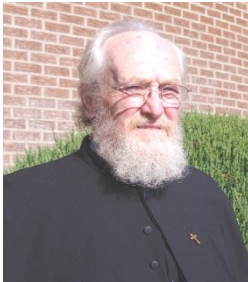


THE TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN NEWS

MAY 15, 2022

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Fr. Robert's Remarks



FR. ROBERT MANSFIELD,
SSC

“And I look for the Resurrection of the dead, And the Life of the world to come.” *Nicene Creed*

Greetings! The Lord be with you!

In the period for the last issue, we covered a lot of ground—the last weeks of Lent, Holy Week, Easter, and Easter Week. This time we ‘conclude’ Eastertide, celebrate the Ascension, Whitsunday, the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity, and we begin Trinity season. It has been a very busy but profound period. Our ongoing challenge, as always consists in allowing all of this to be integrated into our daily lives.

For me, over the last few days, there has been an interesting confluence of events. Please forgive me but, not unusually, this will ramble a bit—but you probably knew that.

(Continued on page 13)

Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Easter V Rogation Sunday



‘Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.’ (John 16.23)

I wonder how many of us have prayed for something to happen, and then sat and waited to see what happens? Then, as we wait, it may be that we think that nothing has happened, but after perhaps several years, as we look back on life past, we might realize that God surely does move in mysterious ways His wonders to perform: And that there **was** an answer to the prayer we prayed: it is just that the answer was hidden, it was not a clear reply: indeed, it was similar to the very words of Jesus when He taught the apostles in parables!

As Jesus says, ‘the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in parables, but I shall show you plainly of the Father’ – and we might ask, ‘When is that time to be?’ I believe that the time when we shall understand the meaning of the life we have lived, when we shall confront all the good, and all the not so good, and all the bad that we have done: achievements, errors, false starts and missed opportunities, together with all of the hidden guidance and counsel that we have listened to and followed, as well as all that we have ignored (to our peril) will be laid before us as we approach that judgement seat, where it is revealed, and we shall come face to face with the most marvellous love that God, His Son and the Holy Spirit have for each one of us, amazing for us to understand, when we from our human standpoint simply do not comprehend how that individual love and caritas can be extended to so many millions of human beings around this earth: but as Jesus said to Thomas, ‘Then saith he to Thomas, reach hither thy finger,

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Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Easter V Rogation Sunday

and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.’ (John 20.27)

So it is that we in our turn pray that we, believing, will find our faith acceptable to Him Who, in the words of the psalmist is with us always: ‘O LORD, thou hast searched me out and known me: / thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising; thou understandest my thoughts from afar. Thou art about my path and about my bed, / and art acquainted with all my ways. For lo, there is not a word in my tongue, / but thou, O LORD, knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, / and laid thine hand upon me.’ (Psalm 139.1-4)

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THE WORLD.’

But of course, we are human, and so want to improve the odds, don’t we: better to bet on a more sure thing than a dud, isn’t it? Which is where the dispute about St. James words can be considered: ‘In answer to a question on James 2:24 ("you see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone"), the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod has written: "In James 2, the author was dealing with errorists who said that if they had faith they didn't need to show their love by a life of faith (2:14–17). James countered this error by teaching that true, saving faith is alive, showing itself to be so by deeds of love (James 2:18, 26). The author of James taught that justification is by faith alone and also that faith is never alone but shows itself to be alive by good deeds that express a believer's thanks to God for the free gift of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ."^[79] (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sola_fide)

How are we saved? Martin Luther argued that it was by our faith and our faith alone that we shall be saved: ‘of the central truths of Christianity, the most important of which, for Luther, was the doctrine of justification—God's act of declaring a sinner righteous—by faith alone through God's grace. He began to teach that salvation or redemption is a gift of God's grace, attainable only through faith in Jesus (as cited by Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theology_of_Martin_Luther), as part of his struggle against what he perceived as corruption in the Roman Catholic Church, and followed the teaching of St. Paul, ‘Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.’ (Romans 3.28)

But St. James does not contradict Paul’s words: he too does not advocate any retention of the ‘deeds of the law, being the old covenant from Moses, but he is making a cogent argument that where there is faith, there must needs be an expression of that faith in the life we live: we cannot avoid this if our faith is true and a sound confession, because our faith in Jesus Christ will also bring to us the power of the Holy Spirit in-dwelling, where that power can increase in harmony with our faith, so that our very life becomes a prayer, becomes a witness to God’s love, becomes a joy. It is then that the true glory of faith can be expressed, as St. James writes: ‘Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.’ (James 1.27)



Bonnie's Reflections Seeing The Whole Picture



BONNIE IVEY (& LAD)

When the apostle Paul went on a missionary journey to the city of Ephesus, he met some disciples who had something missing in their lives. They had a certain amount of knowledge about Jesus and the Christian faith. Still, Paul sensed that evidence of their faith was lacking in their lives. “Did you receive the Holy Spirit since you believed?” he asked.

