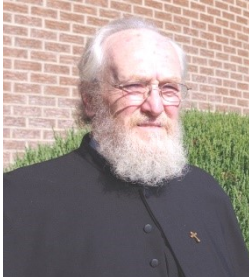


# THE TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN NEWS

JUNE 15, 2020

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 6

## *Fr. Robert's Remarks*



FR. ROBERT MANSFIELD, SSC  
VICAR GENERAL

*Quoniam in aeternum misericordia eius.*  
**For his mercy endureth for ever.**

Greetings; the Lord be with you!

I trust that you are all keeping well and safe through this unusual and unexpected time .

Perhaps I am fortunate that I no longer have secular employment; however, I do remember, vividly, my isolation for two weeks during the SARS situation 17 years ago and the experience of working in the hospital through the rest of that crisis . From the training of that experience, I am left very conscious, especially, of those who are working. Many working have suffered from turmoil in the workplace, others have been sent home to work; still others have been laid off. Certainly, all have experienced unusual stresses and strains in their lives. I also recognize that many who are not working in secular employment are also suffering from the stressful situation.

Recently, I listened to an interview of a Christian psychologist on the topic of the decline of mental health in America. One particular comment caught my attention. It was that mental health of persons is related to their ability to handle ambiguity. Over the last couple of months, it seems unquestionable that we have experienced a lot of ambiguity and there does not yet appear to be an end in sight.

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## *Fr. Byron Woolcock, TDC: A Crisis of Faith*



FR. BYRON WOOLCOCK, TDC

### A CRISIS OF FAITH

“Tell me, Father B., what do you think? Is it true, or just a pile of happy horse manure?”

This was asked me by a dear friend as we left church after a Sunday service. (Of course, being a sincere Newfoundlander, and my trusted friend, he expressed that question in a more blunt way, but I was concerned that I retain our good Vicar General's Imprimatur!) Now at 81, I have often heard that question from years gone by echo in my thoughts and prayers. My dear friend fell asleep in the Lord Jesus long ago. If there were ever a “hierarchy” among the Anawim he would indeed be described as his namesake was in the latter part of Second Kings: “...and he did that was right in the sight of the Lord...and turned not aside to the right or to the left.” (2 Kings 22:2) How did I answer my friend's question? I have no remembrance. Not likely as I would answer now, nor as hastily.

### WHY WE HAVE A CRISIS OF HOPE:

Not an answer to Josiah's question nor, (it might seem) in logical sequence to the main title. The subtitle above is from Fr. Juan Arias' book “The God I Don't Believe In”. I for one, certainly needed his

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clarifications and conclusions and have “Hopefully” begun to carry them to all I meet, both here in my dear Township home as well as my dear “on-line parish”.

“We Christians not only believe in God, we also believe that God believes in us. These two statements may, at first sight, seem the same. However, they are quite different. Even more, I think that the difference is one of the most forgotten aspects of our faith, and our present failure to remember this difference has contributed in no small part to the present crisis of faith.” Here Fr. Arias concludes this important thought with this warning; “To keep faith in God without attaining to God’s faith in us is to remain on the level of primitive religion.” My average five hours daily on-line for my helpful “M.R.I.” (Note #1) M.C.S. sites is why the above quote, and the whole book, struck a responsive chord. Perhaps for you as well in your particular daily ministry. A recent phone conversation with a fellow Priest included the problem of what we Christians encounter in people so very often. I sometimes call it “the hidden commandment”. “Love your neighbour...as you Love yourself and its sad absence in so many of us. Although there is more than one interpretation, yet I tend to view it personally through the eyes of our Marriage Encounter Weekend in Toronto years ago, and thus in the writings of both Frs. John Powell and Henri Nouwen on “Unconditional Love”. Nearly all people I encounter whether in daily life or on my present “on-line parish” suffer a severe and debilitating and even deadly lack of (unconditional) self-love. That whole subject, of course is also a deep and lengthy one. The subject of this present article certainly includes it but, for me, carries us to a higher and wider level.

“TO KEEP FAITH  
IN GOD WITHOUT  
ATTAINING TO  
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IS TO REMAIN ON  
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PRIMITIVE  
RELIGION.”

**“HE WAS A GAMBLER TOO...” (#2)**

I’ve also recently been reading Dr. Jordan Peterson’s “12 Rules For Life”. He is a person I admire much, (although usually beyond my brain power!). He discusses “The New Testament vs. The Old Testament God.” (#3) Because Peterson is (seemingly) not a “Believer” I found the spirit of his conclusions useful for many in my on-line parish, many of whom indeed exhibit “nihilism, resentment and (not nearly so often) arrogance”. (I hasten to add that many of their beliefs are indeed thoughtful and inspired.) Within the supposed New Testament vs. Old Testament God quandary, Peterson concludes,...”You take a risk...”, “...You decide you will start treating Old Testament God, with His terrible and oft-arbitrary-seeming power, as if He could also be the New Testament God (even though you understand the many ways in which that is absurd). In other words, you decide to act as if existence might be justified by its goodness – if only you behave properly”. Peterson concludes, “And it is that decision, that declaration or existential faith, that allows you to overcome nihilism, resentment and arrogance”. He treads very close to familiar Baptismal ground for us when he concludes, “It is that declaration of faith that keeps hatred of Being, with all its attendant evils, at bay.”

