Synod on **11th to 13th April 2025** and a **thanksgiving day on 24th August 2025**. The theme for the day shall be **“THANKING GOD FOR THE GRACE OF PRIESTHOOD in the Church”**.

11 Also **on missions**; since we seconded father Geoffrey Kinywa to take charge of Saint Mary's mission, in Kinangop, Saint Patrick's mission, Gatwe has been served by priests in a Rota system. Thankfully when we ordained **Deacon Stanley Maina** to priesthood last year, he has been so passionate about Saint Patrick's mission and we have been supporting him with transport for 4 months now in order for him to serve the mission. In order for him to take full charge of the mission, there shall be an **induction service** for Father Stanley

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Maina Kibuchi on **Sunday 2nd February 2025** so that he shall take full charge of the mission. Your prayers and support for his transportation and a little support is welcome.

In conclusion, allow me to appreciate you all for sharing your gifts with this missionary Diocese and may God truly bless you.

In Christ and in His serve

Yours faithfully

John K. Ndegwa
Nairobi, Kenya.

South Sudan.



Bishop Garang had wanted to travel to the Diocese of Aweil for Christmas. The Appeal was able to send funds for the travel, but after he made the journey, he became sick, and wrote us on December 23rd, 2024: ‘I hope you are doing well and all is well with you sorry I got sick on Saturday and Sunday with bad diarrhoea and high blood pressure and typhoid and made weak so came to Juba to today to travel tomorrow to Nairobi for treatment and rest pray for me and travel tomorrow and thanks

There is cholera out there... thanks for the funds and God bless you and the donors.’



How to support these churches:

There are no deductions from money received by the Appeal; the full dollar amount is sent to Cameroon, Congo, South Sudan, Rwanda or Kenya. Administrative costs, eg, money transfer fees, are paid from gifts received for this purpose.

In Canada

The Parish of St. Bride

By cheque payable to the Parish of St. Bride and sent to The Parish of St. Bride, 10125 - 276 St., Maple Ridge, V2W 1R5

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

E-transfers can now be made to St. Bride’s using the e-mail address stbridepittmeadows@gmail.com and putting “Africa Appeal” on the message line.

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In the USA

The St. Paul Missionary Society, The Anglican Catholic Church, PO Box 5223, Athens, GA 30604

In Australia and New Zealand

Anglican Catholic Church Missionary Diocese of Australia and New Zealand Appeal Fund

By cheque made out to: ACC (OP) DAT and sent to

Missionary Diocese of Australia and New Zealand
C/- 5 Fallow St
Chermside West, Qld. 4032 Australia

If you intend the donation for a special ACC (OP) project, please let us know, so we can designate it accordingly.

By Direct Deposit to:

Anglican Catholic Church (OP) Diocesan Administrative Trust
or ACC (OP) DAT (for short)
BSB 034-064
A/c 335868

Please note the intentions for the donation on the direct deposit details.

Please be aware that given the current Australian Law situation, we are unable to offer any tax deductible receipts.

In the UK

Cheques should be made payable to Anglican Catholic Church - Diocese of the United Kingdom and marked on the back ^{Fr. Robert's Remarks} "Mission". If you would like to designate a particular county please indicate which one. Mail to: Diocesan Treasurer, ACC Diocesan Office, St Nicholas House, 42-48 High Street, Lydd, Kent TN29 9AN.

Christina Georgina Rossetti: Epiphanytide

Trembling before Thee we fall down to adore Thee,
Shamefaced and trembling we lift our eyes to Thee:
O First and with the last! annul our ruined past,
Rebuild us to Thy glory, set us free
From sin and from sorrow to fall down and worship Thee.

Full of pity view us, stretch Thy sceptre to us,
Bid us live that we may give ourselves to Thee:
O faithful Lord and True! stand up for us and do,
Make us lovely, make us new, set us free —
Heart and soul and spirit — to bring all and worship Thee.



