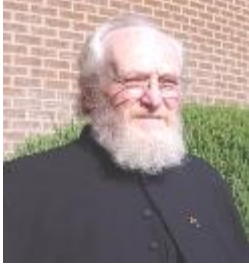


NEWSLETTER TITLE

MARCH 15, 2023

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 3

Fr. Robert's Remarks



FR. ROBERT MANSFIELD,
SSC

Greetings, The Lord be with you!

I want to offer some encouragement as we proceed through our disciplined Lenten period. As we shall be celebrating Easter before the next issue comes out, I shall also take the opportunity to wish you a blessed Holy Week and Easter. From our perspective it is, no doubt, a very helpful to relive the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. There are a couple of good reminders in the Easter Anthems (p. 182 BCP Canada

(Continued on page 22)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
<i>Bonnie's Reflections</i>	3
<i>Fr. David Marriott, SSC: The Africa Appeal?</i>	5
<i>Metropolitan Jonah Paffhausen Do Not Resent, Do Not React, Keep Inner Stillness</i>	10
<i>Continuing Forward</i>	21

Fr. James A. Chantler: A Sermon for Easter Day



FR. JAMES CHANTLER

Almighty and everliving GOD, we beseech Thee to grant us so perfectly, and without all doubt, to believe in Thy Son Jesus Christ's mighty Resurrection, that our faith in Thy sight may never be reprov'd. Hear us, O Lord, through the same Jesus Christ, to whom with Thee and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, now and for evermore. Amen.

The Gospel (St. Mark 16: 1-7) we read this morning at this second Mass of Easter Day relates the account of Mary Magdalene; Mary the mother of James; and Salome's arrival at Christ's tomb to complete the burial rite which had been hurried on Good Friday in order to avoid an improper observance of the Sabbath. By their arrival, at the earliest time possible, we see their faithfulness in keeping the Sabbath; their determination that Christ would have a proper burial; and their courage as it was very dangerous to be associated with Jesus and after His arrest even Peter denied knowing Him.

These ladies were the first disciples to testify that Christ had risen from the dead just as He said He would! They were shocked and confused but the Angel of the Lord helped them to understand why He wasn't there and then sent them to bring the news to Peter and the others. Peter and John rushed to the tomb and found that Christ was no longer there though His burial cloths remained and they confirmed what the ladies had told them though they did not understand yet that Christ had risen from the dead.

After this Christ appeared to two of His disciples who were travelling to Emmaus. At first they did not recognize Him but at the breaking of bread with Jesus their eyes were opened and they knew Him then He vanished from their sight. They returned to Jerusalem immediately to tell the

Fr. James A. Chantler: A Sermon for Easter Day

Apostles that the Lord had risen indeed. As they spoke to them Jesus appeared in their midst: showed them His wounds and invited them to touch Him so they would be convinced it really Him in the flesh and not a spirit who has not flesh and bones. All those assembled finally understood the Scriptures. He charged them to preach in His Name to all the nations starting at Jerusalem and called them to be witnesses of these things.

The Apostle Thomas was not present at this encounter and when the others told him they had seen the risen Lord he replied that unless he saw for himself he would not believe. Eight days later they were all together and Jesus appeared unto them and said to Thomas “reach hither thy finger and behold my hands and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side and be not faithless but believing.” Thomas answered and said unto Him “my Lord and my GOD!” We musn’t be too hard on Thomas for his scepticism as the women who had visited Christ’s tomb had the counsel of an Angel of the Lord and others had encountered the risen Lord face to face. We can even consider Thomas’ encounter with our risen Lord to be a blessing for all who were to come after him for the doubter was moved to exclaim that Christ is not just our leader or master or our teacher and friend: He is our Lord and GOD.

St. Paul, who as Saul had been a persecutor of Christians, tells us in 1 Cor. 15 that the risen Lord was seen by above five hundred people and that he had his own encounter with the risen Lord on the road to Damascus (Acts chap. 9).

Even the authorities who had Christ put to death had witnesses to His Resurrection. In Matthew’s Gospel (28: 1-15) we learn that the soldiers charged with guarding Jesus’ tomb found, after an earthquake and the arrival of an Angel to roll back the stone from the tomb’s entrance, that Christ had risen and they went to the chief priests to report all the things they had heard and seen while securing from them a bribe for their silence and a promise of protection.

We have the testimony of Angels; we have the testimony of the Apostles and the disciples of Christ; and we have the testimony of those in the employ of the enemies of Jesus. We know that making it known that mankind’s Redeemer had risen from the dead would endanger all that dared to do so and still this knowledge spread far and wide: most often passed on by common folk like ourselves. This knowledge ought to confirm in us a strong faith and embolden us to pass on the good news that by His defeat of death that Jesus is the deliverer and Saviour of the world. In closing I will, once again, reference St. Thomas the Apostle’s post Resurrection encounter with the Lord (John 20:24) where Christ taught him; those assembled with him in Jerusalem; and Christians in every age:

“Thomas because thou hast seen me thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed.”

Amen.



“THOMAS BECAUSE
THOU HAST SEEN
ME THOU HAST
BELIEVED:
BLESSED
ARE THEY THAT
HAVE NOT SEEN
AND YET HAVE
BELIEVED.”

Bonnie's Reflections: The Things We Don't See



BONNIE IVEY (& LAD)

Alas for people with the name “Karen”. In the internet world, that name has become a term of mockery. A “Karen” is typified as a middle-aged blonde suburban housewife who raises a fuss because something has offended her. This portion of fries is too small; someone has parked in the wrong space; someone has lit a barbeque in the park, or the mechanic says it will take three weeks for her car parts to arrive. “Karen” always wants to speak to the manager. Or the police.

Recently the Pensacola Christian College in Florida abruptly cancelled a scheduled concert by a choral group called “The King’s Singers.” These six men sing “a Capella”, that is, without instrumental accompaniment. The rich harmonies of their voices alone embody the music. The group was given just two hours’ notice of the decision to cancel their stage appearance. Even though the singers had performed at that college previously, they were suddenly deemed unacceptable. Why? Because a group member was living in a same-sex relationship. That college is known for its strict rules of behavior. One’s clothing should always “demonstrate one’s commitment to Jesus”. You may date a fellow-student but a chaperone will accompany you to one of the approved locations. You should not listen to certain music. Or in this case, listen to a singer who is said to be breaking a commandment.

