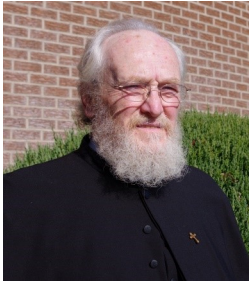


THE TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN NEWS

MAY 15, 2017

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Fr. Robert's Remarks



FR. ROBERT MANSFIELD, SSC
VICAR GENERAL

The Lord is risen! *Sursum Corda!*

Greetings; the Lord be with you!

This coming Sunday is Rogation Sunday which is followed by the Rogation Days and then the Feast of the Ascension and then, 10 days later by Whitsunday.

It is an important period in our life of faith.

Fr. Walter Frere was one of the founders of the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield, and later Bishop of Truro who, incidentally, confirmed Bishop Alfred Woolcock. Bishop Woolcock carried his love of Cornwall, the land of Saints, to the very end. Fr. Frere revised and rewrote Francis Procter's 19th century work as *A New History of the Book of Common Prayer*. In his book, Frere draws attention to the fact that in the early Reformation "all other processions were abolished, except the perambulation of parishes on the three Rogation days before the Ascension." (p. 544) Happily things are no longer so restrictive.

When I was much younger—read, late 1950s—I remember visiting some farms with my father for the blessings of the crops as part of "beating the bounds"; though, as a server, I think that I was grateful that I was not picked up by the ankles and stood on my head as was a bequest requirement in one parish in the UK. In later years—late 70s and early 80s, I can remember college and university students coming home

(Continued on page 10)

Fr. James Chantler: A Sermon for Easter II



FR. JAMES CHANTLER

Almighty GOD, who hast given Thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin and also an example of godly life : Give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that His inestimable benefit and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of His most holy life ; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In the Gospel appointed to be read today (St. John 10. 11-16) Jesus speaks of Himself being the Good Shepherd who gives His life for the sheep and the Epistle (1 Peter 2. 21-25) tells us that our Lord, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, has provided us with the most excellent example of godly life we could have. These lections are the Scriptural foundation upon which our Collect is based for in the Collect we consider the work of Christ : both His selfless sacrifice and His perfect example.

Let's examine Christ's sacrifice for sin. GOD the Father sent His only begotten Son to be the full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.

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Fr. James Chantler: A Sermon for Easter II

Jesus, who was without sin, bore our sins upon the Altar of the Cross and died so he could rise again to defeat sin and death so that we could have a new birth unto righteousness thereby restoring our Communion or ‘relationship’ with the Father. It is important to note that Jesus laid down His life for us in accord with the will of the Father: it was not taken from Him. As we are only weeks removed from Passiontide, I hope we recall what our Lord said to one of His companions who drew a sword to defend Him on the night of His arrest “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be? (St. Matthew 26. 53 , 54) Hear also what Jesus says in the verses which follow immediately after today's liturgical Gospel, “Therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me but I lay it down myself. I have the power to lay it down and I have the power to take it again. This commandment I have received of my Father.” (St. John 10. 17, 18). Jesus can never be overtaken or lose control of any situation! In our Collect Christ's sacrifice is described as ‘His inestimable benefit’ and and in the General Thanksgiving at Mattins we give thanks for ‘Thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ’ and this is wonderful language sadly lacking in many modern prayers. Inestimable is a bit difficult to pronounce but it is the best word to use for we can never really estimate the benefit the whole world, in every age, receives by Christ's work on the Cross of Calvary.

THEREFORE DOTH MY
FATHER LOVE ME
BECAUSE I LAY DOWN
MY LIFE THAT I MAY
TAKE IT AGAIN. NO MAN
TAKETH IT FROM ME
BUT I LAY IT DOWN
MYSELF. I HAVE THE
POWER TO LAY IT DOWN
AND I HAVE THE POWER
TO TAKE IT AGAIN. THIS
COMMANDMENT I HAVE
RECEIVED OF MY
FATHER.

