November 21, 1993

# THE LIVING CHURCH

## Serving Episcopalians Since 1878



Vermont, Minnesota and New Jersey Consecrations [p. 8]

# IN THIS CORNER

## **Reform Is Happening**

We have been hearing a lot about structure during the past year or so. A symposium on structure attracted more than 1,000 people to St. Louis in mid-August, authors have been submitting Viewpoint articles to this magazine recommending a plethora of structural reforms, and speakers all over the church are raising one issue after another on how the Episcopal Church can reform its structures.

Some dioceses are going ahead with changes, at least if this fall's diocesan conventions are any indication. Witness the following:

• The Diocese of Northern Michigan decides there no longer will be votes by orders or an automatic vote at convention by all ordained persons.

• Chicago puts an end to mandatory assessment of parishes and switches to a voluntary system.

• Connecticut moves to a shortened, one-day format for its convention.

• Dallas has its delegates building houses for Habitat for Humanity and enjoying a barbecue together, then finishes its business quickly.

• Indianapolis holds its convention in a shortened, two-day format.

• Fort Worth spends much of its convention discussing how to decentralize diocesan headquarters and emphasize deaneries.

• El Camino Real sends its proposed budget back to committee rather than adopt a deficit.

Add to that the news that the Shaping Our Future Symposium is taking its show "on the road." The Rev Jon Shuler, executive director of Shaping Our Future, who has resigned as rector of Church of the Ascension, Knoxville, Tenn., is leading a series of workshops aimed at local congregations, beginning this month. The workshops, called "The Spirit of St. Louis on the Road," already are scheduled for Kansas City, Dallas, Houston, Lexington, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, New Orleans and Los Angeles.

Reform is happening at the parish level, too. Parish newsletters sent to TLC reveal such developments as vestries allowing more time for prayer and study and spending less time on routine business matters, parish bylaws being revised, new committees forming, and interest being shown in various structural matters.

Is all of this part of a movement? Perhaps. While building houses in one diocese would seem to have little connection with new committees in a parish hundreds of miles away, both are indications of a new way of doing things. They are part of a larger recognition that some of the ways in which the Episcopal Church has been doing its business, or going about its mission, aren't working. Some dioceses aren't willing to wait for the national church to take the lead in structural reform, and some congregations will take steps in reform before their diocese is ready.

The idea of structural reform in dioceses and parishes leads to questions of diocesan polity and charges of congregationalism. While those issues have been addressed in recent issues of this magazine, they are far from settled. The matter of structural reform will be with us for some time.

DAVID A. KALVELAGE, editor

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### **ON THE COVER**

The Rev. Joe Morris Doss, during the service at which he was consecrated Bishop Coadjutor of New Jersey, Oct. 31, raises his arms as a sign of Christ's embracing presence to be expressed through his ministry. The deacon to his right is the Rev. Carolsue J. Cummings. Bishops also were consecrated on Oct. 29 in Minnesota and Nov. 1 in Vermont [p.8]. Photo by Paul Shelly



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## LETTERS

### **Faith Proclaimed**

Thanks for the great article by Rebecca Chapman about the visit to the Diocese of the Rift Valley in Tanzania [TLC, Oct. 24]. Last year I had the privilege of visiting there with a lay member of our congregation, Dr. Bill Worley.

The Rift Valley is a new diocese, less than two years old, and in it the faith is being boldly proclaimed and gratefully received. I write simply to help underline what Ms. Chapman has so ably observed: Great revival is underway in that section of Anglicanism. Any person from our churches who can possibly get there to walk among these humble and holy people will see a church that seems to leap straight off the pages of the Book of Acts. God is active there, especially in many healings. While there, we witnessed Muslim people coming to the altar of an Anglican church to ask for deliverance. We also saw "people of the forest" come forward for baptism. The passionate Christians of the Rift Valley, under the anointed leadership of their great bishop, Alpha Mohammed, have much to teach us about trusting God and building churches. Bravo for your coverage!

(The Rev.) JEFFREY BLACK St. Andrew's Church.

Kansas City, Mo.

### More Than One

Biblical Orthodoxy 3, Fr. (Bishop-Elect) Jelinek 0. That would seem to be the score after reading the three anti-Jelinek letters [TLC, Oct. 24].

All three letters make the same error of assuming there is one, and only one, interpretation of holy scripture, and that interpretation should be obvious to all reasonable persons (especially, a bishop!). Whenever a person says or infers, "The Bible says ..." and then equates what he or she hears the Bible saying as the clear voice of God, then honest and open discussion of any given passage becomes exceedingly difficult.

There are, indeed, absolutes for Christians in the Bible. They involve the two Christian virtues of love and justice. We are bound to receive, accept and apply these throughout our lives. But, holding one interpretation to a given verse or passage as the only interpretation runs the risk of being a hindrance to the application of love and justice.

Not every verse in the Bible is to be taken as a static absolute. God wills to reveal deeper truths embedded in the words of holy scripture. And certainly, human sexuality is not a static absolute. The final word on sexual orientation and/ or behavior has yet to be written. We need to avoid fastening too quickly on one interpretation on the issue of sexuality. Fr. Jelinek does this. The writers of the three letters do not.

(The Rev.) Lewis W. Towler Wickford, R.I.

### **Issue Is Closed**

In his Viewpoint article, "Reception of Women Priests Won't Come Easily" [TLC, Oct. 24], the Very Rev. Gary W. Kriss makes an argument for keeping the debate on women's ordination "open." It is very easy to agree with openness. He takes an argument for openness on an issue of theological dispute within an ecumenical context and attempts to translate it into the context of Episcopal polity. He wants to create room for dissent on women's ordination by arguing for a period of discernment, which he infers might go on for 14 centuries.

These are fine rules for discussion within the catholic context, even within the context of the Anglican Communion. But, within the Episcopal Church, the issue is as closed as any other issue of order. It is sealed in the canons of the church. And, while Dean Kriss would like us to know that ordination of women passed "by the slimmest of margins," the reality is that, like all changes in the canons, the ordination of women passed a vote "by orders" in the House of Deputies. Such a vote, if translated into votes by individual deputies, would more closely approximate a two-thirds majority.

If Dean Kriss wishes to open the issue within the Episcopal Church, the place to do so is General Convention. In the meantime, it is time the Episcopal Church recognized and celebrated our women priests.

(The Rev.) JAMES R. MATHES Belmont, Mass.

### **To Our Readers:**

We welcome your letters to the editor. Each letter is subject to editing and should be kept as brief as possible. Submissions that are typed with double spacing are appreciated and are more likely to be published. Writers must include their names and addresses.



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## BOOKS

### **Fascinating Tale**

**DEATH COMES AS EPIPHANY.** By **Sharan Newman.** Tor (175 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010). Pp. 319. \$19.95.

A novel that sends the reader to dictionaries and histories in search of background information is surely worth more than the sum of its pages. Such a book is *Death Comes as Epiphany*, by Sharan Newman. The central character, Catherine LeVendeur, is a scholar and postulant at the Convent of the Paraclete; the setting is France in the year 1139.

The story of Catherine and the very educated stonecutter Edgar echoes the earlier history of Heloise and Abelard, mentors to the young people who meet in the shell of the new abbey church of Saint Denis.

A defaced Psalter, "a great, flapping messenger from hell, faceless and evil," scheming merchants and rapacious peasants, love and madness, all enter into this complex and fascinating tale. Sharan Newman is completing a Ph.D. in medieval history; she draws a vivid picture of daily life and commerce. The reader hears monks' chanting, sees grotesque gargoyles and wondrous cathedral windows, tastes the mutton stew, and smells with nose-wrinkling clarity the streets of 12th-century Paris.

If Catherine seems to recover a bit too quickly from her physical and emotional trials, if Edgar has perhaps one too many wretched scrapes — well, the reader's interest and sympathy are always engaged. There are many epiphanies in this story, some gentle and some profound: evil masquerading as beauty, wisdom and understanding present if one knew where to look, and love hiding under a layer of stone dust.

This book is great fun and — dreadful phrase — educational too.

PATRICIA WAINWRIGHT Hales Corners, Wis.

### **Stories to Savor Slowly**

**THE COLLECTED STORIES.** By **Reynolds Price.** Atheneum. Pp. 625. \$25.

Reynolds Price, born in North Carolina in 1933, has spent most of his life in that state, and most of his adult life as a professor of English at Duke University. Best known for his novels, his writing also includes poems, plays, essays, a memoir, Bible translations and song lyrics, as well as these 50 short stories. He has been fa-*(Continued on page 18)* 

## A Gift in Tandem

This issue of the magazine is devoted to books and gifts. And these thoughts are devoted to the "book and gift issue." The issue is this:

Of course, books themselves make wonderful gifts. Many of us enjoy receiving a new book — perhaps a well-printed, beautifully bound hardback that we would not otherwise buy for ourselves. Or even a small book associated with a hobby of ours which shows that the giver was thinking especially of us. Many of us take great pleasure in finding exactly the right book, old or new, for that special friend, working companion, spouse, child or grandchild.