There is a temptation for each of us to point the finger with one hand, declaring someone’s actions unacceptable, while with the other hand we pat ourselves on the back.

Jesus told stories about this desire to judge the wrongs done by others. He used humorous exaggeration in telling about “the mote and the beam.” He asks how we can say to someone, “Let me take the mote out of your eye,” while unaware of the “beam” in our own eye. The word “mote” refers to a tiny sliver of dried grass, blown about by the wind. The “beam” is a log used as a support for a building. Mote or beam, if we have anything in our eye we cannot see properly, Jesus suggests. “First,” he says, “Take the beam out of your own eye.” (Matt.7:5)

Have you ever had a gust of wind blow sawdust or sand into your eye? You might find it hard to wipe out all the irritating bits. Your eye is watering but tears are not washing away all the irritation. You call on someone else to help you. Standing patiently still, you allow the person to identify the piece of grit, and carefully wipe it away. Now you can see clearly.

“YOU CALL ON
SOMEONE ELSE TO
HELP YOU. . . .
NOW YOU CAN SEE
CLEARLY.

Bonnie's Reflections:

In Luke's gospel, he records Jesus telling another parable to "some who counted themselves as righteous." It concerns two men praying in the Temple. The Pharisee congratulates himself on his attention to religious duties, saying, "I thank you, God, that I am not like other men, such as that one over there..." He is looking at a publican, a collaborator who collects Rome's taxes from his Jewish neighbours, skimming off some for himself. The publican asks only for God's mercy, as he acknowledges his own sinfulness. (Luke 18: 9-14) "Which man went home justified before God?" Jesus asks the crowd. Many of them agree that it is the Publican. Some are silent; the Pharisees, who were always watching Jesus with discontent.

Who were they? A religious group who were intent on keeping every law God had given, and added hundreds of rules of their own to avoid even the slightest appearance of sin. A contemporary writer, Josephus, said there were about 6000 members in this group, and they were "known for their avarice, ambition, hollow reliance on outward works, and affectation of piety."

The Pharisees hated Jesus and were trying to catch him in some offense so they could end his influence. Jesus rebuked Pharisees for missing the point of God's law. He described them as proudly wearing longer fringes on their prayer shawls than anyone else, and painstakingly counting out seeds of mint, dill and cumin as proof that they give ten percent of everything to God, while forgetting justice, mercy and faithfulness. (Matthew 23:23-34)

There has always been the challenge of trying to live a life pleasing to God, while surrounded by people who do not follow his direction. From Old Testament times until the present day, believers have had to make choices. In 1 Corinthians 5, Paul is writing to a congregation who live among pagan adherents of Greek gods and goddesses. He refers to an even earlier letter, now lost to us, in which he urged the new converts not to imitate the lifestyle of unbelievers. He clarifies his earlier statement. He did not mean they must have absolutely nothing to do with unbelievers, "For then, you would have to leave this world!" We need to look to our own obedience, living as much like Jesus as we can. Boycotting the talents and actions of others is setting ourselves up to be Pharisees. Or Karens. May Jesus help us to see what we don't see about ourselves this Lenten season.



Fr. David Marriott, SSC: The Africa Appeal?



*Republic of
Cameroon*



*République
Démocratique
du Congo*



*Republic of
South Sudan*



*Republic
of Kenya*



Rwanda

Cameroon.

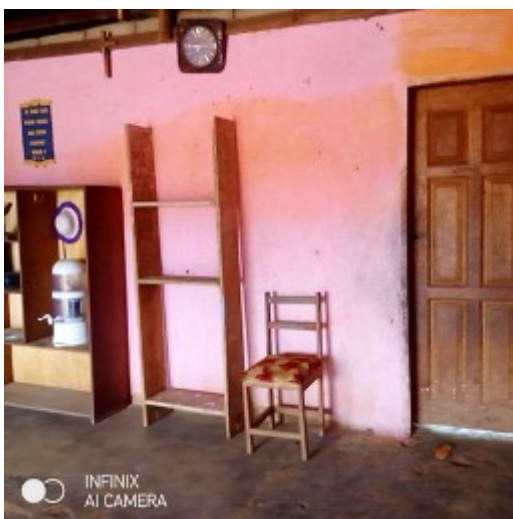


Bishop Alphonse has sent photos of recent work that has been completed, installing new lights at the entrance to the Cathedral compound, and at the Health Centre, which is now providing care to the local population. The coat of paint on the wall and the health centre are certainly an improvement over the grey concrete blocks before!



The wall text below the Crucifix reads: ‘*Si Dieu*

The wall text below the Crucifix reads: ‘*Si Dieu est pour nous, qui sera contre nous?*’: ‘If God is for us, who will be against us’ (Psalm 27.26)



In mid-February, Bishop Alphonse was, once again, afflicted by another malaria attack, which he felt was caused by his overwork in the days before. At present there is a major study being conducted in Nairobi, Kenya, of the first ever malaria vaccine. I am sure that Bishop Alphonse, along with many others, is also hoping that the vaccine proves effective, and will soon be available across Africa.

This from the World Health Organization: ‘The World Health Organization (WHO) is recommending widespread use of the RTS,S/AS01 (RTS,S) malaria vaccine among children in sub-Saharan Africa and in other regions with moderate to high *P. falciparum* malaria transmission. The recommendation is based on results from an ongoing pilot programme in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi that has reached more than 900 000 children since 2019.

results from an ongoing pilot programme in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi that has reached more than 900 000 children since 2019.

Fr. David Marriott, SSC: The Africa Appeal?

“This is a historic moment. The long-awaited malaria vaccine for children is a breakthrough for science, child health and malaria control,” said **WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**. “Using this vaccine on top of existing tools to prevent malaria could save tens of thousands of young lives each year.”