After consideration of Christ's sacrifice we need to consider the example of His most holy life. If we think of Christ's unique life as a work we could replicate (even if we are wealthy or powerful or charismatic or bright) we would be deluding ourselves for we are all weak and sinful and what Jesus can do is beyond our reach or our capacity and therefore impossible. What is possible and is attainable, GOD being our helper, is to make our lives an imitation of Christ however flawed we might be. Through the sacraments and prayer it is possible to to advance on the path to our sanctification (the gradual growth into holiness) and actually experience a taste of the future blessedness of heaven as we walk the King's Highway. We cannot discount human effort for we have all been given various talents by GOD to equip us for work in His service but we must always remember what the General Epistle of St. James says “Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights.” (James 1. 16 ,17)

I pray brethren that throughout the changes and chances of this fleeting life we be always thankful for the many great blessings and mercies GOD has bestowed upon us: especially the saving work of His Son. We do well to remember that, following the example of our Blessed Lord, we must co-operate with our Heavenly Father and submit our wills to Him who in love has sent the Spirit of His Son Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd into our hearts to guide us so that walking in newness of life we might finally be brought to the City of GOD. Amen.



Bonnie's Reflections: *The King Who Tore His Robe*



MRS. BONNIE IVEY

The Second Book of Kings is the record of men who ruled; who either “did what was right in the eyes of the Lord” or failed to do it. Manasseh promoted pagan worship in Jerusalem and Judah. “Under every green tree” was found a sacred place where people could engage in ritual sex with shrine prostitutes to promote fertility in the land. The king practiced sorcery and divination. Mediums and spiritists were his advisors. He worshipped the “starry hosts” at altars built right inside the Temple of God. A sacred pole was erected there for the goddess Asherah, and incense burned before the god Baal. Manasseh sacrificed his own son by fire. But he had another son, Amon.

When Amon became king, he continued Manasseh’s practices. There was intrigue in the palace, however. Amon’s own officials assassinated him two years after he was crowned. The people executed the conspirators, and made Amon’s son Josiah king. He was eight years old. (2 Kings 22)

We are not told who the boy’s advisors were, but Josiah matured rapidly and put his own stamp on the monarchy. At sixteen “he began to seek the God of his father (i.e. forefather) David, turning neither to the right or to the left.” At twenty he began to renovate the Temple. A special collection was made for repairs to the neglected, desecrated building, and taken by the king’s secretary, Shaphan, to Hilkiyah the high priest. Timber and stone were purchased. Carpenters, masons, and craftsmen began the work.

In every old church building there is a “glory hole.” A grubby room or closet serves as final resting place for things that are unused, set aside and forgotten. There was one in the Temple, and in it, a book. Hilkiyah cleaned it off and examined it.

The high priest then hurried to Shaphan. “I have found the Book of the Law in the Temple of the Lord!” Shaphan took it and began to read. Concerned, he brought it to the king.

Shaphan briefly reported on the work being done in the temple, then paused. “Hilkiyah has given me a book,” he said, and opening it he began to read aloud. King Josiah sat frozen as he listened. As the reading continued, chapter after chapter, he became distraught. He wept. Suddenly he grasped his robe at the neckline with both hands and pulled sharply, ripping it open to the waist.

This Jewish custom expressed horror and grief. The torn fabric symbolized a torn heart. The passage read was likely from Deuteronomy, including the blessings and cursings found in the final section. Deuteronomy 17: 18-20 states that each king, when he took the throne, was to “write for himself a copy of this law...It is to be with him, and he is to read from it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the Lord



Bonnie's Reflections: The King Who Tore His Robe

his God and follow carefully all the words of this law." The Law was to be read to the whole nation, assembled at Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, once every seven years. These things had not been done, possibly for centuries.

Josiah was overwhelmed by thoughts of the just judgment that threatened his kingdom after generations of apostasy and neglect. The downward progression of an apostate nation has been summed up by one author in these words: Distress, Despair, Disaster, Disintegration and Destruction.

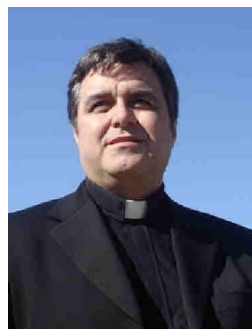
Josiah's instinct was to reach for God. He sent five trusted men to "inquire of the Lord", that is, seek out a recognized prophet. One was close at hand; Huldah, wife of the Keeper of the Wardrobe. The godly woman sent back a message: the nation would indeed be laid waste for its stubborn idolatries. But God, observing Josiah's grief and humility, promised he would not have to witness it: it would come after he died.

Josiah's response was to summon all the elders of Judah to Jerusalem, to hear him read the Book of the Covenant of Moses. He personally made a commitment to follow all the commandments, calling on the people to do likewise. All pledged themselves anew to the covenant. There followed a thorough cleansing of idolatry from the land. Every trace of pagan worship was removed from the Temple. Idols were smashed, the Ashera pole hauled away and burned. Each place in the countryside where false gods were honored was razed, and burnt human bones sprinkled around to render the site ritually unclean.