The giving and receiving of books is surely one of life's richest pleasures, and all the more so for those of us who agree with Cicero that a room without books is like a body without a soul.

But often it is, or can be, not a matter of books, but of books and gifts. The "book and gift issue" is a gift presented in tandem, as it were. One form of Christmas gift I particularly enjoy giving is the gift of a book-and-gift.

Several years ago, I realized that this form of gift, a book linked with a small gift, both on a "theme," was ideal for many family members and friends: For my uncle, a retired priest, a book on Russia and a small icon; for my wife, the right English novel and a box of tea; for my brother and sister-in-law, a coffee table book on Virginia homes and a small container of potpourri from one of the plantations pictured. For my mother, a silver pen from a museum and small book of light-hearted anecdotes. And so forth. For a friend, it was a book of folklore of the Pennsylvania Dutch and a basket.

How to tilt the balance will depend on which you find first, the gift or the book, and which is the "primary" gift. And on financial circumstances. But whichever is the "big" gift and whichever the "smaller," the recipient knows of the thought and extra care that went into the "book and gift issue."

(The Rev.) TRAVIS DU PRIEST book editor

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bearing children, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife. <sup>10</sup>Then Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. <sup>11</sup>And Leah said, "Good fortune!"

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that we may greet with je

Redeemer; who liveth ar

Spirit, one God, now and

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## NEWS. **Three Bishops Consecrated First Woman Beauty and Joy** in Minnesota as Diocesan

The Rev. Mary Adelia Rosamond McLeod became the first woman diocesan bishop in the Episcopal Church when she was consecrated Bishop of Vermont Nov. 1 at the Flynn Theater in Burlington. Bishop McLeod became the third woman bishop in the Episcopal Church and the second woman diocesan in the Anglican Communion, following the Rt. Rev. Penelope Jamieson, Bishop of Dunedin, New Zealand.

The consecration was attended by more than 1,500 persons, including the Lt. Governor Barbara Snelling of Vermont, members of Bishop McLeod's former parish, St. John's, Charleston, W. Va., and the Archbishop and Primate of Canada, the Most Rev. Michael Peers.

The Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning, Presiding Bishop, was the chief consecrator. Other consecrators were the Rt. Rev. Furman Stough, retired Bishop of Alabama; the Rt. Rev. John H. Smith, Bishop of West Virginia; the Rt. Rev. Barbara Ĉ. Harris, Suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts; the Rt. Rev. Jane H. Dixon, Suffragan Bishop of Washington; the Rt. Rev. Harvey D. Butterfield and the Rt. Rev. Daniel L. Swenson, retired Bishops of Vermont.

The choirs of St. Paul's Cathedral, Burlington, and St. John's, Charleston, led the music, which included a hymn written for the occasion with words by the Rev. Charles Price of Virginia Seminary and music by Richard Dirksen, canon precentor of Washington National Cathedral.

Members of the new bishop's family were oblation bearers, including the Rev. Henry M. McLeod, her husband, and her daughters, a son, daughters-in-law and sisters. The Rev. Harrison McLeod, a deacon and the bishop's son, read the gospel.

Bishop Harris preached on the theme of singing the Lord's song in a strange land, and emphasized that in our period of transition we need to be a people of hope and truth. In her charge to Bishop McLeod, she said, "Not much you have done in the past specifically prepares you for what you are about to do, but the power behind you is greater than the challenges ahead of you."

(The Rev. Canon) MICHAEL H. DUGAN



**Bishop McLeod** 

## Dixieland in New Jersey

The Rev. Joe Morris Doss was consecrated Bishop Coadjutor of New Jersey Oct. 31, in Trinity Cathedral, Trenton.

The Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning, Presiding Bishop, was consecrator, and was assisted by four co-consecrators: The Rt. Rev. G.P. Mellick Belshaw, Bishop of New Jersey; the Rt. Rev. Leopold Frade, Bishop of Honduras; the Rt. Rev. William E. Swing, Bishop of California, and the Rt. Rev. Cornelius J. Wilson, Bishop of Costa Rica. The Most Rev. John C. Reiss, Roman Catholic Bishop of Trenton, was among the ecumenical guests in attendance.

In his sermon, the Rt. Rev. Frederick H. Borsch, Bishop of Los Angeles, challenged Fr. Doss to uphold vigorously the teaching, healing and reconciliation ministries of the church.

A dramatic moment occurred at the conclusion of the service when a Dixieland jazz band led the 1,500 in the congregation out of the cathedral to the strains of "When the Saints Go Marching In," a reference to the new bishop's New Orleans background as well as to the All Saints' eve date of the consecration.

Fr. Doss, who was rector of St. Mark's, Palo Alto, Calif., when he was elected, will succeed Bishop Belshaw when the latter retires.

(The Rev.) CHRISTOPHER C. MOORE

The consecration of the Rev. James L. Jelinek as eighth Bishop of Minnesota Oct. 29 at the Abbey Church of St. John the Baptist in Collegeville, was an occasion of great beauty and joy.

The service was a glorious example of Episcopal liturgy at its best. Many described it as a high point of their lives. The music was a tapestry of sounds, including a procession during which the quiet was broken only by the peals of handbell choirs from Church of the Epiphany, Plymouth, and the Gregorian Singers and Academy of St. Cecelia. Also taking part were the well-known youth choir of Ascension Church, Stillwater, a diocesan massed choir and the choir of Gethsemane Church, Minneapolis, the St. Paul Brass and an American Indian drum group from Prairie Island Reservation. Music ranged from a 9th century Veni Creator to a renewal song.

The Rt. Rev. John Krumm, retired Bishop of Southern Ohio, was the preacher. He suggested one of the main tasks for a bishop was that of chief bridge builder.

"The building of a bridge does not mean that we fill up all the chasms that yawn between opposing groups," he said. "All bridge building accomplishes is to allow communication between the two sides of the chasm."

The Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning, Presiding Bishop, was consecrator. The co-consecrators were the Rt. Rev. Robert M. Anderson, retired Bishop of Minnesota, and the Rt. Rev. Sanford Hampton, Suffragan Bishop of Minnesota. Bishop Anderson presented Bishop Jelinek with the pectoral cross worn by Bishop Whipple, the first Bishop of Minnesota.

The sense of joy and anticipation that accompanies the consecration of a new bishop was heightened because protests from those opposed to Fr. Jelinek's stand in favor of ordaining gay and lesbian persons had slowed the consent process. In a down-to-the-wire drama, there had been uncertainty until 54 hours before the consecration as to whether or not the service would take place.

At the point in the service where protests are allowed, two persons came forth. John Winslow, convener of the ad hoc Committee for the Preservation of



Fr. Jelinek before the bishops.

the Church, and Roger Boltz, national associate director of Episcopalians United, spoke. Mr. Winslow said he represented "a number of communicants in the Diocese of Minnesota as well as over 33 standing committees who, at this point, regard this consecration as highly irregular."

Bishop Browning responded that because Fr. Jelinek had made his views known, and because he had been elected by a majority of both clerical and lay delegates and approved through the consent process, the service would proceed.

In his address to Minnesota's convention the day before, Bishop Jelinek reflected on the significance of the consents process.

"These last few months of uncertainty have been difficult, as many of you are aware," he said. "I am sad for the pain my position on a couple of issues has caused for some, both here in this diocese and this beloved Episcopal Church of ours — Holy Mother Church.

"Let us not write off or discount those who are deeply troubled about some of my positions and felt it necessary to vote against my consecration. They wrestled with their consciences and they voted accordingly. We expect no less from leaders in the Episcopal Church."

The consecration took place on the grounds of one of the largest Benedictine communities in the world because it is located near the geographic center of Minnesota and was near the previously chosen site of the diocesan convention in St. Cloud. Excellent ecumenical relations between the diocese and the abbey have existed for some years.

Walt Gordon

## **Coping with California Fires**

"It was literally raining ashes — we couldn't see the sun all day." That's how the Rev. Tom Sandy, rector of St. George's Church, Laguna Hills, Calif., described what it looked like on the day after fires broke out around Los Angeles in late October.

At St. George's Academy, the church's three-year-old school, the staff was answering children's questions, such as if God caused the fires or why he allowed them. The fifth graders at the school of 300 students found something spiritually redemptive in the moment, when they went outside and collected ashes to be used on Ash Wednesday next spring. Fr. Sandy said it was a poignant illustration for the children to learn how God will bring new life out of death.

Fires burned to the east and the west of Laguna Hills. Parishioners at St. George's had taken in some people who were unable to get back to their homes in the affected areas. The principal was staying at the home of the church's assistant rector. While Fr. Sandy talked on the phone to a reporter, someone who walked into the room he was in called "Our house is OK!" Others would wait to learn of the condition of their homes.

Three churches in the Diocese of Los Angeles reported that the brush fires, rapidly whipped into major blazes by the Santa Ana winds, were visible from their windows and have seriously affected many of their parishioners.

The Rev. Raymond Fleming, rector of St. Mary's Church, Laguna Beach, said that his building was two blocks below the fire line. "We're right downtown, which is what they're trying to save," he said. "The fire circled the town." He said he was trying to contact people and assess the situation, but that most people had been evacuated. "It's a ghost city," he said. He estimated 200-400 homes lost in the first 24 hours.

