

November 23, 1997

Last Pentecost, Proper 29

Features



We Give Thanks

By George Wickersham page 12

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Quote of the Week

Author Charles R. Morris, in the book *American Catholic* on converts: "During a spate of conversions of Episcopal ministers, Irish-American bishops complained that the new men could not understand the virtues of obedience."

In This Corner Going Out on a Limb

When I tell friends or colleagues that the parish I serve uses Rite I, Prayer I for principal services of Holy Communion on Sundays, they are caught short. When I tell them that on alternating Sundays, we have services of Morning Prayer, Rite I, they are truly dumbfounded.

Today, many people, without reservation, attack the use of traditional words in public worship. Without pause, they rally to the cause of "relevance" and "the spirit of 'communication'" that seemingly only modern language can accomplish.

Ferdinand E. Ruge, schoolmaster at an Episcopal high school for decades, used to say to his English rhetoric students, "Go out on a limb, use a big word like 'enjoyable' instead of 'fun'." His concern was for the de-volution or deterioration of language.

Contemporary language in worship is helpful for many. I know what the church growth gurus say: Have a service at 10 a.m. on Sundays with casual dress, informal music. Advertise in the sports section and hardware circulars. People will come and you will draw the unchurched. I believe it, I know it, and I have seen it.

What I did not know but now do see every Sunday is a growing, young, downtown parish where the worship is conducted in "decent order," with Christ-centered biblical preaching, exceptional music, and, always, traditional words are used. (Our parish has more than 3,400 members; onethird are 25-45 years old.)

Our parish may be an anomaly of sorts, or maybe not. Church growth experts say

Sunday's Readings Even Now, Christ Reigns

Last Pentecost, Proper 29: Dan. 7:9-14; Ps. 93; Rev. 1:1-8; John 18:33-37 or Mark 11; 1-11

Today's readings focus our attention on the kingship of Christ. Falling as they do on this last Sunday of the Christian year, they underscore the imminence of his reign in the new age which is about to dawn.

Both Daniel and John the Divine provide glorious images of the kingdom and of him who shall reign over it. The Lord, coming in the clouds and with every human eye beholding him, shall be given by God full dominion and glory which shall never abate or diminish.

The elect will be drawn from every culture and nation and tribe, blending together into a perfect image of the Father. They will that Baby Boomers, Generation X, and others are returning to "organized religion." They are returning to the church and seeking a real experience where faith and life not only intersect but also connect. In short, people want to be loved by others and know God's love for them.

Anomaly or not, people are turning up and not tuning out. Attendance, as well as membership, has increased steadily for more than a decade. Can we accept that worshipers in the 1990s are affected by what we say as well as what we do? If this is the case, then I am all for retaining Cranmer's communion service words: "A full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world," not only tell of Christ's salvific work, but also teach us every time we hear them.

I ask what better encapsulation of the good news of the gospel is there than the comfortable words — Jesus in Matthew 22, God's love in John 3:16, St. Paul in 2 Timothy, and St. John in 1 John? And, I submit "perfect offering" does not completely capture the depth of salvation as "propitiation." My observations are not meant to be some retrograde back to prayer book antiquity; rather, I seek to offer reasonable caution in consideration of the good use of traditional words in public worship.

Our guest columnist is the Rev. Canon Thomas S. Hotchkiss, a canon of the Cathedral Church of the Advent, Birmingham, Ala.

collectively constitute a priestly people, forever free from the power of sin. And their eternal delight will be the love and service of their sovereign.

Yet Christ's kingship isn't only an "age to come" promise, as both options for today's gospel hear witness. Christ the King reigns over his faithful people even now, as they live and proclaim the truth of his unbounded love. And today he rides toward the throne of his glorious cross where the faithful suffer unjustly for his sake and the sake of the gospel.

Christ's reign in the kingdom, toward which we make our pilgrim way, is present with us and over us even now as we seek to follow in his path. And his kingdom, even now dawning, is the promise of all those who love him.

Letters

Pagan Practices

I applaud H. Boone Porter's article on "The Month of Souls" [TLC, Oct. 19] and his attempt to remind us of the significance of the special days which start the month of November.

My only concern is that he still endorses allowing Christian children to dress in costume and participate in the practice of "trick or treat." Just as we explain to our children that Santa Claus does not represent Christmas, isn't it also important to explain that these Halloween activities are really pagan practices to honor the Sun God and Samhain, the Celtic Lord of the Dead? And that asking for treats while dressed in costume (even if it's not a ghost, devil or witch) is still reenacting the collecting of tribute money to these gods in an attempt to ward away evil? Children are able to understand that the people who started these activities (and maybe many who practice them today) didn't know about our God or Jesus but that we do and, therefore, our celebration is different. Many churches have planned other activities for children or families during this time such as the one suggested in the article.

On a night that is often used by Satanists for child sacrifices, a prayer vigil would also be appropriate.

Sally Jeanne Kappler Yarmouth, Maine

Bad Theology

The Dallas/Fort Worth meeting of 46 bishops and archbishops, "the Dallas Statement," and content of their public conversations and talks received considerable coverage [TLC, Oct. 19, 26]. Neither issue made any mention of the sponsors of this meeting. Intrigued, I read the Dallas Statement (TDS). It refers to its co-hosts, the Bishop of Dallas and Archbishop David Gitari of Kenya, and lists its attendees.

The meeting was of like-minded prelates, with two of their members as hosts. The U.S. contingent of 12 bishops, five of them retired, is not surprisingly a roundup of "the usual suspects" (to quote Casablanca). These bishops are continuously active in U.S. conversations about saving the Episcopal Church from what TDS calls "unbridled liberalism."

Many of the bishops present from other



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Letters

parts of the Anglican Communion, whatever their concerns about sexual ethics, carry the pastoral weight of the debilitating effects of international debt. Here the concern of TDS was not "unbridled liberalism," but the need for the church "to assist her suffering Saviour in the alleviation of the pain and suffering of the poor."

TDS joins two concerns — sexual ethics and the international debt. It does so by focusing on "the generational family." I believe TDS on sexual ethics is bad theology, badly done. TDS is much better on the issue of debt reduction. TDS is at times amazingly arrogant, being committed to something it calls "orthodox Anglican faith," stating what it will not permit, and labeling as separated, and calling to repentance, those who choose beliefs and practices outside the boundaries of the historical biblical faith."

Reflecting on how these two ethical concerns came to be linked, and so poorly, raises for me again the question of sponsorship. Who organized, invited and paid for this gathering? And why? TLC could do us a service by doing a bit of investigative reporting.

> (The Rev.) Mark Harris Newark, Del.

Set Apart

The letter from the Rev. James Gilmore regarding the consecration of Bishop David Bane [TLC, Oct. 26] deserves both correction and clarification. First, while it is true that a Roman Catholic and an ELCA bishop were present, only the Lutheran participated in the laying on of hands. We rejoice that both of these men and representatives from other Christian bodies shared in setting apart our new bishop coadjutor.