King Josiah chose to serve God "with all his heart, soul and strength". His father and grandfather rebelled, and Josiah had no control over what his own sons would do. But he did what he could on his own watch. Let us do the same.



Fr. Charles Warner: Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Affirmation of St. Louis (1977-2017) continued



FR. CHARLES WARNER

The Road To St. Louis

IV The Canadian Experience

In Anti-Traditional theology, divinity is understood to reside within the individual and the role of the Church is to liberate the self from institutional constraints. An example of this in Canada was the failed Anglican-United Church union talks which would have united a reformation church with a church that followed the apostolic tradition.

In the minds of traditionalists, the hierarchy of the Anglican Church of Canada "was determined to over-ride all opposition and bring about union from the top down." ⁱ There began to emerge "experimental liturgies" ⁱⁱ in spite of the

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Fr. Charles Warner: Celebrating the 40th Anniversary

fact that the 1959 Canadian BCP was only a few years old. Traditionalists saw this as a sort of preparation for church union talks. When talks finally began in 1965, the United Church members of the committee appeared confident in their doctrinal positions and in the way “*they presented their stand.... as opposed to the Anglican Commissioner, Fr. Latimer, who seemed to have considerable ignorance of their own church’s teaching.*”ⁱⁱⁱ

In April of 1967, the Rev’d Dr. Carmino de Catanzaro organized the Council for the Faith, “*a society to fight the proposed draft plan for union.*”^{iv} Individuals that contributed to the Council were co-chairman Professor D.C. Masters, an evangelical layman, Mr. Rex Dark, secretary, Mae Haggerty, as well as many priests and people throughout Canada who established local branches. The Council for the Faith also published a regular newsletter as a means to keep everyone in touch. The goal of the Council for the Faith was to proclaim the Gospel based on the firm foundations of “*the Scriptures, the Book of Common Prayer and the historic Sacraments.*”^v

As the Anglican claim of being apostolic or catholic was eroding in North America, traditionalists elsewhere were taking note and were becoming conscious “*that similar paths were being planned by modernist and new age theologians for them.*”^{vi} Dr. de Catanzaro had been receiving letters from both clergy and laity upset about what was going on within the Anglican Communion. Throughout the 1970’s people from around the world and in particular Great Britain, Sweden, Australia and New Zealand expressed their concern about the future of the Church in their home countries if the trends continued.

A top advisor to Dr. de Catanzaro and the Council for the Faith was Chancellor Alan Campbell of Edinburgh, Scotland, who was both a lawyer and an excellent theologian with expertise in canon law. Another contact was Robert Mercer (b.1931), the Bishop of Matabeleland, in Zimbabwe, Africa. Bishop Cyril Eastaugh (1897-1988), retired bishop of the diocese of Peterborough, England, was another firm supporter.

Others included Dr. Trueman Dicken, an eminent moral theologian from England, and Fr. Leslie Whiting and others from an organization known as “*Ecclesia.*”^{vii} A main reason for contact from the United Kingdom was because the C of E was also in the process of seeking some sort of unification with the Methodist Church^{viii} and his British contacts did not want Canadian Anglicans to go in the same direction.

In 1971 Dr. de Catanzaro traveled to Scotland and England in order to consolidate ties with “*resistance organizations*”^{ix} During this period he met with international groups such as “*the League of Anglican Loyalists, the Anglican Association, Truth and*



*The Rev. Dr.
Carmino de Catanzaro
1916-1983*

Fr. Charles Warner: Celebrating the 40th Anniversary

Unity Group, South African Faith and Unity and the American Church Union.”^x Dr. de Catanzaro became very much part of the process to build up “*the continuation of Anglicanism*”^{xi} in both North America and around the world.

The Council for the Faith was the only medium Dr. de Catanzaro had at his disposal in Canada. According to Joan de Catanzaro, in Thou Art A Priest, it is through this body he attempted to crystallize the debate by showing just what was at stake theologically. He attempted to warn faithful Anglicans that their traditional faith was being gradually taken away from them. “*Largely due to the efforts of the Council for the Faith in Canada, the church union proposals with the United Church fell through.*”^{xii}

However, a supporter of this scheme vowed that even though they lost this particular battle, the war was not over. He promised that change “*(ordination of women, altering the Book of Common Prayer etc.)*”^{xiii} would come about in a different way.