**FULLY HUMAN, FULLY ALIVE**

In reading the above from Peterson, it may seem, like Sophia on tv’s “Golden Girls”, I too might now say “But I digress from my story.” (She too was in her eighties!) Fr. Karl Rahner in his book “Do You Believe In God” joins, with the Eastern Church, in

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my rescue; “In the Christian Religion, when all is said and done, there are only three absolute mysteries (intimately connected): that of the triune God, that of God’s incarnation in Jesus Christ, and that of the grace that divinizes us.” (That may also call for an equally important, likely yet unwritten book titled “Why God Believes in Me”!)

### **DIGNITY AND RESPECT**

We would always send our children out into their daily life with; “treat everyone you meet, and yourself, with dignity and respect”. That, and the many ramifications of Divinization, are, as always practically summarized by Archbishop Joseph Raya so beautifully; “The predominant idea of the Gospel is that just as we are all safe in God’s care, so we should be safe in each other’s care. Of all the holy books of the world only the Gospel presents God as a Being of wonder and beauty who fills the human person with an abundance of security and love as to become for other human beings a haven and a strength.” (Abundance of Love: The Incarnation and Byzantine Tradition) (For my “golden years” I have been shown more and more, “the widening of Vocation calls me daily to this ministry expressed in that immediate little section of this article.) A fellow Franciscan called it “Your Ministry of Affirmation...of truly Listening.” Recently, in the news of so much daily tragedy, a phrase from Politicians on both sides of the border, has bothered me much: “Thoughts and Prayers are not enough.” (For those reading here, no explanation is needed, for those repeating those statements no explanation is (yet) possible.) In this present written context our loving thoughts and powerful Intercession inevitably lead to the Affirmation of who each person is. Further words from Archbishop Raya will both clarify this and, hopefully lead to my conclusions here; “A message which does not carry first and foremost a shock, a poem, something from the heart, is a message betrayed and condemned to lie sterile... Every gesture of Christ is a message and a poem that makes us sing ‘Glory’. Everything Christ did is designed to make our life a celebration.”

### **BLESSING, GLORY AND THANKSGIVING (AND W.A.N.F.)**

Where does Josiah’s question lead us (and where does my attempt written here lead us?) Hopefully fairly close to what Fr. Alexander Schememann expresses in “For The Life Of The World”; “And thus this offering to God of bread and wine, of the food we must eat in order to live, is our offering to Him of ourselves, of our life, and of the whole world. “To take in our hands the whole world as if it were “an apple” said a Russian poet. It is our Eucharist. It is the movement that Adam failed to perform, and that in Christ has become the very life of man: a movement of adoration and praise in which all joy and suffering, all beauty and all frustration, all hunger and all satisfaction are referred to their other ultimate End and become finally meaningful.” (The absence of nihilism!) Now for the closely related “W.A.N.F.” part! In this recent time of “Viral Vulnerability” Susan and I have gratefully been shown a deeper vision of a (very reciprocal) saying we have used over our years here; “What Are Neighbours For?” Recently we have observed Guardian Angels driving our Neighbours’ cars! “Neighbours”, as we know from the Good Samaritan parable, are not simply those living geographically

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close by; “who is my neighbour?” Again Fr. Alexander best clarifies this (inexpressible) language of Neighbour and Love; “Man is a sacrificial being, because he finds his life in love, and love is sacrificial: it puts the value, the very meaning of life, in the other and gives life to the other, and in this giving, in this sacrifice, finds the meaning and joy of Life.” (In that light it may be more accurate to now change our neighbourly local saying to “Who are neighbours for?”)

**CONCLUSION** (of course, She can never be left out...)

“Yes, Mary not only believed in God but believed in the faith that God had in her...”

This leap of faith is the most difficult for a man to make. It is more difficult to allow oneself to be loved by God than to love Him; it is more difficult to accept His faith in us than our faith in Him. For this, one needs to be as poor, as open to the truth, as virginal-ly conscious of one’s own dignity, and as audaciously humble as Mary.”

**NOTES:**

#1 “M.R.I.”, you will recall, is from the Anglican Congress of 1963 in Toronto...”Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence” (in the Body of Christ). I have always found that “Motto” meaningful in every relationship.

#2 Is from Fr. Studdart Kennedy’s book of poems from WW1, “The Unutterable Beauty”. This verse refers to the soldiers beneath the cross gambling for Christ’s seamless robe, likely woven by His Blessed Mother:

“He was a gambler too, my Christ,  
He took His life and threw it  
for a world redeemed.  
And ere His agony was done,  
And before the westering sun went down,  
He knew that He had won.”

(I’m sure this poet would forgive me for here adding that perhaps Christ’s “gamble” also included his “taking a chance on His Faith in you and me!”)

