



Christ & St. Stephen's Glorious New Organ!

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THE EPISCOPAL NEW YORKER

THE OFFICIAL NEWS PUBLICATION OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NEW YORK

March/April 2008



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Palm Sunday procession at St. George's Memorial Church in Baghdad.

Photo courtesy of St. George's

How Iraq's Only Episcopal Church Survives

HINT: Blast walls, razor wire and armed guards
The Rev. Canon Andrew White's Mission

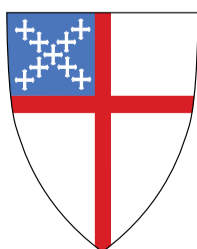
Interview by Lynette Wilson

Canon Andrew White has worked in Iraq for 10 years, but St. George's Memorial Church in Baghdad only opened for worship after the start of the war in March 2003. In addition to being the Anglican/Episcopal Chaplain to Iraq, White heads a Department of Defense program that responds to religious sectarianism. He also negotiates for the release

of hostages, is chaplain to the Baghdad International Zone Chapel (catering mostly to Americans) and is senior consultant to the Iraqi Institute of Peace, an organization he founded.

He has written a book called, *Iraq: Searching for Hope*, published in 2005 and available online.

I interviewed White by email. *(continued on page 18)*



THE EPISCOPAL NEW YORKER

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The purpose of *The Episcopal New Yorker* is to unify The Episcopal Diocese of New York so that people may know and live out the Gospel. It does this by freely communicating the news of the diocese, its parishes, and the Worldwide Anglican Communion in a way that is relevant to the lives of its readers.

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Vol. 84 No. 2

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To Our Readers:

With this issue, *The Episcopal New Yorker* unveils its "new look." We hope you agree it's more logically organized, more accessible—and easier to navigate. For this more reader-friendly environment, thanks go to our talented new art director, Charles Brucaliere, and to our valued editor, Lynette Wilson.

Though we may look somewhat different, our mission remains the same: To serve as the sounding board of the entire Diocese of New York—at a time of unprecedented challenge to The Episcopal Church and the broader Anglican Community.

We won't shrink from covering topical, sometimes controversial topics. But adding to the public debate is the role of any responsible publication. Most importantly, we want to know what YOU think about the issues facing the church.

We welcome the many voices of the chorus. It's time for the processional: Organ music up, please. . .

Stewart Pinkerton
Chair

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The U.S. Naval Reserve Midshipmen's School at Columbia University commissioned 24,000 men from the start of World War II in 1941 ending with the 26th class of 1,121 men who graduated on Nov. 3, 1945. Thirteen of the 26 graduation ceremonies were held at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine; 13,500 men were commissioned at the ceremonies held at the cathedral.

Bishop William T. Manning offered the cathedral for graduation exercises because the school did not have sufficient facilities to accommodate the huge numbers of graduates and guests.

Photo from the diocesan archives

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War in an Imperfect World

By the Rt. Rev. Mark S. Sisk

The theme of this issue being war, I would like to take this opportunity to consider the stance that we Christians should take toward that wretched and disastrous consequence of human discord.

At the very core of Jesus' revelation is God's will to reconcile all things into the Divine life: to bring about the harmony of the Divine peace—the Divine “shalom.” It was, after all, precisely to heal the wounds of division that the Father sent His only Son into the world.

In the light of this uncompromising truth, the Christian has little option but to conclude that war invariably represents a catastrophic failure of human leadership.

But we must also recognize that we live in a world that is filled with sin—in, to use traditional language, a fallen world. Within the complexities of this very imperfect place, filled with imperfect people, we live and move and have our being. Most but not all Christians have, therefore, concluded that there are times when they must consider war to be an acceptable, if always repugnant, option—as the “lesser of two evils.”