The Anglican Church of Canada’s decision to “*support the ordination of women in 1973 in principle until 1976 when ordination actually happened*”^{xiv} was in the view of Dr. de Catanzaro, removing Anglicans from a “*traditional Catholic position into a chaotic do your own thing mode,*”^{xv} believing and teaching “*that each person can have his own truth.*”^{xvi}



**DR. TRUMAN DICKEN:
1919- 2000**

**WARDEN OF LENTON HALL
UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM**



To be continued

Notes

- i. Joan de Catanzaro p.44
- ii. *ibid* p.47
- iii. *ibid* p.48
- iv. *ibid* p.48
- v. *ibid* p.48
- vi. *ibid* p.66
- vii. *ibid* p.66
- viii. Ivan Clutterbuck Marginal Catholics: The Anglican/Methodist Affair. Chapter 16, p.179-197
- ix. de Catanzaro p.49
- x. *ibid* p.49
- xi. *ibid* p.60
- xii. *ibid* p.59
- xiii. *ibid* p.60
- xiv. *ibid* p.62
- xv. *ibid* p.62
- xvi. St. Matthew’s Anglican Catholic Church. Who We Are & What We Believe. (http://stmatthewsacc.com/who_what.html 2006) p.1



*The Rev. Vernon Staley: The Christian Way—Serialized***Hymns,**

THE REV. VERNON STALEY

At this point in his little book, Fr. Staley suggests a number of Hymns for reflection.

THE HOLY TRINITY.

FATHER of heav'n, Whose love profound
A ransom for our souls hath found,
Before Thy throne we sinners bend,
To us Thy pardoning love extend.

Almighty Son, Incarnate Word,
Our Prophet, Priest, Redeemer, Lord,
Before Thy throne we sinners bend,
To us Thy saving grace extend.

Eternal Spirit, by Whose breath
The soul is raised from sin and death,
Before Thy throne we sinners bend,
To us Thy quickening power extend.

Thrice Holy! Father, Spirit, Son;
Mysterious Godhead, Three in One,
Before Thy throne we sinners bend,
Grace, pardon, life to us extend.

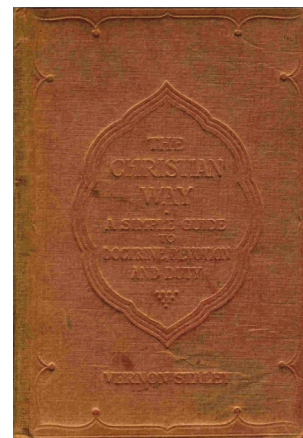
THE ETERNAL FATHER.

My God, how wonderful Thou art,
Thy majesty how bright,
How beautiful Thy mercy-seat,
In depths of burning light!

How dread are Thine eternal years,
O everlasting Lord,
By prostrate spirits day and night
Incessantly adored!

How wonderful, how beautiful,
The sight of Thee must be,
Thine endless wisdom, boundless power,
And awful purity !

Oh, how I fear Thee, Living God,
With deepest, tenderest fears,
And worship Thee with trembling hope,
And penitential tears !



The Rev. Vernon Staley: The Christian Way

Yet I may love Thee too, O Lord,
Almighty as Thou art,
For Thou hast stoop'd to ask of *me*
The love of my poor heart.

No earthly father loves like Thee,
No mother, e'er so mild,
Bears and forbears, as Thou hast done,
With me Thy sinful child.

Father of Jesus, love's reward,
What rapture will it be,
Prostrate before Thy throne to lie,
And gaze and gaze on Thee.

FATHER OF JESUS, LOVE'S REWARD,
WHAT RAPTURE WILL IT BE,
PROSTRATE BEFORE THY THRONE TO LIE,
AND GAZE AND GAZE ON THEE.

THE INCARNATE SON.

O LOVE, how deep! how broad ! how high!
It fills the heart with ecstasy,
That God, the Son of God, should take
Our mortal form for mortals' sake.

He sent no angel to our race
Of higher or of lower place,
But wore the robe of human frame
Himself, and to this lost world came.

For us He was baptized, and bore
His holy fast, and hunger'd sore;
For us temptations sharp He knew;
For us the tempter overthrew..

For us He pray'd; for us He taught,
For us His daily works He wrought,
By words, and signs, and actions, thus
Still seeking not Himself but us.

