

## Fr. Robert's Remarks



FR ROBERT MANSFIELD, SSC  
VICAR GENERAL

Greetings, The Lord be with you!

As this issue is sent out we shall be entering Pre-Lent period and, before the next issue is out, we shall be well into Lent.

If I were to give this column a name, I would likely call it "Something Else", but more on that in a moment.

Fr. Alexander Schmemmann, a favourite author of mine, in a book called *Great Lent* noted,

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
<i>Bonnie's Reflections</i>	3
<i>Fr. Andrew, SDC: St. Matthias's Day—On the Dole</i>	5
<i>Fr. David Marriott, SSC: The Africa Appeal?</i>	6
<i>Fr. Andrew, SDC: The First Sunday in Lent</i>	11

(Continued on page 11)

## Fr. David Marriott, SSC: A Sermon for Quinquagesima



FR. DAVID  
MARRIOTT, SSC

Every Sunday at Mass we repeat the two great commandments. 'And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself'. (Matt. 22.39)

The lawyer asks Jesus, 'Who is my neighbour?' - I ask another question, 'Why should I love my neighbour?'

This sort of questioning is very important in the development of our faith, enabling us to develop a deeper awareness of what it is to be Christian. After all Christianity is in itself this sort of amorphous gathering of disparate folk who happen to belong to a people of a specific faith. And one of the defining character of this faith is the outreach that is demanded of us to love our neighbour as ourselves: not to go out and kill them, nor to maim or otherwise disable them: not to see them as the 'opposition', to be forced into some form of surrender or humiliation: no: the difference is profound, the duty of the Christian believer is to follow the teaching of Jesus Christ, 'Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.' (Matt. 5.43-45)

Jesus Christ knew this, as He lived it in His life among us: he knew that He would be hated by those who were threatened by Him, by His authority, by His truth, by His openness, by His humility: all foreign to those for whom knowledge is power, where the manipulation of facts and

*Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Quinquagesima*

secrets can allow for the acquisition of more power and control: but Jesus sees through all of these petty human idiosyncrasies: after all the psalmist said it best, when we hear, ‘As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.’ (Psalm 103.15-16) Contrast this with that which was so well understood by Jesus, the Son of God, and the very Word of the Father: ‘But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.’ (Psalm 103.17-18) And it is here that we start to gain some understanding of the very importance of that commandment that we repeat so easily every Sunday, every time we say Mass.

‘LOVE YOUR  
ENEMIES, BLESS  
THEM THAT CURSE  
YOU, DO GOOD TO  
THEM THAT HATE  
YOU, AND PRAY FOR  
THEM WHICH  
DESPITEFULLY USE  
YOU, AND  
PERSECUTE YOU;  
THAT YE MAY BE  
THE CHILDREN OF  
YOUR FATHER  
WHICH IS IN  
HEAVEN: . . . “

And the love which we are to show, what is this: the same sort of lovey dovey behaviour that we may remember from our youth? Well, there is a place for that for sure, but this is not the answer. Is it the love which we have for mother and father, which we may call familial love, even extending it to brother and sister, cousin, uncle and aunt? No, not this really, it goes far beyond this, it is the love we need to show to those we might not particularly like, or that we do not like, that we do not respect, that we even despise. It is love for one’s enemies: which was a totally foreign concept at that time when Jesus spoke of it, and even today in our time, for many, it is absolutely foreign.

It is the love of which we have heard in the epistle today: the love which we call charity: *caritas*: it is why we send money to help those far away who are in need after some catastrophe, it is the love we show when we reach out to those who are hurting in our own communities, it is the disinterested love which we are called to show in our dealings with the society at large, with all of those who have no faith, who even attack the Christian faith, it is the love which with the Grace of God might encourage those whom we can touch, with whom we might establish some tenuous contact, so that they too might seek out the glory of the faith, the promise of salvation, and the rewards of eternity in the arms of the loving God.

‘Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.’ God sends rain and tribulation equally: it does not rain on the heathen only: I can just imagine the scene in Vancouver or here in Sechelt, during the rains which occasionally fall: that some of us be equipped with some sort of celestial umbrel-

## *Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Quinquagesima*

la: ‘never need a raincoat if you are Christian’! Of course - ridiculous isn’t it. What is important is how we react to those sorts of negative events which beset all of us in life.