Malaria remains a primary cause of childhood illness and death in sub-Saharan Africa. More than 260 000 African children under the age of five die from malaria annually.’ (<https://www.who.int/news/item/06-10-2021-who-recommends-groundbreaking-malaria-vaccine-for-children-at-risk>)

Rwanda.

Fr. Chadrack has been ‘on the road again’, at Kizi Parish in the south of Rwanda, where he officiated at a wedding. at Kizi parish. He writes, ‘I officiated at a wonderful marriage.’



At this time, I have no names for the Bride and Groom, but will add them to another Appeal letter.

On the way from Uvira to Bukavu in Congo, I looked across a deep valley to the Rwandan mountains to the north, thinking how lush and fertile this land appeared, as we were driving into the ‘Monts Mitumba’, on the way to Bukavu, Sud-Kivu, DRC.

Congo.

Bishop Steven has written with his concerns about the continuing violence affecting the parishes in Nord-Kivu, near Goma in Niyiragongo where the diocese has a ‘Chapel’ which was damaged in 2014 when Mount Niyiragongo erupted. The problem now is being caused by the activity of the M23 militia. As Wikipedia reports:



‘In late March 2022, the March 23 Movement (M23) launched an offensive in North Kivu, clashing with the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) and MONUSCO. The fighting displaced tens of thousands of civilians and caused renewed tensions between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, as the latter was accused of supporting the rebel offensive.’ ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M23_offensive_\(2022%E2%80%932023\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M23_offensive_(2022%E2%80%932023)))

What this has meant is that, once again, people have had to flee their homes.

The Goma mission chief of the UN forces in Congo has requested assistance from the UN for the 3,500 to 15,000 who are in temporary encampments in the region.

Fr. David Marriott, SSC: The Africa Appeal?

A cease fire had been agreed between the UN forces, Rwanda, Congo and M23, but it seems the violence continues.

Eastern Congo.

Bishop M'mokywa Mtundu is still needing assistance for the parish of St. Pierre in Baraka: I have had to write this in reply to his request: 'This morning, I have received the proposal from Bishop M'mokywa Mtundu, for a new church building for the parish of St. Pierre in Baraka, Sud-Kivu, the total cost is US\$3,250.00 (+/- CDN\$4,370) Given the current state of affairs, we are not able to consider such an important project, unless we see a significant change in your support for the Appeal, as well as all the other pressing requests, in Rwanda, Cameroon, Congo, Kenya, and South Sudan, where Pope Francis asked that the civil war cease, in his recent visit!'

Besides this, we need funds for roofing sheets for another parish! All help gratefully received!

Kenya.

Figure 2,3 Ash Wednesday Mass at Resurrection Church, Kayole, Nairobi.

But, Bishop Ndegwa also writes of a major problem facing the people of Kenya, being the drought reducing food supplies: 'The current severe drought and acute hunger that is affecting our members and Kenya in general. We thank God that we have a harvest in place at the moment thanks to God's provision. We shall pray to God to guide us on what amount of maize we should retain for income generating and poultry purposes and how much we should distribute as relief and when.'

As you can see, although Nairobi itself is spared the severe problems, this has meant that refugees from other areas are seeking assistance, and refugee camps around Nairobi are becoming overcrowded. Of course, the situation has been made worse by the restrictions on grain shipments from Ukraine.

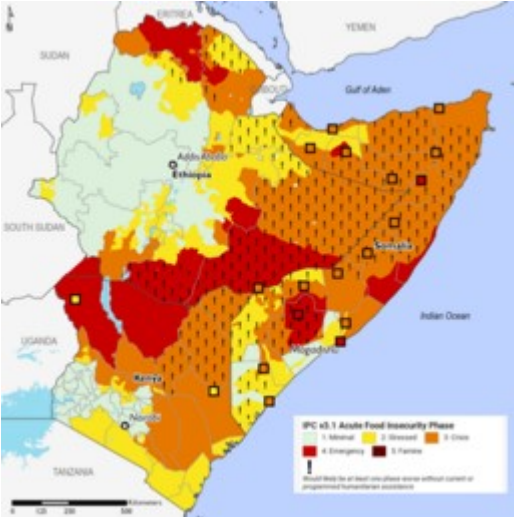
The aid necessary for this is clearly far beyond the Anglican Catholic Church, or any church, but we can be thankful that the careful management of limited resources by Bishop John and his team of clergy and



laypeople, from the chicken and egg project, to the agriculture project, together with the clergy training and preparation, bodes well for the future of the ACC-Kenya, founded on faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ, and fortified by prayer and fasting.

South Sudan.

Fr. David Marriott, SSC: The Africa Appeal?



And the famine extends all the way north into South Sudan, where crops have been destroyed by floods, and new growth has been ravaged by drought in Aweil, close to the border with Sudan. Bishop Garang writes:

‘Thousands of people are worried how they will make it to get seeds for planting in the next season that starts in May and food which will last them until harvest time in August. The affected population which are facing starvation is about 800,000 people in the Diocese. Other people are also fleeing to North Sudan to search for food. We need to pray for the food needs and make the needs known to people who can be of assistance. If nothing is done many lives will be lost. ACC Aweil Diocese is therefore appealing for well-wishers to donate funds towards assisting the victims of starvation. The funds will be used to purchase food items like sorghum, maize flour, beans, lentils and cooking oil that will be distributed to the affected households.

I am sending you the appeal for the starvation victims to make their needs known to people who may be of assistance and pray for the affected people and the Diocese. It is my prayer and hope that God will touch the hearts of the people you will be talking to so that they can give generously for the affected starvation victims. May God continue to bless you and the donors for the concern and continued support. Attached are the pictures for the appeal.’





Fr. David Marriott, SSC: The Africa Appeal?

How to support these churches:

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

In Canada

The Parish of St. Bride

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

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

In the USA

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

In Australia and New Zealand

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

By cheque made out to: ACC (OP) DAT and sent to
Missionary Diocese of Australia and New Zealand
C/- 5 Fallow St
Chermside West, Qld. 4032 Australia

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

By Direct Deposit to:

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

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

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

In the UK

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

Metropolitan Jonah Paffhausen

Metropolitan Jonah (James Paffhausen), formerly Metropolitan of the Orthodox Church in America, now serves in the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia. He currently focuses on preaching and teaching. The following paper was written a long time ago and is useful Lenten reading. The Metropolitan Jonah has given permission for the reprinting of the article.

