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Rogation Days Still Worthwhile

A time to remember God's presence in all we do



The Beach in Cold Weather

O n many days during the past months, I have gotten into the car with my daughter's Irish setter and driven to a beach not far from where we live. There the dog has half an hour of exercise, running over the sand and galloping across expanses of shallow water while chasing seagulls.

Where I park at the edge of the beach, there are almost always a few others also parked in passenger cars, pickup trucks and delivery wagons, even on cold or wet winter days. Some get out and walk, some also have dogs. Some can be seen eating their lunch in their cars or reading a newspaper. In most cases, there is just one person in the vehicle, sitting quietly and intermittently looking at the water, contemplating the expanse of Long Island Sound. Some stay a long time, some



only a few minutes. For all these people, including myself, driving to a beach and looking at the water has meaning.

What meaning? One is hard put to attempt to express it in words. Water has its own messages, conveyed in its own language. The sea is never the same. Sometimes the water is rough and sometimes calm, with a thousand gradations in between. Sometimes it is a glorious blue, more often a dull green, and, especially in winter, a rather melancholy gray. Again, there are innumerable shades in between. Yet in another sense, the sea is always the same. It has been here since the dawn of human history and we can expect it to be here until our demise. Its pulse never ceases. Sometimes it is harder, sending large waves up onto the beach; sometimes it is softer with mere ripples breaking against the sand.

Except for occasional hard storms which bring turbulence and fierce waves, the sea seems calming to the human spirit. We recognize it as the ultimate source of physical life. Its unceasing pulse conveys to us a sense of continuity, courage and inner strength.

This water is the primal element over which the Spirit of God hovered in creation, through which the Hebrews passed on their way to freedom, and through which they passed again when they crossed the Jordan and entered the Promised Land. It is water in which Jesus was baptized and in which we were baptized.

"Here, girl, come back," I call to the dog, and we get into the car to return home.

(The Rev. Canon) H. BOONE PORTER, senior editor

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ON THE COVER

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LETTERS

Take a Poll

On March 16 I publicly called on Bishop Hunt of Rhode Island to take a poll of laity in his diocese with regard to the report of the Standing Commission on Human Affairs [TLC, March 31].

It is unlikely that such a poll will be taken. I followed by writing a neighboring bishop to ascertain his views on the matter, and he replied as follows: "I am not at all convinced that a poll would do anything except confuse matters. Most of our folks have very little information on which to make up their minds other than what they read in the press, and the press always looks for a controversy."

Such a debonair stance from a chief shepherd suggests a serious underestimate of the intelligence of his laity, who make up the overwhelming majority of his diocese, who pay the bills and do the worshipping. If they have not been informed about both sides of the issue, the fault must lie with the bishop.

Deputies to the General Convention are not elected to represent their personal views, but represent faithfully the mind of their diocese. They cannot do so unless they make use of genuine dialogue on the issue without loaded indoctrination sessions.

Perhaps there are some bishops who will have both the courage and the wisdom to know what their laity think about this important matter by taking a poll. One can only hope.

(The Rt. Rev.) JOHN SEVILLE HICCINS Bishop of Rhode Island (ret.) Providence, R.I.

• • •

The report developed by the Standing Commission on Human Affairs leaving the ordination of practicing homosexual candidates up to individual bishops is interesting.

Some years ago, a person I know from one diocese was turned down for entrance to seminary because of psychological reports that he was a homosexual. That person was shortly thereafter accepted by another diocese and sent to seminary. As a priest some years later, the same person returned to the diocese that had initially rejected him. With the Standing Commission on Human Affairs' current thinking, more of the same will occur often enough that the church eventually will

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yield to an unworkable procedure.

We need General Convention to issue a strong and decisive biblical answer regarding ordinations of practicing homosexuals that will be applied to the whole church rather than placing this responsibility in the hands of dioceses to do as they see fit. The 1979 resolution which calls the ordination of practicing homosexuals "not appropriate" should stand or be replaced at Phoenix by one with stronger language that is also decisive.

(The Rev.) Don Vandegrift St. Mark's Church

Honey Brook, Pa.

•

It is with horror and disbelief that I read of the proposal of the Standing Commission on Human Affairs. It is hard to understand that this church would so ignore our biblical heritage.

Gay rights activists want to institutionalize their behavior and to remove their own guilt. Any action by this church cannot, and will not do that. This church, or any church, cannot legislate away sin. The sting of sin can be removed only by the blood of Christ, and not by any commission or even the General Convention. I submit that if this church will stand on the word of God and hold to the truth of scripture, we will be blessed greatly by God and will grow beyond anyone's dreams.

WILLIAM R. BAILEY Rock Island, Ill.

Island, III.

I read in the newspapers that an official commission of our church has recommended that practicing homosexuals be considered as eligible for ordination, other requirements being fulfilled.

I sincerely trust that General Convention will not be persuaded thus to put its imprimatur on practices which are obviously contrary to the intent of nature.

(The Rev.) GEORGE W. WICKERSHAM II Rockbridge Baths, Va.

The Right Choice?

I find it hard to believe that the Most Rev. Sir Paul Reeves can represent the majority of Anglicans, worldwide, to the United Nations, or anywhere else [TLC, Feb. 3]. The fact that the ACC application to the Economic and Social Council was seconded by Libya should make us all leery of the role that was expected of us.

The church in New Zealand is on the leading edge of the Anglican Communion. It would seem better to have chosen someone from a more centrist jurisdiction.

There is also the question of allowing such a position to be funded by parochial organizations when "he that pays the piper calls the tune." If this position is needed, it should be funded by the whole Anglican Communion.

