

Praying for Journalists

| 'For Those Troubled in Heart'

| Sayers and the Gospel

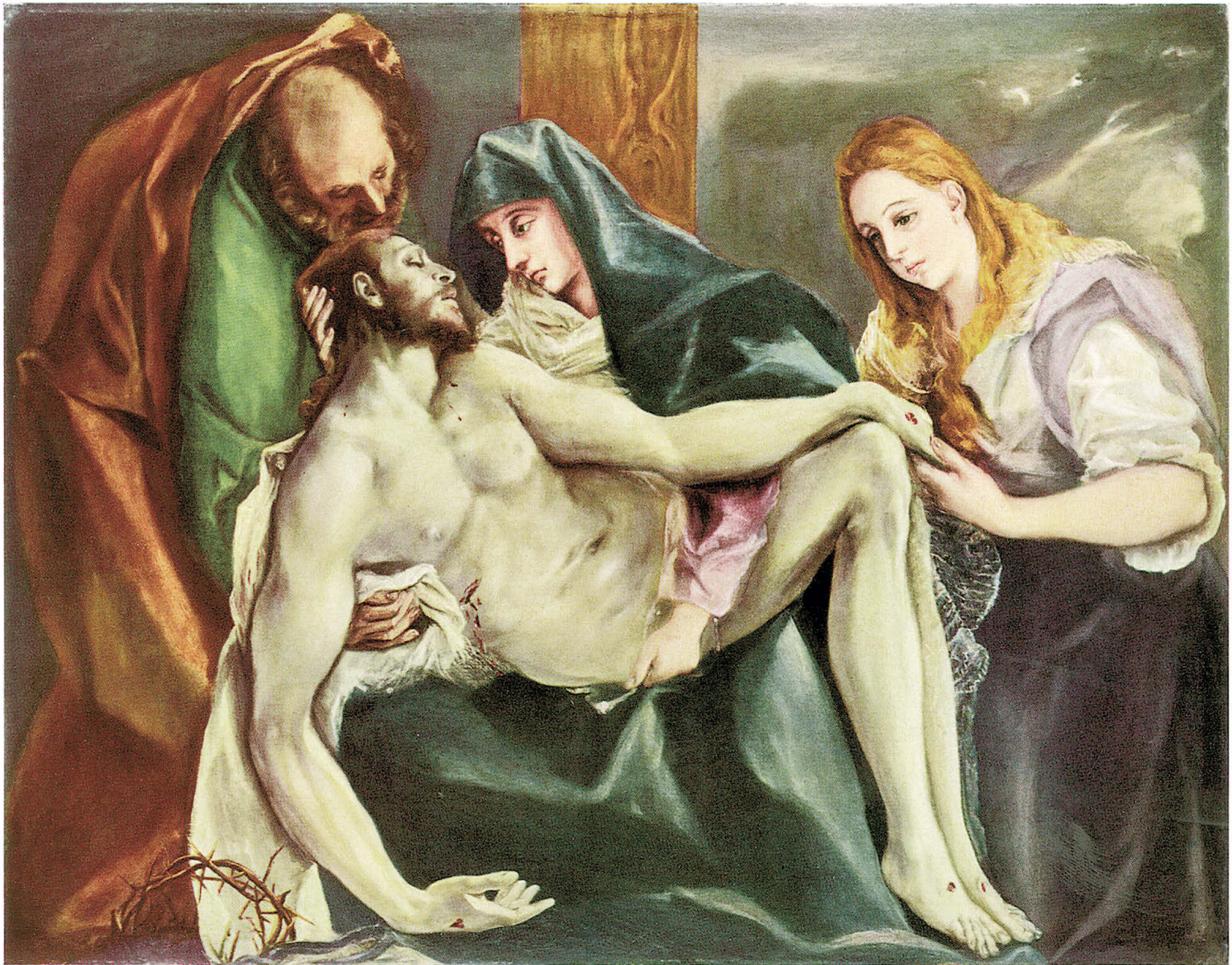
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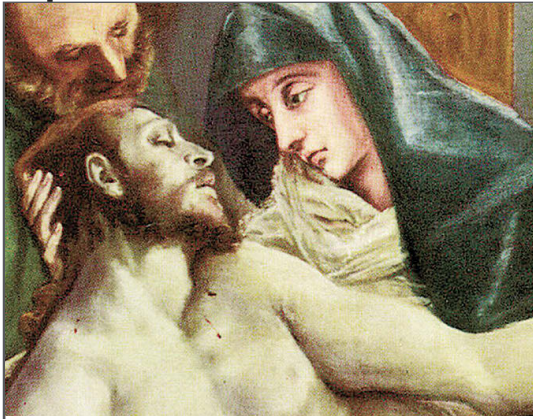
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ON THE COVER

The great theological war raging in Europe led to a market in Catholic Europe for artworks which emphasized a sense of the sacred and spiritual, a shift from the goals of the rational humanism of the Renaissance (see “Window to a Spiritual World,” p. 15).

El Greco: Pieta. Wikimedia Commons

THE LIVING CHURCH

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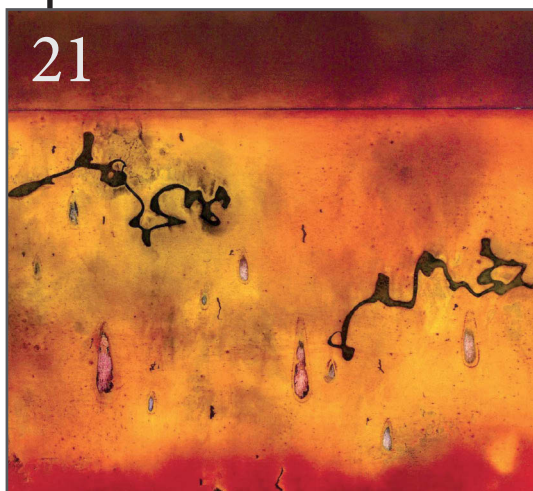
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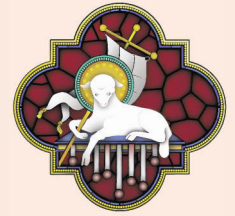
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TLC plans to release a series of uplifting audio and video resources in the coming weeks, to promote hope and spiritual growth during the pandemic. Details are still being worked out, but possibilities include podcasts, real-time panel discussions, and audiobooks. We'll talk with theologians, church leaders, and mental health experts about classic texts, pastoral issues, and liturgical resources. Visit livingchurch.org and covenant.livingchurch.org to stay up to date.



NEWS | April 5, 2020

The spread of the virus has quieted gatherings in churches around the world.

Photo by Stefan Kunze on Unsplash



Accelerating Timeline of a Pandemic

By Kirk Petersen

Everything we write about Coronavirus Disease 2019 seems to be quickly overtaken by new developments. A status update on the pandemic is likely to be outdated before this issue of the print magazine reaches subscribers.

So let's look backward instead, so we can see how quickly the pandemic has remade society, with a special focus on the Episcopal Church.

December 31, 2019 – Cases of pneumonia in Wuhan, China, are first reported to the World Health Organization (WHO).

January 21, 2020 – Officials in Washington state confirm the first case on US soil of what is then officially known as 2019-nCov, referred to more often as the novel coronavirus.

January 23 – the WHO says the Wuhan coronavirus does not yet con-

stitute a “public health emergency of international concern.” The organization reverses that assessment seven days later.

February 4 – Japan announces 10 infections on a cruise ship moored offshore. Every person everywhere who has ever been on a cruise thinks about contagion.

February 13-15 – More than 80 people attended a three-day Executive

Council meeting, including council members, staff and others. There was little or no discussion of the coronavirus. The big story was the vote, with Cuba Bishop Griselda Delgado del Carpio in attendance, to officially reunite the Diocese of Cuba with the Episcopal Church. Much hugging ensued.

February 20 – *TLC* publishes its first online article on the virus, under the headline “Taiwan to Consecrate New Bishop Despite Coronavirus.” Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry was the chief consecrator at the February 22 consecration.

February 26 – After criticism of the White House response to the crisis, President Donald Trump appoints Vice President Mike Pence to coordinate government response.

February 29 – A state health official announces that a patient infected with what is now called Covid-19 in Washington state has died, the first such death in the United States. Washington’s governor declares a state of emergency, followed within days by similar declarations in six states.

March 4 – *TLC* publishes two articles on the virus: an extended interview with a physician/theologian, and a story headlined “Coronavirus Begins to Disrupt Episcopal Church Activities.” The article reports the announcement that day that a House of Bishops meeting is being converted from a physical gathering to a virtual one. Employees of the Church Center had already been told not to travel to six named countries.

March 9 – *TLC* headlines: “Bishops Withhold Common Cup in Response to Coronavirus”; “Episcopal Rector Is First Coronavirus Case in Nation’s Capital.”

March 11 – *TLC*: “Coronavirus: A Pastoral Message from the Presiding Bishop”; “Bishops of Washington & Virginia Cancel All Services.” The WHO declares the crisis is officially a “pandemic,” although many people already were using that term.

March 13 – *TLC*: “Ban Announced for Churchwide Meetings Sponsored by TEC.”

President Trump declares a national emergency.

March 15 – *TLC*: “Presiding Bishop: Love in the Time of the Coronavirus,” featuring the Most Rev. Michael B. Curry preaching from his North Carolina home, as part of the National Cathedral’s livestreamed service conducted with empty pews.

The CDC posts a message recommending that all gatherings of 50 people or more should be canceled for the next eight weeks. The message was later deleted without explanation.

March 16 – *TLC*: “Dispatches from the Pandemic: Easter Services in Play.” The Diocese of Washington suspends all services through May 16. Easter is April 12.

Trump recommends that people not gather in groups of more than 10 people.

March 17 – A message from the presiding bishop says “I believe that suspension of in-person public worship is generally the most prudent course of action at this time, even during Holy Week and on Easter Day.” He said diocesan bishops should determine the length of any suspension based on their local circumstances. He postpones four bishop consecrations.

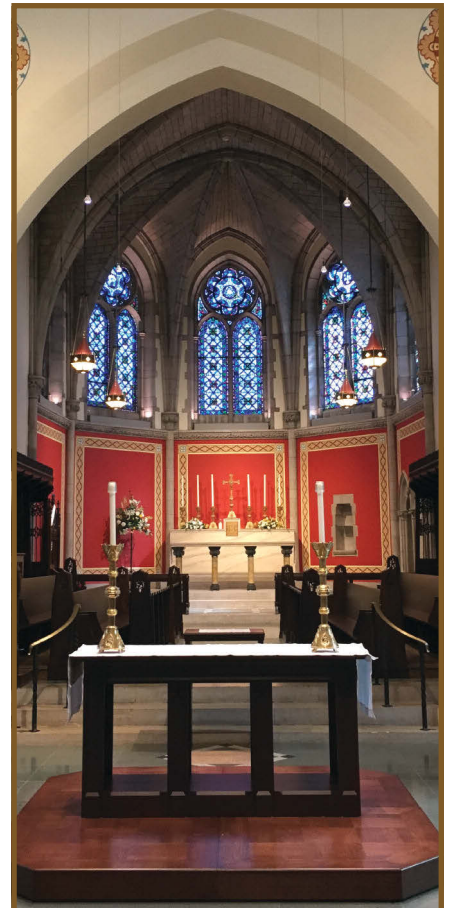
Also on March 17, the Church of England and the Vatican announce suspensions of all public worship until further notice, with the Vatican specifically saying Holy Week services would be private.

March 18 – The Dow Jones Industrial Average drops to the lowest level in the Trump presidency, before recovering slightly to close at 19,904.

Congress passes a \$100-billion-plus coronavirus relief plan, which the president promptly signs.

For the first time, a member of Congress is diagnosed with Covid-19. And then for the second time, hours later.