Dimity Nelson, parish secretary at St. Mark's, Altadena, said she could see the fire going "up the hills to Sierra Madre." The church's day school had been closed since noon of Oct. 27, when the police and fire departments requested that the area be kept clear of traffic, and smoke and ash had made breathing difficult. Many people had been evacuated, she said; one house had been destroyed and more than 100 had been damaged. Ms.

• More News, p. 12 •

Nelson said many of those evacuated had come to stay at the church until they learned whether it was safe to return to their homes, and had then gone to stay with family and friends.

Most calls to St. Mark's on Thursday were from people offering help, Ms. Nelson said. "There's great outpouring of help and concern," she said.

"The mountains are right in our face," Ms. Nelson said. "Our street is the last stoplight before the foothills." Being able to see the flames was less scary than the day before. "When you couldn't see a thing — then you knew it was headed our way," she said.

As are many in his congregation, the Rev. Michael Bamberger is a volunteer firefighter in Sierra Madre; Ascension Church is the command center. He, too, watched the fire "right above us — about four blocks away." Earlier, Fr. Bamberger had functioned as logistics chief for the command center. Then he was 10-15 feet from the flames, directing line operations. "This fire was unusual," he said. "Fires here usually move from east to west. This one moved west to east, up into the mountains."

Sierra Madre knows how to cope. Fr. Bamberger said, "We were the epicenter of the earthquake in 1991."

## BRIEFLY

An openly gay man, James B. Robertson, was **ordained to the vocational diaconate** Oct. 9 by the Rt. Rev. Allen L. Bartlett, Bishop of Pennsylvania. About a dozen protestors were present at the service at St. Asaph's Church, Bala Cynwyd. "You will hurt the Diocese of Pennsylvania if you do this," said the Rev. David L. Moyer, rector of Good Shepherd, Rosemont, to Bishop Bartlett, during the point of the service where objections may be raised. "There is no impediment to what we are about to do," Bishop Bartlett responded.

The Rt. Rev. Garshong Allotey Okine was elected Archbishop of the Church of the **Province of West Africa** on Oct. 8. Bishop Okine is Bishop of Koforidua, Ghana. He succeeds the late Archbishop George Browne, who died last spring.

# **Mystery of Incarnation**

THE MORALS AND THE MEAN-ING OF JESUS: Reflections on the Hard Sayings. By Nicholas Peter Harvey. Pilgrim. Pp. 114. \$11.95 paper.

**THE COMPLETE GOSPELS**. Edited by **Robert J. Miller**. Polebridge (19678 Eighth St. E., Sonoma, CA 95476). Pp. xvi and 432. No price given, paper.

FOLLOWING JESUS: First Steps on the Way. By Harold Percy. Anglican Book Centre (600 Jarvis St., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4Y 2J6). Pp. 128. No price given, paper.

**COURAGEOUS INCARNATION: In Intimacy, Work, Childhood and Aging**. By **Fredrica Harris Thompsett**. Cowley. Pp. 158. \$10.95 paper.

In ach of these books, while taking a different approach, attempts to shed light on the great mystery at the center of Christian faith, the Incarnation. The power of the Incarnation permeates all life, and these authors take great pains to demonstrate that not only Christmas Day, but every day, should be an Incarnation festival.

In exploring the depths of the Incarnation mystery, we logically turn first to the Bible, particularly to the New Testament, which gloriously fulfills what is promised in the Old. A new translation of a portion of the New Testament is found in *The Complete Gospels*, a rendering of the canonical and extracanonical gospels in idiomatic American English. This translation is free of any ecclesiastical controls, so its contents are entirely at the discretion of the project's scholars and editorial staff.

From the first page of *The Complete Gospels*' preface, it is clear that this is to be quite a different translation than those with which we are familiar, as it purports to make itself "truly contemporary" by ridding the scriptures of "misleading and anachronistic renderings" (such as "Kingdom of God," "Lord," and "angel") and "the sexist bias inherent in English pronouns."

While the desire to make scripture (and therefore the Incarnate Lord) more

### By AMY JILL STRICKLAND

accessible linguistically is a commendable one, *The Complete Gospels* is, at best, awkward and, at worst, deeply disturbing. This awkwardness and distress is not that normally associated with the very difficult tasks to which each of us is called by Christ — the wrenching realization that discipleship is not an easy path. Instead, what is most disconcerting is the depiction of a Christ barely recognizable as the God we worship. Consider, involves: "Love of God, love of self, and love of one another are indivisible." Therefore, just as it is impossible to love God and hate your brother, it is also impossible to love God and hate yourself. Fr. Percy, author of *Following Jesus*, echoes the same sentiment when he equates "[a]n affront to the dignity of [a] human being" to "an affront to God in whose image we are created."

Quite often, these affronts are in the

God with us

for example, the words of John 1:14 in *The Complete Gospels*:

"The divine word and wisdom became human and made itself at home among us. We have seen its majesty, majesty appropriate to a Father's only son, brimming with generosity and truth."

The poetic tone of St. John is completely lost and the Incarnate "He" of Jesus is reduced to an "It." Most importantly, there are serious theological objections to the concept of Jesus as being "at home" during his earthly stay. Our home is in heaven, with God; therefore, it is quite impossible that Christ could ever have been "at home" here. *The Complete Gospels* also includes extracanonical gospels which have been condemned by the Church Fathers as Gnostic heresy:

There have been other books published recently which, in differing measures, deal with both the joyous aspects of incarnation theology and the responsibilities involved in working to be faithful to it.

Morals and the Meaning of Jesus concentrates on the issue of general Christian morality. The author's conclusion is "If anything in the moral sphere is distinctive of Christianity it is not some ethical doctrine, superior or otherwise, but a living hope." This hope must obviously run the gamut from Mary's "yes," to Christ's prayer of acceptance in Gethsemane. It is this hope which is the first step in following the Incarnate Lord, the first step in "the moral project of becoming fully human."

However, Dr. Harvey does not gloss over the real pain this growing process area of sexuality, when the gift of a loving God is used destructively and not as a bond of trust and intimacy. Of course, through the Incarnation, God redeems sexuality as he redeems all created humanity. In the words of Fredrica Thompsett, author of *Courageous Incarnation*: "A God Who through the Incarnation reinforces the understanding that our bodies are good, is a God Who intends sexuality as one of numerous sources of pleasure, celebration and nurture."

However, what the Incarnation has not done, despite some popular argument to the contrary, is to make all physical activity acceptable. As Fr. Percy warns: "Our appetites are insatiable." No insatiable appetite is positive except a longing for God, not even an insatiable appetite for love. This type of longing only brings misery, for it is constantly restless and never fulfilled. The Incarnation also does not permit passive acceptance of abuse or indignity.

The assumption is that following Christ and growing into full stature as a Christian still means being in the world and yet not of it. It means being obedient to Christ's call to feed his lambs, even if this call means appearing "abnormal." As Dr. Harvey writes: "The will of God has to do with the calling and nurturing into full, vibrant life of people used to being at most half-alive, so that any awakening is liable to be drastic and the call for it shockingly at odds with what normally passes for normality." This approach is reminiscent of the words of Dag Hammarskjold: "The courage not to betray

(Continued on page 21)

Amy Jill Strickland resides in Washington, D.C. and has written a number of book reviews for THE LIVING CHURCH.

# Christmas Books for Children

### By MABEL BENSON DU PRIEST

## "Christmas just won't be Christmas without any presents!"

S o exclaims Jo March, in the first line of *Little Women*. But we know that she and her sisters did receive gifts: On Christmas morning there was a book for each one. For many of us, no matter what else we may hope to get or plan to give, Christmas just isn't Christmas without at least one book. So, for the season, here is a selection of holiday books.

**THE GOLDEN PEAR.** Written and illustrated by **Helen Ward. Ideals.** Unpaginated. \$4.95 paper.

The wizard's quest for the golden pear leads to the riches of friendship and community. The tale weaves the power and magic of the wizard with the coziness of a fisherman who befriends him; and the travels of the golden pear, drawn by a magic stronger than that of the wizard, provide an Aladdin-like series of adventures with bird and fish and shipwreck. The illustrations in this little book are particularly charming: The magician looks like the real thing, dressed in pointed hat and robe covered with stars and moons; the fishing villages look like tiny English sea-side towns. A pleasanter scene than the wizard and the fisherman. feet in front of the fire, tea kettle on to boil, can hardly be imagined.

**TODAY IS CHRISTMAS!** Written and illustrated by **P.K. Hallinan. Ideals.** Unpaginated. \$3.95 paper.

This book celebrates — in pictures and verse — all the favorite activities of Christmas: shopping, visiting Santa, choosing a Christmas tree, placing the Christmas decorations throughout the house, greeting carolers, attending the candlelight service — all the things that lead up to the excitement and anticipation of Christmas Eve and the celebration of Christmas Day. The verses are short and lively, creating a fast-paced, cheerful tone, and the illustrations are reminscent of the Charles Schulz style. A good book for Christmas reading aloud.