I cannot imagine what pollution Fr. Gilmore fears. Would he say that only Episcopalians have true bishops? He seems to say that "rules are rules." Where does the prayer book ever describe a bishop as an Episcopalian? Surely Seabury himself would not have received the historic episcopate save for some who

The Living Church

An independent weekly record of the news of the church and the views of Episcopalians, since 1878

> Editorial and Business offices: 816 E. Juneau Ave. Mailing address: P.O. Box 92936 Milwaukee, WI 53202-0936

Telephone: 414-276-5420 Fax: 414-276-7483 E-mail: livngchrch@aol.com Quest: livingchurch

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NEWS: THE LIVING CHURCH's chief sources of news are correspondents and news releases from church agencies. TLC cooperates with Episcopal News Service.

PHOTOGRAPHS and MANUSCRIPTS: THE LIVING CHURCH cannot assume responsibility for the return of photos or manuscripts. THE LIVING CHURCH is published every week, dated Sunday, by the Living Church Foundation, Inc., at 816 E. Juneau Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53202. Periodicels postage paid at Milwaukee, WI.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$39.50 for one year; \$54.60 for 18 months; \$70.72 for two years. Foreign postage an additional \$15.00 per year. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE LIVING CHURCH, P.O. Box 92936, Milwaukee, WI 53202-0936.

THE LIVING CHURCH (ISSN 0024-5240) is published by THE LIVING CHURCH FOUNDATION, INC., a nonprofit organization serving the Church. All gifts to the Foundation are taxdeductible.

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Volume 215 • Number 21

Letters

were emboldened by the gospel. I pray that perfect love will cast out fear and that David, our bishop, will be made more of a bishop of the Church of God by the presence and prayers of the wider church at his consecration.

The Commonwealth of Virginia is blessed by a covenant among the seven judicatories of the Episcopal Church, the ELCA and the Roman Catholic Church within our boundaries. This covenant, which is now in its seventh year, is not a "feel good about it all" event, but a sworn commitment before God to share in prayer, evangelism and mission. It has allowed our bishops and the whole church to know and serve one another in a host of ways.

> (The Rev.) Mark S. Delcuze Ecumencial Officer Diocese of Southern Virginia Virginia Beach, Va.

Ring Out

Right on with your "joyful noise" on church bells [TLC, Nov. 2].

This is definitely an evangelism tool. At Grace Church in Oak Park, we believe we get prospects who have heard the bells. In a fast-paced age, it is a reminder where we should be on Sunday mornings. And they're beautiful sounding as well.

As part of a July 4 commemoration each year, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Society, Sons of the American Revolution, we ring our Seabury Chimes at 2 p.m. CDT. It is timed so all bells across America ring at the same time. The program will take place again July 4, 1998. Put it on your church calendar and ring them.

> Charles Chauncey Wells Oak Park, Ill.

On the House

Has anyone else noticed that the cleric portrayed on ABC's *Soul Man* on Tuesday night sports a tippet with the Nashotah House seal on it? While this is hardly an

To Our Readers: We welcome your letters to the editor. Each letter is subject to editing and should be kept as brief as possible. Sub-



missions that are typed with double spacing are appreciated and are more likely to be published. Letters should be signed and include a mailing address. earth-shaking observation, it's good to know that "Friends of Mother" are scattered far and wide.

(The Rev.) Bruce N. Gardner; C.S.S.S. Church of the Ascension Hayward, Wis.

Appropriate Ceremony

The Quote of the Week by the Presiding Bishop on transition to the P.B.-elect [TLC, Oct. 19], was cute. However, I believe the transfer of the bridge of the Titanic to a new captain should be conducted in a more appropriate ceremony a Requiem Mass, not a midnight phone call!

> Francis M. Gibbs, Jr. Daytona Beach, Fla.

It's First

While the Book of Common Prayer offers the blessing "keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord," the very first prayer in our local church is in the front flyleaf and is so appropriate for many of us in these times: "Please Do Not Remove From Church."

Tom Woodstrup Sycamore, Ill.



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News

Bishop Doss Rejects Call for Resignation

The Rt. Rev. Joe Morris Doss, Bishop of New Jersey, has rejected the call by two key committees of his diocese that he resign. After being urged to resign by the standing committee and the diocesan council [TLC, Nov. 16], Bishop Doss said he had something else in mind — namely healing and reconciliation.

"After the most profound and prayerful consideration, together with extensive consultation with the Presiding Bishop and many others, I am renewing my commitment to serve as your bishop," he wrote in a pastoral letter.

The letter, dated Oct. 31, the fourth anniversary of his consecration as bishop, noted that in 1993 he "vowed before God to be faithful to you and to my calling.

"You elected me to serve as your bishop and to lead you forward into the third millennium as a united and strong missionary diocese," the letter stated.

"Together we shall proclaim the gospel to the people of New Jersey and welcome God's kingdom. Our first step must be to continue the process of healing and reconciliation and to bring it to fruition."

Bishop Doss called for a five-hour meeting with the clergy of the diocese on Nov. 15 at Trinity Cathedral in Trenton, in what he called "the third stage of our healing and reconciliation process."

"I know that there have been numerous accusations published in the newspapers and placed in the rumor mill," Bishop Doss said. "I plan to address them."

"I know there are some of you, especially some clergy, who do not feel they can ever again work with me as their bishop. I believe the gospel has the power to reconcile the most intransigent of adversaries."

He also noted in the letter that many persons "fear that a cloud has been created over my episcopacy which may make it impossible to go forward. I believe God will use this crisis to bring us forward in ways we could not have imagined, that God in Christ will surprise us and bring new life where now we see nothing but chaos and pain."

The Diocese of New Jersey also issued a statement Oct. 31 which revealed that "the press has been used by the bishop's detractors as a venue through which they can spread discord and ill will." Bishop Doss also was quoted in the statement.

"To those whom I have disappointed, I offer my sincere regret and my pledge to work constructively with them toward our reconciliation," he said. "To those who have supported me and my family, I extend my personal and sincere appreciation but also my heartfelt plea that we all hear the concerns of our brothers and sis-

(Continued on next page)

A New Cathedral

Christ Church, Nashville, Tenn., a downtown parish for more than 160 years, became the cathedral of the Diocese of Tennessee Nov. 1.

"With its new status as Christ Church Cathedral," predicted the Rt. Rev. Bertram N. Herlong, Bishop of Tennessee, "its well-known ministries, service, stately Anglican worship, community leadership and superb music will be measurably enhanced."

Following tradition, Bishop Herlong, accompanied by his two canons diocesan, the Rev. Canon Robert Dedmon and the Rev. Canon Robert Brodie, knocked on the closed church door three times. He was admitted and welcomed by the Very Rev. Kenneth B. Swanson, newly appointed dean, and the Rev. Canon Anne Stevenson and the Rev. Canon Geoffrey Butcher, canons residentiary.

After signing the official documents, Bishop Herlong proclaimed Christ Church as the cathedral of the diocese and marked it with the sign of the cross. He then was seated in his cathedra by the dean.