Anglicans should concentrate on preaching the good news in parishes and missions, rather than meddling in world politics.

MARY KOHLER

Sheboygan, Wis.

Work of Art

The caption beneath the photo of the Murillo painting on page 11 of your Easter issue [TLC, March 31] should have identified the subject as our Lord, not an angel of annunciation.

(The Rev.) KATHERINE DAY New London, N.H.

Remembering Oswald

Like the Rev. Robert McLeod, I serve as priest of a congregation whose name has led me into study [TLC, March 10]. However, his conclusion that Charles I does not merit a place on the calendar is the opposite of mine concerning King Oswald, patron of St. Oswald's-in-the-Fields in rural Atchison County, Mo.

As a young exile, Oswald came to the faith on the Isle of Iona among men who could still remember the great missionary abbott Columba. After Oswald returned to the throne of Northumbria, he brought an Iona monk, Aidan, to evangelize his people.

Oswald served as a bridge between cultures and set an example of royal humility as he traveled with his bishop and translated Aidan's sermons from Gaelic into Anglo-Saxon. Oswald died bravely in battle and some consider him both martyr and king.

Many churches in the north of England bear the name of St. Oswald. In 1891, the English farmers who founded the northwest Missouri St.

(Continued on page 12)



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NEWS______ Noted Author Selected as Dean at Berkeley

Berkeley Divinity School at Yale has announced the Rev. Philip W. Turner, III, professor of social ethics at General Theological Seminary, has been chosen as school dean.

Fr. Turner, 55, holds degrees from Virginia Theological Seminary and Princeton, and is author of several books, including *Men and Women: Sexual Ethics in Turbulent Times*, and *Sex, Money and Power*.

Fr. Turner, who will become dean July 1 and officially installed in October, said, "I'm very excited because I think Berkeley is a strong Episcopal presence at Yale and has unusual strengths." Of the selection process leading to his being chosen, he said, "The board is very interested in [Berkeley's] formation of clergy; not only in educating the head, but the heart. I was very pleased about this and want to get involved with these goals."

He was ordained to the priesthood in 1961 and served in Uganda for ten years. He was then on the staff of Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest in 1974 and joined the New York seminary in 1980.

Fr. Turner has been married to his wife, the Rev. Elizabeth Z. Turner, since 1986, and they have one child.

College of Preachers President Resigns

The governing council of the College of Preachers in Washington, D.C. has accepted the resignation of the Rev. Canon Charles J. Minifie as president of the college and named the Rev. Erica Wood as interim president.

Dr. Wood, who is the permanent director of studies at the college, has been serving as acting president since November 1, 1990, when Canon Minifie began a six-month sabbatical leave.

Canon Minifie informed the college council in January of his intention to resign at the end of the sabbatical period. The new interim president formerly served a parish in Binghamton, N.Y. She was instrumental in developing the college's expanding programs, and will maintain that role while she is chief operations officer. The search for a permanent president is not expected to begin until 1992.

Canon Minifie was appointed president in 1983, and led the college through a successful \$2 million capital campaign, in the process thoroughly renovating the facility and establishing a year-round program.



One of the nation's finest examples of "carpenter Gothic" architecture still standing, Christ Church in San Augustine, Texas, recently had 19th century lighting fixtures installed, making its interior similar to its appearance shortly after the Civil War.



Dr. Lytle

School of Theology at Sewanee Names New Dean

The Rev. Guy Fitch Lytle, III, professor of church history and historical theology at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, has been appointed as dean of the School of Theology at the University of the South, Sewanee, Tenn. Dr. Lytle also is doctoral professor of history at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley.

An author of numerous books, Dr. Lytle, 46, has served for the past five years as associate rector and rector *pro tem* of the Church of St. John the Evangelist in San Francisco's Mission District. He has taught history and religion at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. and at the University of Texas in Austin.

Historian

He received several degrees from Princeton University, has studied at Oxford and has been actively involved with parish, university and hospital ministries in Texas and California.

Dr. Lytle is vice president of the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church and was a designated historian at the 1988 Lambeth Conference.

He and his wife, Maria, have two children.

Central Florida Aims to Curb Ordinations

Because of what it sees as an increase in Episcopal clergy and decrease in Episcopal laity, the Diocese of Central Florida has put a moratorium on applications to begin the ordination process. The ban is expected to last for at least 18 months.

The Rt. Rev. John Howe, diocesan bishop, said that even though the church continues to grow in Florida, there are not enough positions in parochial ministry for the nearly 50 men and women now in the ordination process. Half of these are preparing for the priesthood, the other half for the diaconate.

"The purpose of this interim," Bishop Howe said in correspondence to rectors and vicars, "will be to allow the Commission on Ministry and the bishop sufficient time to thoroughly review all of the questions . . . and to develop a plan for addressing them to be presented to the . . . convention . . . in January of 1993."

He added, "I am not persuaded that the Lord's solution to the problem will be found in keeping people from being ordained. But I have to question whether the kind of training that is available in our seminaries is really adequate for a greatly-changed situation."

A.E.P. WALI.

Social Justice Discussed

Members of the Anglican Peace and Justice Network, comprised of representatives of 15 Anglican provinces from around the world, met recently and called on the primates of the Anglican Communion to act on improving the plight of the poor in developing countries.

The network is an organization comprised of persons appointed by the primates to serve as advisers on issues of social justice. Members gathered in Porto Alegre, Brazil, March 5-14, to act as a "social conscience of the primates," according to the Rev. Brian Grieves, peace and justice officer for the Episcopal Church and secretary of the network.

New Life at Cuban Seminary

As the director of the Seminario Evangelico de Teologia in Matanzas, Cuba, the Rev. Oden Marichal, an Episcopal priest, heads the only interdenominational seminary in the country.