### MY CHRISTMAS STAR and MY CHRISTMAS ANGEL. By Sarah Reid Chisholm. Illustrations by Michelle Neavill. Augsburg. Unpaginated. \$5.99 each, paper.

These are both hide-and-seek stories, and are parallel narratives. My Christmas Star is a story of disappointment overcome. The speaker, a little boy, wants a special part in the Christmas play at church. He tries out for it, and gets it, but on the night of the performance is too sick to take part. However, his mother, who had given him a special Christmas star, for which they - and the reader have a hide-and-seek game every day, makes up for his disappointment when she says," 'You're my star.' " In the companion book, a little girl's father hides an angel doll, for which she and the reader look every day, in the midst of Christmas activities and decorations. As the story ends, her father tells her about the special care God's angels take of us, and that she is his angel.

## COUNTRY CHRISTMAS. Ideals. Pp. 160.

The sort of compilation Ideals is noted for. Exquisite photographs pair up with Christmas poetry and short prose pieces — some fiction, some giving the lore and legends of Christmas. Some craft instruction. Some "country" art work. Nostalgic, but cheerfully so.

### CHRISTMAS: The Annual of Christmas Literature and Art. Vol. 63. Augsburg. Unpaginated. \$12.99 paper.

Beginning with the biblical Christmas story, this compilation shows Christmas to be an event for all races and colors. The fiction, the recipes, the articles, the illustrations: All of the contents adheres



to the theme of the Peaceable Kingdom. The texts are well-chosen; the illustrations are beautiful. A space at the end for keeping a record of your festivities. Whether you — or the person to whom this might be given — is a collector of these volumes, or someone waiting to be introduced to the series, this would be an enjoyable book.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL. By Charles Dickens. Illustrated by Stephen T. Johnson. Andrews and McMeel (4900 Main St., Kansas City, MO 64112). Pp. 48. \$14.95.

The ever-popular Dickens story as so many of us know it best, that is, adapted for the theater. This beautifully illustrated version is that used by the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, and celebrates the 150th anniversary of A Christmas Carol.

### HEAR THE ANGELS SING. Illustrated by Lynn Bywaters, Judith Ann Griffith, Jennifer St. Denis. Ideals. Unpaginated. \$13.95.

À lovely little collection of favorite carols, and some not as well known, all of them unified by references to the songs of the angels. The book prints the text of the carol and provides an illustration of it on the facing page. Illustrations that are vivid, yet delicate and provide a wide variety of depictions. One illustration shows a procession of angels through a winter woodland scene, accompanied by blue jay and rabbit. "Silent Night" features an angel keeping watch over a scene of peace and quietness, a scene of sheep on soft snowy hills, and gentle cottages with vellow lamplight and curling smoke. Perhaps most imaginative is the depiction of "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," in which the rays of the Christmas star be-

(Continued on page 24)

Mabel Benson Du Priest teaches English at Carthage College in Kenosha, Wis.

# **An Anglican** Writer's Wide Appeal

**Dorothy Sayers** is regarded as a defender of the faith and role model for contemporary women

### By ALZINA STONE DALE

The British mystery writer, poet, playwright, translator of Dante and Christian apologist has been well remembered during her centennial year with new publications and special events. On June 13, her 100th birthday, a festival Evensong was held at St. James' Cathedral, Chicago. The program stated "In honoring Dorothy Leigh Sayers, we are also honoring all the women, past, present and future, who play critical but often unappreciated roles in the church."

A weekend dedicated to celebrating

Alzina Stone Dale resides in Chicago, Ill., and reviews books for THE LIVING CHURCH.

Dorothy L. Sayers' first 100 years was held in Madison, Wis., Sept 24-26. Organized by the mystery bookstore Booked for Murder and the local chapter of Sisters in Crime, the conference was entirely produced by the volunteer efforts of Sayers' admirers from the United States, Great Britain and Canada. Over 150 people attended, among them scholars, editors, publishers, mystery writers and fans, to share three days of programs dealing with the many-faceted career of Dorothy L. Sayers.

British scholar Barbara Reynolds, the friend who completed Sayers' translation of Dante's Divine Comedy, was guest of honor and keynote speaker. She drew from her new biography of Sayers, Dorothy L. Sayers, Her Life and Soul. Dr. Reynolds is now at work on a definitive edition of Sayers' letters.

H.R.F. Keating, president of the London-based Detection Club and himself a prize-winning mystery writer and critic, spoke about the club and Sayers' contributions to its success. The club's "Oath of Initiation" was written by Sayers, based upon the Order of Holy Baptism from the Book of Common Prayer. Keating's wife, actress Sheila Mitchell, gave an arresting performance of a play on the life of Sayers, called "The Heart of

## **Selected Bibliography**

Dorothy L. Sayers' published mysteries and short stories are all in print (e.g., THE NINE TAILORS, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich) as is her Penguin Dante translation, her radio cycle THE MAN BORN TO BE KING (Ignatius), her two comedies published as LOVE ALL (Kent State University), THE MIND OF THE MAKER with an introduction by Madeleine L'Engle (Harper).

Many of Sayers' essays, plays and speeches no longer are in print, while her letters are in the process of being edited for publication. But there is a recent new collection of Sayers', **DOROTHY L. SAYERS, SPIRITU-**AL WRITINGS by Ann Loades (Cowley) and William Griffin's THE WHIMSICAL CHRISTIAN has others (Macmillan).

Recent secondary works about Sayers include:

THE REMARKABLE CASE OF DOROTHY L. SAYERS, by Catherine Kenney (Kent State University). **DOROTHY L. SAYERS: A Careless** Rage for Life, by David Coomes (Lion).

**DOROTHY L. SAYERS: Her Life** and Soul, by Barbara Reynolds (St. Martin's).

DOROTHY L. SAYERS, THE CENTENARY **CELEBRATION** (Walker).

WRITING A WOMAN'S LIFE, by Carolyn G. Heilbrun (Norton).



**Dorothy Sayers** 

Mystery," written by Catherine Kenney, author of The Remarkable Case of Dorothy L. Sayers.

Other conference panels included discussions of Sayers' most famous mysteries, Caudy Night and The Nine Tailors and lectures on Sayers' theological views and her use of the medieval. The conference drew a number of well-known mystery writers, including Anne Perry, the Keatings, Bill Love, Mary Monica Pulver, Gaylord Larsen, Dorothy Cannell, Audrey Peterson, Barbara D'Amato and Medora Sale.

Barbara Sloan Hendershott read Sayers' well-known essay "Are Women Human?" and Marjorie L. Mead, curator of the Wade Center at Wheaton College, showed slides and talked about the center's extensive Sayers collection. Prof. Keith Yandell from the philosophy department of the University of Wisconsin spoke about Sayers' The Mind of the *Maker*, for which Madeleine L'Engle recently wrote a new introduction.

On Saturday afternoon a choral Evensong was held at St. Andrew's Church. In a brief, eloquent homily, the Rev. Julian V. Hills, assistant at St. Mark's, Milwaukee, and associate professor of theology at Marquette University, compared Sayers

(Continued on page 16)

# EDITORIALS.

## **International Gratitude**

E ach year at Thanksgiving, we offer thanks to God, especially for the gracious blessings given to this nation in our freedom, our prosperity, and the material abundance of our food. Hopefully, we pray for the right use of these benefits.

Meanwhile, we may remember to give thanks for God's many blessings to other nations too, and pray for the right use and distribution, especially of food.

Although observed on different dates, a harvest festival has been and is observed in different lands, and we join in giving thanks with brothers and sisters in many places. In Canada it was on Oct. 11. In continental Europe, St. Martin of Tours Day (Nov. 11) has been so observed in some places since medieval times. The Rev Paul T. Bradshaw, an Anglican professor at Notre Dame University, has recently brought it to light that the first recorded American Thanksgiving, in 1621, was not simply a fortunate notion of the so-called Pilgrim Fathers. After leaving England, some of these settlers, before coming to the New World, had lived for several years in the Netherlands, where the old thanksgiving in November was still observed.

Thus there is an older and wider linkage to our American feast. We stand, with the rest of humanity, whether different people know it or not, before the God from whom comes every good and perfect gift.

## **Entertaining Reading**

This year, and this issue of our magazine in particular, brings an awareness of the life and work of British novelist, mystery writer and theological essayist Dorothy L. Sayers. Celebrations — literary and religious — have marked her centennial, as do a number of new books. Both these conferences and the publications remind us of the breadth of accomplishment of such a writer as Dorothy Sayers, one who entertained the world with her detective, Lord Peter Wimsey, and her plays and stories, and one who was increasingly drawn to things theological. She was a woman also concerned with the integrity of women in the modern world.

The reviews and reports in this Christmas Book and Gift Issue highlight some of her contributions to literature and to the church. But our reviewers offer us many other inviting titles to consider as gifts to others at Christmas time, or as gifts to ourselves. For each good book itself brings the gift of pleasure, knowledge, perhaps laughter, and inspiration. Maybe even wisdom. And every good book is a subtle reminder, in its own small way, of the great gifts of pleasure, knowledge, perhaps laughter, inspiration, and wisdom from God.