#3 Another dear neighbour (and avid reader of our Newsletter) hearing of my present intended subject, reminded me of J.B. Phillip’s wonderful “Your God Is Too Small”. Among many thoughtful points Canon Phillips speaks of “Bethel Christians” ...that “Old Testament God” for “Christians who like everything cut and dried so even the Gospel is reduced to a formula...such people have not appreciated the revolutionary character of God’s invasion of the world in Christ.” (Maybe another title for my attempt here!

#4 “The Mighty and Loving Ministry of Intercession” (“thoughts and prayer are indeed “enough”!) “Concerning Intercession the Church is called to be a community which speaks to the world in God’s Name and speaks to God from the middle of the world’s darkness”. (Archbishop Michael Ramsey, “Daily Readings...Gateway to God”.)



“MAN IS A  
SACRIFICIAL BEING,  
BECAUSE HE FINDS  
HIS LIFE IN LOVE,  
AND LOVE IS  
SACRIFICIAL: IT  
PUTS THE VALUE,  
THE VERY MEANING  
OF LIFE, IN THE  
OTHER AND GIVES  
LIFE TO THE  
OTHER, AND IN  
THIS GIVING, IN  
THIS SACRIFICE,  
FINDS THE  
MEANING AND JOY  
OF LIFE.”

## *Bonnie's Reflections: Threshing Time*



BONNIE IVEY (& LAD)

My grandmother recalled harvesting wheat in the early 1900s. She would use a sickle to cut an armload of ripe wheat, tying it together into a sheaf. Sheaves were then set in groups, grain-end upward to make stooks, which resembled little teepees. These were left to dry for several days before threshing, while everyone prayed for dry weather.

As a small child, I was taken to my uncle's wheat farm to see the harvest. I was lifted up to watch a steady stream of golden wheat kernels gushing from the threshing machine into the waiting truck.

When my husband was a young teenager, he experienced grain harvest as a summertime laborer. He hated the chaff, the tiny slivers of brittle material that break off the wheat kernels. It stuck in his throat and in his clothing, prickling and itching.

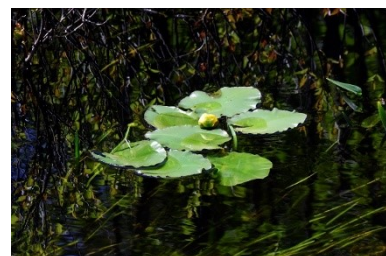
In Biblical times, harvest and threshing were universally familiar. There would be a threshing floor for each village. This was a circular area roughly 50 feet (15metres) across, which was trodden down to cement-like hardness by driving oxen over it repeatedly. Dry sheaves of grain were placed in a layer on the floor. Sometimes the sheaves would be beaten with sticks to release the grain. Otherwise a threshing sledge would be pulled on a circular path over them. The sledge was a heavy wooden panel the size of a tabletop, with its underside studded with sharp stones or metal teeth. It would be pulled by one or more donkeys or oxen. Their driver stood on the sledge to add weight and urged the animals around the circle. The dry stems of the plants would be shredded into short pieces of hay. This hay was gathered and kept as animal fodder.

The grains that were left needed to be cleaned to remove the useless chaff. A small quantity of wheat, say for one family's needs, could be simply shaken in a sieve. The chaff fell out leaving grain ready for grinding. For large quantities people used wooden winnowing forks to toss the grain into the air when the wind was blowing. The wind carried the chaff away, but the clean grains fell back onto the threshing floor, ready to be shoveled into storage containers for the future.

Sifting and threshing appear frequently in the Old Testament as symbols of God's judgment of his people or even of other nations. In Isaiah 21:10 the prophet speaks to Israel which has been captive in Babylon for decades: "Oh, my threshed people, and my afflicted on the threshing floor!"

In II Samuel 21 we read how King David had sinned by spending nearly a year conducting a census of available warriors. An advisor tried to rebuke him, saying God had promised to increase the people to provide enough military strength. David brushed the warning aside.

As punishment, a plague fell on his people. King David saw an angel holding a sword over Jerusalem. He and his elders fell flat, and David begged God to let the punishment



## *Bonnie's Reflections: Threshing Time*

fall on himself and his family, not on his innocent subjects. God sent the prophet Gad to David with an order: offer sacrifice on the threshing floor belonging to Arauna the Jebusite. David bought the threshing floor and the oxen. When his sacrifice was offered up, the plague stopped spreading.

The Temple of Jerusalem was eventually built on that spot. It was the place where Abraham was obedient to the point of offering his son Isaac on an altar, only to have God provide a ram for the sacrifice at the last moment. Both judgment and atonement are associated with that place; calamity and redemption, for there Jesus willingly went to death for us.

When John the Baptist began his ministry, he warned that One would come, who would baptize his people with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He meant Jesus. This great One would come as a judge. "His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear the threshing floor and to gather the wheat in his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Luke 3:17)

Many of us today feel like we are grain on that threshing floor, ground underneath circumstances we could never have imagined. Or perhaps we feel tossed into the air, blown helplessly like bits of chaff, as though Satan is sifting us like wheat. We can take comfort in the knowledge that God remembers we are but dust. (Psalm 103:14) Present uncertainties may reveal things in ourselves that need to be blown away; in our attitudes, in our faith (or lack of it), in our actions. This is valuable knowledge. But only if we act upon it in repentance and trust.