Do Not Resent, Do Not React, Keep Inner Stillness

When I was in seminary I had the great blessing of becoming the spiritual son of a Greek bishop, Bishop Kallistos of Xeloni. He ended his life as the bishop of Denver of the Greek Archdiocese. It was he who taught me the Jesus Prayer. The whole spiritual vision of Bishop Kallistos had three very simple points.

Do not resent. Do not react. Keep inner stillness.

These three spiritual principles, or disciplines, are really a summation of the Philokalia, the collection of Orthodox Christian spiritual wisdom. And they are disciplines every single one of us can practice, no matter where we are in life – whether we're in the monastery or in school; whether we're housewives or retired; whether we've got a job or we've got little kids to run after. If we can hold on to and exercise these three principles, we will be able to go deeper and deeper in our spiritual life.

Do Not Resent

When we look at all the inner clutter that is in our lives, hearts and souls, what do we find? We find resentments. We find remembrance of wrongs. We find self-justifications. We find these in ourselves because of pride. It is pride that makes us hold on to our justifications for our continued anger against other people. And it is hurt pride, or vainglory, which feeds our envy and jealousy. Envy and jealousy lead to resentment.

Resentfulness leads to a host of problems. The more resentful we are of other people, the more depressed we become. And the more we are consumed with the desire to have what they have, which is avarice. Often we'll then engage in the addictive use of the substance of the material world – whether it's food or alcohol or drugs or sex or some other thing – to medicate ourselves into forgetfulness and to distract ourselves from our resentments.

One of the most valuable and important things that we can thus do is look at all of the resentments that we have. And one of the best ways of accomplishing this is to make a life confession. And not just once, before we're baptized or chrismated. In the course of our spiritual life we may make several, in order to really dig in to our past and look at these resentments that we bear against other people. This will enable us to do the difficult work that it takes to overcome these resentments through forgiveness.

What does forgiveness mean? Forgiveness does not mean excusing or justifying the actions of somebody. For example, saying "Oh, he abused me but that's O.K., that's just his nature," or "I deserved it." No, if somebody abused you that was a sin against you. But when we hold resentments, when we hold anger and bitterness within ourselves against those who have abused us in some way, we take their abuse and we continue it against ourselves. We have to stop that cycle. Most likely that person has long gone and long forgotten us, forgotten that we even existed. But maybe not. Maybe it was a parent or someone else close, which makes the resentment all the more bitter. But for the sake of our own soul and for the sake of our own peace, we need to forgive. We should not justify the action, but we should overlook the action and see that there's a person there who is struggling with sin. We should see that the person we have resented, the person we need to forgive, is no different than we are, that they sin just like we do and we sin just like they do.

Metropolitan Jonah Paffhausen

Of course, it helps if the person whom we resent, the person who offended us or abused us in some way, asks forgiveness of us. But we can't wait for this. And we can't hold on to our resentments even after outwardly saying we've forgiven. Think of the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." If we don't forgive, we can't even pray the Lord's Prayer without condemning ourselves. It's not that God condemns us. We condemn ourselves by refusing to forgive. We will never have peace if we don't forgive, only resentment. It is one of the hardest things to do, and our culture does not understand it. It is to look at the person we need to forgive, and to love them – despite how they may have sinned against us. Their sin is their sin, and they have to deal with it themselves. But we sin in our reaction against their sin.

Do Not React

So this first spiritual principle – do not resent – leads to the second. We must learn to not react. This is just a corollary of "turn the other cheek." When somebody says something hurtful, or somebody does something hurtful, what is it that's being hurt? It's our ego. Nobody can truly hurt us. They might cause some physical pain, or emotional pain. They might even kill our body. But nobody can hurt our true selves. We have to take responsibility for our own reactions. Then we can control our reactions.

There are a number of different levels to this principle. On the most blatant level, if someone hits you don't hit them back. Turn the other cheek – that's the Lord's teaching. Now, this is hard enough. But there is a deeper level still. Because if somebody hits you, and you don't hit them back – but you resent them, and you bear anger and hatred and bitterness against them, you've still lost. You have still sinned. You have still broken your relationship with God, because you bear that anger in your heart.

One of the things which is so difficult to come to terms with is the reality that when we bear anger and resentment and bitterness in our hearts, we erect barriers to God's grace within ourselves. It's not that God stops giving us His grace. It's that we say, "No. I don't want it." What is His grace? It is His love, His mercy, His compassion, His activity in our lives. The holy Fathers tell us that each and every human person who has ever been born on this earth bears the image of God undistorted within themselves. In our Tradition there is no such thing as fallen nature. There are fallen persons, but not fallen nature. The implication of this truth is that we have no excuses for our sins. We are responsible for our sins, for the choices we make. We are responsible for our actions, and our reactions. "The devil made me do it" is no excuse, because the devil has no more power over us than we give him. This is hard to accept, because it is really convenient to blame the devil. It is also really convenient to blame the other person, or our past. But, it is also a lie. Our choices are our own.

On an even deeper level, this spiritual principle – do not react – teaches us that we need to learn to not react to thoughts. One of the fundamental aspects of this is inner watchfulness. This might seem like a daunting task, considering how many thoughts we have. However, our watchfulness does not need to be focused on our thoughts. Our watchfulness needs to be focused on God. We need to maintain the conscious awareness of God's

Metropolitan Jonah Paffhausen

presence. If we can maintain the conscious awareness of His presence, our thoughts will have no power over us. We can, to paraphrase St. Benedict, dash our thoughts against the presence of God. This is a very ancient patristic teaching. We focus our attention on the remembrance of God. If we can do that, we will begin to control our troubling thoughts. Our reactions are about our thoughts. After all, if someone says something nasty to us, how are we reacting? We react first through our thinking, our thoughts. Perhaps we're habitually accustomed to just lashing out after taking offense with some kind of nasty response of our own. But keeping watch over our minds so that we maintain that living communion with God leaves no room for distracting thoughts. It leaves plenty of room if we decide we need to think something through intentionally in the presence of God. But as soon as we engage in something hateful, we close God out. And the converse is true – as long as we maintain our connection to God, we won't be capable of engaging in something hateful. We won't react.