“We never even heard there was a Holy Spirit!” they replied. Paul asked what Baptism they had undergone, and they explained they had been baptized in repentance for sin according to the teaching of John the Baptist. They were only seeing part of the picture of a life lived in a relationship with the Lord. Paul filled in the gaps in their knowledge, but more importantly he prayed for them, that they would be indwelt by the living Spirit of God. He baptized them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. There was immediate evidence that the Spirit had been bestowed on them, just as Jesus had promised.

Some of the signs of the Spirit’s coming into people’s lives in the first and second chapters of the Acts of the Apostles make present-day churchgoers draw back. “Preaching to crowds in the street? Shouting praise to God in languages they never learned before? Laying hands on the sick for healing? No, no, it’s not for Anglicans!” But believers have experienced the Spirit’s influence in their lives in less spectacular but important ways. They might have had a physical healing. They find old habits or compulsions have less hold on them. They become more focused on their own sins and shortcomings than on other people’s flaws. They are less likely to use the name of Jesus as a swear word; more likely to speak of ways He has helped them. Things about the faith that never made sense to them are revealed as important and necessary.

There are moments when they know they are not alone. The Lord becomes present to their spirit, and they know this is not their imagination. They pause to take in what the Holy Spirit is teaching them, and they give an inner “Yes” to that new knowledge. The Spirit, for example, can make them inwardly aware that some particular person needs to hear an encouraging word from them right now. Will they obey that prompting, or dismiss it?

If we stay the same in thought, word, and deed as we were before we met the Lord and submitted to His right to rule us, we are still like those disciples in Ephesus; not seeing the whole picture. If people are not changing and maturing in their faith, they are like the eggs referred to by C. S. Lewis. “They must hatch or go bad.” The Holy Spirit dwelling in us is not a special perk for people who are just naturally “holy”. He is the breath of God come to revive our dead spirits. We need to be attentive to Him, for as Jesus told the first disciples, “He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance.” If we have spoken to someone in anger and judgment for example, the Spirit might replay that scene in our mind to let us become aware of how painful it must have

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Bonnie's Reflections

been for that person. Regret and remorse are not what the Spirit of God wants from us, but an awakening of compassion, along with a determination to humble ourselves and apologize. Have we been on the receiving end of harsh treatment? The Spirit will comfort us (in the sense of strengthening; fortifying us) if we share our disappointment with Him in prayer. He will give us wisdom if we ask Him for it.

Christian author Corrie Ten Boom suffered imprisonment in a World War II concentration camp. A certain German guard had been especially brutal. After the war ended, Corrie became a speaker, sharing how the Lord had helped her through the imprisonment. But she still harbored resentment against that guard, particularly because he had caused unnecessary suffering to Corrie's sister, who died in the camp.

One day after speaking at a church in Germany, she was thanked by grateful people as they left the service. One of them was that guard: but he did not recognize her. She silently prayed, "Lord, I am not willing to forgive that man!"

The Holy Spirit spoke in her heart. "Are you willing to be made willing?"

"Yes," she replied inwardly. Then she reached out and grasped the man's hand. Instantly she was filled with compassion and mercy toward this person who had been so cruel. She felt God's own love and forgiveness flow through her and into her former enemy. Even more important, Corrie afterward worked to establish places of spiritual and mental healing specifically for people whose obedience to the Nazis had left them scarred by their own cruelties and by shame.

There are two steps in the process of cooperation with the Holy Spirit: asking for His help, and obeying what He says. Sometimes He tells us to do something that seems to make no sense. (There are many examples in the Bible.)

One winter day, my late husband William was doing pastoral visits to homes of people on the parish list who never attended church. He climbed the snow-covered steps of a house and rang the bell. The woman who answered the door looked at him with distaste, though her little children crowded into the doorway to greet him like friendly puppies.

"I want nothing to do with the church," she said. "I really don't want you visiting me so take me off your list."

William prayed silently, and the Holy Spirit told him, "Show the children your scarf." So he pulled one end of his white silk scarf out of his overcoat and waved it gently.

"Look, kids, I want to show you my nice scarf. See, it has my initial embroidered on it. W for William." The woman began to cry.