## Importance of Scripture

This week is being proclaimed in some parts of the country as the 53rd annual National Bible Week. Most Episcopalians are unaware of this observance, which is sponsored by the Laymen's National Bible Association. It follows by a week the well-known collect in the Book of Common Prayer: "Blessed Lord, who caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning..."

The sponsoring organization says the purpose of National Bible Week is "to motivate Americans to do more Bible reading and study and to reaffirm the biblical founding principles of our nation."

It is obvious that in recent years more Bible reading and study is being done by Episcopalians. From meetings of the House of Bishops to diocesan conventions to the smallest congregations, small group Bible studies are being used as elements of gatherings of Episcopalians everywhere. We salute the Laymen's National Bible Association, which has an Episcopalian, Thomas R. May, as its executive director, and we hope our readers will take seriously the words of last week's collect, to "read, mark, learn and inwardly digest" holy scripture.

### VIEWPOINT

## There's Room for Everyone at the Lord's Table

### By ALANSON B. HOUGHTON

hen I am hungry, food is all that matters; manners take a back seat. I need the hand, the help, of a provider.

If I walk into your house during a meal, an invitation probably will be offered, without question as to my pedigree or preparation or personal beliefs. There is something about people gathered around a common table which breaks down such barriers, and encourages greater understanding and sharing.

When I am asked out to a breakfast, lunch, or dinner party, I feel honored, special, accepted, wanted. Be it a restaurant or in a home, sharing a meal is a special way of showing we care, and are cared about. It is a "communion" in the broadest sense of that word.

Jesus sat down with 12 friends to share a Passover meal the night before he died. Among them was one betrayer, one denier and 10 deserters. All were Jews. One had been "baptized." The rest were sinners. But the meal went on anyway and became the *raison d'etre*, the foundation, the model for the Christian Eucharist, the Holy Communion, the Mass, the Rite, the Lord's Supper.

If the church's tables were full, there might be a rationale for handing out meal tickets. But they are not. If we (the church) had been told to limit those at the table of the Lord to those who passed some litmus test, then I could maybe better understand the keeping of some from eating. But Jesus made no such rules or put on no such restrictions.

We have taken this simple and holy (Continued on page 17)

The Rev. Alanson B. Houghton is a retired priest who lives in Charleston, S.C.

# Good News The Simple Truth of the Gospel

(First of a six-part series) By RUSSELL J. LEVENSON, JR.

## The main thing, is to keep the main thing, the main thing.

arlier this year, I traveled with several undergraduates from the University of the South to innercity New Orleans. We served as tutors for several children in some of the worst of learning and living environments. One day, while walking down a hall, I saw a prominently hung poster inscribed with the above words. This simple message seemed to be a real "anchor" for many in the midst of a world of chaos.

For me, the poster had a great deal of ecclesiastical and theological significance. As a "cradle" Episcopalian, I have watched our limb of the body of Christ become increasingly tangled in complex issues with a decreasing ability to reach clarity or decision. While Episcopal Christians do share a rich heritage to-

The Rev. Russell J. Levenson, Jr., is associate rector of St. Luke's Church, Birmingham, Ala. gether, it would be foolish to say we have reached a point where we reflect the love and truth of Christ to the world. News from General Convention and diocesan conventions seems to portray a church paralyzed by disorder, disunity and even disrespect. We have smothered ourselves in difficult issues and yet have not had the courage or the energy to emerge with some consensus. We would be wise to heed the words of Ecclesiastes, "God made man simple; man's complex problems are of his own devising" (7:30).

This does not mean we should not be dealing with the innumerable complex problems that face our church and our world. I believe, however, and often suffer from believing, that the call to be *loving* and *inclusive* means trying to please too many people on too many fronts. In our attempt to be "relevant," we have become increasingly irrelevant. We have fallen into the trap of believing that to reach the world we must act and speak as the world.

In recent years, we have seen an increasing concern and energy for dealing with the shape of the Episcopal Church. The Decade of Evangelism, the March, 1992, statement from the House of Bishops on leadership, the Baltimore Decla-



ration, the East Tennessee Initiative, the "Shaping our Future Symposium," and the recent Mission 2000 Conference have all been attempts to bring together faithful Christians to try to look past

I have heard a clarion call from people to respond to the basic hungers of the heart.

complexity into our roots so we are able to proclaim the good news to the world. These are good signs, but we have far to go. Whether we like it or not, much of what Jesus has to say to us is simple. Author Richard Foster reminds us in his *Celebration of Discipline*, "Simplicity is freedom. Duplicity is bondage."

It is in the spirit of reflection on these thoughts that the editor has allowed me to offer a series of articles on four pivotal calls to the individual Christian and the body of Christ as a whole. These foundational calls are to confession, conversion, discipleship and evangelism. I will offer a concluding meditation on the person of Jesus and the power of his life and message.

My experience includes ministry to children through adults, college chaplaincy, urban and suburban ministry, small and large parishes. Across the board, I have heard a clarion call from people to respond to the basic, simple hungers of the heart. I pray the articles that follow will deal directly with that hunger. These brief reflections are by no means academic or definitive. However, this active layman turned priest hopes they will add to the discussions that seek to bring clarity and truth to a church on the brink of great and hope-filled change.

In the end, perhaps I will have helped enable some to "keep the main thing, the main thing."

Next week: The Call to Confession



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### SAYERS

### (continued from page 12)

with King Solomon in mutual understanding that God's transcendence and immanence are two aspects of our relationship with him.

In assessing the Sayers' legacy, it becomes obvious that she had a kind of double-sided significance: she is at once a defender of the faith, someone for whom the survival of Western civilization, G.K. Chesterton's Christendom, is crucial; but at one and the same time she continues to be a role model for contemporary women, some of whom share her Christian faith, some of whom do not. One and all, however, by reading and re-reading Dorothy L. Sayers, keep alive an understanding of the mere Christianity she was born to defend while understanding that it was Christ himself who declared that "women are human."

The simple marker in Somerville College at her beloved Oxford says it well:

- In Memoriam
- Dorothy Leigh Sayers
- Scholar of Somerville College

M.A. Oxon. Hon. D. Litt. Durham

Born 1893. Died 1957.

"Praise Him that He Hath made man in His own image, a maker and Craftsman like Himself."

### **Entertaining Writer**

**DOROTHY L. SAYERS: Her Life** and Soul. By Barbara Reynolds. St. Martin's. Pp. ix and 390. \$25.95.

Dorothy L. Sayers is familiar to many as the author of the Lord Peter Wimsey mysteries. She wrote much more — plays, poems, theological articles, translations, literary criticism. She was also a prolific letter writer.

Born is 1893, the only daughter of an English priest, Sayers grew up in a household of adults where she was encouraged to learn and provided with plenty of opportunities for creativity and self-expression. She was observant and interested in people, developing many lifelong friendships. She was in constant contact with her family and friends, using letters the way the telephone is used today.

Utilizing these letters, Barbara Reynolds brings to life her close friend, letting Sayers speak for herself. As Sayers is, for the most part, open and loquacious, her letters provide an accurate portrait at each step of her life. Reynolds rounds out this portrait in many ways, including letters Sayers received, letters about Sayers, conversations with people who knew her and various of Sayers' other writings. "Despite [Sayers'] vehement protestations to the contrary, all her writings...are deeply and consistently personal."

Her writing career was altered in 1935. George Ball, dean of Canterbury Cathedral, had brought drama back into the church as part of the Canterbury Festival, and Sayers was invited to write for the festival. "The Zeal of the House" was the first of the plays Sayers wrote for this festival. Much of the writing she did following that time was of a religious nature and she approached it with a "combination of intellectual light and spiritual ardour."

This is a wonderful book for just about everyone. For the Lord Peter Wimsey fan, Reynolds points out people, events, experiences in Sayers' life that show up in her mysteries; it gives a whole different view of these stories, prompting a second look at those books. For the fans of biographies, Reynolds tells the story of a fascinat-

## **Dorothy Sayers**

### was a multi-

## faceted woman.

ing woman, well-written and welldocumented by a writer interested in ensuring the reader knows the whole person. For the Anglo-Catholic, the book documents Sayers' growing interest in theology, discussing many of her theological writings and her exchanges with other theological writers of the time, including C.S. Lewis.

Dorothy L. Sayers was a multifaceted woman, well worth knowing. Reynolds provides an excellent introduction which is exactly that — an introduction which whetted my appetite to read more Sayers.

C.A. MATZAT Lake Mills, Wis.

### **VIEWPOINT** (Continued from page 13)

and special meal, this communion with him and with each other, and turned it into a segregated, societal, "special event" that requires the ticket of baptism, and/or membership in a particular denomination, or regular participation in the sacraments, or more reasons why one should not be allowed at the table than why they should.

I went to a Thanksgiving Day service a couple of years ago where the Episcopal priest made the following announcements, back to back. "Anyone who is a baptized Christian and who regularly receives the sacrament in their own parish is welcome to receive it here this morning..." "Following the service, there will be a Thanksgiving dinner served in the parish hall. Everyone is welcome!"