Bishop Emrich of Michigan Dies

The Rt. Rev. Richard Stanley Merrill Emrich, 87, retired Bishop of Michigan, died Oct. 31 at his home in Rome, N.Y. Bishop Emrich was the seventh Bishop of Michigan, serving from 1948 to 1973.

Bishop Emrich was born in Mardin, Turkey, the son of Congregational missionaries to Armenian refugees there. He was a graduate of Brown University, the Episcopal Theological School, Union Theological Seminary (N.Y.) and earned his Ph.D. at the University of Marburg, Germany.

He was ordained to the diaconate in 1936 and to the priesthood in 1938. He was assistant at St. John's Church, Waterbury, Conn., 1936-37; rector of St. Anne's, South Lincoln, Mass., 1938-42, and rector of St. Gabriel's, Marion, Mass., 1944-46. He also was a faculty member at the Episcopal Theological School from 1937 to 1946.

In 1946 he was elected Suffragan Bishop of Michigan. Two years later he was elected diocesan. Under his leadership, social services in the diocese were expanded, ecumenical relations were emphasized, churches in the diocese were integrated, 35 new missions were begun, and 42 missions became parishes.



Bishop Emrich (1973 photo)

Bishop Emrich was named honorary commander of the Order of the British Empire, awarded by Queen Elizabeth II in 1958. He was the author of two books, numerous pamphlets and published sermons, and was a columnist for Detroit newspapers during the 1960s and '70s. He retired in 1973.

His wife, the former Beatrice A. Littlehales, preceded him in death in 1994. He is survived by two sons, the Rev. Richard Stanley Merrill Emrich III, of Rome, N.Y., and the Rev. Frederick Ernest Emrich III, of Greenfield, Mass., seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.



At the Diocese of Nevada convention [story at right], parish nurse Jody Lediard of Virginia City gives a flu shot to Carol Garrison of Las Vegas, with Marie Norberg, RN, state parish nursing coordinator, completing paperwork.

Bishop Doss Renews Commitment to Diocese

(Continued from previous page) ters with an open heart and mind."

The statement also refers to the actions of the standing committee and the dioce-san council.

"The standing committee and diocesan council do not represent the views of all the people in the diocese," it said. "More than 60 clergy have signed a letter calling for the bishop, standing committee and diocesan council 'to work for reconciliation in spirit and in action' and to 'end all attempts to short-circuit the healing process the Wellness Committee has laid before us'.

"The standing committee and diocesan council have no basis in canon law to enforce the bishop's resignation. Their prescribed role is to advise the bishop and their actions can only be taken as advisory."

The statement also referred to "a strategy by a well-organized few, to make it impossible for the bishop to conduct his ministry of reconciliation and healing."

The Wellness Committee issued a report which made recommendations to address a number of problems in the diocese, particularly difficulties with various elements of the bishop's ministry.

"Calling for Joe's resignation is counterproductive," said the Rev. Christopher Sherrill, rector of Trinity Church, Princeton, in an interview with the *Trenton Times.* "We've got serious problems. But you've got to deal with the whole system to find health. To think that everything will be fine if we get rid of the bishop is a ruinous assumption."

Following its meeting of Oct. 22, the eight-member standing committee issued a letter to the people of the diocese.

"The questions that we as a standing committee had to answer was: Given all of the many issues and conflicts that are around us, from questions of character, trust, and financial impropriety, to an inability to meet the pastoral and administrative needs of a large and diverse diocese, is it possible for the clergy and laity to continue to work together under the leadership of the Rt. Rev. Joe Morris Doss? It has become clear to us that it is not possible.

"Accordingly, after much prayerful and careful deliberations, the standing committee has voted unanimously to call for the resignation of Bishop Doss as the Bishop of New Jersey."

The diocesan council also addressed the diocese in a letter dated Oct. 31. The letter reveals that by a 10-2 vote the council supported the action of the standing committee's request for the bishop's resignation. Four council members did not attend the meeting.

Richard S. Ellwood, treasurer of the diocese, and Robert Y. Garrett III, interim chief financial officer, resigned from those positions because "we have lost all confidence in Joe Morris Doss as our bishop."

Conventions

Nevada may be the first diocese in the country to have voting youth members on its diocesan council, announced diocesan chancellor Gary Fuller at the diocesan convention, Oct. 17-19 in Carson City.

The convention approved changes in the diocesan canons to provide for four voting youth members, aged 13-19, to be added to the council, and then elected four youths to the position.

Mr. Fuller noted that he had checked with chancellors in other dioceses for help in drafting canons to provide for the young members, and learned that no other dioceses had taken steps to create such a position. He noted that because of Nevada law, the youth diocesan council members under the age of 18 will not be able to vote on matters affecting property or contracts.

"We will be the first diocese in the country" to have voting youth members on council, he told the convention. Diocesan Bishop Stewart Zabriskie presided and preached at the convention.

Convention delegates were also able to take advantage of low-cost flu shots administered by volunteer parish nurses in a program beginning within the diocese.

A budget of approximately \$556,000 was approved, which compares with \$654,000 in 1996.

Delegates learned that loss of an Episcopal Commission on Indian Ministry grant will lead to the elimination next year of a priest's position at Nixon and Wadsworth serving the Paiute reservation adjacent to Pyramid Lake. The Episcopal Church has been on the reservation for 102 years.

Dick Snyder

"Building the Baptized Community" was the theme of the convention of the **Diocese of Rhode Island**, Oct. 24-25 at the Cathedral of St. John in Providence.



The convention had an emphasis on children, and in place of the bishop's sermon, a presentation of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd was offered by the Rev. Marybeth Way and the Rev. Maria DeCarvalho, emphasizing the simplicity of baptismal faith offered to children in the church.

A resolution committed the diocese to "full integration of children into our worship communities," and also to working in the public sector to ensure that all children of the state receive "high quality public (Continued on next page)

Conventions

(Rhode Island — from previous page)

education opportunities." Issues of evangelism and stewardship also were addressed.

In her second convention address as Bishop of Rhode Island, Bishop Geralyn Wolf announced a public advertisement campaign for Lent of 1998. The ads will appear on various cable and broadcast TV outlets 20 times per week for each of the six weeks of Lent. Bishop Wolf issued a call for the congregations to prepare to welcome the 25-40-year-olds who are the target audience for the ads.

The bishop also decried the level of giving of the members of the diocese. She expressed disapproval of parishes which have been using endowment principal for operating expenses, and showed frustration that diocesan canons and state laws prevented diocesan officers from intervening.

Bishop Wolf also called for inclusion of people of all ages in the worship life of the church, including administration of communion to children as young as 3 years of age, with appropriate understanding of their participation. She recommended every-Sunday adult education in each parish, with adult and children's classes meeting at an hour different than worship time.

"To prepare for confirmation much before 16 or 18 is to ask [our children] to go on a journey for which they are not ready," she said.

Bishop Wolf added that most of the children presented to her for confirmation did not have the presence of mind even to answer the vows they were asked to take, because of their immaturity.

Two resolutions proposed by the stewardship commission generated the only controversy of convention. Both were received from General Convention. One concerned tithing of individuals and the other asked congregations to work toward giving 50 percent of income for mission outside the parish. The latter was defeated after debate which raised many diverse concerns. The resolution on tithing was adopted, after clauses requiring a public commitment by convention members were removed by amendment.