## *St. Simeon the New Theologian*

Following is a piece that I (RSHM+) found years ago and to which I return regularly for reflection and meditation. I never cease to be challenged by it.

St. Simeon—also spelled Symeon—was a byzantine mystic who died in 1022. He wrote:

Saviour, I wonder at your boundless mercy!  
How did you make me worthy to become one of your members?  
So unclean, prodigal and prostituted?  
How did you clothe me so regally  
In the bright richness of immortality  
Transforming my body's members into light?  
For your divine and blessed Body  
Flashes with the fire of your divinity.  
And this, O my God, you have given to me  
To be indescribably bound and joined with.

SAVIOUR, I WONDER  
AT YOUR BOUNDLESS  
MERCY!  
HOW DID YOU MAKE  
ME WORTHY TO BE-  
COME ONE OF YOUR  
MEMBERS?

### *St. Simeon the New Theologian*

This filthy and mortal vessel  
 Having been united with thine all-holy Body  
 And my blood having been commingled with Yours,  
 I know I have been joined with Your divinity  
 And I have become your most pure Body,  
 A shining member, a truly holy member,  
 A member translucent, clear and bright.  
 I see the beauty. I observe the rays of light.  
 I reflect the light of your grace!

And I am overcome by Your indescribable magnificence  
 And I am astonished, comprehending myself, from what  
 To what I have become. O miracle!

And I fear you reverently, and I fear for myself  
 And as I honor and respect you, I do myself.  
 And I wonder, completely embarrassed  
 As to where I should sit, and what I should approach  
 And where I should put your members down.  
 What things shall I do, for what deeds  
 Shall I use the awesome and the divine?

(Apanta., Part 2, Logos 28, p. 41, Ekdosis Spanou & Nika).

Quoted in *Partakers of the Divine Nature*, p. 64

Archimandrite Christoforos Stavropoulos

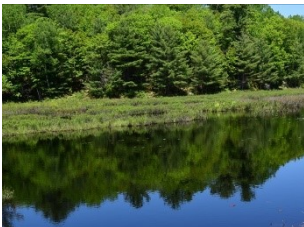


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No doubt, I could go on and mention elections, economic disasters, and then the several recent racial killings that, not surprisingly, have spawned enormous distress for many—me included.

In his book *On Social Justice* St. Basil the Great said, "The world that forgets God, brothers and sisters, is ruled by injustice toward neighbors and inhumanity toward the weak."

Looking through the eyes of Christ, there is but one race—the human race. In the Comfortable Words after the Confession and Absolution at Mass, we hear the words of St. John 3.16, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have eternal life." St John 3. 16. That many people might eventually not believe does not change, even remotely, the fact that God loved and continues to love the world,—which includes each and every one of us—completely and unconditionally; and we are called to do the same .



We also hear, routinely, at Mass the word,

Hear O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first and great commandment And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

Lord, have mercy upon us, and write both these thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee.

followed by

Lord have mercy upon us, Christ have mercy upon us, Lord have mercy upon us.

One of the notable features of this time, for me, has been the opportunity to spend some extra time in prayer and in reflection. The books I recommended last month have been a great help; but so has the time just sitting quietly. That I have not been able to run around doing things that I might normally do has been a great help in this regard.

I have been free to sit in prayer. Hopefully, this time will have been a time of transformation.

A long-time favorite prayer of mine is that commonly called the Jesus Prayer. "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy upon me, a sinner" as I pray for myself; and, Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on *N.N.* "

Why the change in the two forms of the Jesus Prayer? Simple. Do you remember how St. Paul described himself as chief of sinners?

In 1 Timothy 1.15, he wrote this to Timothy,

<sup>15</sup>This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. (1 Tim. 1.15 KJV)



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We hear most of these words as the third of the Comfortable Words after the Confession and Absolution at Mass. I say “most” because we do not hear the words “of whom I am chief” at that point. I remember a light going on for me when I realised that there was, really, only one of two ways that St. Paul could meaningfully say that of sinners he was chief. The first would have been an exercise of extreme pride given that he really did not know the heart of anyone else; the second way was not to judge anyone else to be a sinner. This latter position was to leave him in a category of one in which case it is easy to be chief.

Now back to the Jesus Prayer. As I use the prayer myself, I know myself to be a sinner, therefore, I use the words “on me a sinner”; when I pray for someone else, rather than judge that person to be sinful, I commend that person to the love of God, understanding the word ‘mercy’ to carry more the sense of the loving-kindness’ than ‘clemency’.

*Quoniam in aeternum misericordia eius / for his mercy endureth for ever.*

Beloved in Christ, I think that one of my favourite words is this word *miseri**cordia*. You can see how it breaks easily into its two constituent parts—*miseri* and *cordia*—*mercy* and *heart*. What a wonderful thought it is that the mercy of God is intimately related to the heart, especially as, in a few days, we shall be at the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus—a feast that speaks of, if nothing else, the profound love that Jesus has for us.