Theologians and scholars have explored exhaustively the question of exactly when Christians might consider war permissible; they have expressed their conclusions in the classical terms of “Just War Theory.” This theory states that to qualify as “just,” a war must *simultaneously* satisfy a number of criteria, including that it be:

- a very last resort
- launched only by a legitimate authority
- defensive rather than offensive
- undertaken for substantial reason (for example to redress a great wrong or to prevent the massive violation of the rights of a whole people; neither the desire to assuage injured egos nor the accumulation of land or resources would pass muster)
- conducted with a level of violence proportionate to the threat
- directed at military rather than civilian targets
- fought to gain an achievable objective.

The questions that a government (a “legitimate authority”) must ask if it is truly committed only to fight just wars are clear. The answers to those questions may, of course, be obscured by the fog of politics or of war itself. Discerning the truth will be hard for governments. For the individual citizen, however, Christians among them, it is even harder.

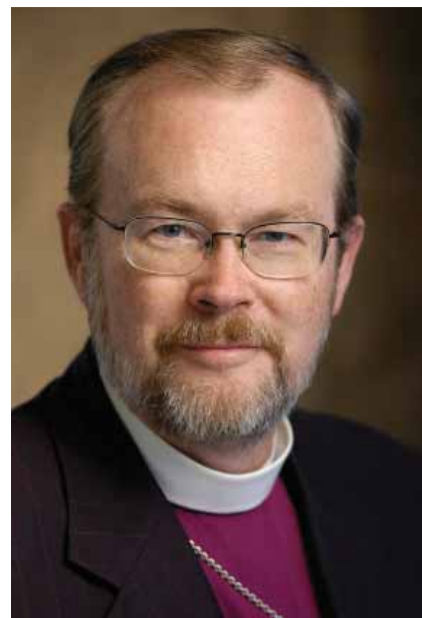
The difficulty for individuals is that we neither declare war nor have the right to do so, since none of us, individually, is a “legitimate authority.” Instead, as citizens of a democracy, we yield to our elected governmental leaders (our “legitimate authority”) the right to determine on our behalf if any given circumstance justifies war.

This delegation of authority requires us to place enormous faith in our elected leaders. We must, after all, take it entirely on trust that before committing the nation to the carnage and evil of warfare, those leaders will take into account everything that we would ourselves, had we their powers. Even then, after a war has begun, we may learn that our leaders ignored some or many of the criteria for a just war, or even suppressed contradictory information; in such a case the moral citizen, Christian or otherwise, would be justified in viewing the war as, in varying degrees, an illegitimate exercise of legitimate authority—and also therefore justified in withholding his or her support from it.

Finally, there is a wider question that we Americans, in common with citizens of all democracies, must also ask when our governments take us to war: Are they doing so within the parameters that define and distinguish an open and free society? Are our governments, in fact, guided by the principles of governance on which its legitimacy rests? Or are they undermining the very values that they claim to be upholding?

I hope that these thoughts are of help as we wrestle with the searingly difficult questions that war always presents for a Christian person: a person who is, after all, impelled to believe that the man or woman caught in the deadly crosshairs of our armies' newest laser-guided rocket is none other than our own brother or sister: Christ in disguise.

Faithfully yours,

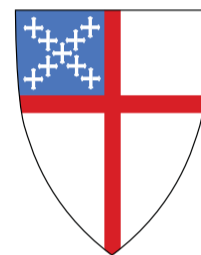
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La Guerra en un Mundo Imperfecto

Por el Reverendísimo Obispo Mark S. Sisk

Como el tema de esta edición es la guerra, me gustaría hacer uso de esta oportunidad para considerar la posición que nosotros los cristianos debemos tener respecto a las consecuencias desastrosas y abominables de la discordia humana.

En el centro mismo de la revelación de Jesús está la voluntad de Dios para reconciliar todas las cosas en la vida divina: crear la armonía de la paz divina—el “shalom” divino. Después de todo, fue precisamente para sanar las heridas de la división que el Padre envió a Su único Hijo al mundo.