"My father always wore a white silk scarf with his initial on it. His name was William too. You'd better come inside."



THE HOLY SPIRIT
SPOKE IN HER
HEART. "ARE
YOU WILLING TO
BE MADE WILLING?"



The Louhs: An Inspirational Messagee

Fr. Nicholas Louh is parish priest at St. John the Divine Greek Orthodox Church in Jacksonville, FL and his wife Dr. Roxanne Louh, a licensed clinical psychologist working in Jacksonville. Together they conduct retreats, conduct topical interview and discussions as online internet radio programming for Ancient Faith Radio, and they produce daily inspirational messages. Subscriptions at <https://thelouhs.com/subscribe/>.

This message from May 13, 2022 is reprinted with permission.

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

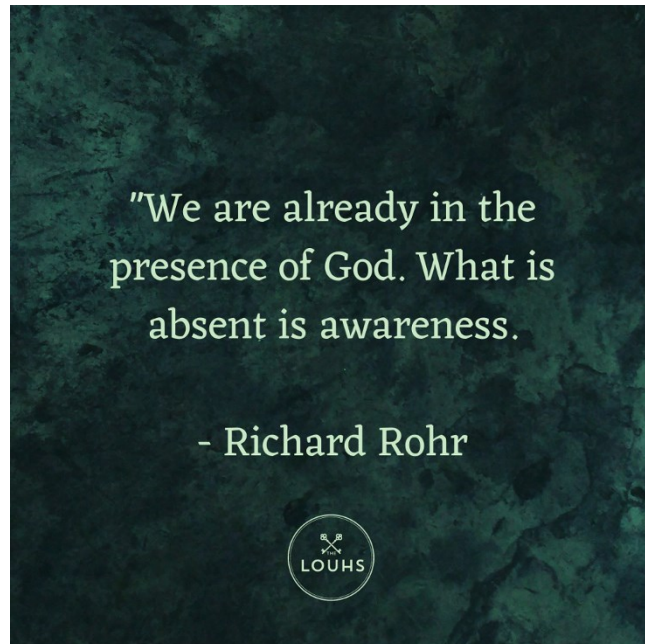
If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light becomes night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you. - Psalm 139:7-12

God knows our every thought, every circumstance and every feeling as this Psalm beautifully reminds us. It begins with reminding us that God has searched us and knows us. He knows when we sit down and when we rise up; He discerns our thoughts from afar. He searches out our path and is acquainted with all our ways. And even before a word is on our tongue, behold, He knows it altogether. And this kind of knowing is too wonderful for us, beyond our understanding. And so even when life isn't work out and even when we pray and feel hopeless and when we get lost wondering "Why?" What are these lessons meant to teach me?

We must remember that He is with us. And even though we don't always understand the "why" for what happens to us in this life. And as Christians, we sometimes think that bad things shouldn't happen to good people. The truth is, the only thing God ever promised us in this life, was that He would always be with us. And it is in these very moments when God is there to remind us of His everlasting presence as we fall to our knees and open up our hearts to His presence. Let us never forget that God enters into our stillness as we create space for Him to do so.

So no matter what struggle you are facing today, trust that God already knows it. He has gone before you. He is fighting for you and is walking every step alongside you. And if you need to feel His presence, enter into His stillness. Remember, God is our healer and in all things, we must remember to "let go and let God," work in our lives and open our hearts to His presence. "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you." 1 Peter 5:6-7



St. John Chrysostom: Paschal Homily

If any man be devout and loveth God,
Let him enjoy this fair and radiant triumphal feast!
If any man be a wise servant,
Let him rejoicing enter into the joy of his Lord.

If any have laboured long in fasting,
Let him how receive his recompense.
If any have wrought from the first hour,
Let him today receive his just reward.
If any have come at the third hour,



Let him with thankfulness keep the feast.
If any have arrived at the sixth hour,
Let him have no misgivings;
Because he shall in nowise be deprived therefore.
If any have delayed until the ninth hour,
Let him draw near, fearing nothing.
And if any have tarried even until the eleventh hour,
Let him, also, be not alarmed at his tardiness.

For the Lord, who is jealous of his honour,
Will accept the last even as the first.
He giveth rest unto him who cometh at the eleventh hour,
Even as unto him who hath wrought from the first hour.
And He showeth mercy upon the last,
And careth for the first;
And to the one He giveth,
And upon the other He bestoweth gifts.
And He both accepteth the deeds,
And welcometh the intention,
And honoureth the acts and praises the offering.