Fr. Marichal was educated at the seminary and ordained in 1964, five years after the Cuban Revolution. He has been teaching at the seminary since 1968.

Seminary professors are not paid by the institution. Instead, they are paid by their congregations while volunteering to teach a class or two at the seminary.

There are currently 34 students at the seminary, 24 on campus. This represents a sharp increase in the number of students since the 1970s, when there were as few as three studying for the ministry. The increase is one indication of the government's changed attitude toward religion. While it once was viewed as an enemy of the state, today it is treated as a kind of ally because of its ability to attract visitors and some trade from overseas.

Many Denominations

Those attending the seminary today represent nine denominations, including Baptist, Methodist, Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian and several Pentecostal churches. When students graduate from the seminary, they receive a degree similar to a master of divinity. Cuba still does not offer doctoral studies in theology.

Many of the seminary's courses are identical in name and content to those offered in U.S. seminaries. "The curriculum of the seminary is rather traditional, but we include the theology which as been generated in Latin America," Fr. Marichal said. "We do not teach liberation theology as a subject, but rather we assume it as a method for doing theology. . . . For example, when we teach Christology, we would interject the teaching of Leonardo Boff," referring to the Franciscan priest from Brazil who has written extensively on liberation theology themes.

Seminary students are supported mainly by their churches, which pay for all expenses.

Four women currently are on schol-



Fr. Marichal

arships offered by the seminary, another break with the past and with a characteristic of the culture.

"In a country where machismo has reigned for years, it is difficult for women to study for leadership positions in the church," Fr. Marichal said. "Consequently, the seminary attempts to make it easier for them, by offering them scholarships."

The major operating costs of the seminary, including those of the support staff, are covered by foreign grants which are received through the Ecumenical Center of Cuba in Havana and are often funneled through the World Council of Churches.

Despite the foreign aid, there have been few foreign students since the late 1950s. "After the triumph of the revolution," Fr. Marichal said, "most of the foreign churches were wary about sending their students." [RNS]



The Not-So-Subtle Mission

By JEFFREY BLACK

(Last in a four-week series)

Whith my seminary classmates, I studied theology and entered the priesthood during a particularly shameful period of American history. We had become aware of racial injustice; we sustained a defeat in a war; our government was reeling from one scandal after another; our president was a betrayer of the Constitution.

In those days, when I thought of the mission of the church, I thought our calling was to be a voice for fixing up the world. And I think that on the basic issues of those days, the church did speak wisely and well, even though what it had to say was often unpopular. I remember also sensing that the church had to reform itself to reflect the values of inclusiveness and justice it was preaching.

Like most of my classmates, I saw the prophet as the one who had the courage to confront the systems of injustice and speak a word from God, usually on behalf of the poor. In practice, this meant scolding the world from the pulpit and scolding the church in convention.

Wonderful Gift

Nowadays, recent seminary graduates lecture me sternly about just caring about numbers and urge me back on the scolding toot. But it seems to me that this version of the prophetic role is something many of us are stuck in as a way of denying the death of the church. For there's something much scarier than confronting a complacent establishment. And there's something far more valuable we have to give away to the poor than another fix-it program. It is far scarier to give my witness about the saving power of Jesus Christ in my own life. And faith in the risen Jesus is a far more wonderful gift to give to any person than any social uplift program.

A disclaimer. A parish can in fact help many poor people. The doing of

The Rev. Jeffrey Black is rector of St. Andrew's Church, Kansas City, Mo. acts of compassion is an essential part of the discipline of growth in the faith. I'm happy that our parish builds a home for Habitat for Humanity every year. We go to Haiti on missions that build a mutual relationship with a third world community. We work in soup kitchens, counsel homeless peo-



ple and do much hands-on caring for the "outsiders." But we are not going to solve any of those problems. In these ways — often painfully and at great cost — Christians have their faith increased.

The operating assumptions of the Episcopal Church seem to be that we exist to nurture those people who are inside and advocate for the marginalized outside, confronting oppressive systems wherever possible. These were certainly my assumptions about mission. I now believe our primary mission is not to nurture those already inside — our needs are so endless that they will drain all our energy. Nor is our primary mission to give our resources to the marginalized for the purpose of uplift. That's only part of the purpose of resources. Believing we should give it all away forgets that the church itself is useful to God.

My generation of Episcopal priests has built our model of the church on the parable of the last judgment in Matthew 25. Because we have done so, we have been first-rate in several places at doing the second most important job. The church has sponsored many wonderful caring agencies to help with the least of my brothers. That's a blessing. But that's not the final word, nor is it the most important word, of the gospel.

The gospels all end with one form or another of the great commission. In Matthew, Jesus commissions us on a mountaintop - a hint that what is coming isn't a minor suggestion. The risen Lord prefaces what he wants to tell us with these words: "All authority in heaven and Earth has been given to me." Not a preface to an off-hand remark, would you say? "Go into all nations and make disciples and baptize in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them all I have commanded you." That's the mission. It's not subtle. We live in a growing population that is open to the message of the gospel, and we have lost 30 percent of our members. We're not doing the mission.

Remember this line? "The church is the only organization which exists for the sake of those who don't belong." We've taken that as a call to do social outreach and uplift. Instead, it's a call to help those who don't belong yet; to help them find a home for their souls where they can encounter Jesus, know the Holy Spirit and be brought spiritually to life. That's the mission.