A la luz de esta verdad intransigente, los cristianos tienen pocas opciones, sólo les queda concluir que la guerra invariablemente es un fracaso catastrófico del liderazgo humano.

Pero también debemos reconocer que vivimos en un mundo que está lleno de pecado—en, para usar el lenguaje tradicional, un mundo caído. Nosotros vivimos, nos movemos y tenemos nuestro ser dentro de las complejidades de este lugar tan imperfecto, lleno de personas imperfectas. Por lo tanto, la mayoría, pero no todos los cristianos, han concluido

(continuado en la paginación 27)

Church Year

GRAVE WALKING

A Path to Resurrection

By the Rev. Robert F. Browning Jr.

Anyone involved in genealogical research will at one time find themselves searching a cemetery for information. The tranquil resting places of today do not resemble the tombs from the past. I am thinking of the hand-hewn tomb which is described in the Gospels—Matthew 27:60; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53; and John 19:41—where Jesus was laid to rest.

During a mission trip to Ethiopia, I experienced the hand-hewn churches in Lalibela, located deep within the rocky mountainside. It was amazing to realize how much time, effort and love went into creating those sacred places for worship some 800 years ago. As I descended deep into the pit surrounding the church, I understood the difference between the tranquility of a tomb and the resurrection that had inspired those churches. These buildings were not designed as final resting places. Out of these stone structures came new life: life filled with joy, expectation and hope. I witnessed that distinct understanding in the faces of the people who prayed and guarded those sacred places. I sensed the deepest faith we shared as believers in the life, death and resurrection of Christ, despite the language barrier.

Many of us today have built our own tombs, some formed of stone-cold hearts without knowledge of resurrection. These tombs stand between the quest for understanding God's gift of eternal

life and the acceptance of salvation from Christ's rising to life. Perhaps it was much easier for me to listen and hear what Jesus' resurrection was all about during an era of postwar hope and renewal. Still, I remember questioning how important an event that happened many years ago far away in Jerusalem could be for me. Demanding proof and evidence that such an event could have taken place seems to be the way some people approach faith. Trusting in God's promise is difficult when you expect to know everything through your own limited vision.

I am truly saddened when I observe someone who has not experienced a desire for renewed faith. Many people today have a different understanding of faith, or none at all, and disassociated themselves from God. Some have said, "Get out of my way, God, and let me do what I want." Erecting monuments has become more important than resurrection. How can we change this way of living?

Awareness to the needs of others in the world is a way to begin. Letting go of "me first" is a positive direction to take. Listening to how others have experienced God working in their lives, and recognizing one's own purpose in life is essential. When I witness the presence of knowledge of God



and faith in someone I meet, it is usually found in the manner in which they honor Christ's life through their own.

I am an optimist. I am infused with hope: hope in the present, hope in the guidance of the Holy Spirit and hope in the knowledge that the resurrection of Jesus was meant to include everyone.

Browning is vicar of St. Andrew's Church in Poughkeepsie.



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Liturgy Corner

with the Rev. Shane Scott-Hamblen
Rector of St. Mary-in-the-Highlands

QUESTION: Are lay people or seminarians allowed to proclaim the Gospel?

SHORT ANSWER: Nope.

LONG ANSWER: While anyone can read the Gospel at the Divine Office (i.e., Morning or Evening Prayer) only ordained deacons are permitted to proclaim the Gospel at the Eucharist. In the absence of a deacon, a priest or bishop may proclaim it because all priests and bishops are also deacons. As for seminarians, they have to wait until they are ordained.

TRIVIA: In the Early Church, bishops ordained deacons by only laying one hand on their head (two hands for priestly and Episcopal ordinations). The Early Church also had women deacons ("deaconesses"). One of their duties was to guide the hand of male clergy when they anointed the chest of adult women being baptized!

Scott-Hamblen is chair of the diocese's Liturgical Commission. If you have a question please email him at frshane@optonline.net.