March 19 – Senate Republican leader introduces \$1 trillion aid package.



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Pioneering Female Bishop Barbara Harris Dies at 89

By Kirk Petersen

The Rt. Rev. Barbara C. Harris, the first woman consecrated a bishop in the Anglican Communion, has passed away at the age of 89.

Bishop Alan Gates of the Diocese of Massachusetts, where Harris served as bishop suffragan from 1989 to 2002, announced: "Bishop Barbara Harris died on the night of March 13, at Care Dimensions Hospice House in Lincoln following a hospitalization in Boston, faithfully attended throughout by dear friends and upheld by the prayers of so many."

Harris, an African-American, devoted decades to supporting social justice causes. According to the Episcopal Archives, she was with the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., in one of the 1965

marches on the Edmund Pettus Bridge outside Selma, Alabama, and she served as crucifer at the unauthorized ordination of 11 women in Philadelphia in 1974.

The latter episode inspired Harris to pursue a career in ministry. She was ordained a deacon in 1979 and a priest in 1980, after completing an Anglican track in the theology department at Villanova University, a Roman Catholic institution outside Philadelphia. She subsequently served as a priest-in-charge, a prison chaplain, and as executive director of Episcopal Church Publishing Company (ECPC) from 1984-88.

(ECPC, which is apparently defunct, is not to be confused with the much-larger Church Publishing Incorporated, a century-old subsidiary of



Diocese of Massachusetts/David Zadig photo

Barbara Harris at her consecration as bishop suffragan.


Church Pension Group. ECPC's primary publication was *The Witness*, a progressive magazine that ceased publication in 2006.

The Lambeth Conference, a meeting of Anglican provinces around the world

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that occurs roughly once every 10 years, determined in 1988 that the controversial issue of consecrating women as bishops should be left up to the individual provinces. Later that year, Harris was elected bishop. She served in that role until reaching the mandatory retirement age of 72 in 2002.

She was succeeded as bishop suffragan by another black woman named Harris: Gayle E. Harris, no relation. The first black female bishop diocesan was not elected until 2017, when Barbara Harris served as co-consecrator for the Rt. Rev. Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows as Bishop of Indianapolis.

New Primate for Ireland

By Mark Michael

The Rt. Rev. F. John McDowell, Bishop of Clogher, was elected Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland by the Church of Ireland's House of Bishops on March 11. McDowell, who



McDowell

has served his rural diocese in North-Central Ireland since 2011, succeeds the Most Rev. Richard Clarke, who retired from the post on February 2.

McDowell said of his new responsibility, "I am overwhelmed by the confidence which my fellow bishops have placed in me to fill this ancient office. I look forward to working with them in the time to come and to serving the people of the Diocese of Armagh and the Church of Ireland in whatever way I can."

Bishop McDowell is a native of Belfast and had a career in business before answering the call to ordained ministry. After ordination in 1996 and a curacy, McDowell served as rector of Ballyrashane in the Diocese of Connor and of St. Mark's, Dundela in the Diocese of Down and Dromore. The latter was C. S. Lewis' family church.

He has been involved in wider church service for many years, and has a particular interest in ecumenical work. He was the Church of Ireland's

representative for six years to the Porvoo Communion — the inter-church fellowship between Anglicans in the British Isles and Lutherans in Scandinavia created in 1992, when full communion was established between the respective churches. He currently serves as chairman of the Church of Ireland's Commission for Church Unity and Dialogue.

McDowell will be the 106th man to hold the archbishopric of Armagh, which was established by St. Patrick around 444. There is a long and complex succession of archbishops, bishops and abbots of Armagh.

McDowell figured in Northern Ireland's recent conversations around Brexit, as the Diocese of Clogher includes parishes in both Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom, and the independent Republic of Ireland. He issued an open letter last July, warning of the consequences of a "no-deal Brexit" that did not secure provisions for the easy passage across the border in his region. The provision has also been described

by many as important for preserving peace between Roman Catholics and Protestants in the region.

"The long-term well-being of men and women like these, and their neighbors all along the border," McDowell wrote, "requires and deserves a clearly spelt-out, sustainable agreement between both sides." He added, "some people like the Border and others do not, but positively or negatively, consciously or unconsciously, it is pivotal to how politicians and people here assess almost all policy alternatives."

Bishop McDowell's most significant recent predecessor is Archbishop Robin Eames, the self-described "divine optimist" who served as Ireland's primate from 1986-2006. Eames chaired a series of Communion-wide commissions handling controversial matters, most notably the Lambeth Commission on Communion, which produced the 2004 Windsor Report, which attempted to chart a way forward for the Communion in the face of strong divisions between its member

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churches over human sexuality.

Notable earlier Archbishops of Armagh include the 12th-century St. Malachy, legendary author of a prophecy about the papal succession; John Bramhall, a famous 17th-century anti-Puritan controversialist; and James Ussher, a 17th-century patristics scholar who famously dated the creation of the world as “the entrance of the night preceding the 23rd day of October... the year before Christ 4004.”

Early English Saint’s Relics Authenticated by Archaeologists

By Mark Michael

Bones discovered in the wall of an Anglican church in Southeastern England are almost certainly the remains one of the nation’s earliest saints, the seventh-century Anglo-Saxon princess Eanswythe. Parishioners of the Church of St. Mary and St. Eanswythe, in the port town of Folkestone, near Canterbury, had long assumed that the relics enshrined in their chancel for over a century were those of the local patron saint. But they took a bit of a risk by inviting experts to take a closer look.

Dr. Andrew Richardson, of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust, one of the partners in the Finding Eanswythe Project, which has been under way since 2017, told *The Guardian*: “It was

a brave move by the church. We could have come out and said: ‘Folks, it’s not her.’ I was 50-50 about it, and a lot of colleagues were skeptical. But everything is consistent with it being her.” The bones were retrieved from St. Mary & St. Eanswythe’s of Folkestone, in Kent County.

St. Eanswythe was the granddaughter of King Ethelbert of Kent, who was converted to Christianity by Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury. She founded what may have been England’s first monastic community for women, in Folkestone, in about 660. Medieval hagiographies record that Eanswythe died a few years later, while still a young woman. The 13th-century Folkestone church was originally the chapel for a priory that traced its roots to Eanswythe’s community.

A team of archaeologists took over the church for five days in January, conducting detailed analysis of the bones, which were housed in a battered lead casket. Initial analysis suggested that they came from one person, probably a female aged between 17 and 20. The bones showed no signs of malnutrition, consistent with a person of wealth and high social status.

A tooth and a foot bone from the casket were sent to Queen’s University, Belfast for radiocarbon dating. These tests confirmed it was highly probable that the woman died in the mid-seventh century, between 649 and 673.

The survival of Eanswythe’s relics is highly unusual, as the remains of locally venerated saints were widely destroyed during the English Refor-



St. Eanswythe

mation. Historians speculate that the casket containing St. Eanswythe’s remains must have been hidden in the chancel wall at some point in the mid-16th century to prevent a similar fate. Her shrine was likely dismantled around the time of the priory’s dissolution, when the former chapel was repurposed as Folkestone’s parish church.

Workmen discovered the casket while clearing out old plaster from the back of a niche in the chancel in 1885. Then-vicar Matthew Woodward, a high churchman who served as local incumbent for 47 years, arranged for the construction of an alabaster and brass shrine to house the discovery.

The Finding Eanswythe Project is raising funds to conduct further tests on the saint’s remains, hoping to extract DNA for analysis to learn more about her diet, background, and appearance. Churchwarden Andrew Plested said he hoped the announcement would encourage modern pilgrims to visit the church, and that it might be included in one of the walking trails to Canterbury currently being developed and promoted by the local tourism authority.

Oregon Candidates

The **Diocese of Oregon** has announced a slate of four candidates to become the XI Bishop of Oregon:

- The Rev. Diana Akiyama, Ph.D., Vicar, St. Augustine’s Episcopal Church (Kapaau, HI)
- The Rev. Dr. Mary Caucutt, Rector, Christ Episcopal Church (Cody, WY)
- The Rev. Andrew T. O’Connor, Rector, Good Shepherd Episcopal Church (Wichita, KS)
- The Rev. Canon Tanya R. Wallace, Rector, All Saints’ Episcopal Church (Hadley, MA)

Nominations by petition will be accepted until March 21. A special election convention is scheduled for June 27, with consecration of the new bishop expected January 30, 2021.

The next bishop will succeed the Rt. Rev. Michael Joseph Hanley, who has served since 2010.





De terra veritas

Son of David, have mercy on us.

The introductory rubrics of the brief order of prayer called the Supplication (BCP, p. 154) prescribe that it be used “especially in times of war, or of national anxiety, or of disaster.” It was nearly the last thing we prayed together as a congregation at Saint Francis Church, where I serve, before our bishop suspended public gatherings for at least two weeks. We continue to pray it twice each day over the livestream from our chapel, uniting as best we can in the midst of the prescribed “social distancing.”

As is often the case for liturgies composed in cases of special need, the text of the Supplication gathers up its contents from various places. There’s a bit of Psalm 44 in it, and the historic forms contained Thomas Cranmer’s translation of the collect from a Sarum votive mass aptly titled, “For those troubled in heart.”

The versicles and responses at the heart of the rite date back to a pontifical, or liturgical book, attributed to Saint Egbert of York, an eighth-century prelate who was a student of the Venerable Bede’s and a correspondent of Boniface, the apostle of the Germans. Egbert’s was a time of relative peace and security for the English Church. He rebuilt York Minster on a grand style after a fire in 741 and founded a distinguished cathedral school. Alcuin, the finest scholar of the Carolingian age, trained there and used Egbert’s model to found institutions all around continental Europe.

Most of the pontifical’s surviving liturgies, though, seem to come from the troubled centuries after Egbert’s death. The Christians of the region then faced repeated attacks from the pagan Northmen, who destroyed many of the great monasteries and sacked Egbert’s cathedral multiple times.

Though the Supplication was associated with wartime in the Tudor period, its versicles and responses were first written for the pontifical’s liturgy for the consecration of a church. The petitions are almost unrestrained for Anglican liturgy, full of emotional intensity and urgency. “From our enemies defend us, O Christ,” they begin. “Graciously behold our afflictions,” the congregation replies. The final



Wikimedia Commons/Martyn Gorman photo

The Church of St John the Baptist, Kirk Hammerton, U.K.

response is especially earnest, almost desperate: “Graciously hear us, O Christ, graciously hear us, O Lord Christ.”

Christ, in these prayers, is always very much “the Lord,” the one who squares off against the power of evil with the full wisdom and strength of God. One versicle also uses his messianic title: “Son of David,” it pleads, “have mercy upon us.”

“Son of David” is an unusual phrase in Western liturgy. But it is common in the Gospels, where it sounds often from the lips of those with deep and persistent faith. The Canaanite woman calls Jesus “Son of David,” in her humble plea for her daughter’s healing, his first in a foreign land (Matt. 9:27). The blind man acclaim Jesus with the same title in the final miracle of St. Luke’s Gospel, where his insight into the truth of things puts the quibbling Pharisees to shame (Luke 18:38). It is also the shout of the Palm Sunday crowds, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” (Matt. 21:10). This is creation’s own inevitable song of praise — that even the stones must cry out in the presence of their maker and king (see Luke 19:40).

The stones, you could say, still do proclaim it.

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There are a handful of Anglo-Saxon churches in Northern England. They were consecrated using this liturgy over a millennium ago and are preserved largely intact from the depredations of the Northmen, the plague, and Victorian remodelers. The churches in humble Yorkshire villages like Kirk Hammerton and Appleton-le-Street are marked by dramatic square towers,

their thick stone walls pierced by a few small windows. The churches look like fortresses today, and would have dominated the wattle huts clustered around them previously.