Jesus says, ‘For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.’ (Matt. 5.46-48)

## *Bonnie’s Reflections: WHEAT AND TARES*



BONNIE IVEY (& LAD)

As a young teen, I visited an uncle’s farm at harvest time. Grandpa and I stood at the edge of the field. The heads of grain were bowed; crisp, and dry. He showed me how to pluck the wheat head and rub it in my hands to remove the chaff. The cleaned grains were a tasty (but very chewy) mouthful. We watched the combine harvester pour the flood of threshed grain into a truck, dust rising from the golden stream in the slanting evening light. It’s a treasured memory.

In Matthew 12 we read that Jesus’ disciples, hungry while travelling, were picking handfuls of grain to eat in that same way. Seeing them, some Pharisees took offense at this “harvesting”, such seeming disrespect for God’s Commandment forbidding work on the Sabbath. Jesus points out to them that even the priests of the Temple “profane the Sabbath” by offering sacrifices on that day, yet they are blameless. He himself is Lord of the Sabbath.

One evening near the Sea of Galilee, Jesus was teaching people who gathered to hear him. The crowd was very large, so he stepped into a boat moored near the shore and sat in the prow to address them. He used parables to teach, including the story of the sower. As the sower flings handfuls of grain onto the plowed field, some seeds land in good soil; others on stony ground. Birds come and snatch up some seeds as soon as they fall. Only the good soil ultimately produces a great yield.

Jesus told a second parable that day, in which a man has sowed good seed in his field, but the crop is later found to be infested with tares. Alerted by his servants, he says “An enemy has done this.” The mixed crop must be allowed to grow until the harvest, he tells them. That is when the tares shall be destroyed, but the good seed kept.

The telling of parables was often used by Jews in teaching. A parable, be-



DARNEL

WIKIIPEDIA –IN PUBLIC  
DOMAIN.

## *Bonnie's Reflections: WHEAT AND TARES*

ing a little story, is easily visualized and retained in the memory. The *point* of the parable is a principle which must be pondered. Some, whose hearts are open to teaching, will take the time to think about the imagery. “Is my life fruitful, like the good soil?” Closed hearts will dismiss the parable, or apply its principle to those whom they are secretly or openly judging.

Later, in private, Jesus tells the disciples that He is the Sower. He is also the Word of God which is sown in men’s hearts. Those who accept the message and willingly follow Jesus will repent of sins, seek direction, grow in understanding, and mature in obedience. These are the ones who will bear fruit, bringing forth spiritual offspring like themselves.

The one who sows the tares among the good seed is Satan. The word “tares” refers to a plant called darnel. It is a weed that resembles wheat closely, until the seed heads mature. It is impossible to uproot it from the field without damage to the wheat. When Jesus speaks of dividing the wheat from the tares only “at harvest” He is referring to the Judgment of souls at the Last Day.

Darnel is mildly toxic. Its effects are like those of alcohol: the person’s vision and physical movements are impaired, and the ability to make sound judgements is diminished. Our judgement and attitudes can be affected by other kinds of toxins; things which bombard our intellect and emotions. Eventually they can affect us spiritually.

Decades ago, there was a television announcement showing a young girl. She looked to be not quite a teenager yet. She spoke about the coming of the Information Highway; a connection which would allow news, learning, and the Arts to be shared worldwide. She spoke in a sweet and quiet voice. The young announcer was chosen by the producers specifically to soothe the fears and doubts of anyone who might caution against such interconnected broadcasting.

That highway now is the Internet, that Great Paradox; both uniting and dividing the world. Far beyond entertainment, it has become the continual second-hand experience of life. People no longer see the world around them; only stooping over little pictures that appear on their little screens. “Men’s hearts failing them for fear, looking at the things that are happening in the world.”

Much that is piped into our houses and phones is aimed at separating us from our money. You can buy a funny T-shirt or an illegal weapon. You are looking at a real person ...or an AI-generated mockery of a person. You go to other sites to check the facts. But who checks the fact-checkers?

At the same time that reality is being mocked, and people divided, people are being brought together. A message on Gmail from the other side of the world: “Thanks for your prayers! I believe prayers are more effective when made by someone who cares about you! We are okay, not much damage with

THOSE WHO ACCEPT  
THE MESSAGE AND  
WILLINGLY FOLLOW  
JESUS WILL REPENT  
OF SINS, SEEK  
DIRECTION, GROW IN  
UNDERSTANDING,  
AND MATURE IN OBE-  
DIENCE.  
THESE ARE THE ONES  
WHO WILL BEAR  
FRUIT, BRINGING  
FORTH SPIRITUAL  
OFFSPRING LIKE  
THEMSELVES.