Profile

JUDGE LAURA TAYLOR SWAIN

Law Day

By the Rev. Harry Abernathy



In my work as a judge, I am responsible for doing justice in each particular case by providing fair opportunities for the parties to present their positions, applying the laws accurately, and communicating my decisions in an understandable way," says Laura Taylor Swain. And in the broader sense, she acknowledged, "all of us play a part – must play a part – in making sure that justice is done in society as a whole."

Swain, a U.S. District Court Judge in Manhattan, is to be awarded this year's Servant of Justice award by Bishop Sisk on May 21. "Our baptismal vows and many of our prayers and liturgies speak of respecting the dignity of other human beings, which is essential to both the fact and reality of justice," says Swain, who was both honored and surprised to be the recipient of this year's award. She was cited for a generosity of spirit expressed through her leadership in the legal community and her involvement in a wide range of charitable institutions.

Among those institutions is Episcopal Charities, where Swain served on the board in the early days. "I was able to be a part of the building of that wonderful institution that supports, encourages and enables service to the community by individuals in the church," she says.

David Shover, recently retired executive director of Episcopal Charities, says that Swain brought to board discussions "a keen intelligence, a passion for excellence, a strong commitment to justice for all people, and a leavening and uplifting wit."

"But most vital," he says, "was the strength of her dedication to serving the least fortunate and most needy among us, which focused our mission and sharpened the impact of our program."

Swain believes that those in the church, who minister to others, "need to be mindful of . . . the rights of others . . . The recent violent conflicts throughout the world show the responsibility not only of leaders, but citizens everywhere, to have a global sense of respect for other people, of their physical needs and of their ideas and desires," Swain says. "It takes all of that, including nurture at the family level, to work toward a truly just society."

Swain, who began her work on the District Court in August 2000 after serving as a U. S. Bankruptcy Court judge for almost four years, speaks of her role on the bench as a "calling," and stresses the importance of communicating the law clearly. Her advice to young people pursuing a career in the law is to build a broad set of practical legal skills and be open to opportunities to work in areas that "might not be in their personal plan." Her own career is an example: she never planned to work in the very technical area of ERISA law (pension, benefits and compensation) or as a bankruptcy judge. But those opportunities enabled her "to do work at a level that affected the lives of individuals, as well as dealing with broader business and economic issues," she says, "something that has been very meaningful to me."

Swain is a member of both Grace Church in New York City, and the Church of the Messiah in Rhinebeck. She began attending Grace during vacations home to New York from law school, attracted there by its reputation for strong preaching and lively fellowship. She was raised in a Conservative Baptist congregation, where her mother modeled what active church membership involved. "I grew up with a sense of responsibility to the Lord and to the church community," she says.

At Grace, where she was confirmed by Bishop Paul Moore in 1983 and married in 1991, she has been a vestry person and warden, head acolyte, a member of various committees; she led a capital campaign focused on building renovations, and served as a lay reader and chalice. At Messiah, she sings in the choir, is a lay reader and chalice, and "in an emergency, she plays the piano and directs the choir," says the Rev. Gerald Gal-

THE SERVANT OF JUSTICE AWARD

honors excellence in the legal profession, public service and commitment to the church and is given at the annual Law Day Choral Evensong. Judge Laura Taylor Swain is the 10th recipient of the award. This year's evensong is Wednesday, May 21, at 6 p.m., St. Paul's Chapel, Broadway and Fulton Street.

agher, Messiah's rector.

"She's just amazing," Gallagher says, "a truly humble, brilliant, joyful, remarkably sensitive woman, and very, very compassionate. She's a gift to us at Messiah - and to her family."

Swain is married and has a daughter, who is in the seventh grade. In 2006, Swain had the opportunity to swear in her husband, a native Briton, as a U.S. citizen.