Here is the place of refuge, these churches proclaim, the fold where Israel's true shepherd gathers his own and bars the gate against the foe. *Here* is sanctuary for the fearful, where the weak and lowly may turn together to the Lord

in the hour of need; he who defends his own shadows over us with his protecting hand. "The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Prov. 18:10).

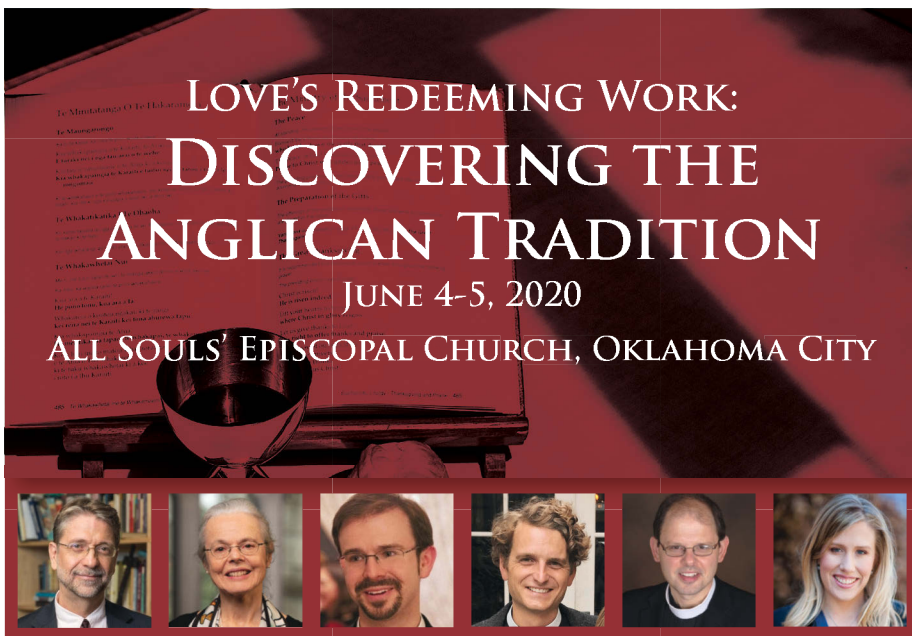
The Diocese of Washington, in which I serve, was the first to close the door of its churches in the midst of the current pandemic. On the conference call with all her clergy, Bishop Mariann Budde acknowledged that this step didn't really feel right to her, and that she knew most of us would have the same intuition. The grocery store in our village is mobbed at the moment and the bars seem to be doing a tidy business. The bank wouldn't think of closing, with so many people worried about their investments. But the church is locked; and, for the sake of the vulnerable, we must keep our distance.

When we are afraid, and the future is uncertain, we want to be together. Even last week, before public worship was banned, we were told to take great care that the Eucharist not be used to spread contagion. The hem of Jesus' robe expelled disease and his touch raised the dead to life. "His blood can make the foulest clean," but so long as it retains the accidents of port, they tell us, it won't neutralize the coronavirus.

Have mercy upon us, O Son of David. We the flock still look to our shepherd, and we bow low before the true king. The work of the Church continues, over video-conferencing platforms and cell phones. Some of us are still able to feed the hungry and to stand watch at the bedside. But all come face to face with an unaccustomed helplessness. Mostly we pray and wait, and we feel, perhaps, as our ancestors once did, huddling in the tower while the Northmen raged.

Faith comes to life in moments like this, and God reaches down in ways we least expect. God wants to give us something, St. Augustine said, but he cannot, because our hands are too full. At long last, they are empty. We do not know what the future will hold, but we know that we are his. For now, that is enough.

— Mark Michael



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Journalism's Higher Calling

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald
Correspondent

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. – Journalists may not get a lot of love these days, at least not like that being shown in the Diocese of Western Massachusetts through a unique ritual that's becoming an annual tradition.

On Feb. 25, Christ Church Cathedral in Springfield hosted its third annual Blessing of Journalists. About 50 worshipers turned out for the Tuesday noontime service at which the work of reporters, editors, and producers was celebrated as essential to liberty and democracy.

Many who gathered were priests, staff, and laypeople from congregations in the diocese. Organizers said fewer than ten of those in the pews were journalists, including this reporter, who was among others on assignment to cover the event.

But administering in-person blessings wasn't the entire reason for the event. The larger goal was to encourage all in the profession, especially those who might have been demoralized in recent years to hear President Donald Trump speak of journalists as "enemies of the people" and purveyors of "fake news."

"We just felt that they were under attack," said Western Massachusetts Bishop Douglas Fisher. "Just as Jesus would go to people who were under attack, we felt that we needed to go there. They were being called 'fake news' and 'enemies of the people.' We just felt we needed to celebrate what they do."

By the time all was finished, the press corps had been nudged also to think about its higher calling to "use communication as an instrument for building, not destroying." And local church leaders confided hope that some of their good will toward the news media might somehow, someday be required.



Photo courtesy of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts
Wayne Phaneuf, retired editor of the *Springfield Republican* newspaper, receives the Bishop's Award from the Rt. Rev Douglas Fisher at the Feb 25 Blessing of Journalists.

"I'm part of a denomination that's not often sought out for comments by media because we're much more bland – we don't have outrageous statements," said Lutheran pastor Erik Karas of Christ Trinity Church, an Episcopal-Lutheran congregation in Sheffield, Mass. "My hope, way beneath the other hopes [for the event], is that connections can be made here where a different picture of the faith community can be presented to the world."

Speakers underscored how reporting is often dangerous, particularly when the powerful come under unwanted scrutiny and decide to lash back. Attendees were reminded that scores of journalists have been targets of violence after shining spotlights on

corruption and organized crime. The Committee to Protect Journalists has tallied 1,919 murders of journalists worldwide since 1992.

As the liturgy unfolded, special attention went to journalists who've had high profile clashes with the Trump administration. Those named during prayers included Mary Louise Kelly, a National Public Radio host who made headlines after her January interview with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo led to an angry public rebuke from him. Also lifted up by name was Jim Acosta, a CNN White House correspondent who sued after the White House revoked his press credential in 2018.

"We remember especially those who

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are pressured by their government,” said the Rev. Victoria Ix as she led prayers of the people, “those who are threatened and silenced, those who are put in harm’s way by their work, and those who have lost their lives throughout the world reporting on the news. In your mercy...”

“Hear our prayer,” the congregation said.

As part of the annual tradition, a journalist was honored with the Bishop’s Award. This year’s prize went to Wayne Phaneuf, retired editor of the *Springfield Republican* newspaper, where he’d held various editorial positions for almost 50 years.

Phaneuf said “it’s huge” for him to be honored by the church at a time when journalistic resources have shrunken to about one-eighth of what they’d been in the heyday of his career. He explained that the greatest threat - one

that’s hollowing out newsrooms - is coming not from government but from disruption of the industry’s business model.

As big tech companies draw advertising away from traditional news outlets, journalism operations have been forced to shrink. Newsroom employment plunged 25 percent from 114,000 jobs in 2008 to 86,000 in 2018, according to a Pew Research Center report (<https://pewrsr.ch/2ITDfuG>). Newspapers suffered the steepest losses as the number of newsroom jobs shrank from 71,000 to 38,000.

“One of the things that’s really killed journalism is Google and Facebook because they took away the ability to make money,” Phaneuf said. “Frankly the Trump impact [on journalism] is nowhere near the impact of Google and Facebook... But nobody ever says anything about that because we all suck up to these people.”

For the church, the Blessing of Journalists takes a familiar motif and gives it a new twist. While Episcopal clergy have convened public events to bless everything from household pets to fishing vessels, Fisher said he’s not aware of any other dioceses or congregations that have blessed journalists in particular.

This burgeoning tradition was launched in February 2018 as a way to honor the February feast of Episcopal saint Frederick Douglass, a 19th-century African Methodist Episcopal clergyman and editor of the pro-abolition journal, *The North Star*. Encouraging today’s journalists marks a way to honor Douglass’ legacy, Fisher said.

The order of worship was designed to span a spectrum of sacred, secular, and interfaith voices. Speakers and readers included a Muslim attorney, a Lutheran pastor and a Springfield city councilor. Texts were drawn from the Hebrew Bible and the United States Constitution, as well as writings by founding father Thomas Jefferson and former Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black.

From this chorus came a unified

message of encouragement for the work of reporting news. But in the process, reporters and the church alike received exhortations to do better, including in their relationships with each other.

After the service, Fisher underscored that church leaders don’t need to shun reporters or assume they’re going to be antagonistic toward the church. Reporters want to tell powerful stories, he noted, and the church has many to share about lives changed for the better.

“I’m not leery of the press at all,” Fisher said. “I consider the press someone who amplifies our stories.”

As reporters heard an uncommonly friendly message aimed in their direction, they also heard a call to be their best - and to use their power for the betterment of humanity. One reading, excerpted from Pope Francis’ address to the Foreign Press Association in May 2019, reinforced how the church might view journalism as a vehicle for advancing God’s purposes.

“Work according to truth and justice,” said the pontiff’s message to the FPA, “so that communication is truly an instrument for building, not destroying; for meeting, not for clashing ... for giving a voice to those who have no voice.”

Before all received a benediction sending them back to their newsrooms and congregations, the journalists were given words to pray aloud while all others listened.

“May the power which is ours, for good or ill,” the press corps prayed, “always be used with honesty and courage, with respect and integrity, so that when all here has been written, said and done, we may, unashamed, meet God face to face.” And alongside the rank and file of the church, those who report the news sang a hymn. “Lord, Make Us Servants of Your Peace.”

“Where there is hate, may we sow love,” they sang. “Where there is hurt, may we forgive; where there is strife, may we make one.” □

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CSI's Passion for Autonomy and Liberation

By Steven R. Ford

I was in southern India recently for the marriage of my niece, who has lived and worked in Chennai for several years, to a local man from Coimbatore, his family hometown. I was invited to participate in the liturgy and deliver the homily. The venue, All Souls' Church, is a stunning Victorian Gothic structure built and consecrated in 1880. The parish is in the Diocese of Coimbatore in the Church of South India (CSI), a province of the worldwide Anglican Communion.

CSI began its life a month after India's independence from the United Kingdom in 1948. Following extensive negotiation, the small and probably independently unsustainable Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregational churches were united. The one stumbling block, however, was the Anglican insistence that all clergy not already in holy orders be ordained by Anglican bishops into apostolic succession. Eventually a grand compromise was reached. Anglicans would accept clergy of the uniting churches as though they were deacons or priests on the condition that all future ordinations be performed by bishops in the Anglican succession. Further, any Protestant elected as a bishop would be consecrated by Anglican bishops. It worked, and now all CSI clergy are in valid Anglican orders.

This compromise is widely regarded as one of the greatest ecumenical breakthroughs since the Reformation. It was the model by which the united Churches of North India, Pakistan and Bangladesh (all now full provinces of the Communion) were formed, and it is the basis on which the Episcopal Church's current relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is being built.

But, as I learned personally at the wedding, there's more! The groom and



Virginia Ford photo

Fr. Ford discusses Indian Church history with retired CSI Primate, the Most Rev. Dharmaraj Rasalam.

his entire family are life-long members of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar, an Eastern-rite body with which Anglicans, since the days of the British Raj, have been in full communion. Relations today with CSI are even closer, with clergy and members of each church interchangeable with one another. The groom, Ani John, and his family, along with retired CSI Archbishop (and Moderator and Primate) the Most Rev. Dharmaraj Rasalam (who lives in the All Souls' rectory) are excellent sources of a

(dutifully fact-checked) oral history of Christianity in South India.