Noble Tradition

It may be that the Episcopal Church is in a cul-de-sac of Christian history. Denominations do disappear, and many in the secular media have predicted our demise. But don't forget God. There are, if God gives me a long life, 20 years left for me to preach and celebrate the sacraments and beckon people into fellowship and tell the great story of the God who comes to us and gives us a new righteousness. Twenty years of priesthood in a great and noble tradition that values word and sacrament, discipline and freedom, compassion and evangelism. My prayer is that I can share this work with a band of passionate brothers and sisters who are not ashamed of the presence of the Holy Spirit within them, and who can help me share new life within the body of Christ.

Rogation Days Still Worthwhile

By J. FLETCHER LOWE, JR.

he 1979 revision of The Book of Common Prayer appears to have downgraded Rogation and well it might. We no longer live in a society dominated by agriculture and fishing. We are no longer a predominantly rural society. That's what Rogation represented — the blessing of the fields and seeds and farming implements and animals; and of boats and nets and bait. In order to keep this rural-based tradition alive, some suburban congregations began to process around their parking lots, planting trees! That trivialized what Rogation symbolized.

Rogation represented the dependence upon God from the very beginning of the production cycles — on the farm, on the boat. Even though our societal focus has shifted, the dependence has not. In our industrialized. service-oriented world, we continue to be dependent upon the Lord for all that we have and all that we are. We may be more removed from the exigencies of nature, more removed from the cycles of rain and sun and wind and calm as they affect our work. Yet, not only are we just as dependent upon God for the food that comes from farm and boat, but dependent too for all of the raw materials we use in production and all the gifts and abilities we bring to produce and service them.

That dependence, especially in our modern world, needs to be made more visible. The Rogation days, including the Sixth Sunday after Easter, provide us with the opportunity. Undergirding the farm and the boat is the common reality all of us share, no matter what we produce — our dependence upon the Lord's bounty. We need to ask his blessing (Rogation from the Latin *rogare* — to ask) upon the means we each use to produce.

The Rogation days are about a specific focus of prayer which needs our God is behind and before, above and beneath all that we do.

attention. This is no more pointedly expressed than was done by Kenneth Adams in a *Church Times* article:

"We pray for good relationships in industry and for the just distribution of the fruits of the earth, but we do not pray for that activity which is the reason for the existence of those relationships and which produces the 'fruits' which we pray may be justly distributed.

"We pray for what flows from industrial production without praying for industry itself and for all those who engage in it. We pray for the unemployed, but we fail to pray for the activity which will provide them with employment or which will produce the surplus wealth to allow them to be employed in other work.

Means of Production

"We pray for the hungry and the homeless, yet we fail to pray for the better industrial production which alone will produce the food and build the houses. We are glad that we can give grain to the starving people of Africa, but do we give thanks to God for those who produced that grain and for those who designed and manufactured the ships and aircraft and vehicles without which that grain could never have been delivered to those who need it?" For Christians in this modern world, Rogation becomes not only a liturgical opportunity, but a deeply significant moment to remember that God is behind and before, above and beneath all we do.

With that in mind, here are some experiences with Rogation:

On Rogation Sunday (no longer identified in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, although the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday following it are), the Sixth Sunday of Easter, the offering of the people includes a small symbol of the means of production of each person participating, i.e. a computer chip, a sales contract, a prescription pad, a tool, an appointment book, a pencil. A new mother set up a tradition for mothers by offering a diaper! The baptismal font might be appropriate for them to be placed, connecting our offering of our labor to our baptism. Along with the offering of bread, wine and alms, the symbols are also offered (and later returned to their owners).

On Rogation Sunday, the celebrant's concluding collect to the Prayers of the People could be those appropriate for people in an industrial society: e.g. BCP p. 256 (III), p. 259 (II).

On Rogation Sunday, all who choose to participate join in a recommitment of their work to the Lord. So often we commission vestries and wardens, choirs, altar guilds, church school teachers — and rightly so. But we fail to give liturgical prominence to the primary arena of the congregations' individual ministries — where people work.

There are several appropriate hymns in *The Hymnal 1982* under Christian Responsibility, pp. 566-612.

On any day, arrange for a liturgy similar to the blessing of homes to bless the place of a person's ministry. I have experienced the significance of this in a person's individual office space at lunch time; more broadly, in a small

(Continued on next page)

The Rev. Canon J. Fletcher Lowe, Jr. is rector of Immanuel Church, Wilmington, Del.

Feasts, Fasts and Ferias

What to Do on Whitsunday

By H. BOONE PORTER

hitsunday, or Pentecost, ranks just after Christmas and Easter as one of the most important Christian festivals. Yet how shall we celebrate it with sufficient emphasis?

The greatest liturgical and pastoral enhancement is to have baptisms on this day. This connects our observance directly with the biblical account in which the apostles baptize 3,000 on this day (Acts 2:41).

Baptism is, furthermore, the great sacrament of the Holy Spirit. We all, as baptized persons, need to see ourselves as those whose lives the Spirit seeks to enkindle. The message of Pentecost is not just for Pentecostals! Whitsunday, or Pentecost, with its focus on the Holy Spirit, provides an important setting for holy baptism as we see it during the course of the year.

For churches fortunate enough to have several baptismal candidates, this day becomes a wonderful occasion. Several babies, each making its own noises, quickly transforms even a very reserved and inhibited congregation into a celebrative assembly of worshipers!

As The Episcopal Choirmaster's Handbook points out, it is very appropriate when there are baptisms on this

The Rev. Canon H. Boone Porter is senior editor of THE LIVING CHURCH and a resident of Southport, Conn. day to lengthen the great epistle to include Acts 2:38-42. (The prayer book permits such lengthenings, p. 888.) This gets the baptismal accounts into the reading, and includes the reference to the new converts continuing in "the



The Holy Spirit of Bernini [RNS]

apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers." As these words are quoted in our baptismal service, it is helpful to hear them read in their biblical context once a year.