Keep Inner Stillness

The second principle, the second essential foundation of our spiritual life – do not react – leads to the third. This third principle is the practice of inner stillness. The use of the Jesus Prayer is an extremely valuable tool for this. But the Jesus Prayer is a means, not an end. It is a means for entering into deeper and deeper conscious communion. It's a means for us to acquire and maintain the awareness of the presence of God. The prayer developed within the tradition of hesychasm, in the desert and on the Holy Mountain. But hesychasm is not only about the Jesus Prayer. It is about inner stillness and silence.

Inner stillness is not merely emptiness. It is a focus on the awareness of the presence of God in the depths of our heart. One of the essential things we have to constantly remember is that God is not out there someplace. He's not just in the box on the altar. It may be the dwelling place of His glory. But God is everywhere. And God dwells in the depths of our hearts. When we can come to that awareness of God dwelling in the depths of our hearts, and keep our attention focused in that core, thoughts vanish.

How do we do this? In order to enter into deep stillness, we have to have a lot of our issues resolved. We have to have a lot of our anger and bitterness and resentments resolved. We have to forgive. If we don't we're not going to get into stillness, because the moment we try our inner turmoil is going to come vomiting out. This is good – painful, but good. Because when we try to enter into stillness and we begin to see the darkness that is lurking in our souls, we can then begin to deal with it. It distracts us from trying to be quiet, from trying to say the Jesus Prayer, but that's just part of the process. And it takes time.

The Fathers talk about three levels of prayer. The first level is oral prayer, where we're saying the prayer with our lips. We may use a prayer rope, saying "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me," or whatever form we use. The next level is mental prayer, where we're saying the prayer in our mind. Prayer of the mind – with the Jesus Prayer, with prayer book prayers, with liturgical prayers – keeps our minds focused and helps to

Metropolitan Jonah Paffhausen

integrate us, so that our lips and our mind are in the same place and doing the same thing. We all know that we can be standing in church, or standing at prayer, and we may be mouthing the words with our lips but our mind is thinking about the grocery list. The second level of prayer overcomes this problem, but it is not the final level. The final level of prayer is prayer of the heart, or spiritual prayer. It is here where we encounter God, in the depths of our soul. Here we open the eye of our attention, with the intention of being present to God who is present within us. This is the key and the core of the whole process of spiritual growth and transformation.

II. So how do we do this?

The Prayer of Stillness

The foundation of the spiritual process is learning to keep inner silence, the prayer of stillness. On the basis of this, we gain insight into how to stop resenting and to stop reacting. Then the process goes deeper and deeper, rooting out our deeply buried resentments and passions, memories of hurt and sin, so that the silence penetrates our whole being. Then we can begin to think clearly, and to attain towards purity of heart.

Before beginning this process, it is important to have an established relationship with a spiritual guide, a father confessor or spiritual mother, to help you. Confession is a central part of the spiritual life, and things that come up in prayer, as well as resolving resentments and other issues, are part of that. It is also valuable to expose obsessive or sinful thoughts to your confessor. Simply exposing them deprives them of their power. We always need to be accompanied on the journey within. Prayer is always a corporate action, leading to the transcendence of our individual isolation into a state of communion with God and the Other.

The Jesus Prayer, “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner,” or some form of it, can be used as a vehicle to help us bring our attention into a prayerful state. The Jesus Prayer states the intention of our prayer, and we use it first verbally and then mentally until it goes beyond word and thought and becomes pure intention in deep silence.

A prayer rope is very helpful to get started, not so much as to count prayers, but to keep the physical level of attention. We say one prayer on each knot, going round and round the rope, until our attention is focused in prayer. Then we can stop moving around the rope, and be still. The rope is not important in and of itself; one can pray just as well without it. It is an aid. Another aid is to follow your breath. What is important is not to get caught up in technique, but to pray.

The Prayer can be said standing, kneeling or sitting. If one is ill, lying down is acceptable; but it is hard to preserve focused attention while lying down. Prayer is not relaxation. It may relax you, but that is not the point. Posture is important to help keep your attention focused. If you’re sitting, it helps to keep your back straight and your

Metropolitan Jonah Paffhausen

shoulders back. One can also be prostrate on the ground, but it takes practice to let go of the physical distractions.

In beginning to pray, remember that God is “everywhere present and filling all things.” In prayer, you make yourself present to God. Open your mind and heart, your awareness of God, so that the sense of God’s Presence fills your consciousness. At first, we may not have a sense of God’s Presence. But the more disciplined our practice of prayer, the more that conscious awareness of God will fill our mind and heart. This is not an image, a thought “that” God is present (though this is a place to start), or a feeling or physical sensation. It is simply an awareness. This is the beginning of spiritual consciousness, where our awareness moves from the head to the heart, and from God as an object to a sense of being rapt in God’s Presence.

How to Enter the Prayer of Stillness

In short, sit down and collect yourself, and remember that God is present. Say the Trisagion Prayers if you wish. Breathe in slowly and deeply a couple of times, following your breath to the center of your chest. Begin to say the Jesus Prayer quietly, slowly, until you have a sense of God’s Presence. Then let the Jesus Prayer trail off, and go into silence. Thoughts will come, but simply let them go by. Don’t let them grab your attention. But if they do, gently dismiss them and bring your focus back to God’s Presence, perhaps using the Jesus Prayer to reestablish your intention to pray. Go deeper within yourself, below the thoughts, into the deeper stillness and awareness of Presence, and simply abide there.

The period of prayer should start out with a few minutes, and may entirely be occupied at first with the Jesus Prayer. Eventually, over a period of weeks or months, as you begin to master keeping your attention focused and dismissing thoughts, let it expand up to twenty or thirty minutes. Two periods of prayer, early in the morning and early in the evening are an excellent discipline.