Little is known for certain about the foundation or earliest history of Christianity in western India. However, all Mar Thoma faithful look to the Apostle Thomas as their founder. He is believed to have arrived on the Malabar Coast in southwest India in 52 AD, spending the rest of his life evangelizing and starting churches. His initial proselytes would most certainly have been West Syriac-speaking Jews

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(the language is a close variant of first-century Aramaic), known to have been living in the Malabar region at the time. In any case, Eusebius of Caesarea reports that, in the early second century, the head of an Alexandrian theological school visited western India and discovered Christian communities speaking the West Syriac/Aramaic language and using an Aramaic version of the Gospel of Mathew written in Hebrew script. Bardaisan (155-222), a Gnostic scholar and mystic, reported that by the end of the second century there were many bishops engaged in missionary work in western India.

A late second- or early third-century document, the Acts of Thomas, recounts two missionary endeavors in India by the apostle, the first in the northern part of the sub-continent, where the Parthian king and his brother were converted. The second, in Malabar (the present-day state of Kerala), was when he began preaching to people of every class and caste (“...all sorts and conditions of men [and women]” (BCP, 814). This expanded outreach, especially among the poor and downtrodden, purportedly resulted in 17,000 baptisms. While most scholars agree that the Acts is a collection of polemical legends, it is nonetheless taken with the utmost seriousness by Mar Thoma Christians. For them, it is an amplification of the Lord’s command to love and serve all people, particularly those who are oppressed.

Whatever its origin — and who’s to say that it wasn’t founded and nurtured by Thomas? — the Mar Thoma Church had always been an Indo-Syriac, orthodox, autocephalous (not reporting to any external primate), and probably apostolic community with a deep social conscience.

That changed with the coming of the 16th century. The arrival of the first Portuguese explorers in 1498 brought awe and wonder to both Mar Thomites and the small band of Europeans about the close commonality of their Christian faith. It also produced dreams of lucrative trade and empire-building.

Officials in Lisbon, on learning of Malabar’s riches and the Christian religion of many of its residents, quickly

realized that bringing Mar Thomites into the Portuguese Roman Catholic fold could ease the takeover and long-term colonial occupation of areas of western India. They were right.

Another Portuguese visitation brought merchant settlers, administrators and no fewer than 18 Roman Catholic priests. While appearing to work closely with their Indian counterparts, they labored feverishly behind the scenes to persuade Mar Thomites to abandon their autonomy and submit to European papal authority. This was, of course, a non-starter with Indian church leadership.

It was the death of Mar Thoma Metropolitan Abraham in 1597 and the subsequent submission to Rome of the new senior hierarch which prompted the Catholic Archbishop of Goa to convene the Synod of Diamper in 1599, which Romanized much of the Mar Thoma Church — theologically, liturgically, and administratively. Not all, however, were to remain “Europeans.” The church’s long tradition of independence, self-governance, and inclusiveness of the dispossessed was again raising its head. In 1653, several bishops, a number of clergy, and a fair minority of laypeople signed the “Coonan Cross Oath,” by which they vowed disobedience to Portuguese colonial authorities, broke communion with the foreign Church of Rome and reinstated West Syriac liturgy and traditions. For this “breakaway” group, at least, autocephaly had been restored and the church’s social conscience took a great leap forward with its introduction of “civil disobedience” regarding religious authority.

With the decline of Portuguese influence and the ascendancy of the British East India Company, replaced by the Raj in 1858, came Anglican and Continental Reformed clergy and missionaries. Many Mar Thomites, isolated from Christian bodies other than Syrian and Roman Catholic, became fascinated by the idea of “reformation.” Influenced primarily by Anglicans, a small but steadily growing number of priests in the 1840s began celebrating their liturgies in the vernacular rather than in

the long-dead West Syriac language. Liturgies were simplified along Anglican lines to remove materials imposed by the Synod of Diamper, and social conscience made the church again accessible to even the lowest castes. A rift in the hierarchy ensued, followed by an uneasy truce between “traditionalists” and “progressives.” This ended in 1898, with the reformist faction, headed by the metropolitan, “winning” at the expense of supporters of supporters of the Synod of Diamper. The latter departed, organizing an independent ecclesial body in communion with Rome.

During the 20th century, Mar Thoman passion for autonomy and liberation saw the church, both clergy and laity, actively supporting and participating in Gandhi’s civil disobedience. During the Indian political crisis of 1975, the metropolitan implored the prime minister, Indira Gandhi, to end the oppressive state of emergency she had declared. The church was a founding member of the World Council of Churches and is in full communion with Canterbury Anglicans throughout the world. It professes to know of “no theological reason” why women cannot be ordained and serve at every level of ministry, although it has yet to ordain women itself.

In 2019, the metropolitan emeritus and numerous active diocesan bishops laid out plans in a public meeting for ministry to India’s outcast gay and transgender communities. In conjunction with CSI, Mar Thomites run vocational schools for young people and purchase land to give to the homeless. Of particular significance to Anglicans in the U.S., a bishop of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar served as co-consecrator of the (then) bishop coadjutor of Southeast Florida, Peter David Eaton; and the church’s former ecumenical officer, Christopher Epting, became the first American bishop to celebrate the ancient Liturgy of St. James in a Mar Thoma Syrian parish church for a Mar Thoma congregation. They have much for which to be proud.

The Rev. Steven R. Ford was assistant at St. Mark’s/San Marcos in Mesa, Arizona. He died recently (see obituary, page 26).



Christ Driving the Money Changers from the Temple, about 1570. El Greco. The Minneapolis Institute of Art

Window to a Spiritual World

By Nathan Mason

The Art Institute of Chicago's current exhibition *El Greco: Ambition and Defiance* is engaging on many levels and in easily digestible bites. He often painted strangely attenuated figures and oddly twisted groups floating in glowing atmospheres, but the portraiture in this exhibit reveals his clear mastery of representational painting. "Christ Driving the Money Changers from the Temple" is an excellent early example of both styles in one painting. The naturally rendered por-

traits of donors in the lower right corner are included as a business necessity but occupy their own space unrelated to the true action and dynamism of the painting seen in the lively figure grouping to the left.

One of the delights of looking at El Greco's work is examining his virtuosic brush work and command of sinuous line. By bringing together multiple versions of the same image it enables the comparison of minor variations between versions, allowing speculation of if the master or an assistant worked on a particular section. The examples of Mary Magda-

lene, St. Francis, St. Martin and the Beggar, and the Annunciation offer much to see and analyze. This also helps to illustrate well what it meant to be a successful artist with a studio of assistants at that time (and now): one had to have popular product available for purchase. While we are generally aware that printmakers issue multiple impressions of an image we don't typically think of painters as working in that manner. Here one can see that when El Greco devised a successful composition of a particular devotional image, he would

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make that design available in whatever size a patron could afford or have room to use.

The business side of art is frequently ignored in exhibition materials. Either it is thought to be a distraction from the artwork or as too prosaic to belong in the museum. However, art is not generated in a vacuum and the economics of its manufacture are inextricable from its creation and appearance. The inclusion of donor portraits in altarpieces is just one example — surely the donors were not present at the event being depicted. There is a large timeline on the gallery wall which presents a chronology of El Greco's life. It also clearly shows how contract negotiations and pricing disputes impacted his life and work.

The Counter-Reformation influence on El Greco's work and its contribution to his unique ethereal drift from naturalism, I think, cannot be underestimated. The great theological war raging in Europe led to a market in Catholic Europe for artworks which emphasized a sense of the sacred and spiritual, a shift from the goals of the rational humanism of the Renaissance. El Greco's first training as a Byzantine icon painter rooted him in a tradition which held that the artwork was a window to a spiritual world. Naturalism was not a necessity or goal. The expansion of his training to master the art and intellectual direction of the High Renaissance brought naturalism into his portfolio. Addressing the market of his conservative and religious patrons who sought to have their Counter-Reformation faith valorized in the artwork in the churches and homes gave El Greco the support to develop a type of spiritual realism which satisfied the demand for good painting, as then perceived, with the communication of an otherworldly quality that appealed to the religious sensibility of the audience.

On a final note, this exhibition supports one of the great pleasures of museum going — the hunt for visual quotations and who did it first. Does "The Vision of Saint John" look jar-



The Vision of St. John,
about 1609-14. El Greco
The Metropolitan Museum of Art



The Penitent Magdalene,
about 1577. El Greco
Worcester Art Museum,
Worcester, Mass.

ringly modern? Picasso quoted it in "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon." Do you see hints of Michelangelo here and there? You are correct. Was Margaret Keane thinking about Mary Magdalene? We don't know, but there is no reason to be embarrassed if thoughts of those mid-century "big eye" paintings cross your mind. She was a good painter, and populism is not a sin. Reading El Greco's biography suggests that while he may have wanted a licensing fee for derivative works, he wouldn't have been opposed to them.

After all, it would mean that more people might want his original artworks.

El Greco: Ambition and Defiance is on view at the Art Institute of Chicago until June 21, 2020

Nathan Mason is an artist, art history nerd and public art administrator in Chicago. He will have an exhibition of sculpture at The Dime Gallery in May. He is also a verger and a thurifer who occasionally indulges in Queen Anne swings at St. James Cathedral, Chicago.

Behold, The Man

By Stephen Platten

One of the most powerful moments of Holy Week is the proclamation — either spoken or in the remarkable plainchant setting by Victoria—of John’s account of Jesus’ passion. But equally remarkable is the St. John Passion commissioned to be written by the new Thomaskantor (music director) at Leipzig on his appointment in 1723, one Johann Sebastian Bach. Bach’s St. John Passion made its first appearance on Good Friday in 1724. Revised for three subsequent performances, a *final* version was never produced. The fourth version was sung in 1749. This unusual musicological history provoked the quirky subtitle given in the program notes here — the “*Incomplete Complete!*” The received version now performed is a hybrid, including material from all four versions. Sometimes seen as the lesser of Bach’s passions alongside the far longer setting of Matthew, many would now argue that its compactness and use of drama gives the St. John Passion the edge over all Bach’s other sacred music.

The passion in John’s Gospel is, of course, the most sophisticated of the four. It abounds in the use of literary irony, in the dialogue on kingship and in the recurring description of Jesus’ “lifting up,” which holds together his passion and exaltation/resurrection. This element, when added to its juxtaposition of the priestly and secular authority and Jesus’ consistent self-possession in his passion, makes for an intense degree of dramatic tension. Bach exploits this tension to the full throughout, with his varied use of

chorales, recitatives, solo voice arias, and choruses. The achievement is astonishing, seeing how much more of a challenge the composition of a full-scale passion would have been in comparison with the cantatas that were usually expected of him. The composer makes it clear that this was not to be an operatic piece but rather a devout meditation, aiming to inspire the congregation to a greater depth of reflection on this day, the day of all days.

Philippe Herreweghe’s recording with the Collegium Vocale Gent is a *tour de force* and reinforces his reputation as one of the great contemporary interpreters of the one who is seen by some as “the greatest composer of all time.” That argument, of course, will recur often in this, Beethoven’s 250th year!

The opening chorus establishes a dramatic depth which is maintained throughout. But the contrast of this with the chorales’ lyrical phrasing and lightness of approach moves the listener progressively deeper into the mystery of John’s writing and its unique ability to chart the tensions of Christ’s trial and agonies. This is further established by the great rhythmic sensitivity established and developed as the drama unfolds. Any hint of operatic showmanship is avoided, but despite the intensity and comparative length of the passion narrative, both the intensity and lingering beauty never disappoint, nor allow the work to feel “slow” in a dramatic sense. The entry of the great Latin hymn *Gloria, laus et honor* brings its own pathos and richness at that supreme Johannine moment, when Pilate declares: “What I have written, I have written.”