Fr. Arthur Stanton: The Teaching of the Storm

“The men marvelled saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!” Matt. viii. 27



THE storm on the Lake of Galilee is a very, very beautiful little lesson. Let us for a moment just consider the wonder naturally, and then we shall see more clearly into the spiritual significance of the whole incident. The Lake of Galilee is situated amongst the hills. Volumes of wind from the scattered regions come down upon the lake, and in a moment or two the surface, hitherto calm, is ruffled. These storms on the Lake of Galilee defied all the science of the navigator; they nonplussed those who knew the lake best. Sometimes from one quarter, and sometimes from another, the whole lake boiled and seethed like a cauldron. We are told in the Gospel that the waves came over into the ship, and even the men who are accustomed to the lake, and the methods and manner of the lake, they themselves were terrified, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ lay asleep, in the boat on the lake—fast asleep in the storm! He had had a very hard day's work before He got into the boat. If you look into the chapter you will see He had been

all day preaching and healing and teaching among a crowd of Easterns, and you know what an Eastern crowd is like? You can fancy it, filthy, loathsome, importunate, pressing upon Him. The whole day long He had been preaching and teaching and healing and comforting, and then at the end of the long day, they got into this boat on the lake. Why didn't they offer Him hospitality? There should be plenty of residents in good circumstances round about the Lake of Galilee? They could easily have offered Him a shelter for the night. Why put Him out in a boat on the lake after a hard day's work? Oh! my brethren, He was but as a poor working man, He was clothed and dressed as only an ordinary working man, and there was no consideration paid to Him. "Is not this the carpenter's son?" And so, although He had been preaching and teaching and healing the whole day, they let Him go out in a rickety boat in the teeth of a hurtling storm coming across the mountains. And there He is asleep—He Who might have been on the Throne of Heaven within the Trinity, in a boat on the lake, in a storm asleep!

“He held thö highest place above,
Adored by sons of flame,
Yet such His self-denying love,
He laid aside His Crown, and came
To seek thö lost, at any cost
Of Heavenly rank, and earthly fame,
He sought me—Blessed be His name.”

But they missed the chance. Had they put Him up for the night they would have entertained not angels, but the King of angels; not angels unawares, but He Who is the Lord of all the angelic host, Aye, they missed their chance! And yet, dear brethren, isn't it exactly consonant with His whole beautiful life? He went about doing good, comforting, healing, saying such things as man never spake before, the joy not only of His age, but of the ages, not only of time, but of eternity, and yet at the end of His life there waged round about Him the greatest storm that ever raged round about any man. Round about the Rock of Ages there burst the storm of

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the whole ages —Time and Eternity were engaged round about Him. Then there was no storm like the storm of Calvary, when the sun was darkened, and the moon did not give her light, and the rocks were rent, and the veil of the temple was torn in twain from the top to the bottom. That is like His life—a little bit of His life which ended in the storm. And as He lay asleep the storm burst upon them. Was it that the spirits of evil in high places seized the moment, for God has given even them some control over the forces of nature, still all under the control of Him at whose word the storm and wind rise and fall? Down from the hills they sped upon the boat. Oh ! if they could have sunk that boat with that freight on the rock! Oh ! if He Who is the Salvation of the World could have been sunk to the bottom ! But eternal decree wills He is to mount the highest hill, the tallest tree that ever lived, and die for us men and for our salvation, and there on Calvary to lay down His life. And so, although the boat was nearly sunk, salvation came. And I know no more magnificent picture in Scripture : There is the storm, the hissing of the hurtling waves, the roaring of the winds, the poor frightened Apostles in the boat half up to their waist in water, and the Master asleep; and terrified they rush to Him and stab Him to the heart by saying: "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" He Who made them ! He who came down on earth for their salvation! "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" And then He got up and rose and rebuked the waves, and on the waves and through the water you could hear the word—"At Thy Word" borne upon the waves and the wind, borne upon the voices of the storm; and the waves and the winds sank down at once. There was no movement, no sway, no noise. There was a great calm, there was a great calm!

And what was the effect of this upon the disciples? Do you know they were more terrified by this than they were even by the storm? The Greek word is that they were very much terrified, frightened to death. They said: "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!" If the storm terrified them, the display of their Master and Saviour as very God frightened them more. They never knew Him before like that; that was something altogether new. "What manner of man is this?" Oh ! indeed, what sort of man is this that even the winds and the sea obey Him? They had been with Him, but they had never thoroughly known Him, or who He was. They had heard Him speak; they had seen His miracles, and thought of Him as a great man, or a great Prophet; they felt the tenderness of His life, the sweetness of His care, the help of His Presence, but they never knew exactly who He was. And here in the midst of the storm in the gloom, in the howling of the winds, and the roar of the waves, close upon death in the midst of the storm, there had shot up from the Master, the Light of lights, the light of Deity and they saw Him as they had never seen Him before. For who but God can control the wind and the waves? And they were frightened. They did not know they had been in the presence of their God, that their own dear Master and sweet friend and kind companion of their life was the God Who made heaven and earth and all that is therein, that ruleth the power of the waves, that " bringeth the wind out of his treasuries " (Ps. cxxxv. 7).