A 1998 operating budget of just under \$2 million was adopted. It does not include an additional \$225,000 of restricted funds for special programs or the \$558,000 for Rhode Island Episcopal Charities.

(The Rev.) Peter Michaelson

The Rev. Hugh Magers, evangelism officer for the national church, was the guest speaker at the convention of the **Diocese of North Dakota**, Oct. 3-5 at Gethsemane Cathedral, Fargo.

Fr. Magers spoke about what it takes for a congregation to live and grow, and the diocesan mission strategy committee led data gathering/planning sessions.

A potentially controversial resolution calling for the diocese to take a stand against abortion was withdrawn, and discussion followed with persons on both sides of the issue sharing concerns.

St. John's Church, Farmington, N.M., was host to the annual convocation of the **Diocese of the Rio Grande**, Oct. 10-12 in Farmington's civic center. Many of those in attendance expressed the feeling of an overall difference in the atmosphere from previous convocations, and several voiced the opinion that "the center is reasserting itself."

The convocation opened with a Litany of Thanksgiving for the healing of its bishop, the Rt. Rev. Terence Kelshaw,

from a cerebral aneurysm which he suffered in March. In his opening remarks, Bishop Kelshaw recalled the statement from the 1978

Lambeth Conference, "to proclaim the word will

always be the primary Christian task, for God has entrusted his church with good news to share with the world..."

"This statement," Bishop Kelshaw said, "is true for our work here in the Diocese of the Rio Grande. We need missionary people. We need people who will share the good news of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. We need to be quite clear about that call and quite active in that work."

A proposed amendment to the diocesan constitution generated considerable debate. It read: "The Church of the Diocese of the Rio Grande accedes to the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church and recognizes the authority of the General Convention of said Church provided that no action of General Convention which is contrary to Holy Scripture and Apostolic Teaching of the Church shall be of any force or effect in this Diocese." Supporters of the proposed amendment failed to achieve a two-thirds majority vote.

Mary Haines, vice president of the National Organization of Episcopalians

for Life (NOEL), preached at the convocation Eucharist and spoke at other times during the three days.

Young persons were the principal lay ministers at the Sunday Eucharist celebrated by Bishop Kelshaw.

A budget of more than \$1.1 million was adopted.

Carol M. Marsh

Delegates to the 120th synod of the **Diocese of Quincy**, meeting Oct. 17-18 at the Packard Plaza in downtown Peoria, Ill., enthusiastically reaffirmed support for their bishop, the Rt. Rev. Keith Ackerman, who has



faced criticism from some quarters of the Episcopal Church because of his unwillingness to ordain women to the priesthood.

A resolution from the synod floor united both proponents and opponents of ordination of women behind Bishop Ackerman, urging him to continue to act on his conscience and promising deep and continual prayer for his leadership. After unanimous passage, delegates rose for a sustained standing ovation and the singing of the Te Deum.

In other action, delegates defeated attempts to cease payment of the diocese's apportionment to the national budget of the Episcopal Church and reduction of the diocese's General Convention deputation.

They also heard reports of growth and accomplishment in nearly every parish and mission, and in the diocese's relatively new endowment, the Philander Chase Fund.

The bishop's synod address drew from the 30-year episcopate of the third Bishop of Quincy, Edward Fawcett. Bishop Ackerman noted that many of Bishop Fawcett's concerns were reflected today in the diocese.

Bishop Ackerman, echoing Bishop Fawcett's words, declared, "We have no program but Jesus Christ as Lord."

The synod Eucharist, held in St. Andrew's Church, Peoria, to honor the parish's centennial, featured the sixth Bishop of Quincy, the Rt. Rev. Donald J. Parsons, as preacher. Drawing from the fourth chapter of Luke's gospel, Bishop Parsons stressed the personal and corporate nature of freedom in Christ from sin and oppression.

The diocese adopted with little dissent a budget of \$433,472.

(The Rev.) John Throop



Editorials

Resolving Conflict

The conflict in the Diocese of New Jersey [p. 6], which has escalated into a call for the resignation of the bishop [TLC, Nov. 16], is not unlike those which occur in our parish churches, sometimes polarizing congregations for months at a time. Conflict in the church is much like strife within families. Members have their differences, and inevitably differences arise which should be dealt with systematically.

Many of those calling for the Bishop of New Jersey's resignation have indicated they do not believe reconciliation is possible. In most instances, finding the source of the conflict can take considerable time, but in New Jersey, a wellness committee has gathered a considerable amount of information following interviews throughout the diocese, and has made recommendations for actions to be implemented.

We are not in position to determine whether matters in New Jersey have gone too far for reconciliation to be achieved. We hope both the bishop and those calling for his resignation will be intentional and serious about holding the good of the diocese above personal agendas. Under the right circumstances, a brighter, stronger more focused diocese could emerge from this controversy.



Always in Season

Members of the church are reminded constantly of the need to give thanks. In our Eucharist, which means thanksgiving, we have the familiar exchange between celebrant, "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God," and the people, "It is right to give him thanks and praise." It is indeed proper to give thanks to God at all times, but how often do we do that? Do we ask ourselves the question, "What do I have to be thankful for?"

Gratitude should always be in season for Christians, not just on the Thanksgiving holiday. May we give thanks on this day with the knowledge that we enjoy countless blessings from our God. In spite of the problems which face each of us, most of us have much to be thankful for and blessing to share. We hope our readers have an abundance of reasons to give thanks and many blessing to share with others.

Viewpoint

THE CHURCH IS GUILTY OF

hy is the Episcopal Church participating in the severe and demonstrable downward spiral of American life and culture known as "dumbing down"?

By "dumbing down" I mean the widespread practice in the entertainment and political worlds, among other places, of making any discourse or communication, visual or written, so simplified that it is comprehensible readily to the least educated and least sophisticated members of the audience. I also mean the widespread practice in academic life of making one's intellectual wares glitter with vulgarity, cheap relevance and non-threatening familiarity, as if any language that is elevated or smacking of canon-approved privilege must be avoided as undemocratic or elitist.

The issues of multiculturalism and the role of the media, of educational institutions, and of democracy itself which these questions raise have often been discussed (see, for instance, *Dumbing Down: Essays* on the Strip-mining of American Culture edited by Katharine Washburn and John F. Thornton, the impetus for my present question). But no one seems to be asking how and why the church, specifically our province of the Anglican Communion, is meshing with this cultural phenomenon of the post-modern age. Is it intentional or inadvertent?

'DUMBING DOWN'

In the not-too-distant past, the church sought to bring all its members to their full human potential. Hence programs of literacy in the slums of 19th-century America. Hence the wonderful and spiritfilled social justice movements from the 1950s on. And hence the according of full status to women, in ordained and lay ministry. The church sought to intensify not only the social equality but also the intellectual gifts of all its members. The most ordinary intelligence, clerical or lay, could be stimulated toward historical knowledge and to critical modes of thinking as foundations for coherent work toward the kingdom of God in this world.