Wherefore, enter ye all into the joy of your Lord;
Receive your reward,
Both the first, and likewise the second.
You rich and poor together, hold high festival!
You sober and you heedless, honour the day!
Rejoice today, both you who have fasted
And you who have disregarded the fast.
The table is full-laden; feast ye all sumptuously.
The calf is fatted; let no one go hungry away.
Enjoy ye all the feast of faith:
Receive ye all the riches of loving-kindness.

St. John Chrysostom: Paschal Homily

Let no one bewail his poverty,
 For the universal Kingdom has been revealed.
 Let no one weep for his iniquities,
 For pardon has shown forth from the grave.
 Let no one fear death,
 For the Saviour's death has set us free.
 He that was held prisoner of it has annihilated it.

By descending into Hell, He made Hell captive.
 He embittered it when it tasted of His flesh.
 And Isaiah, foretelling this, did cry:
 Hell, said he, was embittered
 When it encountered Thee in the lower regions.

It was embittered, for it was abolished.
 It was embittered, for it was mocked.
 It was embittered, for it was slain.
 It was embittered, for it was overthrown.
 It was embittered, for it was fettered in chains.
 It took a body, and met God face to face.
 It took earth, and encountered Heaven.
 It took that which was seen, and fell upon the unseen.

O Death, where is thy sting?
 O Hell, where is thy victory?

Christ is risen, and thou art overthrown!
 Christ is risen, and the demons are fallen!
 Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice!
 Christ is risen, and life reigns!
 Christ is risen, and not one dead remains in the grave.
 For Christ, being risen from the dead,
 Is become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

To Him be glory and dominion
 Unto ages of ages.

Amen.



(Rendered in stanza format by M.C. Steenberg. Please feel free to print, copy, distribute and post this text without need for written permission. From [www.monochos .net](http://www.monochos.net))



TO HIM BE GLORY
 AND DOMINION
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Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Some thoughts about Mission and Outreach, and the importance of this work.

Some thoughts about Mission and Outreach, and the importance of this work.

The Gospel of Mark has provided us with what we are to do: ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.’ (Mark 16.15), to which I add the next verse: ‘He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.’ (Mark 16.16)

Some 16 years ago, a group of us, working for a Canadian pharmaceutical company, were given an exceptional award, of a grant for travel to ‘somewhere that you had always longed to visit’: the ‘journey of a lifetime’. I recall thinking that this might be the one chance I would have to walk along the ‘Street named straight’ in Damascus, following in the steps of St. Paul, you’ll remember the story of St. Paul’s conversion in Acts, chapter 9: ‘And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: (Acts 9.10-15).

But it seems that I was not going to Damascus, for during the following months, ‘Bashar al-Assad succeeded his father in 2000 pledging reforms. He promised to let markets take the place of the “Arab socialism” touted by the Baathist state, upending old patronage networks. He broke up and privatized state monopolies, but the benefits were concentrated among those well-connected with the regime, while the end of subsidies and price ceilings harmed rural peasants and urban laborers. A [record-setting drought](#) from 2006 to 2010 exacerbated socioeconomic problems. Mismanaged farmland was rendered fallow and farmers migrated to cities in ever-larger numbers, causing the unemployment rate to surge.’ (‘Council on Foreign Relations, New York, USA.’ _ <https://www.cfr.org/article/syrias-civil-war>).

Our news here in Canada spoke of the risks of an open rebellion against Bashar al-Assad and his regime: the start of what has been a terrible time for the people of Syria. I needed to find a different ‘trip of a lifetime’!

I thought of my grandfather’s time as a young man, going with his father

SOME THOUGHTS
ABOUT MISSION AND
OUTREACH, AND THE
IMPORTANCE OF THIS
WORK.



Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Some thoughts

in the 1890's, to work in the gold mines of Kimberley in South Africa: at a time when there was no work in England, so I wrote to Bishop Trevor Rhodes CR, the then Bishop of the TAC South Africa, with the permission of my then Diocesan. I was, of course, unaware that his health was not good, and that the visit would not be possible. At that time in the TAC, and having read about the work of Fr. Pierre Dill in Zambia, I was given permission to visit Fr. Mukuyamba, who had succeeded Fr. Dill, after his death the previous year. After emails with Fr. Ayule-Milenge, the TAC primate also asked me to visit Congo if possible.