Another practice which can make the feast more vivid is to have the gospel read in additional languages. This may follow or precede the reading in English by the deacon or priest, and it is an impressive ceremony. (People really don't have to understand everything they hear!) Most congregations can scare up at least two or three people who can read some other language.

This being the end of the Great Fifty Days, it is the last time this year that the paschal candle will occupy its paschal position in the front of the church. Even if flowers have not been placed around it during the previous weeks, this can be done today. After the service, it is quietly extinguished and taken to its usual place near the baptismal font. This is also the last time the double Alleluia is used at the end of services. Even if these Alleluias have not been sung during the previous weeks, they may appropriately be sung at the end of the main service today.

Should this feast, in accordance with ancient customs, be introduced by a vigil somewhat similar to that of Easter? The prayer book (p. 175 and 227) suggests it, but few of us have had experience with it. It need not imitate the Easter vigil too closely. It may be developed around some special theme such as Christian unity, peace or overseas missions. The rubric is flexible enough. We would welcome hearing from readers who have experience with this vigil.

Finally, spring has fully come, and following this service, fun and games are welcome. Red balloons, strawberries and red cookies are appropriate. It is also fun if everyone has been asked beforehand to wear something red on this day. Some parishes may be bold enough to hold their main service at a nearby park or beach, and have baptisms out-of-doors in a natural body of water, and then have a picnic following. That makes it a day everyone will remember.

ROGATION

(Continued from previous page)

town publisher's office building late one weekday afternoon; and about the grounds of a road construction company immediately following the Sunday Eucharist with the coffee hour there at the plant. Periodically (such as every month in

Periodically (such as every month in which there is a fifth Sunday), offer people the opportunity to recommit their work, especially in time of transition: promotion, new job, job loss, retirement or volunteer endeavor. The first couple of times I offered this I was a bit anxious about people coming forward, so I primed the pump a bit. There was no need to. People seemed energized by the opportunity to offer their daily life and work to God.

"I am only a supervisor in a textile mill," a man once said to me. He only saw his work as something to do to make a living for his family. There was little sense of ministry, of vocation. He saw that far more clearly in his "work" as a member of the vestry, a lay reader and a church school teacher. Strange how we separate the sacred from the secular, the holy from the common, the spiritual from the material. As we talked further, I suggested that he consider his supervisor's position as his primary ministry, as a real calling from the Lord. He'd never thought of it that way, but as he did, his work took on a new dimension. He asked (rogare) God to bless the "means of

production" he used as a supervisor, to bless his work. The problems did not diminish, but his perspective changed and his work was transformed into ministry, part of his offering to God.

That is the natural consequence of what originated with the Rogation Days. The opportunity to pause — on farm and on boat — to ask God's blessings upon the means of production to offer one's work as ministry; as calling. Though society has changed, the basic orientation of Rogation has not. We can use those Rogation days to affirm and confirm the work of Christians today as indeed the call of God to special ministry in his name in his world, dependent upon his grace and love.

EDITORIALS.

Questions for Everyone in the Church to Ponder

This issue includes the final segment of a four-part series, "A Needless Dying," by Jeffrey Black. The series has been a critical, yet forthright examination of the Episcopal Church written by a Kansas City rector.

Fr. Black has raised pertinent questions which are applicable to congregations of every size, location and worship style. For example, is our liturgy open and accessible to newcomers? Are our sermons understandable? Are we afraid "to give my witness about the saving power of Jesus Christ in my own life?" Into what kind of community are we inviting people?

All of these questions are appropriate to ask during the early stages of the Decade of Evangelism. They should be pondered by vestries, evangelism committees and parish clergy, not because Fr. Black has a better way, but because he is willing to examine the issues and to reflect on his own ministry candidly. St. Andrew's Church, Kansas City, where Fr. Black is the rector, is the largest parish in the Diocese of West Missouri. It has shown remarkable growth while both its diocese and the national church have lost members. It is currently involved in a three-year long-range plan to increase the number of active baptized members by 100 percent and to double attendance. With about 1,700 baptized members and an average Sunday attendance of nearly 500, these are objectives which will take considerable effort to fulfill.

Fr. Black and others from the Diocese of West Missouri made a presentation on church growth to Executive Council when it met in Kansas City last year. We are pleased he decided to share his thoughts with our readers, and we hope his words will be taken seriously by congregations everywhere.

VIEWPOINT

Too Many Holy Week Services?

By LARRY E. VALENTINE

B efore the aroma of incense and lilies dissipate, I would like to present a few comments which I hope will encourage an exchange of ideas. For me the dilemma is: there is too much to do in the time allowed. I refer to Holy Week and Easter Day. The Book of Common Prayer encourages Eucharists on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week, and Maundy Thursday. This is in addition to Morning and Evening Prayer each day.

The remainder of the week includes the liturgies of Good Friday and Holy Saturday, the Easter Vigil and one or two Eucharists on Easter Day. In addition, the *Book of Occasional Services* offers: Stations of the Cross, footwashing, an agape meal, Tenebrae and some congregations manage a Passover seder and the watch on Maundy Thursday.

Some communities (seminary or monastery) might be able to do justice to this rich tradition, but a small parish, in my experience, simply runs out of steam. I have chosen to emphasize a different service

The Rev. Larry E. Valentine is rector of St. Andrew's, Emporia, Kan. each year in addition to Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. This year, for example, we had Stations of the Cross on Good Friday after the prescribed liturgy in the BCP. Next year we will have Tenebrae and probably not have stations.