## *Bonnie's Reflections: WHEAT AND TARES*

this, the fifth typhoon to hit the Philippines in 10 days!"

Christians are deepening connections between distant communities. Even though there are questionable sites or blogs, there are legitimate teachers. Believers are finding support, even in little towns, as they pray, share experiences, and study in online groups. The faith of individuals is being strengthened for service. Experienced pastors are training students who feel drawn to ministry.

May God give to all of us the maturity to serve him faithfully in this very challenging time. May he give us right discernment to divide truth from falsehood; discipline to turn away from the trivial, and the strength to turn off the world's message, so we can breathe. The Joy of the Lord is our strength.



### *Fr. Andrew, SDC: St. Matthias' s Day-On the Dole*

'Stand fast in the faith, fait you like men, be strong.'--1 Corg. xvi. 13

WE sometimes see rather sentimental pictures of our Lord welcoming the weary and heavy-laden to Him. When our Lord said, 'Come unto Me, all ye that are weary-and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest,' He did not mean us to be weary and heavy-laden for ever. We have to balance those words with other words of His, such as, 'Take up your cross and follow Me.' In these pictures the people coming to our Lord have an aspect of being spiritually on the dole. They do not look as if they ever wanted to be anything but weakly, weary, and heavy-laden, to be Comforted by a kind Christ Who will ask no more of them than that they should let Him comfort them. Now Christ is the strong Son of God, Who would make us also strong sons of God. His comfort and His rest will be not in keeping us on a spiritual dole, but in enlisting us in the service of His Father.

When we have any spiritual experience or a supernatural sense of the nearness of Christ, we have to be careful not just to rest in the joy of these occasions but to make them practical, and to turn them into acts of devotion, mortification, or service. Religion is not a sentimental adoration of a sentimental Christ, but a coming, through the strong Spirit of God, to the knowledge of the strong Son of God, and so gaining the power of sacrifice that one may bear oneself in this life as a true son of the God and Father of our Lord. A strong man was needed in the place of the traitor Judas, and S. Matthias was chosen for his proved loyalty; he had 'companied' with the disciples 'all the time.'

(February 24th)



THE JOY OF THE  
LORD IS OUR  
STRENGTH.



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



*Republic of  
Cameroon*



*République  
Démocratique  
du Congo*



*Republic of  
South Sudan*



*Republic  
of Kenya*



*Rwanda*

## **Rwanda.**

Towards the end of January, Fr. Chadrack wrote: ‘The year has started well although closed church buildings are not yet open. We are keeping in prayers that the Lord will do something.’ You will recall that the Government of Rwanda has closed many churches (and mosques) in the past year. This Press release from the Republic of Rwanda (<https://www.gov.rw/blog-detail/frequent-questions-on-inspection-and-closure-of-prayer-houses>) gives an explanation of this policy. For the full report, please check on the link above.

### **‘1. Why are prayer houses being closed when the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda guarantees freedom of worship and association?’**

It’s true, the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda guarantees freedom of worship in its article 37. The Constitution also guarantees the right to freedom of association in article 39. No one forbids people to get together and pray. However, these rights must be exercised in accordance with the law. The law requires people to pray in a place that meets certain requirements in order to prevent them from putting their lives in danger.

In recent years there’s been a rapid rise in churches and prayer houses that operate in places that puts peoples’ lives at risk and cases of preachers engaged in exploitation of people through extorting money and property by promising miracles, encouraging harmful practices such as sowing divisionism, promoting anti vaccination ideologies and other conspiracy theories

The Government has decided to intervene to protect the safety of people. A country wide inspection of prayer houses has been carried out and many of the houses inspected were closed for non-compliance with established regulations including registration, building codes, safety, hygiene/sanitation, and financial or other exploitation of followers.’

The full report details the requirements for full compliance and permission to reopen, which will require significant investment. In the meanwhile, please keep the Clergy, Parish Councils, and Faithful People in your prayers that an amicable resolution might be found, allowing the Rwandan ACC Parishes to worship the Lord in their local Parish Churches again.

## **Congo.**

You will recall that in the January Newsletter that I had written that the Appeal had sent funds for the hospital care for the son of M. Wetemwami, the leader of the St. Matthias Mission in Goma, Nord-Kivu, who had been



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

shot in the leg. He has now recovered, and Bishop Steven writes that the young man has now been made Deacon: ‘Also the Wetemwami family says thank you, he will be with us on Thursday morning in the retreat because he will be ordained deacon for the Mission of Saint Mathias Goma.’