Surrender and Detachment

The Prayer of Stillness is a process of inner surrender to the Presence and activity of God within yourself. Surrender your thoughts, feelings, emotions, ideas, agendas, plans, images and submit them to the Divine Presence. This is surrender of the ego, and the enkindling of our spiritual awareness. We stop our ego and its thoughts from distracting our attention, and permit God’s energy to work within to heal our souls. This is a kind of active and willful passivity, so that God becomes the active partner in prayer.

It becomes obvious that we cannot hold any kind of rancor or resentment, lust or passion, in our minds while trying to enter into silence. In fact, all our attachments to things, people, concepts and ideas have to be surrendered during silent prayer, and thus, they are brought into perspective. The more we connect with God in prayer, the more detached we become. It is a necessity if we are going to progress in prayer and in com-

Metropolitan Jonah Paffhausen

munion with God. All things that are obstacles to our living communion fall away, if we let them. The key, of course, is to surrender them and let them go.

The Emptying of the Subconscious

One critically important process that occurs is the emptying of the subconscious. After we have gotten to a point of stillness, over a period of days or weeks, we will be flooded by memories of past hurts, sins, resentments, images and sensations, and wrongs done to us. At first, we feel like we make progress in the prayer, and it is nice and peaceful. Then, with the flood of memories, we feel like we are going backwards. This is progress! It is the beginning of the process of the purification of our soul. It is extremely unpleasant, at times, but the key is to not allow ourselves to react. These memories have been suppressed, and are now coming to awareness so that they can be dealt with. This purification is already the action of grace illumining your soul.

During prayer, make a mental note of the memory or sin, and then take it to confession. Sometimes these memories and the feelings connected with them can be overwhelming. This is why accompaniment on the spiritual journey is so important. You need someone who can encourage and reassure you, as well as help you resolve the issues that come to awareness, and forgive your sins. It is extremely distressing when suppressed memories of abuse and violent emotions come up. It can not only be confusing, but it can dominate our consciousness. We have to deal with these issues, as they come up, in order to be purified and open ourselves to God. This means working through forgiveness, accepting forgiveness, and forgiving ourselves and God.

The Imagination

Another thing that comes up is images, which play on our mind and imagination. There are two main levels here: first, the memory images we have seen that are connected with our passions; the second, images from our imagination. All the images we have ever seen are stored in our brain. They range from the face of our mother from our infancy, and other joyful images, to pornographic and violent images or those who have hurt us. These images are especially powerful if they are attached to some kind of passionate act, of lust or anger. They can be a strong distraction from awareness of God. What is

important is to remember that these are just thoughts, memories, and we can dismiss them. They have no power over us that we do not give them. The task is to get beneath them, and let them go, and eventually take them to confession.

The second level of images is what is produced by the imagination. We quiet down, and start to pray, and go into all sorts of imaginal realms, populated by angels, demons, and any and everything else. Many people take this as spiritual vision. But it is not. It is the realm of delusion, and there is nothing spiritual about it. This is especially dangerous if one has a past with hallucinogens and other psychotropic drugs. The task is, first, to stay with the Jesus Prayer. Then, after much practice, go into silence and be absolutely resolute to allow no images, even of Jesus or the saints, into one's mind during prayer. The imagination is still part of the mind, not the spirit (*nous*). Even icons are not to be

Metropolitan Jonah Paffhausen

contemplated in an objective sense, bringing the image into the mind. As St John Chrysostom wrote, somewhere, “When you pray before your icons, light a candle and then close your eyes!” The icon is a sacrament of the Presence.

Spiritual work is very serious business. If we do not work through the issues that arise in a healthy way, they can literally drive us crazy.

It takes a deep commitment to the spiritual process, so as not to be distracted by the emptying of our subconscious, and led into despondency or despair. The task is to persevere, and let the process take its course. This means confessing our thoughts and resolving our resentments, and receiving absolution of our sins. Eventually, it works itself through, though it may take months or years to do so. As Metropolitan Anthony Bloom said, somewhere, when it gets too heavy, sit back and have a cup of tea! God is going to be there; it is we who have to work through our issues so we can be present to Him.

Dealing with Resentments

Resentment and reaction are deeply interrelated. Resentment is an impassioned reaction, based on a judgment of a person (or the self), where our passions are ignited. Resentment is a reaction which we hold within ourselves, and allow ourselves to nurture. It comes from and feeds off our passions, from judgment of others. Resentment is judgment and objectification of a person according to his actions which have offended us.

The real key to resolving resentment is to realize that it is not the other person who is causing it, but that it is our own reaction. The actions of the other person may have precipitated the reaction, his words or deeds, his sin; but the reaction to those sins, words or deeds is purely our own.

We can only control what belongs to us; we cannot control another person. It is our decision to allow ourselves to be possessed by our passions and reactions, or to take control over our own lives. It is our decision to take responsibility for our own reactions, or to allow ourselves to be caught in the vicious cycle of blaming the other person, in resentment and self-righteousness.

Blame and resentment lead nowhere, except to bitterness and unhappiness. They make us into helpless victims, which in turn robs us of the power to take responsibility for ourselves.

Resentment comes when we refuse to forgive someone, justifying ourselves by our self-righteous indignation at being hurt. Some of these hurts can be very deep: abuse, abandonment, betrayal, rejection. Sometimes they can be very petty. We keep turning the hurt over and over in our minds, and refuse let it go by justifying our anger. Then we feel justified in hating or despising the person who hurt us. Doing this, we continue to beat ourselves up with someone else’s sin, and compound the other person’s sin by our own resentfulness. We blind ourselves to our own sin, and focus only on the sin of the other, and in so doing, we lose all perspective.

Metropolitan Jonah Paffhausen

We have to put things into perspective, and realize that the other person's actions are only part of the equation, and that our own reaction is entirely our own sin. To do this, we have to move towards forgiveness.

To forgive does not mean to justify the other person's sin. It does not mean that we absolve the other person—not hold them responsible for their sin. Rather, we acknowledge that they have sinned and that it hurt us. But what do we do with that hurt? If we resent, we turn it against ourselves. But if we forgive, we accept the person for who he is, not according to his actions; we drop our judgment of the person. We realize that he is a sinner just like me. If I am aware of my own sins, I can never judge anyone. We can begin to love him as we love ourselves, and excuse his falling short as we forgive ourselves. It helps when the person who hurt us asks for forgiveness, but it is not necessary. We must always forgive: not only because God forgave us; but also because we hurt ourselves by refusing to forgive.