I spent a week giving a course to the ordinands in Lusaka, Zambia: which let me get to understand the reason why the work of the Makeni compound was so important to so many, with courses in cultivation and agriculture, making it possible for families to become self-sufficient, and to earn an adequate income off the land. At that time, life expectancy was under 40 years for the majority and unemployment was well above 50%, most being employed 'by the day'. The church could become the centre of social life, with strong attendance by all ages I recall one day, at Mass, we gave Communion to around 300 adults, then Fr. Mukuyamba said, 'Father, now we bless the children': there were very many little faces, looking up at me as they knelt at the altar rail, for my blessing!



Some years after my visit, Fr. Mukuyamba was consecrated Bishop, but then succumbed to the pandemic last year. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

If I had thought Lusaka traffic was chaotic, my arrival in Bukavu, with Fr. Steven Ayule-Milenge, was of a different order. I had arrived in Bujumbura, Burundi, as no international flights were allowed to land in Eastern Congo. Bujumbura was close to the border, and we drove over the Monts Mitumba, looking down to the valleys of Burundi and Rwanda, on our way to Bukavu.

Fr. Steven's father had been an Anglican priest in Uvira, Sud-Kivu. Steven had worked for the Anglican Diocese in a marketing role, and later studied theology in Uganda. There was severe political unrest in both Congo and Uganda, which caused Steven to seek refuge in South Africa, where, in time he was ordained priest and licenced by Bishop Trevor Rhodes, to work with the many Congolese refugees living there. During the troubles, his father was murdered by

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Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Some thoughts

militiamen, and many people went into exile in Tanzania.

Fr. Steven was attempting to establish the church in areas which had suffered great violence, where villagers were trying to re-establish their lives. But

there were few priests, with lay-catechists doing incredible work, keeping the faith alive. Most ‘chappelles’ in a wider parish might expect to receive Communion perhaps three times a year, as the priest made his rounds, often walking many miles where there were few roads, but great dangers from militias.

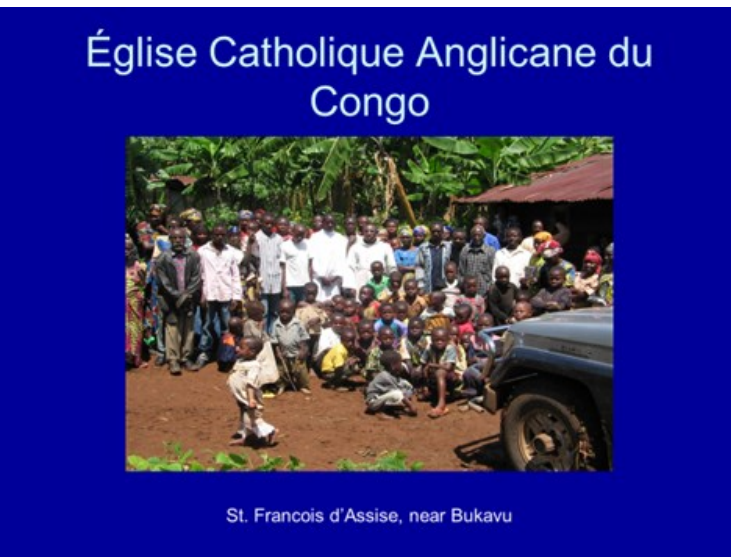
Bukavu is a city of some 870,000 people (2006), situated on Lac Kivu, on the border with Rwanda (Cyangugu) – but, despite the magnificent countryside, has experienced terrible challenges and violence in recent years.

Compared with the situation in Zambia, the problem in Congo is that the entire health reporting system is fractured, in that there are many who lack any meaningful contact with formal health and welfare services, and are limited to ‘traditional medicine’ for their health care, and, indeed, ‘traditional religion’ for spiritual help’, each of which rely on traditions predating Christianity.

As we travelled south from Uvira, with Fr. Mamba Itongwa, the Dean of that region, I was shocked to see this sign, at the village of Makobola: his massacre had occurred on New Year’s Eve 1998. Since my visit in 2007, the violence

has continued with several ‘militias’, in effect ‘private armies’, fighting for control of the mineral riches to be found, especially in the area around Fizi, where some of our ACC churches have been destroyed.

Is it any wonder, when surrounded by danger and threats, that ordinary folk like you and me, search for what might give them solace and assurance that there is ‘better way’? The little children of St. François d’Assise in the village of Mosho, south of Bukavu are now grown up. But, since my visit, this village has gained a new church building, a primary school, a secondary school, a medical clinic, with a physician and nursing staff,



Fr. David Marriott, SSC: Some thoughts

thanks to support from our Appeal, and yet more from generous donors from the ACC in the USA. And, as Bishop Steven Ayule-Milenge tells, many of the children are a new generation of the Diocese of the ACC!