St. John Passion, BWV 245

Johann Sebastian Bach

Collegium Vocale Gent, Philippe Herreweghe

Label: PHI. LPH 231. Harmonium Mundi, \$45

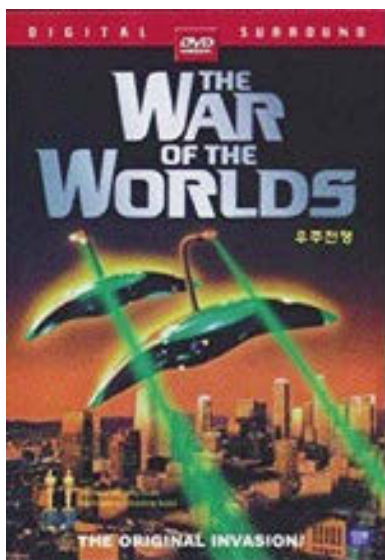
The hymn’s response is “*In meines Herzens Grunde, dein Nam und Kreuz Allein*” — “in the inmost reaches of my heart, thy name and cross alone.”

Herreweghe’s rendering offers the listener a most subtle and moving way into the mystery of Good Friday. The tempo is brisk and strong, but never breathless; the diction is outstanding and the recording quality impeccable. Bonuses are the intriguing program notes, which abound in insight. Michael Maul begins: “The bass quavers sound like the merciless blows of a chisel on stone, the violins’ semiquavers interweave a pure infinite tapestry of sound...” His reflection on Robert Schumann’s appreciation of the work and his insights into Bach’s own engagement with it over four versions are fascinating. Ultimately, however, it is the power of the text and music together which bespeak more of the theology and spiritual power of John’s dialogue and drama than might issue from countless more purely prosaic analyses: “Behold the Man!”

The Rt. Rev. Stephen Platten is honorary assistant bishop in the Dioceses of London, Newcastle, and Southwark.

Hopeful Movies for Episcopalians in Self-Quarantine

By Paul F.M. Zahl



We are all spending more time than usual at home this month. And probably next month, and maybe the month after that. We are certainly spending less time in church, or at least in the beautiful buildings we love. That, too, may go on for a while.

So I submit to you four classic movies to entertain you and inspire you during this involuntary form of a Lenten fast.

Three of them tell the tale of a minister or priest trying to lead the people through a time of extraordinary crisis. The fourth presents a marriage that is in search of a miracle. All of these films embody a Christian view of faithful persistence under extreme stress. I hope they can lift our spirits just now.

Oh, and each is easily available, either as a mail-order DVD or streamed over the internet.

War of the Worlds (1953)

This is the original Hollywood version, produced by George Pal and starring Anne Robinson and Gene Barry. It posits the entire human world up against an insuperable and merciless foe — the Martians! But God is not mocked. In the unforgettable conclusion, Gene Barry enters three successive churches in search of the woman he loves. In the last church, he finds her. As they embrace, fully expecting the Martian death ray to destroy the church and them with it, the minister prays our “Prayer for All Sorts and Conditions of Men” from the 1928 *Book of Common Prayer*. At that moment, a miracle takes place.

Note also that a very Episcopal-looking minister is the heroine’s uncle, who confronts the Martians with his prayer book and the Twenty-Third Psalm.

Available as a DVD or streaming.

***The Return of Don Camillo* (1953)**

This is an Italian movie directed by the Frenchman Julien Duvivier.

It concerns a wry and wise Catholic priest in a small Italian town, who mostly battles an elected Communist mayor and city council.

But then a natural disaster happens, and everyone must work together.

And they do!

The Return of Don Camillo feels timely for our time in more than one important way.

It is available as a DVD.



***Journey to Italy* (1954)**

The immortal Roberto Rossellini directed this one, which stars Ingrid Bergman and George Sanders. They portray an unhappy married couple who are vacationing in Naples, near Pompeii. After arguing bitterly for most of the film, they encounter a miracle, a *bona fide* religious miracle.

Some people regard *Journey to Italy* as Rossellini's greatest film.

You decide. It is a true wonder of a work of art, in any event. Available as streaming video.

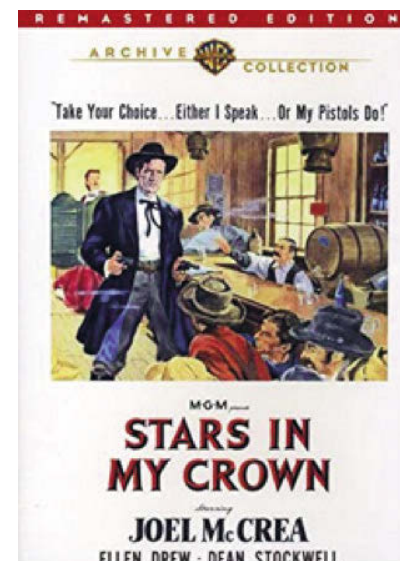


***Stars in My Crown* (1950)**

Here is depicted a small-town Methodist minister who must navigate both an epidemic of typhoid fever *and* an outbreak of racial prejudice. By the grace of God, he finds the way of Christ and the movie is a *tour de force*. The minister is played by Joel McCrea, and McCrea's son told me that *Stars in My Crown* was his father's favorite film. I can understand why. See this movie for hope and delight. It is also a family favorite, as the story is told from the vantage point of a 12-year-old boy. Available as DVD or streaming video.

Four film gems, three of them set in a "time of cholera." Mary and I have gone back to them ourselves – this week, with shutters down and curtains drawn – and they sure helped to restore our hope.

The Rev. Paul F. M. Zahl is a retired priest, and was formerly rector of All Saints' Church, Chevy Chase, Md. and dean of Trinity School for Ministry. He is the author of many books.



Lying

Are the biblical authors simply inconsistent on this point?

By Stewart Clem

The Bible does not condone lying. Or does it? On the one hand, when lying is considered in the abstract, the biblical authors are unequivocal: “Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord” (Prov. 12:22a), “You destroy those who tell lies” (Ps. 5:6), “Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices” (Col. 3:9). But there are plenty of stories in the Bible in which characters tell lies, and not only do they get away with it, they’re often praised for their actions. The Hebrew midwives lied to the Egyptians, who were carrying out the king’s edict to murder every newborn Hebrew boy. The narrator tells us, “And because the midwives feared God he gave them families” (Ex. 1:21). Rahab lied to the Canaanite soldiers in order to protect Joshua’s spies (Josh. 2:4-6) and was later eulogized in the New Testament (Heb. 11:31; James 2:25). How can we reconcile these passages of Scripture? Are the lies of Rahab and the midwives praiseworthy because they were told for a good end? Or are they somehow not lies at all? Or are the biblical authors simply inconsistent on this point?

The early Christians wrestled with these very questions. They were well aware of Scripture’s ambiguity on the subject of lying, and their own answers were often creative (sometimes fanciful) even as they sought to remain faithful to biblical teaching. Among the early Christian writers, St. Augustine of Hippo exercised the greatest influence on the Church’s reflections on the subject. He recognized that a clear definition of the lie was necessary before any moral analysis could proceed. His own definition was quite simple: “A person lies who has one thing in mind yet expresses something else with words” (*On Lying*, 3). Moreover, he drew upon biblical texts and reasoned arguments to conclude that every lie is a sin, without exception. Some lies are worse than others, of course, but there cannot be a sinless lie, even if told for a good cause.

The most frequently cited biblical text related to lying is found in the Decalogue: “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor” (Ex. 20:16). Many Christian traditions teach that the Ninth Commandment (or Eighth Commandment, in Lutheran and Roman Catholic numbering) prohibits *all* forms of lying. The Catechism of the Episcopal Church, for example, teaches that this commandment requires us to “speak the truth, and not to mis-

lead others by our silence” (BCP, 848). The Catholic Church teaches that this commandment “forbids misrepresenting the truth in our relations with others” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2464). This is not a novel interpretation of the commandment. It finds support in Augustine, who writes, “Under this general term, ‘you shall not bear false witness,’ all lying is included; for whoever declares anything bears witness to one’s own mind” (*On Lying*, 6). In other words, bearing false witness against one’s neighbor is a rather broad category of sinful action, and the commandment is broken every time a lie is uttered.

But there is another, more literal way to read the commandment. The language of “bearing false witness” suggests a concern with the judicial and litigious; the clause “against your neighbor” evokes instances of slander and intentionally harmful speech. Surely a little white lie (“that outfit looks great on you”), or a lie told to save a life (“there are no fugitives in my house”) doesn’t meet these criteria. Some biblical scholars and moral theologians have called for greater attention to the precise wording and historical context of the commandments. In most Jewish rabbinic traditions, the commandment is interpreted in the narrower, legal sense. Wouldn’t it be better to emphasize this legal aspect of the Ninth Commandment, precisely so we don’t become so *legalistic* that we find ourselves condemning even harmless lies as grave sins?

Yes and no.

It’s true that the Ninth Commandment specifically condemns false, *harmful* speech. The second table of the Decalogue is concerned with acts of injustice against one’s neighbor. It’s not difficult to imagine lies that might *help* (or at least flatter) one’s neighbor. But the Ten Commandments are not meant to address every possible sin of the human heart. They are concerned with grave acts against God and neighbor — acts the Church came to describe as “mortal” sins, insofar as they are fatal to our spiritual lives. But just because an act is not directly opposed to one of the commandments does not mean that it is a *good* thing to do.

St. Thomas Aquinas, writing in the 13th century, was the first major theologian to acknowledge that the simple act of lying does not violate the Ninth Commandment. To have one thing in mind and yet say another (to recall Augustine’s definition of the lie) is not itself an act

of injustice. But it is never a good thing to do. Why? The short answer is simply that we are linguistic creatures, and God created the faculty of speech in us for the purpose of communicating truth. While it may be prudent to withhold the truth at times, telling lies — no matter how small or convenient — can never contribute to our flourishing in a positive way.

Little lies, like those told by Rahab and the midwives, are ‘venial’ sins, because they are forgivable (from the Latin *venia*, “forgiveness”). As St. Thomas explains, these biblical heroes were not acting in direct opposition to God’s law. It would have been better if they had found a way to avoid lying, but this action can be isolated from the broader context of their attempt to save others. As the biblical texts affirm, these women were motivated by their love for God, and for this they should be praised.

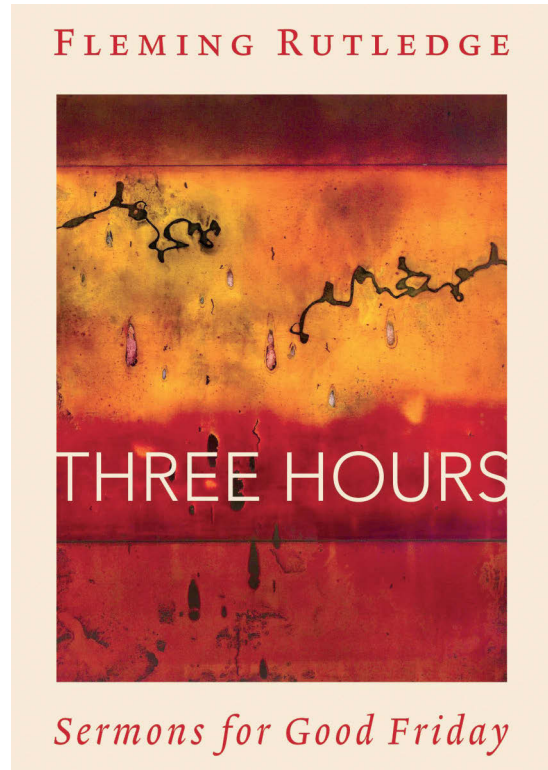
We must be careful here. Rahab’s and the midwives’ lies are not reclassified as good actions because they resulted in a good outcome or because their hearts were in right place. As St. Paul reminds us, we cannot do evil that good may come (Rom. 3:8). The lies remain sins. What St. Thomas

We are linguistic creatures, and God created the faculty of speech in us for the purpose of communicating truth.

teaches us is that these lies are not the kind of action that severs one’s relationship with God. If Rahab had told a lie or performed any other action that brought harm upon someone else, then the sin would have been much more serious.