In seminary, I recall reading the Catechesis of St. Cvril. It was exciting to read, but I have found it extremely difficult to imitate. Did the Christians in his diocese have jobs? In seminary, I recall the wondrous joy of the Great Vigil, but when it was over at 2 a.m. we did not repeat one half of it eight hours later. As a cathedral dean wrote this year, "this service was the Easter liturgy of the early church, and so it was not in competition with the services of Easter Day." Few congregations that have the Great Vigil begin at 11 p.m. or later on Holy Saturday. Most begin between 6-8 p.m.

This year we divided the vigil. On Saturday evening, we had the lighting of the paschal candle, two readings from the liturgy of the word and renewal of baptismal vows (there were no baptisms this year). We stopped, went home and returned at 8 or 10:30 to continue. The lighting of the candle assumes some degree of darkness and does not seem appropriate for Easter morning.

There seems to me tension between having the Eucharist on Saturday evening (early) and again on Sunday. The vigil, to me, assumes that when it is over the Easter celebration is over (it is, of course, never really over). In former congregations, when we had the full vigil on Saturday, it did not reduce the attendance on Sunday morning.

In small churches, which are the majority of Episcopal churches, it is difficult to "do it all." I do not mean to imply that we should wait for all the members to attend before we do any of the rites. My solution as written above is to choose to do the basic services and to add one extra each year. It is important not to fall into the numbers trap, but, on the other hand, does 20 percent of the members constitute a valid witness to the queen of feasts at the vigil?

Just because St. Cyril was able to have an apparently successful vigil as the conclusion to an extensive period of instruction does not mean that it works well today. My guess is that all the new and happy Christians went home at the end of the vigil and took a nap.

What are others doing? I would welcome an exchange of ideas.

LETTERS

(Continued from page 5)

Oswald's named it for their home church in Grasmere, celebrated by William Wordsworth in "The Excursion." I commend Oswald to the Standing Liturgical Commission for an observance August 5 or 9 or together with Aidan on August 31, and to congregations seeking a name to inspire faith.

> (The Rev.) LAWRENCE B. LEWIS St. Paul's Church

Maryville, Mo.

'Buying Into' Program

In "Viewpoint" [TLC, March 10] the Rev. Lauriston H. McCagg asks, "Why must one exclude the other?" referring to "buying into a program" vs. "giving out of gratitude to God (The Alabama Plan)."

It is worth noting that the Rt. Rev. Furman C. Stough was instrumental in the development of the "Alabama Plan," and is now deputy for the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief at 815, both of which are cited by Fr. McCagg.

I began my ministry under Bishop Stough, and recall how strongly he advocated the use of the "Alabama Plan." Yet the diocese also promoted many programs — a conference center, college chaplaincy, mission work in Africa — to which we were all encouraged to "buy into" apart from the diocesan budget.

As a young priest, I once went to him for his advice on a decision in which I was questioning my own motives. His advice was: "I wouldn't worry about your motives too much. It's a good program; go with it!" Would that I had followed his advice.

(The Rev.) JAMES A. CREASY Christ Church

Marion, Va.

A Book's Effects

When I read Boyd Wright's article about *The Imitation of Christ* [TLC, Feb. 10], I remembered with something like horror the effect that book had on me about 30 years ago.

At that time, I already had a low opinion of myself. And so, I picked up all of Thomas' words that went along with the way I already felt. His words carried the authority of centuries of veneration, and so, I reasoned, they must be true and must apply to me.

I know many other women were, and still are, in a position similar to

mine at that time. We do not need to be told to be humble or to despise ourselves. We already are and we already do, and our humility is not of the healthy kind that makes for growth. And this isn't limited to women; it's just that I know more about women.

Several years of working on a "Twelve-Step" program, and daily reading of a great little book, *Each Day a New Beginning*, are helping me to overcome my negative feelings and thoughts about myself.

And so, I think that *The Imitation* of *Christ* and other books of that sort — even part of the Bible — need to come with some sort of a warning, the way toys do nowadays: "Not recommended for those with low selfesteem."

JOANNE MAYNARD

Helena, Mont.

Weak Response

Your readers may be interested in the extent of responsiveness of our seminaries to the requests of my wife and me who are Episcopalians, for copies of their reports to the Standing Liturgical Commission on their evaluation of the proposed Supplemental Texts.

In November, 1990, we requested each of the 11 accredited seminaries for a copy of its report. Between then and mid-March replies have been received from only five of the seminaries: two of them sent copies of their reports; one wrote that it did not make a written report; one wrote that it did not have a copy available to send us; and one wrote that it did not have a copy available, but suggested our writing directly to the Standing Liturgical Commission. We did write to the Standing Liturgical Commission in December, 1990, but have not received a reply.

It is disappointing that most of our seminaries are evidently not interested in informing lay people like us of their conclusions in this important matter before General Convention at which action on the Supplemental Texts is, I understand, on the agenda.

EDWARD E. HUNTER, JR. West Jefferson, N.C.

Shore It Is

Surely the word intended in the item about the church installing supporting columns [TLC, March 24] was shored, not shorn. It wouldn't do that sagging floor much good to be shorn, as in Samson, sheep or haircuts.

Austin, Texas

LARK P. ANTHONY t

SHORT_____and SHARP

By TRAVIS DU PRIEST

PRAYERS OF THE COSMOS: Meditations on the Aramaic Words of Jesus. Translated with commentary by Neil Douglas-Klotz. Harper & Row. Pp. 91. \$14.95.

A member of the faculty of the Institute for Culture and Creation Spirituality builds on the work of Aramaic scholar George Lamsa to render new "translations" and reinterpretations of the most familiar words of Jesus, such as the Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer. While some will not care for the cosmic, mystical voice ascribed to Christ in these renderings, some will take delight. From the Lord's Prayer: "O Birther! Father-Mother of the Cosmos, you create all that moves in light. Focus your light within us . . ."