However, since then, the ‘M23’ militias, supported by Rwandan military, attacked Goma, the largest city in Nord-Kivu, and took control of the city, then declaring a ‘cease-fire’. As a measure of relative calm returned, some of the M23 forces broke the cease-fire, as reported here in the journal ‘Jeune Afrique avec AFP’ on February 5th, ‘Eastern DRC: M23 advances in South Kivu, violating its own ceasefire

Fighters from the armed group and their Rwandan allies have engaged in intense fighting against the Congolese armed forces in the neighbouring province of South Kivu. They quickly seized the mining town of Nyabibwe.’ (<https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1655342/societe/est-de-la-rdc-le-m23-progresse-dans-le-sud-kivu-violant-son-propre-cessez-le-feu/>)

In turn, this led to this email from Bishop Steven on January 24<sup>th</sup>: ‘The security situation is very fragile in our country, yesterday the military Governor of North Kivu, the Major General Peter Cirimwami was shot dead on the battlefield in Sake, a small town located 27 km from the city of Goma. The small town of Minova in the Province of South Kivu fell into the hands of the M23 rebels. In Bukavu, people imagine the fate of the population with regard to food supplies that come from the North of the Province located about 180Km to Bukavu where I am living. Please pray for us that peace reigns in the Great Lakes countries. +Bishop Steven Ayule-Milenge’, and on the 29<sup>th</sup> January, ‘The information you say may be true because we have had information that there were clashes at Nyabibwe, 100 km from Bukavu. The Congolese army was infiltrated by the Rwandans who gave the positions to the adversaries. Also, corruption to betray military secrecy. +Steven.’

Keep the Diocese, Clergy and Faithful, in your prayers that peace will prevail. For those in Canada, you can make Interac e-transfers for the Appeal to St. Bride’s, which will allow tax-receipts, to ‘stbridepittmeadows@gmail.com’. Note that on the transfer message, you can advise the Diocese you would like to receive the funds.

### **Congo East.**

On January 19<sup>th</sup>, Bishop Lameck wrote: ‘In accordance with the requests of the studies of our clergy, year 2024-2025. As we pointed out in the letter of recommendation, the fees will be informed after having the information to the heads of the institutions, the 5 students will pay \$650 per year. We ask you to support them during all studies. The funds could arrive in February

For the Missionary Diocese of Eastern Congo. +Mgr. Mmokywa Mtundu Lameck. In Christ

On January 20<sup>th</sup>, Bishop Lameck wrote: ‘Thank you very much, Father, Our church is 22m by 11m, it will consume 160 sheets of \$20, the unit price when delivered to our home in Baraka. Thank you very much, we are working together until the completion of this construction, I am waiting for the funds, as you have proposed. Our hope is yours. +Bishop Lameck. In Christ.’

You will recall that in January 2025, we sent US\$300.00 to Bishop Lameck for the purchase of roofing sheets,

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

which would buy 15 sheets of the 160 sheets required. On January 28<sup>th</sup>, we sent a further CDN\$1500.00, which gave the Bishop US\$972.80, in the hope that this will pay for the clergy training and provide for more roofing sheets.

Clearly, the fall in the value of the Canadian dollar to the US dollar has had a major impact: on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, CDN\$1.00 was worth US\$0.7435, whereas on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, CDN\$1.00 was worth US\$0.6848. (<https://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/exchange/currency-converter>) This represents an 8.57 decline in value of the Canadian dollar from the US dollar in a year.

The current situation in Goma and anxiety in Bukavu, as described previously, will also have a negative effect on availability of products and services in both Nord and South Kivu, which often causes price increases for construction materials, as well as increased demand!

## Kenya.

Once again, Bishop John has sent the report for his Diocese of Kenya:

‘Dear Father David Marriott and the Church in Canada

Thank you so much for the continued support of our ministry in Kenya.



Allow me to report on the progress of our mission work so far.

On **Resurrection Church Kayole**, in the last two Sundays we have done as follows. Being the season of Epiphanytide, we have unveiled new group leaders for each of our ecclesiastical and development groups (*Photo attached*). And yester Sunday being the commemoration of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we launched new Rosaries to be distributed to our newest members as well as new booklets that shall be used for devotion and recitation. (*Photo attached*)



On the **On Saint Mary’s Mission Kinangop**, I was able to make physical follow-up with the Kenya power company who were alleging that the 3 months’ timeline they provide for new power applicants is because they have only one connection team in the whole county. We were able to schedule a date when they would connect us and surely, they did. Attached are current photos of Kinangop in connected and active



electricity supply.