And so, dear brethren, is it with many Christians. It is like—let me compare it to the Brahmin—the Brahmin goes to worship His God—it is an ancient worship, perhaps more ancient than the worship of us Christians, and he brings to his God, his rice and his chicken, and lays his offering down before it (and that is more than some Christians do, who bring a penny or a halfpenny, for you cannot buy a chicken for a halfpenny in London), and there his idol sits, cold, impassive, stony in his ivory whiteness—conceive his surprise if one day the whole thing became incarnated, and the eyes had light, and the lips became pink, and the whole idol became living! But how frightened the man would be! And yet, my brethren, so may it be among many Chris-



Fr. Arthur Stanton: The Teaching of the Storm

tians. We have our conventional Christ, Who is the Christ of our family religion, the Christ of our early education, the Christ of our going to church, the Christ of controversy, and we worship Him up to a point, and bring our offerings to Him, our conventional religion. But, one day, oh, what a day ! the conventional Christ becomes the living God, and light fills His eyes, and the Master is to you all in all, your Dearest, your Best, your Nearest, your Eternal Friend, the One you cannot live without. It may be you see Him in the storm—the storm lay upon you, and darkness was round about you, and the winds round about your dwelling, and in the midst of the storm the Christ you had heard of conventionally came to you as your own dear Saviour and clasped you to His Heart, and you felt the beating of the Sacred Heart, and knew you had the Christ; Christ was alive, the living God, and living with you for ever and ever, and that He made you, and died for you that you might be with Him and He might be with you for all eternity. That is the revelation. He has come to many in a storm. When all else seemed hopeless, the Saviour became all in all. Or it may be in the fear of death; these men were in the immediate fear of death—then they saw the Master their Salvation. And it may be to some who have never seen Him in this life, that as the shadows of death fall upon them, and all is going from them—

“Loose sand-and all things sinking ! Hark, The murmur of a sea !
Saviour ! it is intensely dark;
Is it near Eternity?”¹

then the Master may show Himself to be All in all. God grant that this Christ may be your Christ ; this Saviour your Saviour. Talk about your different religions, be an Anglican, Roman or Nonconformist, be what you like, as long as you are Christ's and Christ is yours for ever and ever. That is the point. That is the kernel, that is the Eternal Salvation.

¹ Faber, *The Length of Death*.



Fr. Robert's Remarks

This Council is the first of a series of Seven Oecumenical Councils acknowledged as authoritative by the Affirmation of St. Louis.

The Nicene Creed is the symbol of our faith that we use regularly at the Eucharist. The other two Creeds that we have in the Prayer Book are the Athanasian Creed and the Apostles' Creed. The former is used occasionally; the latter is used daily at Morning and Evening Prayer, Compline, and other Prayer Book Offices.

It is worthwhile spending some time looking at and meditating on the Nicene Creed.

There are 4 things posited in the Nicene Creed about the Church. It is the “One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church”. For somewhat over a century, the Octave of Christian Unity has been celebrated from January 18 to 25 inclusive (in the northern hemisphere).

(Continued on page 14)

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GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD

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Fr. Robert's Remarks

One thing about the Church and the four characteristics of the Church that I have found interesting and helpful is that it is all lumped together in the paragraph about the Holy Ghost. We need the working of the Holy Ghost for any of this to be effective.

Our Prayer Book provides a set of propers for the Eucharist entitled, "The Unity of the Christian Church". They are to be found on page 213 of the Prayer Book in the Ember Days in the Octave of Pentecost.

I commend the Collect for use in your prayers for Christian Unity.

O LORD Jesus Christ, who didst say unto thine Apostles, Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: Regard not our sins, but the faith of thy Church, and grant unto it that peace and unity which is agreeable to thy will; who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

More next month,

R+



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