In her spare time, Swain demonstrates her skill at "spinning" (yarn on a spinning wheel), and has won ribbons for spinning and needlework at both the New York State Sheep and Wool Festival in Rhinebeck, and the Dutchess County Fair. She got hooked on spinning after taking a course a couple of years ago, although she has been knitting since age 5. She designs knitted and felted works. "I don't sleep that much," she jokes.

Abernathy is rector of St. Stephen's Church in Armonk.

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Stations Of the Cross

Families use everyday objects to tell the Passion of Jesus *By Dr. Kathy Bozzuti-Jones*

My approach to children's Christian formation is not a bit sentimental: No "Jesus loves me, this I know" for me. Instead, I teach about paying attention to reality and attuning to God's presence daily. I favor the process of prayerful engagement over grasping for certitude.

This Lent, families at St. Bart's participated in "14 Families, 14 Stations, 14 Homes for Faith: Interactive Stations of the Cross," a project that brought home the spirit of this complex, holy season. It began with a collection of colorful cigar boxes and resulted in a collaborative art exhibit offered to the parish for meditative use during Holy Week.

Parents selected a box labeled with the name of a station. The box included design ideas and brief meditations intended to prepare children to imagine the Way of the Cross through the lens of everyday family life. Families were given a week to find prayerful time to create their art boxes. The preparatory meditations were brief and thought-provoking, as in this excerpt, written by Lucille Perotta Castro:

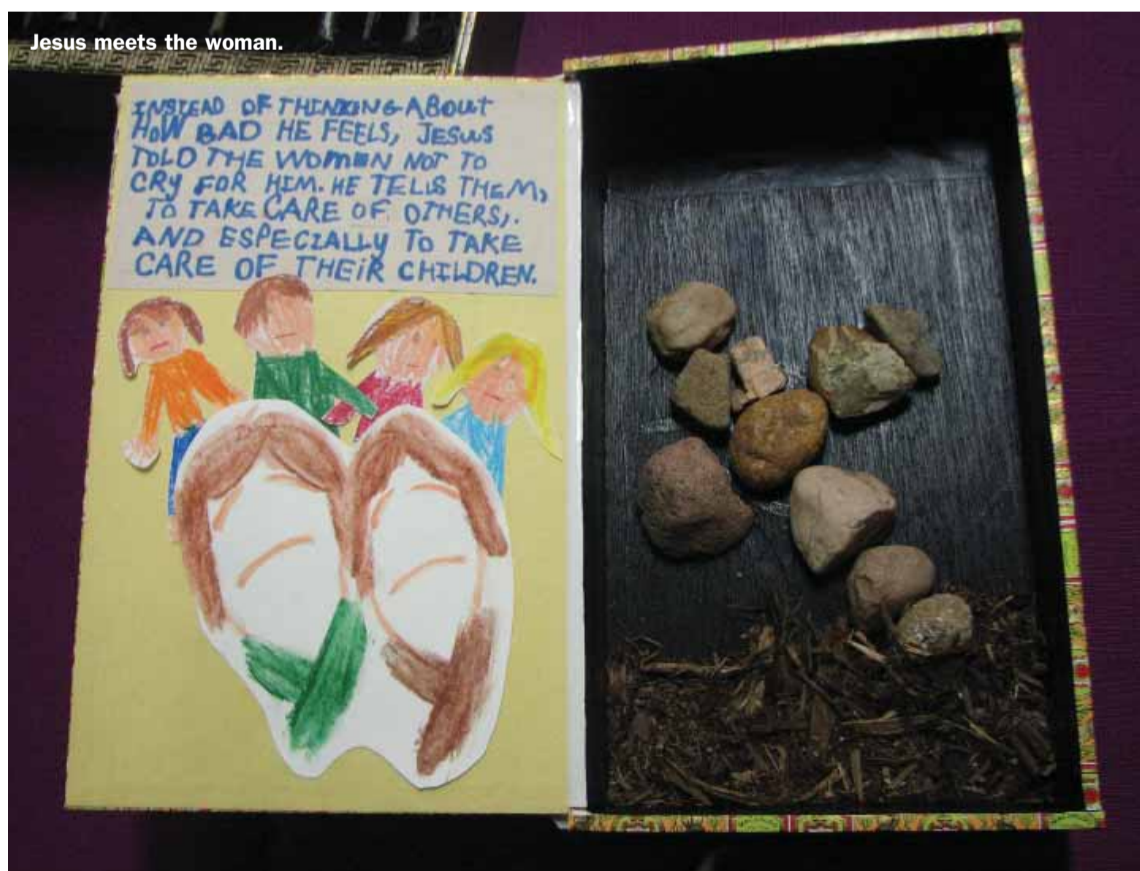
"Jesus is so tired as he walks along the road with the heavy cross on his shoulders.... the stones on the road hurt his feet... Jesus prays in his heart, 'God, help me remember that you are here.' ... Can you remember a time when you fell, when your heart felt hurt? As you remember that time... show your heart to Jesus. See Jesus loving you as you show him your heart... you can ask Jesus to help make your heart more like his."