We might be tempted to say that lying is not so bad, after all. As long as we’re not hurting anyone, why not tell a lie when it’s more convenient? But this is the question of the sophist, not the would-be saint. St. Thomas reminds us that truthfulness is a virtue. We only need to look around to see the manifold ways in which disregard for the truth has dehumanized our social interactions. Becoming a truthful person is not easy, and it belongs to the (sometimes painful) process of sanctification. Most of us will never face the question of whether we ought to tell a lie in a life-or-death situation. Exercising the virtue of truth takes places in the quotidian and the mundane. We’ll know we’re on the right path when, instead of asking, “When is it okay to lie?” we find ourselves asking God to show us how we can become more truthful.

The Rev. Dr. Stewart Clem is assistant professor of moral theology and director of the Ashley-O’Rourke Center for Health Ministry Leadership at Aquinas Institute of Theology, and priest associate at the Church of St. Michael & St. George in St. Louis, Missouri.



Three Hours

Sermons for Good Friday

By Fleming Rutledge
Eerdmans, pp. 96, \$18

The Cross at the Center

Review by Jacob Smith

Fleming Rutledge is among the finest theologians and preachers, not only the Episcopal Church, but the Church Catholic. I have read most of her books; however, as a point of confession ... I have not finished *The Crucifixion: Understanding the Death of Jesus*. It sits on my night stand and beckons me to try again and absorb all of the footnotes. So, I was pleasantly surprised to pick up her latest work, *Three Hours: Sermons for Good Friday*.

Jesus spoke seven times while dying on the cross, and these seven expressions bring a continuity to the different passion narratives recorded in the four gospels. Throughout the centuries, these seven words have functioned as anchors to help Christians meditate on the profundity of Jesus’ sacrifice for humankind. *Three Hours*, like *The Crucifixion*, zeroes in and focuses on the meaning of Jesus’ death. This book is a collection of sermons Rutledge

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preached on the Seven Last Words of Jesus, at Saint Thomas Church on Fifth Avenue, at their three-hour Good Friday Service in 2018.

Three Hours reads as a devotional classic; it can be consumed and pondered in one sitting or drawn out and contemplated throughout Lent or during Holy Week. For those unfamiliar with *The Crucifixion*, or those of us who have yet to finish it, *Three Hours* gives readers a chance to engage Rutledge's profound and deep understanding of the meaning of the death of Jesus.

In these seven sermons, Rutledge explores the meaning of the crucifixion by bringing the reader to the foot of cross, or, as she rightly describes, "the heart and center of the Christian faith." In each sermon, she weaves together social concern, literature, personal story and rich theological insight to clear out the sentimentality of Good Friday and accomplish what St. Paul calls every preacher's chief aim, "to preach Christ and him crucified (1 Cor. 1:23).

There is no sentimentality, for

example, in her fourth sermon, which treats Jesus' cry of dereliction, in Matthew 27:45-46: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." Rutledge tactfully speaks of a friend's suicide, and her own questioning of what more she might have done to have helped prevent it. A sentimental preacher might proceed to offer advice on being more helpful or recognizing signs of potential suicide in a depressed person. But Rutledge does no such thing. Instead, she rightly points out humanity's own hopelessness and offers the reader a word of real and eternal comfort: that, in the cross, Christ endured — even in his divine self — all the hopelessness of humanity to rise victorious on the third day. With urgency, she echoes St. Paul that our despair meets Christ's despair in the cross of Jesus; that we too are more than conquerors in his victory; and that nothing — not even suicide — can separate us from God's love.

In the Episcopal Church, we talk a lot about "the Love of God." But God's love disconnected from the cross

quickly becomes an abstraction. The beauty of this book is that Rutledge thoroughly roots and conveys the love of God in his crucified Son. This short book has the power to knock down any attempt to downplay the pastoral implications of Jesus' death or to push the crucifixion to the periphery of the Church's attention. This book does exactly what it sets out to do: move the cross back to the center of Holy Week, to the center of our devotion, and to the center of our lives, so we might understand afresh what the love of God is actually all about.

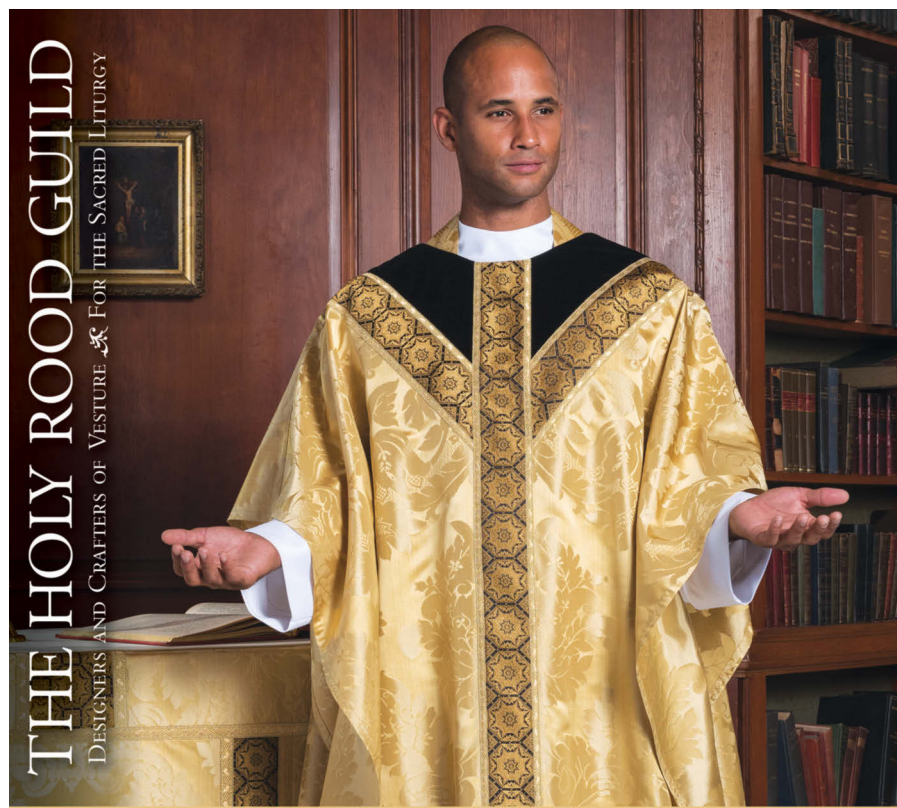
The Rev. Jacob Smith is rector of Calvary-St. George's Church, New York.

The Dogma is the Drama

Review by J. Scott Jackson

This fine anthology, drawn from the breadth of Dorothy L. Sayers' diverse corpus, aims to "uncover the gospel themes woven throughout Sayers' popular fiction alongside related readings from her plays, letters, talks, and essays." The selections are teasers serving more to whet the appetite than to survey systematically this seminal 20th-century English writer's works. This volume shows that Sayers, across genres, is preoccupied with exploring and commending credal faith and Christian moral commitments.

Somewhat reticent about being a lay theologian and apologist, Sayers saw her primary vocation as literary. She insisted that Christian artists, like secular ones, should pursue excellence in their craft for its own sake. Religious writing must avoid kitsch and banality; only then will it please and glorify the triune God, whose very being-in-act models authentic creativity. Sayers identified as Anglo-Catholic, yet she affirmed the commonplaces her tradition shared with Roman and Eastern Orthodox churches. She viewed the historic faith as consisting,



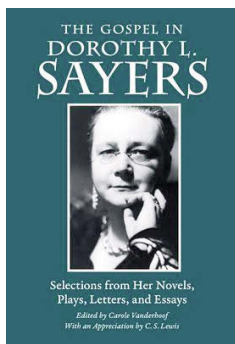
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above all, in a story that surprises, tantalizes, and compels response; her essays anticipate, to some extent, contemporary narrative theologies. “The Christian faith is the most exciting drama that ever staggered the imagination of man — and the dogma is the drama,” she once wrote.

Her 1941 BBC radio play, *The Man Born to be King*, offended some pious church folk while thrilling thousands of believers and unbelievers alike, as she eschewed King James English in favor of a vivid, colloquial style rooted in her own translations from the Greek gospel texts. (C.S. Lewis admitted he read through this play every Holy Week.) Sayers could be mischievously



The Gospel in Dorothy L. Sayers

Selections from Her Novels, Plays, Letters, and Essays
 Edited by Carol Vanderhoof
 With an Appreciation by C.S. Lewis
 Plough, pp. 270, \$16.99

funny while probing serious topics. In a satirical catechism, she parodies popular heretical reductions of the person of Jesus Christ: “If we try to live like Him, God the Father will let us off being damned hereafter and only have us tortured in this life instead.”

Though she published essays, poetry, and translations (her final, unfinished work was a fresh rendering of Dante’s *Divine Comedy*), Sayers is best known for her mystery novels, a genre she helped pioneer with Agatha Christie and G.K. Chesterton. These books were not mere crime thrillers, as the selections here reveal. Through the questions and quandaries of lay detective Lord Peter Wimsey and other characters, the author wrestles with

such issues as the relationship between faith and doubt, sin and grace, and time and eternity. Keen social concern is evident, too, in her theology of work and her affirmation of women’s full humanity. Let the neophyte Sayers reader beware, though: Several plot spoilers are sprinkled throughout this book. Overall, despite its partial and

eclectic character, this anthology bristles with a passion for word craft that promises to lure contemporary readers into an exhilarating oeuvre whose lifeblood was orthodox faith.

J. Scott Jackson is a theologian, independent scholar, and writer living in Northampton, Massachusetts.

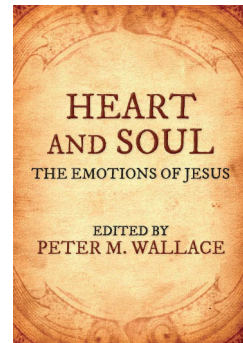
Truly Human

Review by Joseph L. Mangina

An ounce of real living is worth a pound of thought; so one might paraphrase a great deal of Kierkegaard’s work. So likewise, we might say that the capacity to experience real emotions is worth a lot more than having theories about the emotions. Human beings have — *are* — bodies, and part of what it means to be a body is to respond to the world and other people through the passions. This is one reason the Psalms are so important in the Christian life: they teach us a kind of emotional grammar of life before God — not a theory, certainly, but a display of what it might mean to be moved by God’s presence, to be properly joyful or angry or thankful or penitent. The Psalms are about God, not us; but being about God, they summon us to a life of genuine feeling.

But what if the body in question, the subject of all these passions, is the second person of the Trinity? If Christ really took on our human flesh, then he took on our emotions. Granted, this thought can be taken in all kinds of unhelpful directions. It can lead to a depressingly low Christology, one in which Jesus’ chief function is to sympathize with us in our sinfulness, rather than delivering us from it. But a treatment of the emotions of Jesus need not indulge in such sentimentalism. It could be a serious attempt to reckon with an important, if somewhat neglected, aspect of Jesus’ humanity, an affirmation of the creedal teaching that he is *vere homo* or “truly human.”