MEISTER ECKHART: The Man From Whom God Nothing Hid. Edited by Ursula Fleming, Templegate. Pp. 160. \$9.95 paper.

A conveniently organized selection of the great medieval mystic's writings under such headings as God, Method, Weapons We Have, Soul, and Ending. I personally find the arrangement quite helpful because Meister Eckhart's salient points do not always surface rapidly. The editor is aware that her use of an older translation will not please scholars who prefer more recent translations. Helpful devotional reading, for those ready for the deep spirituality of the 13th century: "Sure proof of true humility is the fearful joy of being praised."

THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER IN THE LIFE OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH. By John E. Booty. Forward Movement. Pp. 36. \$1.25 plus postage and handling, paper.

Succinctly explains several important "hows" — how the Prayer Book came to have its status in our church and how the Prayer Book functions in the life of our church — as well as a section on the relation of the Prayer Book to doctrine. Among several insights is this one: "the Episcopal Church today, in its use of the Book of Common Prayer, comes closer to the ideal established by Cranmer than did the people of the sixteenth century English Church."

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BENEDICTION

The author is the Rev. John B. Fritschner, rector of St. David's Church and headmaster of St. David's School, Cheraw, S.C.

G od has blessed my wife Nancy and me with two boys, ages four and two. Children are special and these two are no different. However, trying to be good parents in the '90s is complicated. We are bombarded with information on how to raise our children to be bright, welladjusted and full of self-esteem. We try to keep up, but when all else fails, make do with what common sense we have. It usually works.

Children Teach Too

Instructing comes naturally to me. I have taught in the high school and university systems and now serve as the headmaster of an Episcopal preschool. Teaching is much of what I do. What I often forget is that children teach us as well.

On a walk to school one day, I decided it would be a great chance to begin teaching Charlie, 4, how to recognize the way there. We reviewed the correct route, as well as some lessons in safety. We went over the meanings of red and green lights. We talked about the importance of looking both ways. Testing his sense of direction, I acted as if I did not know the way. "Have we gotten there yet?" I asked him. "What does your school look like?" "Do we take a right or go straight?" Charlie enjoyed the experience. He was excited when we arrived. He had shown me the way.

I said good-bye as Charlie entered the side door of the school building and went to my office through another door. Content that I had taught my son something new, I settled into my chair. A few minutes later, there was a knock at my door. "Come in," I said. As the door opened, there stood Charlie. He was holding his teacher's hand. His eyes were filled with tears.

"Charlie wanted to check on you," his teacher said. "He was afraid that you'd get lost trying to find your way to the office. He wanted to make sure you were safe."

Charlie then held me as tightly as he ever had in his life. That day the teacher in me learned a huge lesson about God's love.

PEOPLE____ and PLACES

Appointments

The Rev. Canon Ronald Conrad Crocker is canon to the ordinary of the Diocese of Rhode Island, 275 N. Main St., Providence, RI 02903.

The Rev. Charles F. Hood is supply priest of St. Mark's, APDO 61-173, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico CP44630.

The Rev. **Charles L. Oglesby** is deacon at the Church of the Nativity, Raleigh, NC; add: 5113 Kaplan Dr., Raleigh 27606.

The Rev. Eleanor L. Shapton is vicar of St. John the Baptist, Ephrata and St. Dunstan's, Grand Coulee, WA; add: Box 295, Ephrata 98823.

The Rev. Willis H. Steinberg, Jr. is rector of St. Paul's, 323 Catherine St., Walla Walla, WA 99362.

The Ven. Edward J. Trafford is archdeacon of the Diocese of Rhode Island; add: 45 Rotary Dr., West Warwick, RI 02893.

Retirements

The Rev. Charles H. Hood, as rector of St. Matthew's, Austin, TX; add: 6306 Highland Hills Dr., Austin 78731.

The Rev. Keith J. Reeve, non-parochial, Diocese of North Carolina; Box 40457, Raleigh, NC 27629.

Other Changes

The Rev. Richard H. Callaway is now nonparochial in the Diocese of North Carolina; add: 4663 Pine Trace Dr., Raleigh, NC 27613.

Resignations

The Rev. William K. McDonald, as priest-incharge of St. Paul's, Corunna, MI; add: 421 E. Ellen St., Fenton, MI 48430.

Deaths

The Rev. Bernard J. Hellmann, retired priest of the Diocese of Western North Carolina, died March 2 in Hendersonville, NC at the age of 78.

After attending the University of Tennessee and the University of the South, Fr. Hellmann was ordained priest in 1957 and served parishes in Louisiana, Alabama and North Carolina; he was rector of St. James, Hendersonville from 1968 to 1974 when he was named rector emeritus. He is survived by his wife, Vernon, and three children.

Mason Martens, well-known musicologist who contributed 33 named entries plus unnumbered consultations to *The Hymnal* 1982, died in St. Luke's Hospital, New York City, February 7 at the age of 57.

For over 40 years he was concerned with the development of better congregational music in the church and was well-known for his participation at General Convention where he tried to arouse interest in new musical forms. He contributed extensively to the service music section of *The Hymnal* 1982. Mr. Martens was a communicant of St. Luke's-in-the-Fields, New York City. He is survived by his father and brother, Dr. William Martens of Fredericksburg, Va.