In other words, you are not welcome at Jesus' table unless this or that, but you are welcome afterward regardless of this or that. That doesn't make any sense.

I agree people should take the sacrament, the invitation to our Lord's table, seriously. But even though most are baptized, some are not. Even though regular participation is better, periodic attendance is better than none at all.

I can remember wondering about a slightly tipsy man in a dinner jacket kneeling at the altar on Christmas Eve with his hands outstretched. I'd never seen him before. As I put the host in his hand, he looked me in the eye and said with a smile, "thank you." It struck me at that moment, how dare I question one's

## I keep thinking what Jesus would do.

acceptance by Jesus, one's condition, appearance, attendance record or whatever. It was his table, not mine. He'd invited all mankind, not just those whom I knew or approved of. It was a humbling moment, and one I'll not forget.

Often persons who have strayed from the church, or are looking or seeking for the first time will stick their head in and look and listen for some encouragement, or welcome. Scolding them or segregating them or refusing them a place at Jesus' table will drive them away, often for good. Remember who was at that table in the Upper Room. Would you let them in your church? Would you invite them to the altar?

I keep thinking what Jesus would do. I can't be certain, but I am convinced he would include all who wanted to come in and sit down and share in this holy meal. Feed people first. Talk with them second. Welcome them into that wonderful fellowship of sinners who, week after week, join their Lord at supper, and share with him in the sacrament of love, the food and drink of life.

I belong to an Episcopal parish which is composed of Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists and some who have no formal church heritage. I think one of the compelling reasons we all attend this integrated church (racially as well as theologically) is we all feel welcome. There is no color nor denominational nor any other test given before one is fully accepted into our life. And every Sunday the following announcement is made and meant: "Everyone is welcome in our church, and at our altar."

I think that is what Jesus intended. Everyone is asked to supper. Everyone is welcome. Everyone is equal in God's eyes. Everyone shares in his love. Everyone is given a chance, an opportunity, a place at his table.

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### BOOKS

### (Continued from page 6)

vorably compared with Flannery O'Connor as a Southern writer, and these stories support the comparison.

The collection represents the short fiction of about 40 years of the author's adult life. In his foreword, Price says "To sort old stories is to meet selves, lost or longsince abandoned... The man who wrote half these stories is no longer me, but I was once him." He explores life, death, love, joy and sorrow in stories dealing with subjects as old as marriage and as contemporary as AIDS.

Tender, poignant, moving, profound, his stories range from childhood jealousies and reconciliation ("Troubled Sleep") to the after death dream meeting of a man with his mother ("This Wait"). In the latter, he writes, "Any hand that took my agonized mother, who died enraged with her reason gone, and made her new and sent her to greet me, surely means me well at the absolute least . . ." In "The Golden Child," the narrator, who resented his mother's love for her dead niece through his childhood, turns his resentment to desire to ease that child's painful death by offering the pain he suffers after major surgery.

Price is especially moving in exploring pre-adolescent boyhood, father-son relationships, and the complexities of black/ white relationships in the post-Civil War South. His stories of several ancient black people who had been part of his family for generations can be revelation to Northerners.

Although most of the stories are set in the South, some relate experiences in England, Israel, and a Navajo reservation. They deserve to be savored slowly, one at a time. Price challenges his readers to serious thinking, but he never lectures.

He writes of the short story that it "is the prose narrator's nearest approach to music ... the lean lament or ballad of hunger, delight, revulsion or praise," and that his stories are "driven by heat passion and mystery," an accurate description of this book.

> HELEN D. HOBBS Salem, Ind.

### Yearning for Home

**SON OF LAUGHTER.** By **Frederick Buechner.** HarperSanFrancisco. Pp. 288. \$19.

Son of Laughter reflects the three central themes found in almost everything Frederick Buechner has written: the importance of an individual's spiritual journey, the importance of family, and the importance of home.

This novel is Buechner's retelling of the Jacob-Joseph story. As a Presbyterian minister, he believes that the minister's most important task is preaching and that the best of all preaching is the retelling of the old story, "modernizing the myth" in his own words. But in this work he does not modernize; rather, he expands and embellishes. Although he elaborates on the narrative, he does nothing to change its message.

Why would someone familiar with the straightforward biblical account wish to read this 274-page novel? For Buechner's



use <u>of language</u>. For his riveting attention to embellished detail, for the poetry which the story becomes in his hands.

In the novel, Jacob recalls his brother Esau: "He was either weeping on your neck or threatening to wring it, either roaring with delight or looking as if he was about to hang himself. My mother agreed that he was simple-minded. Laughter loved him." Laughter here and in the title refers to Jacob, Jacob in Hebrew meaning laughter.

There is perhaps no chapter so tender as that which marks the end of the journey, that which describes Jacob's reunion with his son Joseph. The biblical narrative tells it directly and simply: "Then Joseph made ready his chariot and went up to meet Israel his father in Goshen; and he presented himself to him, and fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while." For some time now in the novel, Buechner has been writing from the persona of Joseph, but at this point, the story's end, he takes the reader inside Jacob's mind and allows him to see that reunion through the old man's eyes: "I saw him coming toward me through the grass. Joseph. I saw his hands. They wore the king's ring on his finger. All that my lips could speak at first were unshaped air. He did not speak. His hands were on my arms. I said, 'Now let me die, since my eyes have seen your face'."

Jacob's journey complete, he takes comfort in knowing that Joseph will carry him back for burial with his ancestors and that he will be buried not as Jacob but as Israel. "He who has Wrestled with God and with Men and has Prevailed is the name's meaning, the Fear said." The gentleness with which Joseph tends his

dying father and with which, as Jacob had prayed, he closes his dead father's eyes and prepares to return him to his homeland for burial, bring the story full circle.

In much of the literature of the medieval and renaissance eras, the necessity for making a long trip was directly connected to sin. The rigors of the trip were frequently forms of purification, and the destination was reward. Our following in the footsteps of Jacob and Joseph takes us through much of the same process. The sacred journey of Jacob and Joseph is a part of our journey, too. And our careful re-reading of their story reminds us of the importance of our own family, both our life family and our spiritual family, and of our own yearning for home.

> C. JERIEL HOWARD Chicago, Ill.

### **Sophisticated Volume**

A DICTIONARY OF BIBLICAL TRA-DITION IN ENGLISH LITERA-TURE. By David Lyle Jeffrey, general editor. Eerdmans. Pp. xxxii and 960. \$79.99.

Anyone familiar with the world of literature knows how frequently it resonates with biblical themes. Even if many

of us are unfamiliar with scriptural detail, we at least recognize that Captain Ahab of Herman Melville's Moby Dick stems from the Israelite king of that name, that Archibald MacLeish's I.B. is an effort to modernize the book of Job, and that Thomas Hobbes' great political treatise Leviathan is rooted in the Old Testament beast of mythical proportions. Yet there are literally thousands of biblical allusions that escape us.

David Lyle Jeffrey of the University of Ottawa has come to our rescue in an extraordinary volume, one containing several hundred articles dealing with how English and American authors have dealt with biblical themes. Sixteen years in the making, the volume draws upon 160 scholars. Some articles deal with individuals: others cover place names. Certain poetic phrases are discussed (e.g., "Bone of My Bone," "House Divided Against Itelf") as are certain proper nouns (e.g., Dove, Night, Water) and abstract concepts (e.g., Faith, Fall, Incarnation). At the end of the volume, there are lengthy articles dealing with biblical studies, the history of biblical interpretation, and biblical tradition in English literature.

A single entry can be taken as exemplifying the volume's sophistication. Within the article "Burning Bush," there is mention of Augustine, Ambrose, Gregory of Nyssa, Anthony of Padua, John Donne, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, John Greenleaf Whittier, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Flannery O'Connor, Aldous Huxley, D.H. Lawrence and James Joyce.

This is an excellent volume for clergy and laity alike, to be appreciated by those who delight in the Word and in the many works of literature derived from it.

> **JUSTUS D. DOENECKE** New College of the University of South Florida Sarasota, Fla.

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(Continued on next page)



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### BOOKS

(Continued from previous page) for the divine, and we know the Bible has inspired numerous poets through the ages. Volume 1 of the projected two-volume set covers most of the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament and seeks to present a comprehensive collection of poems inspired by verses and themes from this part of holy scripture. The text flows chronologically from Genesis through Malachi, quoting a particular scriptural passage, following with the poem in English which takes its inspiration from those verses. The work is indexed by titles, first lines and poets.

For example, the Fourth Book of Moses, called Numbers (13:17-27) is quoted, followed by "The Bunch of Grapes," with its references to Canaan and the Red Sea, by the well-known poet-priest of the 17th century, George Herbert. I should add that I was also pleased that Deut. 27:2-3 prefaced Herbert's poem, "The Altar," though I was slightly disappointed that I Kings 6:7 was not also referenced for the line, "No workman's tool hath touched the same."