For us to wicked men betray'd,
Scourged, mock'd, in purple robe array'd,
He bore the shameful cross and death;
For us at length gave up His breath.

For us He rose from death again,
For us He went on high to reign,
For us He sent His Spirit here
To guide, to strengthen, and to cheer.

To Him. Whose boundless love has won
Salvation for us through His Son,
To God the Father, glory be
Both now and through eternity.



St. Bernard of Clairvaux: On Loving God—Serialized

ST. BERNARD OF
CLAIRVAUX

1090–20/08/1153

Chapter XII. Of love: out of a letter to the Carthusians

I remember writing a letter to the holy Carthusian brethren, wherein I discussed these degrees of love, and spoke of charity in other words, although not in another sense, than here. It may be well to repeat a portion of that letter, since it is easier to copy than to dictate anew.

To love our neighbor's welfare as much as our own: that is true and sincere charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned (I Tim. 1:5). Whosoever

loves his own prosperity only is proved thereby not to love good for its own sake, since he loves it on his own account. And so he cannot sing with the psalmist, 'O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is gracious' (Ps. 118:1). Such a man would praise God, not because He is goodness, but because He has been good to him: he could take to himself the reproach of the same writer, 'So long as Thou doest well unto him, he will speak good of Thee' (Ps. 49:18, Vulg.). One praises God because He is mighty, another because He is gracious, yet another solely because He is essential goodness. The first is a slave and fears for himself; the second is greedy, desiring further benefits; but the third is a son who honors his Father. He who fears, he who profits, are both concerned about self-interest. Only in the son is that charity which seeketh not her own (I Cor. 13:5). Wherefore I take this saying, 'The law of the Lord is an undefiled law, converting the soul' (Ps. 19:7) to be of charity; because charity alone is able to turn the soul away from love of self and of the world to pure love of God. Neither fear nor self-interest can convert the soul. They may change the appearance, perhaps even the conduct, but never the object of supreme desire. Sometimes a slave may do God's work; but because he does not toil voluntarily, he remains in bondage. So a mercenary may serve God, but because he puts a price on his service, he is enchained by his own greediness. For where there is self-interest there is isolation; and such isolation is like the dark corner of a room where dust and rust befall. Fear is the motive which constrains the slave; greed binds the selfish man, by which he is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed (James 1:14). But neither fear nor self-interest is undefiled, nor can they convert the soul. Only charity can convert the soul, freeing it from unworthy motives.

Next, I call it undefiled because it never keeps back anything of its own for itself. When a man boasts of nothing as his very own, surely all that he has is God's; and what is God's cannot be unclean. The undefiled law of the Lord is

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St. Bernard of Clairvaux: On Loving God

that love which bids men seek not their own, but every man another's wealth. It is called the law of the Lord as much because He lives in accordance with it as because no man has it except by gift from Him. Nor is it improper to say that even God lives by law, when that law is the law of love. For what preserves the glorious and ineffable Unity of the blessed Trinity, except love? Charity, the law of the Lord, joins the Three Persons into the unity of the Godhead and unites the holy Trinity in the bond of peace. Do not suppose me to imply that charity exists as an accidental quality of Deity; for whatever could be conceived of as wanting in the divine Nature is not God. No, it is the very substance of the Godhead; and my assertion is neither novel nor extraordinary, since St. John says, 'God is love' (I John 4:8). One may therefore say with truth that love is at once God and the gift of God, essential love imparting the quality of love. Where the word refers to the Giver, it is the name of His very being; where the gift is meant, it is the name of a quality. Love is the eternal law whereby the universe was created and is ruled. Since all things are ordered in measure and number and weight, and nothing is left outside the realm of law, that universal law cannot itself be without a law, which is itself. So love though it did not create itself, does surely govern itself by its own decree.



O HEAVENLY
FATHER, LOOK, WE
PRAY THEE, ON
THE FACE OF THY
BELOVED SON,
WHOSE PERFECT
SACRIFICE WE
HERE PRESENT TO
THEE; . . .

Fr. Robert's Remarks

on the reading week which often fell around Rogation Sunday. By those years the whole thing was simplified to a blessing of some seeds, whether they be of corn or marigolds. Students commented that on the few times they were home we were always blessing seeds.