It was a feast of which I knew nothing until one day I was leafing through a copy of the little Introits and Graduals book published by the Society of St. John the Evangelist, Cowley Bracebridge as an accompaniment to the 1962 BCP. In that little book, the feast is entitled as “The Holy Heart of Jesus” and under that title are drawn together as Collect the prayer *Blessed Saviour* on page 16 of the BCP, the Epistle and Gospel on page 323 where the Epistle speaks of Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith and Paul’s prayer that the Ephesians “might know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge”; the Gospel in which Jesus speaks, saying, “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” The Introit (Ps. 89.1-4) and Gradual (Ps. 126) are found in the propers for Founders, Benefactors, Missionaries.

Do you want rest unto your soul? Turn to (repent and keep repented) the One Who is meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest unto your souls. More on this in a moment.

In 1990—30 years ago, the Feast of the Sacred Heart fell on Friday, June 22. That day Bishop Robert Mercer celebrated Mass at the Annunciation in Ottawa and then proceeded with a quiet day for the then Deacon Carl Reid and me. The topic was the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the heart of the priest. This was in anticipation of our ordination to the priesthood the following day—the vigil of the Nativity of St. John Baptist, the seventh anniversary of the repose of Bishop Carmino deCatanzaro. My first Mass, supported by the Dean, the late Fr. Mel McLeneghan, was the early Mass on the Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. How little did I then understand the phrase—“the



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voice of one crying in the wilderness” and how little does it seem that I understood the Heart of Jesus. It has been a long, learning road for me from June 23, 1990-June 23, 2020.

I want to offer my thanks to God for the gift of the priesthood and to offer thanks for those who have supported me throughout these years—especially to Joyce.

Above, I mentioned Bishop Mercer’s pre-ordination Quiet Day on the Feast of the Sacred Heart in 1990. I came away from that day with an indelible sense of how important it was that a priest configure his life to that of Christ Jesus and His Most Sacred Heart which is essentially a symbol of the Love of God.

Begging your indulgence, I should like to share a few thoughts on this. Much of what follows is influenced by Bishop Mercer’s talks and also by a paper that I shared with some fellow priests about 12 or 13 years ago.

The moment to which I referred above is up. Listen for a moment to the Alleluia from the minor propers for the Mass of the Sacred Heart from the English Missal: ]

Alleluia. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Alleluia.

If you hear nothing else today take this—the Alleluia—with you and reflect on it for it encapsulates so much. Does life get to you, sometimes? Do you feel that everything depends on you? Are you looking for rest for your soul? Well, yoke yourself with Jesus, learn of him. Be meek and let his Sacred Heart speak to your heart—*cor ad cor loquitur*.

For those of us who are priests, if we will stand at the altar as *alter Christus*—‘another Christ’, we must conform our lives to the life of the one who is *Christus*. We must let His heart speak to ours and to change us in ways we never dreamed possible.

Many times have I heard it said, “The worthiness of the minister hindereth not the effect of the Sacrament”; and it is true. It is probably one of the few Articles of the 39 articles which Anglo-Catholics accept with enthusiasm. I have the notion that this Article was created much more for the comfort and assurance of the recipient in the face of unholy priests than for comforting unworthy celebrants. The “effect of the Sacrament” is that, in the Eucharist, for example, the Body and the Blood of Christ are conected. It is the oath (*sacramentum*) of God that this will be so and God’s promises are true.

However, the moment that I a priest take any satisfaction and comfort in this article rather than simply and humbly falling down and saying, *Domine, non dignus sum* / Lord, I am not worthy; however maximalist and perfectionist I may be in areas of liturgy or the academic expression, I have, in that moment, dispensed myself from pursuing the life of holiness. Hebrews 12.14 reminds us that we are to “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:” This section of Hebrews is a cautionary note, well worth reflecting on.

Without any difficulty, I could, I am sure, fill this space with a catena of horror stories—of drunks, sexual predators, the indolent, ... ; but, what good would it do? All it

ALLELUIA. TAKE MY  
YOKE UPON YOU AND  
LEARN OF ME, FOR I AM  
MEEK AND LOWLY IN  
HEART, AND YE SHALL  
FIND REST UNTO YOUR  
SOULS. ALLELUIA.

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would do is drop the bar on the spiritual life to the point where we might be comfortable with ourselves because we have—like the Pharisee pointing to the publican—have found someone to whom we can compare ourselves favourably; but, is that the goal of the spiritual life? Surely that is not what we are here for!

Let us move on and remind ourselves that St. Paul said:

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39)

One thing that we must never forget is that none of the things he mentions as being unable to separate us from the love of God is sinful. The things he does mention as being unable to separate us from the love of God are extrinsic to us. They are not things over which we have control. Look at Galatians 5 sometime and remind yourselves of the things done by those who “shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (v.21) and of the characteristics of those “that are Christ’s.”(v.24)

Perhaps when Jesus was walking the road to Emmaus, one of the things he shared with the two disciples was from the prophecy of Ezekiel:

Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence.