Father Makutano Alonda, who, after his ordination, became curate of la Paroisse St. Jean Misisi, suffered a poison attack in 2016 died in 2018. Father Alonda had recovered after treatment in Bukavu, but when he returned home his problems returned. At the time of my visit back in 2007, Father Alonda was a catechist - the foundation of the work of the church in Congo in the early days when there were many chapels and few priests. I was so impressed with this man when I met him, with his work carried out with the help of his

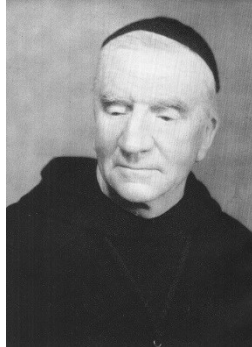
trusty Bible, and know that he is one of the many builders of the church, bringing so many to love God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

And this is what it is all about: ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.’! Here in Canada, we have worked for many years to bring those around us, our neighbours, to join with us in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ. It seems that so many are, as we read in the parable of the Sower, so, as we read in the Gospel of Mark: ‘And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.’ (Mark 4.18-19)

On my return from the journey to Congo and Zambia, and later, from my journey to Cameroon, I was left with the strong impression that the future of the Christian church might belong to those who have the greatest need of the message of the Gospels. And that, in time, as those who have rejected the faith, have need once more, it will be to those who will be given the task of rebuilding Western Christianity!



Fr. Andrew, SDC: God the Holy Spirit



FR. ANDREW, SDC

IT IS THROUGH THE
POWER OF THE HOLY
GHOST THAT THE
EUCHARIST IS CON-
SECATED. EVEN AS
BY HIS POWER THE
DIVINE SON BECAME
PRESENT ON EARTH,
SO BY HIS POWER
OUR LORD BECOMES
PRESENT ON THE
ALTAR.

A Meditation for Whitsun Eve

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

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

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

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

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



A TURKEY VULTURE ALONG THE WAY. AN AMAZING AND GRACEFUL BIRD.



Fr. Robert's Remarks

I have been reflecting quite a bit on the Creeds, recently. At home, we normally have a book at hand from which, after dinner, we read a chapter. Over the last week it has been a little book by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann entitled *The Celebration of Faith: I believe . . . Sermons, Volume 1*. A third event was the reading of the last chapter of *The Revelation of St. John the Divine* or *The Apocalypse* on Sunday evening, the Fourth Sunday after Easter. This reminded me of another book—this one by Massey Shepherd—to which I always return when I am reflecting on *The Revelation of St. John the Divine*. It is called *The Paschal Liturgy and the Apocalypse*. It was published in 1960 in a series called *Ecumenical Studies in Worship*. The final piece was the recent reading of the conversion of Paul Claudel, a French poet (1868-1955)

Half a century ago, I got caught up for a couple of years with following the common contemporary interpretation of the book of *the Revelation* which involves identifying names, places, people, and coming up with a date for the Second Coming of Jesus. In the early in 70s, there were several groups that picked a date. The date came and went and nothing dramatic happened and I began to wonder.

In 1973, Fr. McCausland of the Society of St. John the Evangelist at Cowley Bracebridge produced the *Canadian Holy Week Book*. The next year I attended the Easter Vigil at a Church in Oshawa, ON and was entranced by it. ‘Coincidentally’, on that visit to Oshawa, I noticed Massey Shepherd’s *The Paschal Liturgy and the Apocalypse* on my father’s bookshelf. I borrowed it, read it, photocopied it, and returned it. It was an absolute ‘life-changer’ for me. It gave me a whole new perspective on Scripture and Liturgy. Since Dad died eight years ago, this book has had an honoured place on my shelf.

Last evening, at the table after dinner, we read the last bit of Fr. Schmemmann’s book on the Nicene Creed. The section was “I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.”

In the earlier part of the Nicene Creed each paragraph begins with, “I believe in . . .” I have come to understand the word ‘believe’ as more connected to ‘trust in’ or ‘have faith in’. For example, I trust in God the Father. I recognise the rest of the paragraph as saying things about God the Father, but the essential point is that I trust Him. Similarly, I trust in one Lord Jesus Christ. There are details about Jesus but the essence is that I trust in Him. And again, I trust in the Holy Spirit. There are details about the Holy Spirit but the essence is that I trust in Him.