Yet the book is wonderfully rich in its inclusions and shows quite clearly that biblical allusions, paraphrases and inspiration are not confined to the past but continue into our time. The anthology includes poetry back to the 14th century, but, thankfully, includes modern poets such as Dylan Thomas, William Carlos Williams, e.e. cummings, and Marianne Moore; as well as contemporary poets such as Derek Walcott, Denise Levertov, and one of my favorites, Philip Levine. Jonah 3:1-4:4 has occasioned several fine poems, one by Randall Jarrell and a marvelous one: "In a Blind Garden," by David Shapiro, which begins: "The whale/is a room/A light blue room/a blind garden . . ."

Let me end where I began: Thank you, Oxford.

(The Rev.) Travis Du Priest Book Editor

### **Profound Mystery**

### THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL: A Meditation on Fathers, Brothers and Sons. By Henri J.M. Nouwen. Doubleday. Pp 142. \$25.

The Return of the Prodigal is Henri Nouwen at his best, not that his writing is ever mediocre. Some of us do not read Nouwen. We wrestle with Nouwen, with ourselves, and with God.

The Return of the Prodigal begins for Nouwen when he sees Rembrandt's painting, the Prodigal Son, on a poster at the Trosly community of L'Arche. Just returning from an exhausting lecture tour, Nouwen was deeply moved as he looked at the reproduction. Later he is able to travel to Catherine the Great's Hermitage in St. Petersburg to spend some hours sitting before the original.

From notes, conversations, research and Nouwen's own peculiar brand of selfconfrontation, *The Return of the Prodigal* offers a profound opening of the mystery of God's love. Like the father of the Prodigal, God awaits our surrender to



God's generosity and to God's call to receive authority to be children of God.

One will, of course, look for the theme of repentance and amendment of life. It is not to be found in this book. Like C.S. Lewis' A Grief Observed, one does not necessarily find what one wants and expects. Lewis faced his grief and accepted the hopelessness of a return to life as it had been. Nouwen tells of a love which engulfs us and which also tolerates no return to life as it had been. However, this is more implied than stated. The focus is upon the love of God for each of us.

Nouwen mentions with disdain the idea of God as a stern judge who punishes sinners. The focus is on God's love. Yet, in this total immersion in God's love there is a total exclusion of all that is not God's love.

Students of the Bible will appreciate Nouwen's very thorough exegetical work. Word study and comparative study of scriptural parallels are provided. But the primary work is done in meditating upon God's love for us. Mention is made of cultural attitudes about inheritance. The author might have discussed Middle Eastern attitudes about sons remaining "in the father's home," even raising their own families in close proximity to the father's household.

Nevertheless, Nouwen stays with his subject: the unfailing and generous love of God. Plenty of work has been left for other writers to say about repentance and judgment of sinners, but they will have to say it in the light of the unfailing and boundless love of God the Father.

(The Rev.) CHARLES V. DAY St. George's Church Hellertown, Pa.

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### **INCARNATION**

### (Continued from page 10)

what is noblest in oneself is considered, at best, to be pride. And the critic finds his judgment confirmed when he sees consequences which, to him, must look very like the punishment for a mortal sin."

It is obvious that the Christianity espoused by both Fr. Percy and Dr. Harvey is religion that has become incarnate. It is religion which has flesh and bones and sweat and tears. It is not, however, becoming Christ, but following him. As Dr. Harvey states clearly: "I am seeking to draw attention to the difference between the attempt to be a moral replica of Jesus and the adventure of seeking to live your own life to the limit in the light of his story, supported by those who are caught up in the same task." Fr. Percy echoes this statement succinctly in the Introduction to Following Jesus: "At the very heart of the Christian faith and life stands the invitation of Jesus to 'come and follow me.''

Incarnation theology is also about living in community, and living in community means having to appreciate the dignity and potential goodness of humanity in all its creative actions and growing stages since, according to Dr. Thompsett: "Incarnation theology reveals a God who creates, risks, and embraces the fullness of human life."

Most important of Dr. Thompsett's gifts in her book is that she does not fall prey to the myth that body and soul are separate, with one being a cage for the other. By taking on human flesh, Christ has made our fragile bodies and the works of their hands worthy of reverence. Dr. Thompsett rejoices in the physical as it expresses the spiritual.

In Deut. 30:14, Moses addresses the people of Israel saying, "the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart." Moses spoke to the people in this way so that they could not claim distance from God as a reason for not keeping his commandments. Under the New Covenant, this saying from Deuteronomy takes on new dimensions, for the Word is Christ, who blesses our beings with his divine nature, in order that nothing which comes into contact with him remains unsanctified.

These authors combine to remind us that the Incarnation cannot be seen in any other light than this brilliant, extravagant one, since the Incarnation leads to the ultimate extravagance: the Crucifixion. Therefore, taking the Incarnation to heart inspires not only awe and wonder but great joy.



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\* . . . the 500 years that will come forth from this place today will be a community dedicated not to greed, not to violence, but to peace, to reconciliation, a community of hope, a community of trust, a community of love. We are here, brothers and sisters all, by the will of God to be such a community. We are blessed by God on this sacred day to embody that new beginning."

- The Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston, Bishop of Alaska

This program will air on the VISN Television Network. To find out what channel carries VISN in your community, contact your cable system.

You can order a VHS videocassette of this program for \$19.95 from Episcopal Parish Services, (800) 334-7626, extension 5412. Please specify "catalog number 50371." "Celebration of Survival" is a media resource from the Native American Ministries Office

and the Electronic Media Department of the Episcopal Church.



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In time for the Sayers centennial, this spritely publication from Cowley offers a fine collection of specifically spiritual writing by the famous English novelist, Dorothy Sayers, whose detective, Peter Wimsey, is much loved on both sides of the Atlantic. Includes excerpts from her dramas and essays, and, thankfully, a goodly number of her poems. I was very pleased with her verse, which I had not known before, especially "Hymn in Contemplation of Sudden Death." Compiled by the editor of the British journal, *Theelegy*, and reader in theology at the University of Durham (England).

PLAIN PRAYERS IN A COMPLI-CATED WORLD. By Avery Brooke. Cowley. Pp. 159. \$10.95 paper.

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TOUCHED BY ANGELS. By Eileen Elias Freeman. Warner. Pp. 204. \$14.95.

There's a renaissance of angel books in the publishing world. Several months ago, *Publishers Weekly* did a lengthy review of published and forthcoming books on angels. Some are linked to a particular tradition; some are New Age. This one collects stories of people who have had transforming encounters with angels. The author defines angels as "another race of sentient, intelligent beings, different from humans, far more ancient and powerful, wiser and more evolved" who were "created by God to serve the divine."

ILLUSTRATED CHRISTMAS CAR-OLS: Words and Music for Over 40 Traditional Songs. Arranged by Michael Haslam. Illustrated by Isabelle Brent. Clarkson Potter. Pp. 95. \$20.

Decorative borders around every 2-page spread and numerous illustrations, many of children, enhance this beautiful, hardbound collection. A sentence or two precedes each carol's text. For "The Birds Carol" — "In 1921 a Czech schoolgirl was heard singing this happy song in the hills of Bohemia and it was written down for the first time." Verses on left-hand pages, musical scores on right.



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STARLIGHT: Beholding the Christmas Miracle All Year Long. By John Shea. Crossroad. Pp. 192. \$10.95 paper.

Taking as his guiding image darkness and starlight, this storyteller uses the Christmas season as a lens to examine spirituality. He senses, properly, I think, that "the spiritual ambition of strange stories is to move the reader or listener with surface, physical consciousness . . . to deeper, spiritual consciousness." He's also a realist: Religion "glories in the little light it has but fears the great darkness that surrounds it."

### **SIMPLY CHRISTMAS 1993: Great Ideas for a Noncommercial Holiday.** By **Mary Thompson.** Walker. Pp. 100. \$5.95 paper.

A Christmas party to which people bring a toy for a needy or sick child. Prints from thrift shops or rummage sales. The recipe for herbed vinegar. Lots of interesting, usable ideas in this little book.

1994 HISTORIC EPISCOPAL CHURCHES ENGAGEMENT CAL-ENDAR. Edited by A. Margaret Landis. Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church (the Philadelphia Office of the Episcopal Church, 1201 Chestnut St., 12th Fl., Philadelphia, PA 19107). Unpaginated. No price given, paper, spiral bound.

A weekly engagement calendar with plenty of space to write notes and appointments on the righthand page, with a black and white photograph of a historic Episcopal church on the facing page. All 53 churches began from a sense of mission — they are delightful to look at and to read about in the short narrative underneath the pictures. As a descendant of several Manakin Towne settlers in Virginia, I am delighted to see the lovely Huguenot Manakin Church featured.

HISTORIC AMERICA: National Trust for Historic Preservation 1994 Engagement Calendar. Preservation (1785 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20036). Unpaginated. \$12.95, laminated and boxed.

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### FOR CHILDREN

(Continued from page 11)

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Dedicated to "all the world's animals," this little picture book gives us a good look at some not usually seen in the typical animal alphabet book; mandrills, vicuna, quetzels, to name three. In this charming book, each letter is pictured by the animal engaging in some holiday festivity: "Fireside Foxes festively fiddle." Illustrations are exuberant and humorous.

**LET'S GET READY FOR CHRIST-MAS.** By Sandra Myhr Anderson. Illustrated by Jeff Carnehl. Augsburg. Pp. 32. \$5.99 paper.