And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.” (Ezek 11:17-20)

Never forget, though, the concluding and negative half of that promise:

But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord GOD.” (Ezek 11:21)

The best example that we have of the “heart of flesh” is the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

In the Introduction to his book *Heart of the Redeemer*, Fr. Timothy O’Donnell writes:

St. Thomas Aquinas defines devotion as a willingness ‘to give oneself readily to what concerns the service of God’ (Summa, II-II,q.82.a.1.) Accordingly, the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus appears essentially as a worship of and a response to the Person of Christ as viewed from the perspective of

AND I WILL GIVE  
THEM ONE HEART,  
AND I WILL PUT A  
NEW SPIRIT WITHIN  
YOU; AND I WILL TAKE  
THE STONY HEART  
OUT OF THEIR FLESH,  
AND WILL GIVE THEM  
AN HEART OF FLESH:

### *Fr. Robert's Remarks*

His divine and human love which is manifested through His sacred humanity and is symbolized by His wounded physical Heart. In his masterful encyclical, *Haurietis Aquas*, Pope Pius XII gives the following definition of this devotion:

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, by its very nature is a worship of the love with which God, through Jesus, loved us, and at the same time, an exercise of our love by which we are related to God and to other men.

From this definition it can be seen that authentic devotion to the Sacred Heart is not merely an optional set of pious practices (which may be very helpful) but an essential element of the Christian way of life. All Christians are called to the comprehension of certain truths concerning God and to a response in love to them. In living a life in imitation of Christ, as found in the Gospels and taught by the Church, the Christian should use all the spiritual aids offered to him by God. He should fill his life with an ever growing and deepening love for God and his fellow man. Every Christian will build his own unique spirituality upon this common foundation, which should include a response to the Heart of Christ that gives honor to the divine love and is offered for the sake of that love.

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS  
DEFINES DEVOTION AS A  
WILLINGNESS 'TO GIVE  
ONESELF READILY TO  
WHAT CONCERNS THE  
SERVICE OF GOD'

What is the heart? O'Donnell wrote, "The Heart is the spiritual center of man's soul, the core of all volitional and emotional and intellectual activity. It therefore represents the whole man. Despite the occasional abuse of this word by sentimentalists and its rejection by rationalists, it continues to possess this rich signification today. Every failure to understand the deeper meaning of the "heart" is a profound tragedy for the human spirit for this is how God has chosen to reveal himself in Sacred Scripture: *Cor ad cor loquitur*.

Fr. O'Donnell notes that "[i]n Semitic thought *heart* signifies the entire interior life of a person" and that "[t]he Old Testament does use the word in its literal sense as a physical organ, (Exodus 28.29; 1 Sam. 25.27) but normally it is used in this figurative sense".

I would note here that the English word *core* is not unrelated, etymologically, to the Latin word *cor—heart*. "the core of volitional and emotional and intellectual activity" is what we speak of when referring to our concupiscent human nature—our weakened will, disordered passions, and darkened intellect. It is thus our heart, our very core, the true centre of our being that needs to be changed.

It is also this core in Jesus which is perfect because it is without original sin. Jesus while having human nature could not sin because He had a divine nature also and His personhood is one and that the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. To understand this is simply to accept what the first four Ecumenical Councils convey to us, that Jesus is 100% God; 100% Man; 2 wills; one Person and that Divine.

Early in the book of Genesis we read that "When the Lord saw the wickedness of man on the earth was great, and that man's every thought and all the inclinations of his heart were only evil, He regretted that he had made man on the earth and was grieved

## *Fr. Robert's Remarks*

to the heart. (Gen. 6:5-6); or, later, in the prophet Jeremiah, "And I will give you pastors according to my own heart and they shall feed you." (Jer. 3:15)

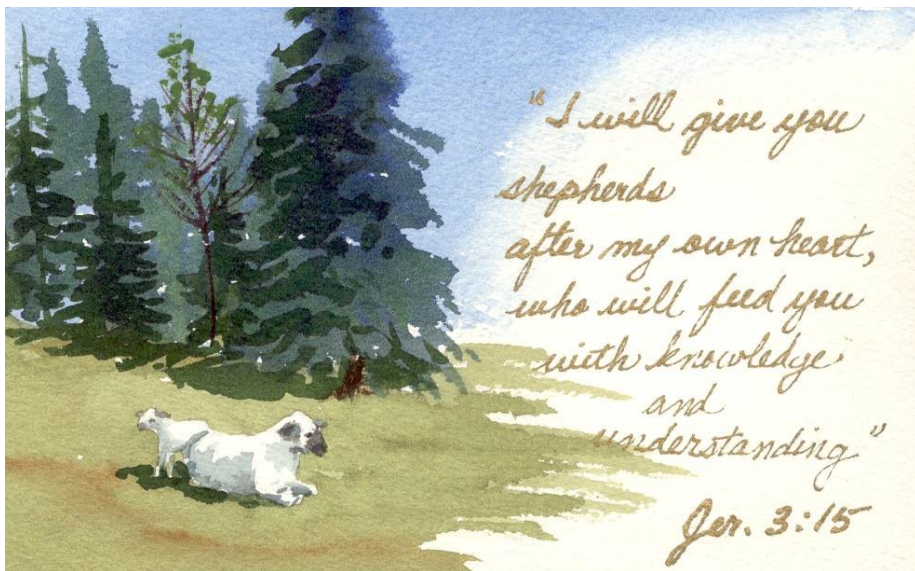
The last quote really affected me when, at dinner in the evening of the Feast of the Sacred Heart immediately following Bishop Mercer's talks, Fr. William Ivey gave me gift and card from St. Mary's congregation in Chapleau. With the gift was a card painted by Bonnie Ivey based on this verse. To the right is a scan of that card.