Still on **Saint Mary's Mission Kinangop**, we are currently on land preparation in anticipation for the February- April rains. Father Geoffrey is doing a good job. *(Please refer to the Kale farm photos which he has grown using the water hole in the farm).*



We have demarcated the Kinangop land in 3 ways. The eucalyptus trees farm will remain undisturbed since the trees are now getting bigger. This will allow the trees to develop their natural habitat undisturbed. The land from which we harvested maize and potatoes will continue being used for the same crops on a rotational basis. The horticultural section will remain in full control of Father Geoffrey, so that he can remain somehow self-sufficient through the crops that shall not be dependent on the conventional rain circles.

I am attaching a prayer request concerning input for the next planting season, which has reduced by 50% because

- i. Trenches and land preparation is already in session, since there is a missioner currently residing in the farm.
- ii. Potato seeds are available from the previous harvest.
- iii. Potato harvesting will be done mainly by the missioner in charge, with minimal support from our members.
- iv. There is already left over sacks, strings and packaging materials from the previous budget.

The total donation support needed to accomplish this is 145,600KSH being US\$1161.00...

In the meantime, please receive the attached photos and documents for your perusal and please do not hesitate to ask us for any clarification. We wish you all Epiphanytide blessings and good health.

In Christ

John Ndegwa

Nairobi, Kenya



## 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.

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*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](mailto:stbridepittmeadows@gmail.com) and putting "Africa Appeal" on the message line.

### 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

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

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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 "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.

## *Fr. Andrew, SDC: The First Sunday in Lent*

‘IF’

*‘If Thou be the Son of God.’* - S. MATT. iv.3

‘I could do such a lot,’ people sometimes say, ‘if I had the time,’ or the money, or the ability. That little word ‘if’ makes a tremendous challenge. We are either accidents or animals or the children of God. If we are accidents, there is not much point in life, and we can only wait till that other accident which we call death comes to end this accident which we call existence. If we are animals, we can only live as animals and die as animals and fight as animals. But if we really are the children of God, we must be rising ever to the splendour and royalty of the everlasting Divine Life, to the majesty, glory, and beauty worthy of God. We are called to love Him with all our heart and soul and strength, and our brothers and sisters, our neighbours, as ourselves.

Lent brings before us a picture of temptation, of our Lord tempted to act in ways that were inconsistent with being the Son of that God Who is His Father and ours. Temptation went all through our Lord's life, as it goes through the-lives of all men. All of us are tempted to doubt that we are the children of God. If we are anything less than that, we shall not be ready to face the cross. But if we *are* His children, then we would surely prefer any pain that came to us through doing His will rather than effect an escape, if by escaping we lost our union with Him. It may be that the way of faith will take us through darkness and pain, but if we are the children of God we cannot come down from the cross that proves our faith and our love.



## *Fr. Robert's Remarks*

For many, if not for the majority of Orthodox Christians, Lent consists of a limited number of formal, predominantly negative, rules and prescriptions: abstention from certain food, dancing, perhaps movies. Such is the degree of our alienation from the real spirit of the Church that it is almost impossible for us to understand that there is “something else” in Lent—something without which all these prescriptions lose much of their meaning. This “something else” can best be described as an “atmosphere,” a “climate” into which one enters, as first of all a state of mind, soul, and spirit which for seven weeks permeates our entire life. Let us stress once more that the purpose of Lent is not to force on us a few formal obligations, but to “soften” our heart so that it may open itself to the realities of the spirit, to experience the hidden “thirst and hunger” for communion with God.

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*EUNTES IN MUNDUM UNIVERSUM*  
GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD

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### *Fr. Robert's Remarks*

You can see here whence the idea of "Something Else" as a title came to me. I found the notion of the "Something Else" being an "atmosphere" or a "climate" quite attractive and much more positive than the negatives often associated with Lent. That "the purpose of Lent is not to force on us a few formal obligations, but to 'soften' our heart so that it may open itself to the realities of the spirit, to experience the hidden 'thirst and hunger' for communion with God" make me think of the lovely little prayer from the Penitential Service:

Lord of all power and might, who art the author and giver of all good things: Graft in our hearts the love of thy Name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of thy great mercy keep us in the same; though Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

May your Lent this year be truly "Something Else"!

More next month,

**R+**

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c/o 10125-276 St.,  
Maple Ridge, V2W 1R5  
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