Things seem to be different now. The church seems to have bought into the values of current American mega-corporate society as it sets about purveying to consumers a watered-down American culture severed from its historical roots and confined therefore to a cartoon-like present.

Liturgy in a good many places is likewise made shallow and unchallenging. If the church has a role to play in commenting on how we think about and live out our private and public lives, and how we govern our private and public selves, then the church, when it makes its sorely needed pronouncements about decades of evangelism and its necessary calls for an end to racism, might upgrade the discussions by seeking to educate a broader spectrum of its audience's intellects. Instead, being driven by single issues, such pronouncements are often foreshortened into the printed equivalents of sound bites, unsupported by a broader context of historical and theological examination.

By CHARLES WITKE

Perhaps the church could think about how hungry the world is for a different message in a different medium, particularly now that American society is unremittingly battered by vulgarity and perversity masked in pseudosophistication in almost all verbal and visual communications. Perhaps the church, the most radical multicultural institution ever seen on earth, could regain contact with its teaching mission and its past and speak to the present with authority once again.

Of course, the church can't do this if "authority" is perceived as something repressive, elitist or basically unfair for some people. Of course the church won't do this if the past is seen as a construct of which the proprietors and apologists are somehow elitists themselves.

And so, it probably won't happen any time soon that the church will cast the light of clear thought and effective rea-(Continued on page 15)



SOLI

Austere and at the edge of the habitable world, this 10-year-old religious community is a blend of unusual ingredients.

By MARIE LOUISE WEBNER

n one of the northernmost Shetland Islands is a 10-year-old religious community of the Scottish Episcopal Church. It is called the Society of Our Lady of the Isles — or, more familiarly, SOLI. SOLI will surprise you. No amount of acquaintance with other religious orders quite prepares you for it.

You can take a plane to Shetland, but most visitors prefer the boat trip. Our modern lifestyles usually include frenzied busyness and unending noise. The transi-



tion to the serenity of a community whose priorities are love, prayer, silence, service to others and hard work should not be hurried. Better to give it time. Fourteen hours on shipboard are a calming interlude. After the boat docks, you will have more hours of quiet reflection as you pass meadows and seascapes on the bus trip northward on the Shetland mainland. The last leg of the trip is by ferry to the isles of Yell, Unst and Fetlar. The Isle of Fetlar is home to SOLI. In latitude, it corresponds to the southern tip of Greenland.

Mother Mary Agnes, founder of SOLI, will explain to you that her presence on Fetlar is the direct result of God's calling her to restore the religious life to the isles of Scotland. Face to face with Mother's unwavering faith, it is difficult to doubt her call. She will admit that she procrastinated for seven years before acting on God's command. She was at the time a member of a Franciscan order in southerm England and had never anticipated leaving a life which she found fulfilling and satisfying. Founding a religious order had never entered her mind.

After seven years, God's call came

again, this time with the clear addendum that she would forever lose the opportunity to fulfill God's purpose for her if she failed to obey. Mother delayed no longer. With her community's consent and understanding, she moved to the Isle of Fetlar, where she lived as a solitary for four years before another recruit to the religious life joined her. Today SOLI includes three nuns, as well as four companions who live on Fetlar and who share in the community's worship, its work and its decisions.

Mother Mary Agnes was trained in the Franciscan tradition, but she has included in SOLI some elements of the Celtic spirituality of St. Patrick, St. Bridget, St. Columba and St. Aidan. Similarities in the two traditions are numerous. Both include a deep appreciation of God as Creator and great joy in all God's creatures. Both include emphasis on contemplation, discipline for the love of Christ, poverty, manual labor, and ministry to others.

The unique flavor of SOLI is a blend of unusual ingredients. The leadership of Mother Mary Agnes is fundamental. A founder necessarily bears the burden of vision in her lifetime. Her vision is growing and broadening as others bring their insights and experience to SOLI.

The spice of poverty and discipline is reinforced in SOLI by the austerity of its setting. Although Fetlar's rich and acidic soil provides excellent pastures for many sheep and some cattle, the island is almost treeless. For the seven or eight months of winter, frequent gales howl across the land, and neither tree nor shrub can survive unless it is in a walled enclosure. There is nothing gentle about the climate. I have visited SOLI twice. In May, I never went outside without a sweater under my winter coat, but in August one sweater was usually enough to keep me warm. The frigidity of deep winter, when the sun shines for only a few hours each day, is something I have never experienced and can barely imagine.

The daily work of the community is prayer, hospitality and spiritual guidance. The companions extend ministry to the islanders in service to seniors, sharing of concerns, help in emergencies, and providing an organist for services at the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland. Fetlar is not yet universally enthusiastic about its resident nuns, but 10 years is a mere blink of the eye in the island's long history.

Leadership by Mother Mary Agnes, an austere setting at the edge of the habitable world, poverty, discipline, prayer, and ministry — these flavors are part of SOLI. But when the women of SOLI gather in the light-filled Chapel of Christ the Encompasser and All His Holy Angels, the flavors are blended into a distinctive and fragrant parfait. I hear only one voice when the women of SOLI raise their voices in hymns of praise. The light purity of tone is common to all, and the quality of devotion is the same in all. The language of the old-fashioned breviary is sexist and patriarchal, but the praise is the timeless song of the spheres that is offered



to God through eternity.

The role and ministry of Mother Mary Agnes will be blessed and completed in the power of the Holy Spirit when she is ordained to the priesthood in 1998. In the regularity of eucharistic worship, the song of praise will grow stronger and works of mercy will multiply. The eclectic blend of the traditional and the modern in SOLI is possible only because its members are devoted with single mind and heart to the God who is All.

The Rev. Marie Louise Webner is a deacon who resides in Tucson, Ariz.





t our ecumenical Thanksgiving service in Hot Springs, Va., some years ago, the Rev. Warren Rollins, pastor of the Healing Springs Baptist Church, delivered the sermon. We were gathered in the Mitcheltown Pentecostal- Holiness Church.

Warren, who was known for his dry wit, began his discourse by stating that he and his wife had driven up to New Hampshire that summer and had stopped for gas in Wolfeboro, on the shores of the great Lake Winnepesaukee. A grizzled old Yankee emerged from the station, put the nozzle in the tank and then came around and put his head in the window. "How's y'oil?" he asked. "We all are fine," Warren replied. "How're you-all?"

That was it. There was no further reference to Wolfeboro in the sermon. Apparently, it had nothing to do with it, unless Warren wanted to express gratitude for being a southerner, or appreciation for having been in the north.

I ran into Warren at a restaurant in Richmond recently. There he was, pokerfaced, inscrutable, delightful. I'll bet nobody has forgotten the Wolfeboro joke, even though none of us has any recollection of the rest of the sermon. I give thanks for these unforgettable people.

When it comes to counting our blessings, personal and family, in the U.S.A. of our era, I have no doubt that we could make lists of incredible length. And then we might compare these lists with those of some children in Ethiopia or Rwanda, some widows in Bosnia or Bangladesh. Truth is, we have it good, no matter who or where we are in this luxuriant land.