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SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

ST. CYPRIAN'S 2097 Turk St. at Lvon The Rev. Dr. William A. Guthrie (415) 567-1855 Sun Services; 8 & 10. Bible Study Wed 7:30

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2430 K St., N.W. The Rev. Dr. Richard Cornish Martin, r; the Rev. August W. Peters, Jr., ass't; the Rev. Richard L. Kunkel; the Rev. E. Perrin Hayes

Sun Mat 7:30, Masses 7:45 (with Ser), 9 (Sung & Ch S), 11:15 (Sol), Sol Ev, Ser & B 8. Masses Daily 7; also Tues & Sat 9:30; Wed 6:15; Thurs 12 noon HS; HD 12 noon & 6:15; MP 6:45, EP 6: C Sat 5-6

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LAKE WORTH, FLA.

ST. ANDREW'S 100 N. Palmway Sun H Eu 7:30 & 10. Wed H Eu 10. Fri H Eu 6. First Sat H Eu 8

INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL Monument Circle, Downtown The Very Rev. Robert Giannini, dean Sun 8 Eu, 9 Sung Eu, 10 Christian Education, 11 Cho Eu

KEOKUK, IOWA

ST JOHN'S The Rev. Gregg L. Riley, r; Sun H Eu 8 & 10, Wed 10, HD as anno

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Sun 8:30, 11 & 4 H Eu. Wed 10:30 H Eu & Healing. Fri 7 H Eu. Sat 10:30 H Eu

BOSTON, MASS.

CHURCH OF THE ADVENT 30 Brimmer St. The Rev. Andrew C. Mead, r; the Rev. Jürgen W. Liias, the Rev. Allan B. Warren, III, ass'ts

Sun Masses, 8, 9 (Sung), 11 (Sol). Daily: Mon-Fri 7:30, Mon & Wed 6, Sat 9. MP: Mon-Fri 7, Sat 8:30, Sun 7:30. EP Mon-Fri 5:30

KEY — Lightface type denotes AM, black face PM; add, address; anno, announced; A-C, Ante-Communion; appt, appointment; B, Benediction; C, Confessions; Cho, Choral; Ch S, Church School; c, curate; d, deacon, d.r.e., director of religious education; EP, Evening Prayer; Eu, Eucharist; Ev, Evensong; ex, except; 1S, 1st Sun-day; hol, holiday, HC, Holy Communion; HD, Holy Days; HS, Healing Service, HU, Holy Unction; Instr, Instructions; Int, Intercessions; LOH, Laying On of Hands; Lit, Litany; Mat, Matins; MP, Morning Prayer; P, Penance; r, rector; r-em, rector emeritus; Ser, Sermon: Sol, Solemn; Sta, Stations; V. Ser, Sermon; Sol, Solemn; Sta, Stations; V, Vespers; v, vicar.

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The Rev. Jennifer Phillips, the Rev. Richard Valantasis Sun Soi Eu 10:30 Daily as announced

DETROIT, MICH.

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ST. LOUIS, MO.

CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL & ST. GEORGE Clayton 6345 Wydown at Ellenwood

The Rev. C. Frederick Barbee, priest-in-charge: the Rev. Wiliiam K. Christian, III, the Rev. Steven W. Lawler, the Rev. Virginia L. Bennett, associates; the Rev. James D'Wolf, asst Sun Eu 8, 9:15, 11:15 (1S & 3S), 5:30; MP 11:15 (2S, 4S, 5S), Ch S 9:15 & 11:15. Daily MP, EP, HC

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NEWARK, N.J.

GRACE CHURCH 950 Broad St., at Federal So. The Rev. George H. Bowen, r; the Rev. H. King McGlaughon, ass't

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The Rev. Donald A. Nickerson, Jr., chap Daily Morning Prayer 8:45; H Eu 12:10

ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

145 W. 46th St. (between 6th & 7th Aves.) 10036 The Rev. Edgar F. Wells, r; the Rev. Gary E.A. Lawler, ass't Sun Masses 9, 10, 11 (Sol & Ser) 5, MP 8:40, EP 4:45. Daily: MP 8:30 (ex Sat), noonday Office 12, Masses: 12:15 & 6:15 (ex Sat.) Sat only 12:15, EP 6 (ex Sat), Sat Only 5:30; C Sat 11:30-12, 1-1:30, Sun 10:30-10:50, Maj HD 5:30-5:50

PARISH OF TRINITY CHURCH The Rev. Daniel P. Matthews, D.D., Rector The Rev. Canon Lloyd S. Casson, Vicar

TRINITY Broadway at Wall Sun H Eu 9 & 11:15. Daily H Eu (ex Sat) 8, 12; MP 7:45; EP 5:15, Sat H Eu 9.

ST. PAUL'S Sun H Eu 8. Mon-Fri H Eu 1:05

SUNNYSIDE, N.Y.

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GETTYSBURG, PA.

PRINCE OF PEACE MEMORIAL CHURCH (717) 334-6463 West High and Baltimore Sts., 17325 The Rev. Michael G. Cole, D.Min. r (717) 334-4205 Sun Eu 8 & 10:15. Wkdys & Holy Days as anno

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S. CLEMENT'S, Shrine of Our Lady of Clemency 20th and Cherry Sts., (215) 563-1876 Sun Masses 8 & 11 (High); Matins 7:30; Soi Ev Novena & B

5:30. [June through Sept: 8, 10 (Sung), Ev & Novena 5:30]. Daily: Matins 6:30: Mass 7 & 12:10 (Sat 7 & 10), Ev & Novena 5:30. C Sat 5-6, at any time on request

(717) 374-8289

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EAU CLAIRE. WIS.

Lake & S. Farwell Sts. CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL The Very Rev. H. Scott Kirby, dean (715) 835-3734 Sun MP 7:30, H Eu 8 & 10, Christian Ed 9:15, EP 5:30

MILWAUKEE, WIS.

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