I mentioned Paul Claudel. The French writer Paul Claudel alluded to the profound force of the liturgy in witnessing to his conversion at 18 years old during the singing of the *Magnificat* during Vespers on Christmas Eve at Notre-Dame de Paris. From *The Via Pulchritudinis, Way Of Beauty* published by The Pontifical Council for Culture: “It was then that the event happened that has dominated all my life. In an instant, my heart was touched and I believed. I believed with such force, with such relief of all my being, a conviction so powerful, so certain and without any room for doubt, that ever since, all the books, all the arguments, all the hazards of my agitated life have never shaken my faith, nor to tell the truth have they even touched it.”

[<http://www.cultura.va/content/cultura/en/pub/documenti/ViaPulchritudinis.html>]

“IT WAS THEN THAT
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Fr. Robert's Remarks

The point would be that Claudel's conversion was not one of intellectual assent. He had a profound experience of God and nothing was ever the same again.

Claudel's comments support a statement that Fr. Thomas Hopko made in the course of some lectures at the Met. Andrey Sheptytsky Institute for Eastern Christian Studies at St. Paul University in Ottawa in 2008 entitled, *Teaching Doctrine in the World We Live in Today*. Asked the question, "If you had to do it all over again, what would you do differently?" he replied that if one thing he would ensure that seminary students were converted before they began their studies rather than hoping that it would happen sometime during their years at the seminary.

Now back to Schmemmann. In his little book he wrote, "

CHRISTIAN FAITH IS
NOT AN AFFIRMA-
TION OF SOME AB-
STRACT INTELLEC-
TUAL TRUTH; NO,
ABOVE ALL IT IS AN
ENCOUNTER WITH
THE ONE WHOM IT
AFFIRMS, AND
THEREFORE IT IS
KNOWLEDGE AND
VISION WITHIN THE
SOUL, A PENETRA-
TION OF THE
HEART.

Not only the word faith, but also the affirmation "I believe," can certainly be experienced and understood in different ways. To say, for example, "I believe in the immutability of the laws of nature," still reveals nothing about my personal, inner attitude either to this immutability or to the laws themselves; it expresses neither joy nor sadness about them. When, however, I have enumerated everything I believe and then add as well that "I expect," or "look forward to it," this indicates that my faith has been transformed into an active state which permeates my inner being and therefore I await. I look for that in which I believe. Expectancy is here disclosed as the direction of faith, as an action of faith, and faith is disclosed as the source of that expectancy. "I look for" carries with it my desire for that which I await, my joy at its approach as the approach of happiness. But I can only have this sense of expectation about something that I know already, if only partially. This brings us to what I call the uniqueness of the Christian Faith, its joy and profound depth. Christian faith is not an affirmation of some abstract intellectual truth; no, above all it is an encounter with the One whom it affirms, and therefore it is knowledge and vision within the soul, a penetration of the heart. I look for, I await the resurrection of the dead, because the faith within me—if only at the best, most pure and exalted moments of my life—have been penetrated by the light of the resurrection, that mysterious but utterly joyful knowledge that Christ has risen from the dead, opening for us the path to our own resurrection. He has granted us His own life—immortal, shining forth from the grave, free of death—and thereby transformed our death into an entrance, an approach, the beginning of victory. I await, I look for the resurrection of the dead because it has already been given to me, because all Christian faith is nothing other than the rationally unprovable yet self evident inner knowledge that man is called to eternity.

I shall forever be grateful to Fr. Schmemmann for his writings and, may I say, especially for this little book.

Schmemmann's closing words are,

Fr. Robert's Remarks

“I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.”
 Within some corner of my soul I have already tasted this life and know that it is already here and now it has begun and is accessible. And therefore anyone who believes in Christ is not merely seeking help from Him in “this world,” in this life, but is awaiting *Him*, looking for *Him*. “Come Lord Jesus!” (Rev. 22.20).

Come Lord Jesus! Except for the blessing, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen”, these words “Come Lord Jesus” are closing words of the Revelation and of the Bible.

Sunday, Easter 4 at Evensong the Second Lesson was Revelation 22.

For the many years since I read Massey Shepherd’s book and books by others like Dr. Scott Hahn on *The Revelation*, I have been conscious of the fact that John was “in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day” and being so would seem to imply that if St. John was doing it right, he would have been at the Eucharistic Liturgy. At the Consecration of the Eucharist, I have been equally conscious that with the Holy Spirit we are before the altar offering Bread and Wine saying, in effect, “even so, come, Lord Jesus”, in expectation that He is coming to us in Body and Blood. “The Spirit and the bride say, Come.”

TOGETHER AS THE
 CHURCH, LET US SAY
 WITH THE SPIRIT,
 “EVEN SO COME
 LORD JESUS.”