Our resentments can also be extremely petty. Sometimes we resent because we cannot control or manipulate someone to behave according to our expectations. We become resentful of our own frustration, where the other really had nothing to do with it. All our expectations of other people are projections of our own self-centeredness. If we can let other people simply be who they are, and rejoice in that, then we will have tremendous peace!

We have to be watchful over ourselves, so that we do not allow ourselves to project our expectations on others, or allow resentment to grow within us. This kind of awareness, watchfulness, is nurtured by the practice of cutting off our thoughts and practicing inner stillness. By this, we practice cutting off our reactions, which all start with thoughts. We can come to see what is our own reaction, and what belongs to the other.

Eventually, we see that our judgment of the other is really about ourselves, our own actions, words, attitudes and temptations, which we see reflected in the other person. To face this means to face our own hypocrisy, and to change. If we judge and condemn someone for the same sins, thoughts, words and deeds that we have ourselves, then we are hypocrites. We must repent from our hypocrisy. This is real repentance: to recognize and acknowledge our own sin, and turn away from it towards God and towards our neighbor.

We have to see how our sins distract us from loving our neighbor, and from loving God. Our love of our brother is the criterion of our love of God. St John tells us, How can we love God whom we have not seen, if we can't love our neighbor whom we can? If you say that you love God and hate your brother, you are a liar. If we love God, then we will forgive our neighbor, as God has also forgiven us.

The conscious awareness of our own reactions and judgments, of our attachment to our passions of anger and our own will, is the first level of spiritual awareness and watchfulness. We have to move beyond self-centeredness (oblivious to others), to

Metropolitan Jonah Paffhausen

becoming self-aware, aware of our own inner processes through watching our thoughts and reactions.

Repentance and Confession

Awareness of our sins and hypocrisy, our short comings and falls, leads us to repentance and the transformation of our life. Repentance, conversion, the transformation of our mind and our life, is the core of the Christian life. Repentance does not mean to beat ourselves up for our sins, or to dwell in a state of guilt and morose self-condemnation. Rather, it means to confront our sins, and reject and renounce them, and confess them, trying not to do them again.

What this does is, that to the extent we renounce and confess our sins, they no longer generate thoughts, which accuse us or spur passionate reactions. Sometimes we have to confess things several times, because we only repent of, or are even conscious of, aspects of the sin. Things that make us feel guilty, provoke our conscience, or that we know are acts of disobedience all should be confessed. We have to train our conscience, not by memorizing lists of sins, but by becoming aware of what breaks our relationship with God and other people. We need to be conscious of God's presence, and realize what distracts us from it. These things are sins. Of course, we are experts at deluding ourselves, when we really want to do something, and we know that it is not blessable.

Confession is not only Christ's first gift to the Church, the authority to forgive sins in His Name; but is one of the most important means of healing our souls. Sins are not sins because they are listed in a book somewhere. They are sins because they break our relationship with God, other people, and distort our true self. Sins are sins because they hurt us and other people. We need to heal that hurt, and revealing the act or thought or attitude takes away the shame that keeps it concealed, and prevents healing. We need to confess the things that we are the most ashamed of, the secret sins which we know are betrayals of our true self. If we don't confess them, they fester and generate all sorts of despondency, depression and guilt, shame and despair. The result of that is that we identify ourselves with our sins. For example, same-sex attraction becomes gay identity. Failure in some area becomes a general self-identification with being a failure.

What is critically important is that we are not our sins, thoughts or actions. These things happen, we sin, have bad thoughts and do wicked and evil things. But we are not our thoughts or actions. Repentance means to stop and renounce not only the actions, but to renounce the identity that goes with it. Thoughts are going to come. But we can learn, through practicing inner stillness, to let our thoughts go. They will still be there, but we can learn to not react to them, and eventually, simply to ignore them.

The process of purifying our self is hard and painful, at first; but becomes the source of great joy. The more we confess, honestly and nakedly, the more we open ourselves to God's grace, and the lighter we feel. Truly the angels in heaven (and the priest standing before you bearing witness to the confession) rejoice im-

Metropolitan Jonah Paffhausen

mensely when a person truly repents and confesses their sins, no matter how dark and heinous. There is no sin so grievous that it cannot be forgiven. NOTHING! The only sin not forgiven is thinking that God cannot forgive our sin. He forgives. We have to forgive our self, and accept His forgiveness.

Preparing for confession is an important process. It means to take stock of our life, and to recognize where we have fallen, and that we need to repent. The following should help to prepare for confession, but it is not a laundry list. Rather, it should help to spur our memory, so that we can bring things to consciousness that we have forgotten. It is more of an examination of conscience.

The Passions: Gluttony, lust, avarice; anger, envy, despondency; vainglory, pride.

The Commandments: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind; and love your neighbor as yourself.

Loving God

Do I love God? Do I really believe in God, or just go through the motions?

Do I pray, and when I do, do I connect, or is it just mechanical? Do I rush through prayers, Scripture readings, and spiritual literature? Do I seek the will of God in all things? Do I rebel against what I know to be God's will, and the Christian life? Do I try to be obedient, and constantly surrender my life to God?

Do I go to church, go to confession and communion regularly, keep the fasts?
Do I try to be conscious of God's Presence, or not?

Do I try to sanctify my life? Or do I give in to temptation easily? Thoughtlessly?

Loving our Neighbor

How do I treat the people around me? Do I allow myself to judge, criticize, gossip about or condemn my neighbor? Do I put people down? Do I look for their faults? Do I condescend and talk down to others?

Do I treat others with kindness, gentleness, patience? Or am I mean, rough and nasty?
Do I try to control others, manipulate others?

Do I regard others with love and compassion?

Do I bear anger or resentments against others? Hatred, bitterness, scorn?

Do I use and objectify others for my own pleasure or advantage? For sex, for profit, or for anything else which de-personalizes him/her?

Do I envy and bear jealousy towards my neighbor? Do I take pleasure in his misfortunes?