A step in this direction can be found



Heart and Soul The Emotions of Jesus

By Robert Law, revised and edited
 by Peter M. Wallace
 Church Publishing, pp. 128, \$12.95

in a little book titled *Heart and Soul: The Emotions of Jesus*, by Robert Law, a now mostly forgotten Scots Presbyterian scholar and minister. The Rev. Dr. Law taught from 1909 to 1919 at Knox College in Toronto (a sister school of Wycliffe College, the Anglican seminary where I teach). Law’s work has been edited and lightly updated by the Rev. Peter M. Wallace, an Episcopal priest in the Diocese of Atlanta. Wallace has performed a real service in reintroducing the book to a wider audience. If it is not quite a “spiritual classic,” as the cover blurb suggests, it is at least a worthwhile catalyst for thinking not only about the passion but the passions of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Law singles out six emotions of Jesus for treatment: joy, geniality, compassion (for both “the lost” and “the suffering”), anger, wonder, and determination or steadfastness. The joy of Jesus plays a foundational role, naming as it does Jesus’ utter devotion and obedience to the Father. I was frankly

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)

skeptical about “geniality” being on the list — it sounds like something one might say about a kindly uncle — until I realized Law was using it to denote Jesus’ concern for ordinary people amid the concrete circumstances of their lives. He eats and drinks with sinners, and blesses the wedding guests at Cana with his presence. Jesus is, nevertheless, no stranger to anger, because the world he inhabits is one where God’s will is still not done. Law’s sensitive discussion of wonder invites comparison with Karl Barth’s treatment of that passion of the Christian life in *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction*. The final chapter examines Jesus’ steadfastness in the face of suffering, as his genuine human power is perfected in powerlessness and death. Law’s original title for this chapter was “Straightened!” from the King James rendering of Luke 12:50. I like this better than “The Determination of Jesus,” the name assigned by the editor. “Straightened” suggests constraint, reflecting

the hard language of necessity (“the Messiah must suffer,” etc.) that runs like a thread through the gospels’ passion narratives. Whereas, to my ear, “determination” sounds too much like 19th-century muscular Christianity.

And yet there may be more than a little muscular Christianity in *Heart and Soul*. The book was written in 1914, before the carnage of the Great War had played havoc with the ways Western Christians talk about God, man, suffering, death, sacrifice, and much else. Had the book been written a decade later (Law died in 1919), I suspect it would have sounded rather different: less idealistic and confident, maybe, in its claims to knowledge of Jesus’ inner life. The affirmation that Jesus is “truly human” is as much a

mystery as the “truly divine,” and in fact is only disclosed together with the latter. Still, there is much to be said for Law’s combination of warm evangelical piety, devotion to Holy Scripture, and simple human wisdom. He clearly loves the Lord Jesus, commendation enough in his day or ours. The editor has helpfully provided a list of study questions at the end of each chapter, enhancing the book’s value for personal devotion and use in parish education courses. A preface by Dr. John Vissers, the current Principal of Knox College, offers useful historical background and theological framing.

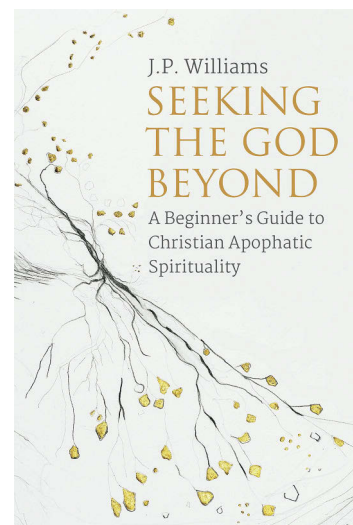
Dr. Joseph L. Mangina is professor of systematic theology at Wycliffe College, Toronto.

Prayer Beyond Words

By David Moser

“Apophatic” is not a word you come by every day. If you do, it will probably be in one of two places. The first might be floating down the halls of a divinity school, perhaps as a term to be memorized for a church history or theology exam. That won’t happen for most of us, but the second place may be more likely: among the contemplative types you meet at church, who are seeking to deepen their experience of Christ. Even if neither situation applies to you, J.P. Williams, the West of England Ministry Training Course dean at Ripon College Cuddesdon, has written an elegant and informative book that introduces the term and the spiritual tradition from which it emerged.

As Williams explains, “apophatic” comes from a Greek term *phasis*, for “speech,” and has the prefix *apo-*, or



Seeking the God Beyond

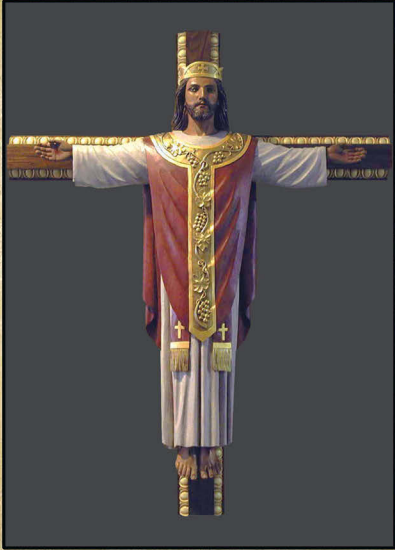
A Beginner’s Guide to Christian
Apophatic Spirituality

By J.P. Williams

SCM Press, pp. 216, \$35.


“away from.” Apophasis is thus a going away from speech, a negation of what one says. It is not a method of prayer, though it includes that. Instead, it names a way of relating to God that recognizes our finitude, particularly that we lack the capacity to speak of God as he is. Our concepts about him

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cannot adequately describe his infinite being. But apophatic spirituality is not simply the opposite of talking about God. It is a way of spiritual transformation intended to lead us to ascend beyond the duality of affirmation and negation to pure prayer, the deepest mystical experience of God imaginable this side of heaven.

The book is not a prayer manual, nor is it a general spiritual guidebook. Rather, Williams tells us it is “a basic exploration of something wonderful that many of us have heard stories about but few have tried.” It thus introduces apophatic spirituality by exploring some of its central practices and the historical figures who have shaped it.

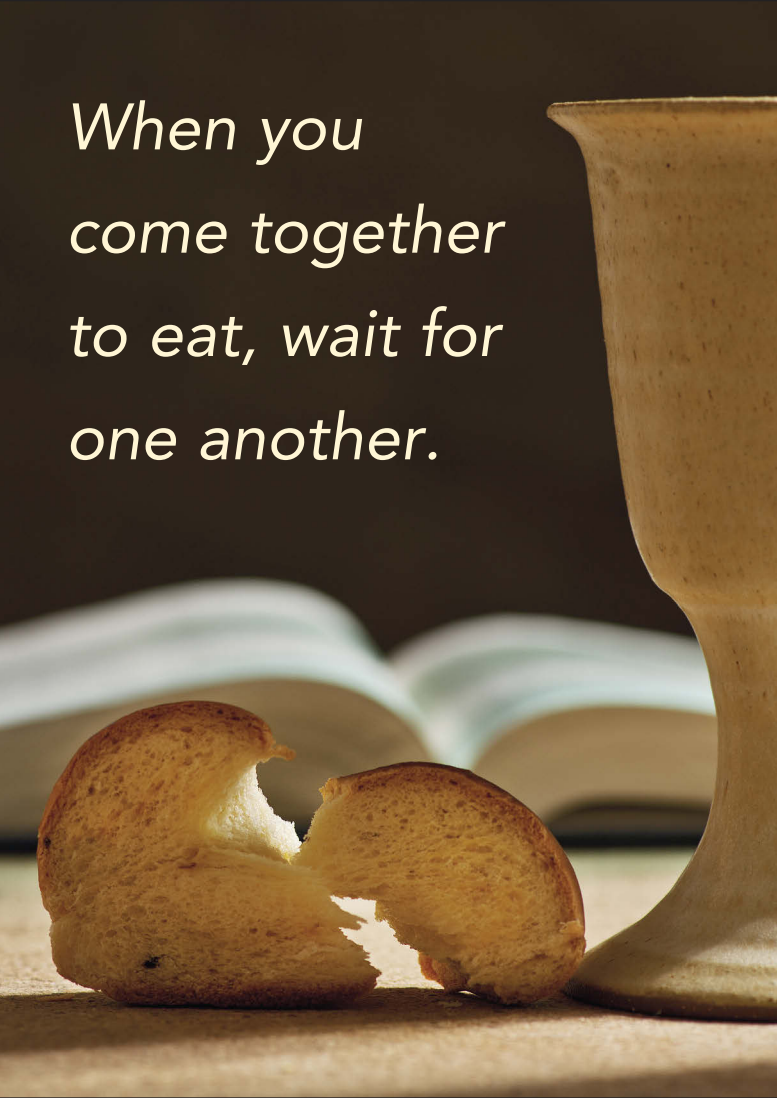
It is divided into five parts, and each part has four short chapters. The first part establishes the biblical founda-

tions of apophatic spirituality in the lives of Moses, John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, and the text of the Song of Songs. The second part expounds classic apophatic themes, beginning with stripping our faulty concepts about God and ending with mystical union with him. Part three surveys “pioneers of apophatic faith” like Gregory of Nyssa and Meister Eckhart. Part four explores parallels to Christian apophatic spirituality in Plato, the poetry of John Keats, C.S. Lewis’s Narnia novels, and Zen spirituality. Part five considers four practices helpful on the apophatic journey: the use of parable and poetry, pilgrimages, liturgy, and prayer.

The book is beautifully written, and the historical chapters on Gregory of Nyssa and the Dionysian tradition are

well done. However, the book raises a question for me: How does apophatic spirituality account for our duty to pray the Lord’s Prayer and the Church’s regular use of the Psalms in worship and private prayer? These prayers, after all, include direct speech, praise, and petition, and the Lord commanded that we pray at least one of them. If the goal of spirituality is to ascend beyond speech and thought, are these prayers really inferior to pure or wordless prayer? Even if it does not answer every question, this book is an excellent primer to its topic, and would be well suited for a spirituality study group at church.

David Moser is a doctoral student in systematic theology at Southern Methodist University.

A photograph of a communion table. In the foreground, a golden chalice stands on the right. To its left, a round piece of bread is broken into two halves. In the background, an open book, likely a Bible, is visible. The lighting is warm and focused on the bread and chalice.

*When you
come together
to eat, wait for
one another.*

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PEOPLE & PLACES

Appointments

The Rev. **John Agbaje** is transition priest at St. Mark's, Dayton, Ohio.

The Rev. **Hilario Albert** is priest-in-charge of Grace, Union City, N.J.

The Rev. Dr. **Barbara Bond** is priest-in-charge of New Life, Uniontown, Ohio.

The Rev. **Patrick Bush** is priest-in-charge of St. Andrew's, Rocky Hill, Conn.

The Rev. **Scott Ciosek** is Protestant chaplain at the University of Massachusetts, South Dartmouth, Mass.

The Rev. **Adrian Dannhauser** is interim priest of Incarnation, New York.

The Rev. **Donald Davidson** is interim priest of Christ, Warwick, N.Y.

The Rev. **James W. Erwin, Jr.** is priest-in-charge of St. Ann's, Bridgehampton, N.Y.

The Rev. **Robert Flanagan** is interim priest of St. Peter's, Lithgow, Millbrook, N.Y.

The Rev. **Este Gardner** is vicar of Mediator, Bronx, N.Y.

The Rev. **Elise Ashley Hanley** is assistant rector of Epiphany, New York.

The Rev. **Gia Hayes-Martin** is rector of St. John's, Worthington, Ohio.

The Rev. **Richard Hogue** is vicar of Holy Cross, Carlsbad, Calif.

The Rev. **Virginia Bain Inman** is interim rector of St. Andrew's, Greensboro, N.C.

The Rev. **Christine Ann Jones** is priest-in-partnership of St. John's, Randolph, Vt.

The Rev. **Morgan Mercer Ladd** is sub dean of Cathedral of the Incarnation, Garden City, N.Y.

The Rev. **Paul Kolbet** is interim priest of All Saints, Chelmsford, Mass.

The Rev. **Richard Kukowski** is interim rector of Grace, Silver Spring, Md.

The Rev. Dr. **Alison Moore** is priest-in-charge of St. Andrew's, New Paltz, N.Y.