Our Catechism reminds us (p. 551):

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Catechist. | Why was the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper ordained? |
| Answer. | For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits we receive thereby. |
| Catechist. | What is the outward part or sign of the Lord’s Supper? |
| Answer. | Bread and Wine, which the Lord commanded to be received. |
| Catechist. | What is the inward part or thing signified? |
| Answer. | The Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord’s Supper/ |
| Catechist. | What benefits do we receive thereby? |
| Answer. | The strengthening and refreshing of our souls and bodies unto eternal life by the Body and Blood of Christ. |

In St. John’s Gospel, Jesus, Himself says, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of man, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.” In St. Luke’s Gospel, Jesus, Himself, tells us, having taken bread and given thanks, that “This is my body which is given for you.”

Can we receive it as less?

Together as the Church, let us say with the Spirit, “Even so Come Lord Jesus.”



The Mouse: Inward and Outward

“How strange!” I said to myself. “There seems to be nobody here for the children’s Bible class. And where is Fr. Palmer? Isn’t this the right day?” I went across the hall and peeked into Mrs. Bee’s office. She was working at her desk.

Mrs. Bee turned and noticed me. “Ah, there you are, Mouse,” she said. “The children have had their snack already, but I saved you a cookie. It’s under the radiator as usual.” (What a lovely person. She knows just what I like!) “They are all up at the front of the church, practicing for the Bishop’s visit,” she added.



I quickly scurried to see what was going on. The first thing I noticed was a big, wooden chair set up near the altar. Fr. Palmer asked Kevin and Mona come and stand together in front of it. The rest of the class was sitting in the choir pew, watching.

Fr. Palmer said, “At the beginning of the Confirmation service, I will say to the Bishop that you have been prepared for Confirmation by being baptized and learning about the faith, and that we are gathered to see you blessed by the laying on of the Bishop’s hands, just as the Apostles did for the first believers. I’ll say that you are now grown up enough to show that you are ready to be what you were called to be at your Baptism: God’s faithful soldiers and servants. And that now you wish to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit to do this.”

“Why does the Bishop lay his hands on our heads? Can’t he just say some special words?” asked Mona.

“It’s because Confirmation is a Sacrament, a special action we do because Jesus commanded that it be done. Do you remember learning that a sacrament has two parts?” said the priest, looking around at all the children.

“An outward and visible sign and an inward and spiritual grace!” answered Jesse from the choir pew.

“Correct, Jesse. The person who wants to be filled with the Holy Spirit kneels down where everyone can see. The Bishop puts his hands on the person’s head: that’s the *outward sign that all the*



The Mouse: Inward and Outward

people in church will see. That's the part that the person asking to be confirmed, and the people watching, and the Bishop, are doing."

"God's part is to send the Holy Spirit to become part of that person, to teach and lead and remind the person of the things every Christian needs to know. That is the *inward and spiritual grace*. Remember, God's grace is something we can't earn or work for. It is His gift to help us do what we cannot do by ourselves."

"After your Confirmation Day has come and gone, we will have the memories of the day to remind us that we now have the Holy Spirit's help. You say, on such-and-such day I was Confirmed. That's a fact. Facts are nice solid things. Our Christian life must be based on facts, not on feelings. Remember how we talked a few weeks ago about feeling being like the weather? Always changing! But God says, 'I am the Lord and I do not change.'"

BUT GOD SAYS,
'I AM THE LORD AND
I DO NOT CHANGE.

Mrs. Bee had finished her work and came in to sit with the children. "Father, I will never forget my Confirmation Day for two reasons. I was twelve years old, excited and nervous, and wanted to appear very grown up. So I borrowed my sister's high-heeled shoes. But I wasn't used to walking in them. As I went up to kneel in front of the Bishop, suddenly I got wobbly and fell, right into the Bishop's lap!"

"Oh no! What did you do?" cried Mona.

"The Bishop stood up and helped me to my feet. He smiled and whispered, 'That's all right. We'll do fine.'" He sat down but steadied me with one hand while I knelt. Placing his hands on my head, he said the prayer."

"Let me read it aloud", said Fr. Palmer. "Defend, O Lord, this thy servant with Thy heavenly grace, that she may continue Thine forever; and daily increase in The Holy Spirit, more and more, until she come into thine everlasting kingdom. Amen." So you see, we are meant to continue receiving more and more help throughout our whole lives! And remember, the Lord is ready to help us up if we fall, just as that Bishop did."



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GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD

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Fr. Robert's Remarks



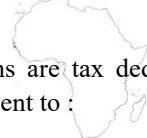
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