Edward Malatesta and Jesus Solano have outlined in a book, *The Heart of Christ and the Heart of Man*, almost 2 dozen explicit Old Testament references to the heart of God.

O'Donnell lists these and in commenting on "the application of the biblical expression 'Heart of God' to the Heart of Christ" that "God is pure spirit and has no heart or body. So, in these passages Scripture is speaking metaphorically to communicate a truth about God. When we speak of our Lord's Heart, however, this is literally true, for as Vatican II so beautifully proclaimed, Jesus loved and continues to love us with a human heart (*Gaudium et Spes* 1,22). Accordingly, we may apply those biblical references of God's Heart to the Heart of Jesus. Our Lord's human thoughts and desires were in perfect harmony with God the Father.

God's will did in fact become incarnate in the heart of his Son. The sentiments which Sacred Scripture attribute to God in all truth exist in the Heart of Jesus. For this reason we may appropriately apply to the heart of our Lord what the Scripture states of the Heart of God."

Throughout the Scriptures and particularly the Psalter not only is there reference to "the heart" there are over and over again pictures, if you will, of what having the heart of God implied in human life. In his *Annotated Book of Common Prayer* while speaking of the Psalter in Divine Worship and of the Spiritual senses or meanings of the Scriptures, John Blunt writes, "This spiritual mode of viewing the Psalms was the principal if not the only one adopted by the early Church. 'All the Psalms,' says St. Jerome, 'appertain to the Person of Christ.' 'David more than all the rest of the prophets,' says St. Ambrose, 'spake of the marriage between the Divine and Human nature.' Tertullian had declared that nearly all the Psalms represent the Son speaking to the Father; and St. Hilary leaves his opinion on record, that all which is in the Psalms refers to knowledge of the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, His Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection, and to the glory also and power of our own life in Him..."



## *Fr. Robert's Remarks*

In the New Testament, among other many other things,—and we have seen this earlier—, Jesus said, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (St. Mt. 11. 28-30).

In St. John's Gospel are the words, “On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, ‘If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, “Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.”’” (John 7:37-38 RSV)

In Pope Benedict's book *Jesus of Nazareth* there is a discussion about these verses. His Holiness notes that from earliest times there have been two different answers to the question, “Out of whose body?” “The tradition started by Origen, which is associated with Alexandria, though the great Latin Fathers Jerome and Augustine also subscribe to it, reads the text thus: ‘He who believes ... out of his body ...’ The believer himself becomes a spring, an oasis out of which bubbles up fresh, uncontaminated water, the life-giving power of the Creator Spirit. Alongside this tradition there is another, albeit much less widespread, from Asia Minor, which is closer to John in its origins. It is documented by Justin (d.165), Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Cyprian, and Ephraim of Syria. It punctuates the text differently: ‘He who thirsts, let him come to me, and let him who believes in me drink it. As the Scripture says: out of his body rivers will flow.’” “His body” is now applied to Christ: He is, the living rock, from which the new water comes. Benedict does allow that the Alexandrian interpretation is more convincing “from the purely linguistic point of view” stating “In terms of content, though, there is more to be said for the second, “Asia Minor” interpretation to which Schnackenburg, for example, subscribes, though it need not be considered to exclude the “Alexandrian” reading.

Benedict continues, “The application of this passage primarily to Christ—as we saw earlier—does not have to exclude a secondary interpretation referring to the believer. The believer becomes one with Christ and participates in his fruitfulness. The man who believes and loves Christ becomes a well that gives life. That, too, is something that is wonderfully illustrated in history: The saints are oases around which life sprouts up and something of lost paradise returns. And ultimately, Christ himself is always the well-spring who pours himself forth in such abundance.”

“Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water” has connections with the piercing of the side of Jesus on the Sacred Cross and has obvious connections to so many prophecies concerning his Life and Passion followed by his Resurrection, Ascension, and Heavenly Presence now; prophecies concerning “the Suffering Servant”, in Isaiah, “healing water which will ‘flow from the sanctuary of the temple’” (Ezek. 47.1-12); the piercing of the side and the fountain in Zechariah 12 & 13.

I could go on and draw from the Fathers and others on up to our day; but, that could be for another day.