I encouraged families to use objects found at home—scraps of fabric, plastic objects, bottle caps, clay, yarn and rubber bands—to reinforce the idea of connecting their artistic expression to daily life. More importantly, I wanted to empower parents not to fear this topic (undoubtedly, a difficult one for both children and adults), but rather, to take advantage of the teaching moment and follow their children's lead.

Given the intrinsic nature of suffering and violence in our Christian story, I felt that sensitive engagement with the Stations at home would elicit a natural compassionate connection to the story. I didn't use traditional graphic images inside the boxes; instead I chose to allow the mingling of parent/child conversation and artistic expression to make space for genuine empathy and reflection on faith, evil and the possibility for connecting the Jesus story to the reality that there are people dying before their time every day all over the world.

Mostly, I had hoped to help create an opportunity for families to think about our Christian obligation to show mercy. The boxes are touchingly sacred, no two remotely alike. They are interactive on two levels: they were created by small family groups and the viewer must interact with them by opening the little doors as s/he moves along in meditation.

Bozzuti-Jones directs Children, Youth and Family Ministries at St. Bartholomew's Church in Manhattan and is chaplain to the preschool. She has published poems and essays and is a frequent contributor to Children at Worship: Congregations in Bloom, a website for educators. She serves on the Diocesan Children and Families Committee.





Passion box.



Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.

Photos by Lynn Goswick

POWERFUL LIFE LESSONS

As with most of life's lessons, the process can be more powerful than the finished product. Parents participating in "14 Families, 14 Stations, 14 Homes for Faith: Interactive Stations of the Cross" shared their experiences.

- The mother of a 3-year-old boy reported: "He worked hard at gluing all the paper trees and the road ...and the rocks and a worm on the side of the road. He kept asking me why Jesus fell down."
- Another said: "... making this art box with my oldest son was a moving and joyous experience. I now have an appreciation for the Stations of the Cross... and he woke up Saturday and made a Pontius Pilate figure all on his own. That was the joyous part."
- A father of twins wrote: "As parents, we do everything we can to shield our kids from graphic violence. So, it was a challenge to work through, Jesus is nailed to the cross. We chose to express the feelings this station evokes, as opposed to the brutal act, using black roses, dark fabric and rough-hewn nails. They convey sorrow and sadness for Jesus and those who loved him, and anger at those who hurt him."



St. Barnabas Debuts Episcopal Church Year Bookmarks

By Juanita Dugdale

The Church of St. Barnabas' in Irvington introduced a new bookmark venture last December starting with a series about the six seasons of the church year. Intended to complement traditional Bible study, these mini-primers augment adult education for today's congregants who arrive with remarkably diverse cultural backgrounds and religious training. The point is to "mark" the rhythm of seasonal change in a tangible way and help people make a personal connection to events in Christ's life.