And, of course, each one of us has his or her special list, ranging from items like school and college to jobs and homes. And there are those who like to tell you about their grandchildren.

For all such blessings we should, as we

do in the prayer book's General Thanksgiving, give thanks "for all thy goodness and loving kindness to us and to all men." That magnificent prayer continues, "We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life." Wonderful, but it does not stop there: "but above all," it proceeds, "for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord, Jesus Christ, for the means of grace and for the hope of glory." These things, I maintain, are what really keep us going.

It was Martin Rinkhart who wrote the hymn, "Now thank we all our God." What most people do not realize about that great hymn is that it was written during the terrible times of the "Thirty Years War" of the 17th century. Rinkhart's village was sacked three times, but Rinkhart's point is found at the end of his first stanza, wherein he writes of God as still being "ours today."

HO.

This, basically, is that for which we are, or should be, thankful. Were we to have all the material blessings of which one might possibly conceive, yes, and our beloved families too, and yet knew that we were adrift in the universe, here today and gone tomorrow — free only to seize what we can — we would, I believe, be a people "most to be pitied," as St. Paul points out in First Corinthians (15:19).

When does this thought of the most gratitude come to us with the greatest impact? When we receive a million dollars in a sweepstakes? Hardly. It is far more apt to come to us when we experience deep trouble or personal tragedy. Not at our best moments, but at our worst.

I remember being in such a mood after a major operation in New Hampshire. "Why me?" never occurred to me. Of course I prayed for relief, but the prayer which kept coming back to me was the one just cited: "We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings

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Friends

Truth is, we have it good, no matter who or where we are in this luxuriant land.

Well-being

t and shelter

of this life, but above all for the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory."

In such a circumstance, what more can you say? Somehow high salaries, luxury cars, social status — whatever — lose their aura of importance. One's relationship with the Almighty becomes the No. 1 issue of the day.

How well I remember when we lost our son. He was a devout fellow, and, at 30 years, had considerable stature. The prayer which kept ringing in my ears was simply, "Thank God for God!"

What we have found in our own bouts with serious ailments and setbacks is the extraordinary support which comes from the beyond. Truly, "A mighty fortress is our God!" Add to this the more tangible support which comes from those who have some understanding of the meaning of life. The years which health-wise were simply terrible did not remain in our minds as bad years. They were years in which we experienced the deep love and concern of so many among our families and friends. The doors of kind hearts were opened in a manner not obvious before.

This, of course, is what we call "the Communion of Saints." He who is the source of all selfless love on the earth is mirrored in the lives of those who love him and therefore come to be like him.

I can remember thinking, perhaps not altogether seriously, "Well, if this is what you get for being sick, maybe it is worth it!" But maybe it is, at that!

Whatever we get, whatever we have in this earthly life, and certainly. whatever comes to mind on Thanksgiving Day, is of little value, and brings little joy, unless it is somehow connected with love.

Johnny van Rocks was a 10-year-old friend of mine many years ago. My friends know how much 1 love Lionel trains, and Johnny had them all — a beautiful set. But Johnny hated them. And why? Johnny knew they were a put-off. "Johnny, go play with your trains!" They were a substitute for the real love and affection of his parents — a love and affection which he never received.

Safety

I have on my desk items of no monetary value — a small tin can with a picture of a train on it, a sprig off a pine tree, a toy train no bigger than a minute but woe to him or her who dares to remove them, because they came with true affection, sacraments of a love which is basically divine, like the bread and the wine in communion.

Warren Rollins gave us the story of the gas man in Wolfeboro. Don't tell me that Warren did not know he was giving us something which we would not forget — a token of love which was real and which reflected the love of the Father. This is the sort of thing for which I am grateful on Thanksgiving Day and every day thereafter.

The Rev. George W. Wickersham II is a retired priest who lives in Rockbridge Baths, Va.

More Gift Ideas



1998 Historic Episcopal Churcher Engagement Calendar



copal Parish Services (P.O. Box 269, William Penn Annex, Philadelphia, PA 19105). Unpaginated. \$5.95 paper. A long-time favorite with Episcopalians and cat lovers of all breeds.

By TRAVIS DU PRIEST

Each fall I look forward to the new

year's calendars almost as much as I do to

the new books — they are often filled

with lovely illustrations, and, of course,

offer weeks and months of new opportu-

nities and occasions. These are some of the many engagement calendars which

would make nice Christmas gifts or stock-

1998 HISTORIC EPISCOPAL

CHURCHES ENGAGEMENT CAL-

ENDAR. Episcopal Parish Services (P.O.

Box 269, William Penn Annex, Philadel-

phia, PA 19105). Unpaginated. \$12 spiral

collection of quaint and majestic Episco-

pal churches from dioceses around the country, with accompanying historical

write-ups, facing weekly engagement calendar pages with notations of the church

year. At least one illustration for each

month is in color. The perfect Episcopal

1998 EPISCOCAT CALENDAR. Epis-

This one's my personal pick: a stunning

ing stuffers.

bound, paper.

gift.

Charming black and white full page photos of cats in different poses and "situations" atop a monthly calendar with the church year noted appropriately. I loved July's cat asleep on its back and its verse from Proverbs 10:6 "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber ..." Punched for hanging on the wall.



MY DAILY WALK 1998. Living A Life Of Faith: A Calendar & Journal. Dimensions for Living. Unpaginated. \$14 spiral bound, paper.

An interesting concept: Each page offers one or two dates with scripture verse and room for your own journal remarks. Scattered throughout are handsome color photographs of scenic vistas, plants, and close-ups of flowers and trees.

WORD AND WORSHIP DESK CAL-ENDAR 1998. Paulist. Unpaginated. \$11.95, spiral, coated paper. WORD AND WORSHIP POCKET CALEN-DAR 1998. Paulist. Unpaginated. \$4.95,



Tracking '98









plastic slip cover.

A matched set of desk and pocket calendars, each with four days a week per page, with feast days and scripture readings from the Roman Catholic lectionary printed in small type. At the back of both calendars there is space for notes and addresses and telephone numbers.

365 DAILY MEDITATIONS FOR WOMEN. Edited by Mary Ruth Howes. Dimensions for Living. Pp. 340. \$12 paper.

Not exactly a calendar, but would make a lovely companion gift to the calendar above, also published by Dimensions and with the same red tulip on its cover. Short daily meditations by a number of different women writers, each on a particular theme. Aug. 9, "Heritage," for example, begins: "I got my love of baseball from my grandfather Durost."

IN GOOD COMPANY: A Woman's Journal For Spiritual Reflection. 1998. Edited by Lynne M. Deming and Kathleen C. Ackley. Pilgrim (Cleveland, OH 44115). Unpaginated. No price given, spiral bound, heavy paper.

Two days a week on each page with lines for journal writing or appointments, with a verse from a different woman writer or from scripture. Anais Nin for Monday, Oct. 19: "We write to taste life twice, in the moment, and in retrospection." Artistic black and white photos every three or four pages.