“Beating the bounds” was at one time a legal requirement in the UK so that Churchmen knew the legal boundaries of the parish. One example of the importance of the knowing the boundaries was that only those who lived within them or had properties within those boundaries had a right of burial in the parish cemetery. The notion of boundaries is of huge importance in life but that can be the topic for another day.

The modern web based encyclopaedia Wikipedia tells us that “Although modern surveying techniques make the ceremony obsolete, at least for its secular purpose, many English parishes carry out a regular beating of the bounds, as a way of strengthening the community and giving it a sense of place.”

For precisely this reason, Rogationtide and Ascension Day were important in our area in the Anglican Church of Canada in the 70s and 80s. The Ascension Day Service moved around the Churches of the Deanery. There were about 20 congregations—none involved more than about an hour and a half in travel. Most of the congregations would

Fr. Robert's Remarks

be represented. There was a great procession, a pilgrimage, from all quarters and bounds of the Deanery.

At present, for us, Synod is something of a notable exception for the clergy and a relative few of the laity, but sadly, given our smallness and our huge geography this coming together like that is not something that we can do very often.

Regardless, let's continue with the theme of pilgrimage for a bit.

We have passed Lent for this year however, Fr. Alexander Schmemmann's words are still valuable:

..For each year Lent and Easter are, once again, the rediscovery and the recovery by us of what we were made through our own baptismal death and resurrection.

A journey, a pilgrimage! Yet, as we begin it, as we make the first steps into the "bright sadness" of Lent, we see—far, far away—the destination. It is the joy of Easter, it is the entrance into the glory of the Kingdom. And it is this vision, the foretaste of Easter, that makes Lent's sadness bright and our Lenten effort a "spiritual spring." The night may be dark and long, but all along the way a mysterious and radiant dawn seems to shine on the horizon. "Do not deprive us of our expectation, O lover of man!" (Great Lent, p. 14-15)

Fr. Schmemmann wrote about the Eucharist in his much earlier (1963) book *For the Life of the World*—one of my all-time favourites—and speaks of our purposeful journey or procession. He speaks of *ascension* and he speaks the Holy Spirit both of which are our focus in this coming season.

Listen to Fr. Schmemmann:

The liturgy of the Eucharist is best understood as a journey or procession. It is the journey of the Church into the dimension of the Kingdom. We use this word "dimension" because it seems the best way to indicate the manner of our sacramental entrance into the risen life of Christ. Color transparencies "come alive" when viewed in three dimensions instead of two. The presence of the added dimension allows us to see much better the actual reality of what has been photographed. In very much the same way, though of course any analogy is condemned to fail, our *entrance* into the presence of Christ is an entrance into a fourth dimension which allows us to see the ultimate reality of life. It is

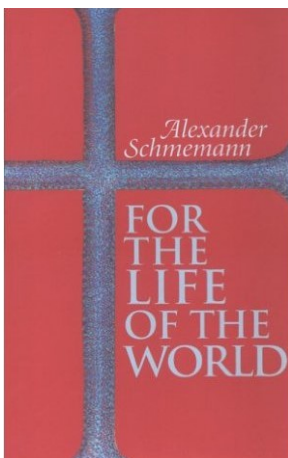


FR. ALEXANDER SCHMEMMANN

Fr. Robert's Remarks

not an escape from the world, rather it is the arrival at a vantage point from which we can *see* more deeply into the reality of the world.

The journey begins when Christians leave their homes and beds. They leave, indeed, their life in this present and *concrete* world, and whether *they* have to drive fifteen miles or walk a few blocks, a sacramental *act* is already taking place, an act which is the very condition of everything else that is to happen. For they are now on their way to *constitute the Church*, or to be more exact, to be transformed into the Church of God. They have been individuals, some white, some black, some poor, some rich, they have been the "natural" world and a natural community. And now they have been called to "come together in one place," to bring their lives, their very "world" with them and to be more than what they were: a *new* community with a new life. We are already far beyond the categories of common worship and prayer. The purpose of this "coming together" is not simply to add a religious dimension to the natural community, to make it "better"—more responsible, more Christian. The purpose is to *fulfill the Church*, and that means to make present the One in whom all things are at their *end*, and all things are at their *beginning*.