Before closing, I want to draw your attention to the image on the right. It is a photo of a print painted by the late William Kurelyk. Kurelyk was a late convert to Christiani-

TAKE MY YOKE UPON  
YOU, AND LEARN OF ME;  
FOR I AM MEEK AND  
LOWLY IN HEART: AND  
YE SHALL FIND REST  
UNTO YOUR SOULS

## *Fr. Robert's Remarks*

ty. He lived out the last 20 years of his life in the Ukrainian Catholic Church. Many of his works were used on cards used in the pro-life movement. This particular print which hangs by the altar in our domestic chapel reminds of the humble child-like—not childish, but child-like simplicity we are called to. I am distressed by those in the background walking away, their backs to Jesus; though my sadness and distress are undoubtedly nothing like those of Jesus Himself.

We have seen a few things of the Sacred Heart in all this. Regardless of whether we are priests or not priests we will want to configure our lives after that of Jesus.

We need to be able to say to others as Jesus said, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (St. Mt. 11. 28-30).

It is certainly not that you or I or anyone other than Jesus can do this of ourselves; however, certainly for those of us who are priests, if we are to be priests like Jesus wants us to be, we need to become like him. Several speakers to whom I have listened over the years have made a powerful distinction between two types of priests—the one is a *churchman*; the other a *disciple*. I suspect that you can tell in an instant that the churchman in this juxtaposition does not fare too well.

The *disciple* will try to become like his Master.

As a few suggestions for reflection and living the life of the disciple, after I read the Summary of the Law, I shall leaving you with a few headings from a chapter in a book *Icons of Mercy* by Fr. George Kosicki, CSB which he wrote to a brother priest over 30 years ago. Fr. George was heavily involved as in promoting the Divine Mercy and communicating the teachings of St. Faustina Kowalska.

Remember that our Lord Jesus Christ said: Hear O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first and great commandment And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

- ✠ To do this is to Love with the Heart of Jesus
- ✠ To do this is to Serve with the Heart of Jesus
- ✠ To do this is to Preach with the Heart of Jesus
- ✠ To do this have the Heart and MIND of Jesus



(Continued on page 18)

## *The Church Mouse: A Sign*

When the children came for Bible class this week, Jenny remembered that last time she had a question for Fr. Palmer. I was mousing around under the table, watching out for crumbs that might fall down (Oh! Chocolate chip cookies! Hooray!) so I heard her ask again.

“Remember, Father, that we were talking about the word **sacrament**? Can you explain what it means?”

“Well, Jenny,” answered Fr. Palmer, “A sacrament is a special action or ceremony we do, as Christians. A sacrament has two parts. There is our part, and God’s part. We can see the part we do, but not the part which God does. So we say **a sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace**. Now, some of you were here when Kevin’s baby sister Anna was baptised.” Several heads nodded.



“When little Anna was baptized, you saw the priest (that’s me) bless some water and pour it on her head. That is the outward and visible part. But at the same time, the priest and the people present at the baptism pray, asking God to put a new, heavenly, eternal life into the person who is baptized, in this case baby Anna. And God does that, although we cannot see it happening. That part is the inward and spiritual grace. That new life is given just as God promises.”

“There are other sacraments. One happens every Sunday. Can you tell what it is?” Several hands shot up. Fr. Palmer pointed to Mona.

“The Holy Communion!” she said.

“And can you tell us, Mona, what might be the outward and visible signs at Communion?”

“The bread and wine!” she answered. “But what is the inward part?”

“At Holy Communion,” replied Fr. Palmer, “We admit to God that we have done things we ought not to have done, and we have left undone the things we ought to have done. We ask his forgiveness, and for help to do better. Jesus nourishes us with his body and blood in this sacrament, as spiritual food, to make us strong in our spirit, and more like him.”

I was still under the table nibbling crumbs but noticed Kevin was getting squirmy and restless. Kevin is always squirmy when he is thinking hard. His toes were tapping. Finally he came out with his question. “Father, about that inward and spiritual grace part...What exactly is grace?”

“Ah, Kevin! What a wonderful question that is!” replied Fr. Palmer. “But we have no more time today. We will talk about grace when we meet again. I will tell you the story of a boy named John, who was very stubborn and rebellious, and what became of him.”







### *From the Parishes*

#### **Bill Turner of St. Columba of Iona Parish**

Earlier this year, weeks short of his 100th birthday, Bill Turner relocated from the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia to Qualicum Beach on the Island.



More recently there was a celebration of the event with family present.

A piper made an appearance and played before the house and family and friends sang.

We—all of us in the District—rejoice with Bill, offer our prayers for him, and wish him all the very best as he begins his second century!



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GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD

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### ***Fr. Robert's Remarks***

*(Continued from page 15)*

- ✠ To do this is to Pray with the Heart of Jesus
  - Live the Lord's Prayer. Be present to the Father like Jesus.
- ✠ To do this is to Listen with the Heart of Jesus
  - Think of King Solomon who asked for an "understanding heart" – marginal note is "hearing heart" Listen – *Cor ad cor loquitur.*

Most sacred Heart of Jesus, Have mercy upon us.

Please pray  
for our Synod  
scheduled for  
October.

Till next month;  
God Bless!  
R+



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