An activity book for preschool children. Included are instructions for crafts and also activities (games and puppet plays). Each week in Advent focuses on a particular theme based on a Bible story. Used in a home or in a class, this book would provide a good framework for helping 3- to 5-year-olds prepare for Christmas.

THE CHRISTMAS ACTIVITY BOOK. Illustrated by Stacy Venturi-Pickett. Ideals. Unpaginated. \$4.95.

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## CONVENTIONS

The convention of the **Diocese of Northern Michigan**, Oct. 15-17 in Marquette, adopted a new constitution which may well draw both rave reviews and criticism from the larger church.

On second reading, in the last ballot by orders to be held in the diocese, a new constitution was unanimously passed which abolishes both the vote by orders mechanism and the automatic vote at convention of all ordained persons. The diocese has been focusing for nearly a decade on the significance of baptism as full initiation into the church, and it is consistent in its insistence that ordination should not separate the baptized into distinct groups, but should focus all baptized persons more clearly on their God-gifted ministries.

Under the new constitution there is still a method for taking a cautious and conservative vote. The results of a secret ballot will be counted in two ways: There must be both a 2/3 majority of all votes cast, and a simple majority of all delegations present. A delegation's vote is determined by a simple majority of all the congregation's delegates.

All ordained persons present voted to throw out their automatic status as voting members of the convention. Clergy now will have to stand for election as delegates from their congregations, or, in the case of missioners and diocesan staff, from one of the congregations in the region or diocese. All persons attending convention will have seat and voice.

One feature of the constitution is not so innovative. That is, in Northern Michigan every congregation may now have four delegates to diocesan convention.

The diocese has been working for two years on a complete revision of its canons which will reflect and support the changes in the constitution. In small group discussions, all delegates and visitors to convention had a chance to react to an early version. Comments will be considered in the redrafting of the canons, which will be presented for a vote to the 1994 convention.

The diocese also agreed to enter into a companion diocese relationship with the Diocese of Keewatin in eastern Manitoba and western Ontario, Canada, should that diocese agree.

Many delegates said they were not comfortable with adopting a deficit budget, but with the assurance of treasurer Dick Graybill that bills would be paid, a \$13,000 deficit budget was approved.

CAROL HOSLER

Bishop Coadjutor Jack Iker's first convention in the **Diocese of Fort Worth** was a relatively peaceful event, in marked contrast to the contentious process he went through in order to be consecrated in the Episcopal Church's most traditional diocese.

Convention delegates decided to sidestep the controversial issue of women's ordination Oct. 8-9 at Trinity Church, Fort Worth. Their attention was occupied primarily with a plan to reorganize and decentralize the diocese by placing greater emphasis on the deaneries.

A resolution which asked for parishes to be able to call women priests if they wished to do so was countered by several substitutes and amendments seeking to maintain the diocese's traditionalist policy. However, delegates quickly moved to table the entire discussion until after next summer's General Convention has an opportunity to address the matter.

The Rt. Rev. Clarence C. Pope, Jr., Bishop of Fort Worth, announced in his convention address his plan to resign at the end of 1994. He urged the convention to bear in mind the words "truth, unity and concord" from the Prayer for the Whole State of Christ's Church. "The body of Christ must be founded upon re-

(Continued on next page)

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## **'U.N. Peacekeeping' Discussed**

A group of church members of different nationalities gathered at the Episcopal Church Center in New York City in late October to learn of the work of the Anglican observer at the United Nations, the Rt. Rev. Paul Reeves.

Following Morning Prayer, Bishop Reeves explained his work and his efforts to give a voice for 70 million Anglicans in 34 provinces. He also introduced members of his staff and described their functions.

A panel dealt with "The Expectations and Realities of U.N. peacekeeping." H.E. Prince Sisowath Sirirath, Cambodian ambassador to the U.N., spoke of the U.N.'s success and acceptance in his country after 17 years of internal strife.

Karl E. Meyer of the editorial board of the *New York Times* spoke of the U.N.'s mandate as peacekeeper and how it could be more effective. Ambassador Muhamad Sacirbey, permanent repre-

### **CONVENTIONS**

(Continued from previous page)

vealed truth," he said. "We cannot put institutional unity ahead of that."

Delegates approved a 1994 budget of slightly more than \$1 million.

(The Rev.) JEFFREY STEENSON

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The Rt. Rev. Wiliam E. Smalley called upon delegates to the convention of the **Diocese of Kansas** Oct. 15-16 in Topeka to make Jesus' great commission, "Go and make disciples . . ." the main work of the church.

Delegates adopted a budget of \$1.2 million which reduced, or eliminated, funding for some existing programs. Program committees had been asked to submit funding requests to reflect reductions of 12.5 percent to 16 percent from their proposed budgets. Funding was eliminated for the companion diocese project with Venezuela, liturgy and music, and outreach ministries and social concerns. Delegates adopted a resolution to fund the companion diocese project through a special appeal.

In other business, the convention merged the Protestant Episcopal Church for the Diocese of Kansas and the Trustees of the Diocese of Kansas into a single corporation.

(The Rev.) JAMES HUNKINS

sentative of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the U.N., spoke of his disappointment at the failure of the U.N. to come to the aid of his beleaguered country.

Another panel of speakers dealt with "The U.N., National Sovereignty and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples." Chief Oren Lyons of the Onondaga Nation spoke with hope that native peoples could keep their identity, religious beliefs and property rights in a society that outnumbers them, often misunderstands them, and is frequently hostile to them.

Later that evening, hundreds attended a fund raising dinner at the U.N. with Sir Paul and Lady Reeves as hosts for the benefit of the office of the Anglican observer to the U.N. The Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning, Presiding Bishop, and the Most Rev. George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury, spoke of the need to continue the office of the observer.

VIOLET M. PORTER

The convention of the **Diocese of Wyoming** was held Oct. 7-10 at Jeffrey Center, Rawlins, with St. Thomas' Church as host. The opening service was held in the auditorium of Rawlins High School, where the Rt. Rev. Bob Jones, Bishop of Wyoming, delivered his annual address.

Guest speaker and spiritual leader for convention was the Very Rev. John Petersen, dean of St. George's College, Jerusalem. Each day opened with Bible studies in small groups, followed by the Holy Eucharist and meditations led by Dean Petersen.

Afternoon business sessions were chaired by Bishop Jones. Among the resolutions adopted were those which:

• assure training in each parish to combat racism;

• develop a network of talents throughout the diocese and develop programs wherein parishes would help each other;

• accept invitation to be companion diocese with the Diocese of Archangel of the Russian Orthodox Church.

DOROTHY J. JOHNSON

The Rev. William A. Kolb, associate rector of pastoral ministry at Calvary Church, Memphis, Tenn., was omitted from the list of nominees for Bishop Coadjutor of West Texas [TLC, Oct. 24].

# **CLASSIFIED**

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ANGLICAN THEOLOGICAL BOOKS — scholarly, out-of-print — bought and sold. Send \$1 for catalog. The Anglican Bibliopole, 858 Church St., Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. (518) 587-7470.

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THE FRANCISCAN ORDER OF THE DIVINE COMPASSION is a traditional religious order in the Franciscan Spirit. Inquiries: For those who seek the life of a friar to Brother John-Charles, F.O.D.C., P.O. Box 317, Monmouth, IL 61462-0317. For men and women who wish to be Tertiaries or Associates to The Franciscan Order of the Divine Compassion, P.O. Box 6054, Rock Island, IL 61204.

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ST. JAMES' Via Bernardo Rucellai 9, 50123 Florence, Italy. Tel. 39/55/29 44 17 The Rev. Ledlie I. Laughlin, Jr., r Sun 9 Rite I, 11 Rite II

### FRANKFURT

CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING Sebastian Rinz St. 22, 60323 Frankfurt, Germany, U1, 2, 3 Miquel-Allee. Tel. 49/64 55 01 84 The Rev. David W. Radcliff, r Sun HC 9 & 11. Sunday school & nursery 10:45

### GENEVA

EMMANUEL 3 rue de Monthoux, 1201 Geneva, Switzerland Tel. 41/22 736 63 01 The Rev. Gerard S. Moser, r Sun (1S, 3S, 5S) 10 H Eu; 2S, 4S MP

### MUNICH

ASCENSION Seybothstrasse 4, 8000 Munich 90, Germany. Tel. 49/89 611 55 20. The Rev. Walter B. Phelps, interim

### ROME

ST. PAUL'S WITHIN THE WALL Via Napoli 58, 00184 Rome, Italy The Rev. Michael Vono, r Tel. 39/6 474 35 69 Sun 8:30 Rite I, 10:30 Rite II, 1 Spanish Eu

### WATERI OO

ALL SAINTS' 563 Chaussee de Louvain, Ohain, Belgium The Rev. Charles B. Atcheson, r Tel. 32/2 384-3556 Sun 11:15 ex 1S 9

### WIESBADEN

ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY Frankfurter Strasse 3, Wiesbaden, Germany The Rev. Karl Bell, r Tel. 49/61 22 76 916 Sun 10 Family Eu