JOSHUA 1998 CALENDAR: 365 Inspirations and Teachings. From the work of Joseph F. Girzone. ACTS OF FAITH 1998 CALENDAR: Daily Meditations for People of Color. From the work of Iyanla Vanzant. POLITI-CALLY CORRECT 1998: 365 Thoughts For Our Enlightened Times. From the work of James Finne Garner. Simon & Schuster. \$9.95 each, paper with plastic backing.

Small calendars for the desk, offering a thought for the day on each leaf of the calendar. Sept. 12 from Acts of Faith: "You simply cannot pay anyone back for something they did to you. Look for the lesson and move on." July 17 from Politically Correct on the English royal family's 1917 name change: "What a pity that they felt obliged to abandon their name and ethnic heritage just to get ahead."

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Viewpoint

(Continued from page 9)

soning over the ground of American life. To do that might threaten those who confuse self-esteem with achievement, and equate excellence and clear thinking, even when linked to holy living and humble service, with intellectual and social snobbery.

Three areas in which the church has failed to do its homework while dumbing down can be seen in the Lutheran-Episcopal rapprochement; the waning of confirmation as a sacramental act; and the considerable confusion on such theological questions as who gets saved and what that means. While a great deal can and should be written on the intellectual and theological ramifications of these issues (and many more besides), I offer only these observations.

First, in regard to the arrangements with the ELCA, has anyone noticed how the intellectual level and tone of our discussions in both popular and learned venues is markedly different from the discussions surrounding the inauguration of the Church of South India 50 years ago? Those documents make interesting reading today, but who reads them? Second, in regard to confirmation, while it was of signal importance to re-establish this rite

as the sign of a mature commitment of faith, why did discussions of its implementation under the new rubrics largely fail to take into account such excellent theological resources as Lionel Thornton's Confirmation: Its Place in the Baptismal Mystery, a basic resource in this matter since 1954? Is it because sociology was much more "with it" than theology, or was it just another instance of dumbing down?

Finally, one can only note that the American province of the Anglican Communion, currently driven by a rejection of its teaching charism, has heeded little or nothing of the Church of England's remarkable achievements in the area of theological writing on profound subjects made accessible to any reader who gets the very easily obtained books and makes a bit of an effort to understand. We must bear in mind that presenting a person with something not previously understood is not everywhere an antisocial act. But in our present office lectionary we often make optional those portions of the Psalter which present seemingly violent images, as if God and we could have no enemies in these bland times, or as if the violence needs to be understood literally, and not in terms of systemic hostility to

the kingdom coming from societal and spiritual forces.

Why is the Episcopal Church participating in the dumbing down of our society? There are many reasons. Buying into the secular values that come with the secular gimmicks of consumerist America may be one. Thinking that intellectual thoroughness and historical awareness are elitist may be another. Being faced with wide-ranging and complex sets of questions in a time of societal stress and major shifts in the way we use our minds can, however, lead to more than throwing away the past in order to look post-modern. It can be beneficial to take stock of where we have come from and why we are allowing important questions to be discussed in oversimplified, one-dimensional ways. But one is grateful that the church (even if some of her shepherds sometimes appear not to think so) is after all a divine institution, and that in some mysterious way, even now, "all things are returning to their perfection through him from whom they took their origin."

The Rev. Charles Witke is professor of Greek and Latin at the University of Michigan. He assists at St. Andrew's Church, Ann Arbor.

Give a Gift of Compassion this Christmas



 ${
m A}^{
m s}$ an alternative to the usual gift for someone who has every-thing, this Christmas make a gift to the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief in their honor.

Send a gift to the Fund telling us the name(s) and addresses of the persons(s) you want to honor. The Fund will send an attractive card to the person(s) you want to be notified of the gift.

You will be remembering someone you love and admire while giving hope to people in need around the world.

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	(name of person(s) to be notified)		
	(street address)		
	(city)	(state)	(zip)
	(your name)		
<i>Please make checks payable to:</i> The Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief and submit	(street address)		
to PBFWR c/o Banker's Trust Company, Box 12043, Newark, NJ 07101.	(city)	(state)	(zip)
OFFICES OF THE FUND ARE LOCATED AT 815 S	ECOND AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 1001	7. (800) 334-7626	ЕХТ. 5129.

Short & Sharp

More for Christmas

By TRAVIS DU PRIEST











ROOTS OF FAITH: An Anthology of Early Christian Spirituality to Contemplate and Treasure. Edited by Robert Van De Weyer. Eerdmans. Pp. 128. \$20.

Anglican priest Robert Van De Weyer selects passages from Clement of Rome, the Didache, Irenaeus and other writings of the Apostolic or Early Fathers of the church for this beautifully printed and illustrated giftbook. Full-page color reproductions add to the meditative quality of this elegant book.

CERTAIN POOR SHEPHERDS: A Christmas Tale. By Elizabeth Marshall Thomas. Scribner. Pp. 128. \$9.95 paper.

"Like sheep and goats, angels should travel together," muses Ima the goat, pondering what a sick angel might do — possibly "straggle along at the rear," in this fetching tale about the animals' venturing to Bethlehem.

THE WAY TO BETHLEHEM. By **Inos Biffi.** Illustrated by **Franco Vignazia**. Eerdmans. Pp. 47. \$14.

Bright, cheerful pictures with wide blue borders surround key biblical stories of the ancestors of Jesus, John the Baptist, Mary and Elizabeth, the Wise Men and the saints of Christmas in this book which will delight all ages.

SILENT NIGHT: The Song and Its Story. By Margaret Hodges. Illustrated by Tim Ladwig. Eerdmans. Pp. 40. \$17.

The Song and Its Story, with its colorful full-page pictures, sets us in the Church of St. Nicholas on Christmas Eve in an Austrian village and recounts how "Silent Night" came to be written. A double-page spread of a hand playing a guitar and the music and words of the hymn on the last page are quite effective, as are the bold figures throughout.

THE BOOK OF DAILY PRAYER. Morning and Evening. 1998. Edited by Kim Martin Sadler. United Church. Pp. 384. \$12.95 paper.

A free church book of Daily Offices, you might say. For each day we are given antiphons, several sentences on the suggested scripture reading. Feb. 2 opens: "God of words and deeds, I begin this new day praising your love and faithfulness." Lovely, colorful cover.





LETTERS HOME



CEORCE CRANI & KAREN GRANT



GOD IS WITH US: Rediscovering the Meaning of Christmas. By F. Thomas Trotter. Upper Room. Pp. 94. \$9.95 paper.

Sometime dean of Claremont School of Theology and chaplain of Boston University, well-known preacher and writer, Thomas Trotter presents us with a different sort of Christmas gift — 25 reflections on Christmas and its deep religious meaning. Well written and insightful. From "You Expected Chimes, Madam?"— "Religious folk can be so fond of particular details about their belief that the details overwhelm the purposes of belief."

A CALENDAR OF WISDOM: Daily Thoughts to Nourish the Soul. Written and selected from the world's sacred texts by Leo Tolstoy. Translated by Peter Serkin. Scribner. Pp. 384. \$20.