Do I act thoughtlessly, oblivious to the feelings or conscience of the other? Do I lead my neighbor into temptation intentionally? Do I mock him or make fun of him?

Metropolitan Jonah Paffhausen

Do I honor the commitments I have made? Marriage vows? Monastic vows? Do I honor my parents? Am I faithful in my relationships? Do I have stability in my commitments? Am I conscious of how my words and actions affect others?

Have I stolen anything, abused or hurt anyone? Have I committed adultery? Have I injured or killed someone?

Do I covet other people's things? Do I lust after possessions or money? Does my life revolve around making money and buying things?

Loving Our Selves

How am I self-centered, egotistical, self-referenced?

Do I take care of myself, physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually? Am I obsessed about myself, my image, my appearance, my desires and agenda?

Do I indulge in laziness? Do I get despondent, depressed, despairing?

Do I beat myself up, indulge in self-hatred or self-pity? Do I injure myself? Do I have low self-esteem, or think myself worthless?

Do I blame other people for my reactions? Do I feel myself a victim? Do I take responsibility for my own reactions and behaviors?

Do I engage in addictive behaviors, abusing alcohol, food, drugs, sex, pornography, masturbation? How do I try to console myself when I'm feeling down?

Do I have anger and resentment, rage, and other strong emotions and passions suppressed within me? Do I act out on them? How do they affect my behavior? Can I control them or do I abuse other people?

Am I conscious of how my words affect people?

How am I a hypocrite? Can I face my own hypocrisy? Am I lying to and deluding myself?

Do I have a realistic idea of myself? Am I honest with myself and others? What kind of façade do I put up?

Have I done things which I don't want to or am too ashamed to admit? Abuse of others or animals, incest, homosexual acts, perverse actions? Have I abused drugs, sex or other things which I don't want to acknowledge? Am I afraid that I am those things—an alcoholic, drug addict, gay, child abuser? Am I afraid to confess them? Can I forgive myself for these things? What do I feel guilty about? Does guilt control my life?

Am I being faithful to myself, to God, to others? Does my life have integrity?





www.ContinuingForward.org

Mission and Evangelism at the 2023 Anglican Joint Synods

Continuing Forward was formed in 2019 to help revitalize and grow the Continuing Anglican movement, by supporting the renewal of existing churches and the planting of new churches. We are sponsoring multiple events for attendees at the 2023 Joint Synods being held October 9-13 in Orlando.

Church Renewal

We invite you to attend our three 45-minute sessions:

- Tuesday 4:10 pm: “A Call for Renewal within the G-3” by Bp. Paul Hewett and Abp. Chad Jones
- Wednesday 4:10 pm: “Recovering Kingdom Thinking” by Bp. Paul Hewett
- Thursday 4:10 pm: “Calling and Forming Healthy Clergy” by Abp. Chad Jones and Fr. Glenn Spencer

All sessions will be held in the Seminole C room of the DoubleTree. For more details, or to be notified of future updates, see

<http://www.continuingforward.org/jointsynods2023>

We also commend the Evening Prayer being hosted Wednesday by the ACC Diocese of the Holy Trinity. It will be followed by a discussion of mission and evangelism, including their Remnant Mission vision for spiritual formation. For more information, see their website at <http://www.thedht.org/jointsynods2023>

Church Planting

We are planning to host a social event for those active or interested in planting a Continuing Anglican parish. Please email jwest@thedht.com for more details.

TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

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

EUNTES IN MUNDUM UNIVERSUM
GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD

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



The Traditional Anglican Church of Canada is a Missionary District of the Original Province of the Anglican Catholic Church.

The Anglican Catholic Church is a growing worldwide body with Dioceses, Districts, and Parishes present in North America, the UK, South America, Africa, Pakistan, India, Australia, New Zealand, & the Philippines.

The Anglican Catholic Church enjoys full communion in sacris with the Anglican Province of Christ the King and the United Episcopal Church of North America.; and since the signing of the Atlanta Accord in October, 2017, with the Anglican Church of America, the Anglican Province of America, and the Diocese of the Holy Cross.

The Traditional Anglican Church of Canada is a Canadian Registered Charitable Organization #84410 7235 RR0001 Donations may be sent to the District Office. Income Tax receipts will be issued.

PARISHES

St. Matthew the Apostle
Ottawa, ON
613 256 8494

St. Athanasius
Belleville/Roslin, ON
613-477-3098

Mission of
Our Lady of Walsingham
Brantford, ON
519-756-3053

The Resurrection
Walkerville (Windsor), ON
519-255-1703

St. John's
Parry Sound, ON
705-746-9720

Mission of the Ascension
Waterloo, ON
705-746-9720

Holy Trinity & St. Jude
Thunder Bay, ON
807-251-3489

St. Mary's
Chapleau, ON
705-864-0909

St. Bride of Kildare
Pitt Meadows, BC
604-551-4660

Fr. Robert's Remarks

1962) that these were, on one level, once and for all events. "Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more;/ death hath no more dominion over him" and "For in that he died, he died unto sin once:/ but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God."

We can be reminded, in our commemoration of Holy Week and Easter of the events; but also that Jesus is risen and is always there for us.

Happy Easter!

Please take note of the information about 'Continuing Forward' on page 21. There are links to the 'Continuing Forward' website, to things specific to the upcoming Provincial Synod, and to the website of the Diocese of the Holy Trinity regarding the Remnant Mission in general and also specifically at Provincial Synod.



More next month. R+



Newsletters 4 U

You may subscribe to this free Newsletter by going to <https://traditionalanglican.ca/news/newsletters/newsletters.htm> and clicking on <Subscribe> or send an email to Newsletters@traditionalAnglican.ca

The Africa Appeal

Donations are tax deductible and may be sent to :

The Parish of St. Bride,
c/o 10125-276 St.,
Maple Ridge, V2W 1R5
Please make a note on the front of the cheque that the funds are for the Africa Appeal. Tax receipts will be issued.

Contact Info:

Fr. David Marriott, SSC
drm274@hotmail.com
409-15210 Guildford Dr.
Surrey BC V3R 0X7
604-551-4660