The Rev. Dr. **Frank Munoz** is military missionary of the Diocese of San Diego.

The Rev. **Jennifer Neal** is supply priest of All Saints, West Newbury, Mass.

The Rev. **Corie Olson** is rector of St. Andrew's, Lake Worth Beach, Fla.

The Rev. **John Olsson** is priest-in-charge of St. Martin's, New Bedford, Mass.

The Rev. **Richard Pike** is interim associate of Incarnation, New York.

The Rev. **Jean Lenord Quatorze** is priest-in-charge of Divine Love, Montrose, N.Y., and Haitian missionary of the Diocese of New York.

The Very Rev. **Roman Roldan** is rector of St. Dunstan's, Houston.

The Rev. **Josh Shipman** is rector of St. Paul's, Corinth, Miss.

The Rev. **Gene Alan (AJ) Stack, Jr.** is priest-in-charge of St. Thomas, Amenia Union, N.Y.

The Rev. Dr. **Anthony Stephens** is vicar of St. John's-in-the-Wilderness, Stony Point, N.Y.

Ms. **Virginia Taylor** is communications director of the Diocese of Western North Carolina

The Rev. **Janet Vincent** is interim priest of Christ the King, Stone Ridge, N.Y.

Ordinations

Diaconate

Albany: **Meaghan Keegan**.

Arkansas: **Laurie Bridewell, Teresa Cantrell, Brandon Hudson, Katherine Wren**.

Southwestern Virginia: **John Church, John Simpson**.

Western North Carolina: **Kevin Wayne Todd**.

Priesthood

Albany: **Randolph Edgar Lukas** (vicar of St. Mark's, Philmont, N.Y.), **Dale Van Wormer** (vicar of St. Paul's, Sidney and St. Matthew's, Unadilla, N.Y.).

Connecticut: **Mary Barnett** (missional curate of Holy Trinity, Middletown).

Retirements

The Rev. **Philip Byrum** as rector of St. Mark's and Iglesia de Guadalupe, Wilson, N.C.

The Rev. **Tyler Jones** as rector of St. Paul's, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

The Rev. **Mike Kreutzer** as rector of St. Mark's, Dayton, Ohio.

The Rev. **Frank Morales** as rector of All Souls, New York.

Deaths

The Rev. Canon **Robert J. Brooks**, a liturgical scholar who also served as the Episcopal Church's director of government relations for a decade, died February 29, aged 72.

A native of Austin, Texas, he was a graduate of St. Edward's University and prepared for the ministry at Church Divinity School of the Pacific. Following his ordination, he served as vicar of All Saints, Baytown, Texas for ten years. During his ministry there, he earned a masters' degree in liturgy from Notre Dame, and introduced the catechumenate to the parish. He would later serve on the Episcopal Church's

Standing Liturgical Commission and was also the church's representative on the Anglican Consultation on Liturgy.

He served on Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning's staff from 1983-1993, representing the Episcopal Church's public policy commitments before Congress and the Executive Branch. He worked as a back-channel negotiator during efforts to end El Salvador's civil war and was made an honorary canon of the Diocese of El Salvador in recognition of this work. He later served as director of the Business Partnership for a New Global Future, a coalition which secured Congressional funding for debt relief for the world's poorest countries in 2000.

He became rector of St. Paul's, Willimantic, Conn., from 2001 until his retirement in 2015, when he retired to his native Texas. In retirement, he served as chair of the Episcopal Urban Caucus. He is survived by his partner, Adisak Nernbok, and by many relatives and friends.

The Rev. Canon **Gwendolyn J. Dillon**, the first black woman to be ordained to the vocational diaconate in the Diocese of Chicago, died January 6, aged 93.

A native of Minneapolis, Dillon was a leader at Chicago's Sts. George and Matthias Church for decades, first as a layperson, and then as a deacon. She was the founding director of the Fr. Charles Pond Memorial Kitchen at the church, and led its work of preparing and serving breakfast for the city's homeless for nearly 30 years, until well into her 80s.

She was honored with the St. Stephen Recognition for exemplary ministry by the Association for Episcopal Deacons in 1995, and was made an honorary canon of Chicago's St. James Cathedral in 2008. She is survived by three grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

The Rev. **Steven R. Ford**, a longtime contributor to *The Living Church* who was sometimes called "the world's only travel theologian" died in Tempe, Arizona, on February 9, aged 66.

A native of Upstate New York, he was a graduate of Hobart College, where he studied sociology and cultural anthropology. His freshman year roommate there was future presiding bishop, Michael Curry. After his graduation from General Seminary, he served in a series of parishes in the Diocese of Arizona. He was rector of St. Paul's Church in Phoenix from 1987 to 1992, and assisted in churches in Paradise Valley, Scottsdale, and Tempe. Since 2016, he had assisted at St. Mark's Church in Mesa, where his primary ministry was care for the dying and their families.

He had a great love of travel and adventure, and visited over 200 countries, often writing reflections on people he encountered, especially fellow Christians whose faith inspired him. Many of these reflections were published in *The Living Church* over the past few decades. A final travel piece, about his journey to Southern India with his sister, is included in this issue.

Father Ford was preceded in death by his beloved Becky, and is survived by a stepson, three grandsons, his sister, Virginia, and five nieces and nephews.



TLC plans to release a series of uplifting audio and video resources in the coming weeks, to promote hope and spiritual growth during the pandemic. Details are still being worked out, but possibilities include podcasts, real-time panel discussions, and audiobooks. We'll talk with theologians, church leaders, and mental health experts about classic texts, pastoral issues, and liturgical resources. Visit livingchurch.org and covenant.livingchurch.org to stay up to date.

Among the Dead

The congregational reading of the Passion makes a deep impression from which the sermon should not detract. Perhaps the most compelling commentary, to begin, is the silence observed at the moment when “Jesus cried out with a loud voice and breathed his last.” What are we to say, what are we to add in the face of such anguish and such horror? Silence is the heart’s approach not only to Jesus’ betrayal and death, but also to the mysterious good accomplished for us, the self-emptying, the abasement on our behalf, accepted in obedience to his Father’s will.

He was greatly distressed, grieved, and agitated. He pleaded to avoid this cup of pain, but, in the end, he accepted it for us, on our behalf, and for our eternal good. Becoming what we are, he who knew no sin bore the full weight and consequence of sin, its deadly cost. All pain and every anguish would be his.

There has never been a single dogmatic and binding explanation of the death of Jesus. There are images and metaphors, complementary and sometimes contradictory, but nothing approaching a complete and logical explanation. What use would an explanation be in the face of his bloody cross?

One such metaphor comes in the form of an ancient Christian hymn from St. Paul’s Letter to the Philippians. Jesus came down, all the way down among us.

“Let this mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness, and being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on the cross” (Phil. 2:5-8).

Without relinquishing his divine power, he willingly entered into the

depths of human sorrow and the hour of human death, assuming not merely his own suffering and end on Calvary, but, in some sense, all suffering and all death. Death appeared to swallow him, but, in truth, he swallowed death. In his death, as in his earthly ministry, Jesus was “gathering all things [into himself], things in heaven and things on earth” (Eph. 1:10). Even more, he descended to the dead and thus left nothing untouched by his redeeming power.

Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, is in our midst, among us, one of us. He has become what we are so that every moment of human life and every moment of human history and every particle of the cosmos itself may be caught up in him. He has assumed it all: your life, my life, all who have lived, all who will live, the heights of heaven, all earthly being, and the depths of hell. He has become what we are on his bloody cross. Why? So that we might become what he is, so that we might become the sons and daughters of God by adoption and grace.

The hymn continues, “Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord” (Phil. 2:9-11).

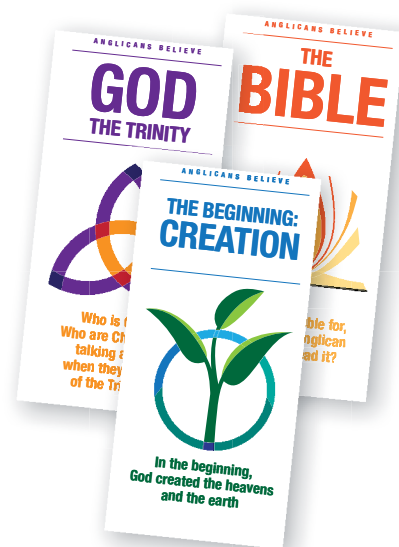
He is holding your life right now. Your life is the weight of his body. Your life is the anguish of his pain. Your death is the death of his last breath. He is with you, but not merely alongside you as a fellow sufferer. He is transforming everything into the life and glory of God, making all things new.

Look It Up

Read Matthew 27:29.

Think About It

Pray privately, on the ground, from the heart.



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Risen and Hidden

Alleluia! Christ has broken the bonds of death and hell, calling forth, in his victory, a people to share his New Life, not simply as a future promise but as a real and present mystery. Alleluia!

When Mary Magdalen stood confused and grieved over what she thought was the theft of Jesus' body, the Lord appeared to her newly alive, though she did not at first recognize him. His resurrection became real to her only at the moment — a moment the Church knows now yet awaits—when her heart was pierced by the sound of her name. Naming her, Jesus made her the first witness to the resurrection. He rose from the grave and then infused his new and eternal life into Mary by speaking her name. "He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out" (John 10:3). Indeed, as the New Adam, Jesus stands in a new Garden of Eden. As in the creation account, he has authority to name created things. "And whatever the man called every living thing, that was its name" (Gen. 2:19).

The name that Jesus gives to Mary and the name he gives to you is, in one sense, your name; he calls you as you are. Yet he also invites you to something higher and more profound. He calls you "out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life" (BCP, p. 368). He calls you as a living witness to his resurrection by your participation in his risen body. In a profound sense, the Church is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Church has no life but the life of the Risen Lord who sustains her moment by moment.

From the vantage point of the resurrection, we see with greater clarity all that Jesus did and taught, and how his life and ministry extends new life to humanity and renews creation. Preaching his first sermon, Peter said, "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power . . . he

went about doing good, *healing all who were oppressed by the devil*, for God was with him" (Acts 10:38). As all were oppressed, he reached out to heal everyone. His ministry concerns the whole human race. Even more, it involves the cosmos. "In him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible . . . He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together . . . he has come to have first place in everything . . . and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross" (Col. 1:16-20). All things are gathered into Christ and raised. Thus, our lives and the whole created order are, in a mysterious sense, hidden in Christ. Christ is before all things, in all things, above all things. He is the tabernacle of all being.

Jesus is calling us to his resurrected life using our name, taking personal care to reach our ears and our hearts and our minds. He calls us by name, but his calling and our response to it means that our lives are hidden in Christ. There are aspects of our lives in him that, for now, we cannot know. "You have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3). Who are you? You will only know when Christ is revealed, and the fulness of your identity revealed in him.

You have a secret and beautiful life above, hidden with Christ.

Look It Up

Read Psalm 118:17.

Think About It

I shall not die, but live.

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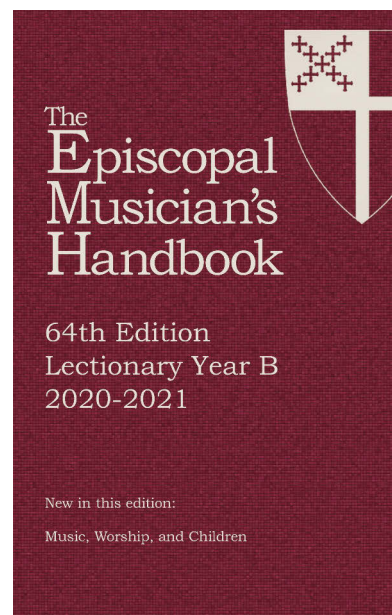
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