Published for the first time in English, this daily treasury of the world's wisdom invites us to share in those passages that were spiritual guides to the great Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy. He begins June 10 with this from Lao Tzu: "There is something in the soul which cannot die, which cannot be affected by death."

LETTERS HOME: Sage Advice From Wise Men and Women of the Ages to Their Friends and Loved Ones. By George Grant and Karen Grant Cumberland. Pp. 224. \$12.95 paper.

Short quotations of counsel, comfort and guidance from numerous writers arranged under subject headings such as Anger, Children, Education, Faith, Gardens, Love, Reading, Relatives, Sports, Tact and Work. From Lyman Abbott to his friend Frederick Cooper: "A broad interest in books usually means a broad interest in life." And Charles Spurgeon to his brother: "The devil is not afraid of a dustcovered Bible."

GOLDEN NUGGETS: From Sir John Templeton. Templeton Foundation. Pp. 86. \$12.95.

A small gift book of gleanings of the now-legendary financial figure John Templeton who founded the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion in 1972 and who was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 1987. The bordered pages of ivory paper serve up: Joy provides assurance; Envy brings loneliness, No one's education is ever complete and Every useful life is a ministry.

The Cantor's Task

THE CHURCH MUSICIAN Revised Edition By Paul Westermeyer Augsburg Fortress Pp. 159, \$9 paper

What a terrific book this is, foreword and all! It is not entirely new — the original edition appeared in 1988 — but it remains an uplifting, encouraging, challenging text, easily accessible for musicians, clergy and those of us volunteers who sing "in the trenches and benches" on Sunday and special holy days.

"To worship is to be — and to be human is to sing," Dr. Westermeyer writes, "and church musicians are called to give us our voice."

He introduces the concept of "cantor" as leader of the people's song; and the cantor's life and work is illustrated through the ebb and flow of the liturgical year, in all its colors and moods: anticipation, joy, penance, exultation. The church's song — the people's song — is one of praise, prayer, proclamation, story and gift. This gives some idea of the scope of the cantor's task, and the depth of his or her vocation.

The importance, necessity and power of "the people's song" runs like a golden thread through this extraordinary little book. The cantor is to lead, teach, help and grow himself, as the vessel of God's grace, over and over, song after song. He has prophetic and priestly roles, just like the clergy. But he is, at the center, psalmist, responsible for the "whole story." (And, if the parish is lucky, there may be a glimpse of the angelic mystic as well.)

Examples of "nonpartnership" in clergy-musician relationships are given; problems and problem personalities are clearly and honestly put on the table. A rather merciless mirror of truth reflects what Dr. Westermeyer calls the "wicked waste" in such situations. He then offers measures to heal; after a definition of mutual roles and responsibilities, he describes opportunities for three-way bridge-building, among clergy, cantor and people.

The last two chapters have been added since the first edition to address and rebut "increasingly hostile attacks on the church's worship, church music, church musicians." They are wise, wonderful chapters: Please read them! They are eminently accessible, but steeped in holiness, theological soundness, good psychology, and hope.

> Judith M. Howard Wauwatosa, Wis.



Seasonal Collects

TUNE MY HEART TO SING Devotions for Choirs based on the Revised Common Lectionary By Wayne L. Wold Augsburg Fortress. Pp. 208 \$14.99 paper

This collection of one-page meditations on the Sunday gospel readings is intended as devotional material for the beginning of choir rehearsals. It deserves a much wider reading. While the images frequently have to do with singers and the making of music, the meditations address issues faced by any Christian trying faith-

Sharps, Flats & Naturals

fully to live out the gospel.

These brief meditations point out the richness of the liturgical year and invite readers into it. Sometimes modestly, sometimes profoundly, the sweep of the Christian year is presented week by week, season by season. Each meditation is rooted in the Sunday gospel and then suggests how that gospel can appear and live in familiar hymn texts, in ritual actions, and in the ordinary events of daily life. The meditations function like good liturgical sermons: making connections between the words of the gospel and the mystery of Christ's presence in the life of the church in the world.

The author declares his intention to write in a conversational style that is more "reflective and meditative than theological or exegetical." But homilists and intercessors, members of liturgy committees and altar guilds, and even Bible study leaders, will find solid material here for their work. The book contains a set of elegantly written seasonal collects and a new hymn text:

Let us then make music boldly, as an offering true and strong.

God is praised, proclaimed, and honored as we join the eternal song.

(The Rev.) Jeffrey D. Lee River Hills, Wis.

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For information on how to join the Navy Chaplain Corps, call 1-800-USA-NAVY (Operator #113), or visit the Navy's Internet web site www.navyjobs.com In Puerto Rico, call toll-free 1-800-872-6289.

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People and Places

Appointments

Barbara Barth is lay vicar of St. Paul's, Box 546, Woodville, TX 75979.

The Rev. **Stephen Bartlett** is rector of Messiah, 213 E Grand Blvd., Detroit, MI 48214.

The Rev. Kenneth Grabinski is deacon at All Saints', Bellevue, WA.

The Rev. Canon **Frank Martin Harron II** is canon vicar and executive director of program and ministry at Washington National Cathedral, Mt. St. Alban, Washington, DC 20016.

The Rev. **Robert Hensley** is priest-in-charge of Epiphany, 3111 Ritchie Rd., Forestville, MD 20747.

The Rev. **Dale Hirst** is assistant at St. Aidan's, 3201 Edinburgh St., Virginia Beach, VA 23452.

The Rev. **Nan Kennedy** is upper school chaplain at Holland Hall School, 5666 E 81st St., Tulsa, OK 74136.

The Rev. **K. Casey Longwood** is rector of Christ Church, 210 5th Ave. SW, Puyallup, WA 98371.

The Rev. Jeffrey A. Mackey is rector of St. Mark's, 1692 Bellmore Ave., North Bellmore, NY 11710.

The Rev. **Vincent Murray** is vicar of Faith Community, Kingston, WA.

The Rev. **Don Nesheim** is vicar of St. Matthew's, 1121 Lowry Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55418; he continues as rector of St. Andrew's, Minneapolis.

Ordinations

Priests

North Dakota — Page Towne. Western New York — Judy Hefner.

Resignations

The Rev. Richard A. Burnett, as rector of St. James', 490 N Country Rd., St. James, NY 11780.

The Rev. **Timothy Dobbins**, as rector of Redeemer, Bryn Mawr, PA.

The Rev. **John Johnson**, as rector of Holy Trinity, Louisville, KY.

The Rev. Steve Malcom, as rector of St. Mary's, Nebraska City, NE.

The Rev. **Bob Miller**, as priest-in-charge of St. Matthew's, Minneapolis, MN.

The Rev. Steve Schaitberger, as rector of St. Paul's, Brainerd, MN

The Rev. **Sarah Trimble**, as rector of the Fork Church, Doswell, VA.

Changes of Address

The Rev. John F. Mangrum, 6065 S Verde Tr., #G313, Boca Raton, FL 33433.

The Order of Jonathan Daniels, Sagamore Court, 567-23 Sagamore Ave., Portsmouth, NH 03801-5550.

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