The liturgy begins then as a real separation from the world. In our attempt to make Christianity appeal to the man on the street, we have often minimized, or even completely forgotten, this necessary separation. We always want to make Christianity "understandable" and "acceptable" to this mythical "modern" man on the street. And we forget that the Christ of whom we speak is "not of this world," and that after His resurrection He was not recognized even by His own disciples. Mary Magdalene thought He was a gardener. When two of His disciples were going to Emmaus, "Jesus himself drew near and went with them," and they did not know Him before "he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave it to them" (Lk. 24:15-16, 30). He appeared to the twelve, "the doors being shut." It was apparently no longer sufficient simply to know *that* He was the son of Mary. There was no physical imperative to recognize Him. He was, in other words, no longer a "part" of this world, of its reality, and to recognize Him, to enter into the joy of His presence, to be with Him, meant a conversion to another reality. The Lord's glorification does not have the compelling, objective evidence of His humiliation and cross. His glorification is known only through the mysterious death in the baptismal font, through the anointing of the Holy Spirit. It is known only in the fullness of the Church, as she gathers to meet the Lord and to share in His risen life.

The early Christians realized that in order to become the temple of the Holy Spirit they must *ascend to heaven* where Christ has ascended. They

Fr. Robert's Remarks

realized also that this ascension was the very condition of their mission in the world, of their ministry to the world. For there—in heaven—they were immersed in the new life of the Kingdom; and when, after *this* "liturgy of ascension," they returned into the world, their faces reflected the light, the "joy and peace" of that Kingdom and they were truly its witnesses. They brought no programs and no theories; but wherever they went, the seeds of *the* Kingdom sprouted, faith was kindled, life was transfigured, things impossible were made possible. They were witnesses, and when they were asked, "Whence shines this light, where is the source of this power?" they knew what to answer and where to lead men. In church today, we so often find we meet only the same old world, not Christ and His Kingdom. We do not realize that we never get anywhere because we never leave any place behind us.

To leave, to come.... This is the *beginning*, the starting point of the sacrament, the condition of its transforming power and reality.

Quite frankly, these paragraphs challenge me . Many times I have reflected on the themes of outreach and evangelism. Fr. Schmemmann refers to how "we always want to make 'understandable' and 'acceptable' to this mythical 'modern' man on the street.". Today, we might even add the word "relevant". He spoke of how those closest to Jesus did not recognise Him—specifically alluding to the disciples on the road to Emmaus. I am reminded that they did recognise Jesus in the breaking of the bread precisely because they had just finished a good and thorough bible study just before Jesus broke the bread. With the teaching, their disposition was such that they could see and understand Jesus present to them.



Fr. Schmemmann describes the return to the world and the impact of the immersion in the new life of the Kingdom, the joy and peace and the witness—"no programs and no theories; but wherever they went, the seeds of *the* Kingdom sprouted, faith was kindled, life was transfigured, things impossible were made possible. They were witnesses, and when they were asked, "Whence shines this light, where is the source of this power?" they knew what to answer and where to lead men."

Later, toward the close of this same book, answering the questions, "What am I going to do? What are the Church and each Christian to do in this world? What is our *mission*?", Fr. Schmemmann writes,

To these questions there exist no answers in the form of practical "recipes." "It all depends" on thousands of factors—and, to be sure, all faculties of our human intelligence and wisdom, organization and planning, are to be constantly used. Yet—and this is the one "point" we wanted to make in these pages—"it all depends" primarily on our being real witnesses to the joy and peace of the Holy Spirit, to the new

TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

TACC Office
136 William St.
Parry Sound, ON
P2A 1W2

Phone: 705-746-7378
E-mail:
vicargeneral@traditionalanglican.ca
&
We're on the web at

TRADITIONALANGLICAN.CA



EUNTES IN MUNDUM UNIVERSUM
GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD

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life of which we are made partakers in the Church. The Church is the sacrament of the Kingdom—not because she possesses divinely instituted acts called “sacraments,” but because she possesses first of all she is the possibility given to man to see in and through this world the “world to come,” to see and to “live” it in Christ. It is only when in the darkness of *this world* we discern that Christ has *already* “filled all things with Himself” that these *things*, whatever they may be, are revealed and given to us full of meaning and beauty. A Christian is one who, wherever he looks, finds Christ and rejoices in Him. And this joy *transforms* all his human plans and programs, decisions and action, making all his mission the sacrament of the world's return to Him who is the life of the world. (Life of the World, p. 113)

Perhaps these words will offer you a different slant as we approach the Rogation, Ascension, and Pentecostal seasons.

God Bless!



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Fr. David Marriott

drm274@hotmail.com

409-15210 Guildford Dr.

Surrey BC V3R 0X7

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