Organized by the two major cycles, Christmas (Advent, Christmas and Epiphany) and Easter (Lent, Easter and Pentecost) the bookmarks are being distributed in sequence, gifts usually tucked into service bulletins at the start of each season.

"This is an idea that came out of conversations about how to educate the parish about the church year," says Joel Daniels, the associate rector of St. Barnabas'. "We wanted to bring to light how each liturgical season came to be, what its significance is, and how the seasons fit together."

Each 4-page bookmark covers a season's dates, historic origins, liturgy, music and special symbolism. The necessarily abbreviated text is easy to read through before or after a service, while the spirit of the occasion lingers. Several books and websites have been helpful, particularly *Welcome to the Church Year* by Vicki K. Black, a comprehensive and engaging reference. The bookmarks' colorful cover designs track visual changes between seasons, highlighting Christmas and Easter with appropriately bright white backgrounds. The writing challenge has been to strike a balance between essential teachings and esoteric facts, which, though fascinating, simply put readers off track. A few problems arose – for instance, finding compelling and familiar verses proved far easier for Advent and Christmas, both joyful times of carol singing, than for Lent, a season of silence and darkness.

Our collaborators include Father Joel Daniels who serves as editor, parishioner Karl Weber who shares the writing responsibilities with me and Skeggs Design does the graphic design. The bookmarks are printed locally by Ditto!, an environmentally friendly printer.

Later this year the committee hopes to publish additional bookmarks covering subjects such as "Ordinary Time" and the life of our own St. Barnabas the Apostle.

Dugdale is a writer and designer and she serves on the vestry of Church of St. Barnabas' in Irvington.

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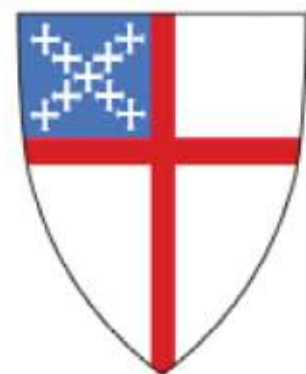


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Feed the Hungry Sunday, June 1

A message from Executive Director
Mary Beth Sasso

During this past November's Diocesan Convention, delegates adopted a resolution permanently designating the first Sunday of June as "Episcopal Charities Sunday." On that day, this year, June 1, parishes are asked to take a special collection to be offered to Episcopal Charities to further support its funding of feeding programs in the diocese. The first Sunday of June was chosen to coincide with National Hunger Awareness Day on Tuesday, June 3rd.

Hunger is an ongoing and growing problem in all of our communities. With more of our neighbors under-earning and unemployed, and our elderly feeling the pinch of trying to make ends meet on budgets that just don't add up, something has to give. When the rent is paid, the food budget is gone. Episcopal Charities supports congregation-based feeding programs throughout our diocese that address the pressing needs of men, women and children for hot meals and food supplies to keep them nourished. Help us help those in such great need.

Every parish will receive an Episcopal Charities Sunday packet, with envelopes, communications materials, suggestions for relevant liturgical reading, and further explanation of the need for support of feeding programs.



A barbeque at Grace Church, White Plains.

From the Front Line

The Caring Hands Food Pantry

The Caring Hands Food Pantry at St. John's, Monticello, was founded in 1994. Under the direction of Tracy West-Barnes, the food pantry expanded through grants from the Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP) and Episcopal Charities. Caring Hands also receives generous donations from the Monticello ShopRite and the Wakefern Corporation. The food pantry is being converted to a "shopping-style" food pantry, offering patrons a choice. The food pantry serves about 110 families (approximately 400 people) on a bi-weekly basis. In addition to providing food, the food pantry is in the process of developing forums to address issues including housing and healthcare. The food pantry is under the direction of Jan Downing and Corrinne Dunlap.

Episcopal Charities awarded Caring Hands a \$10,000 grant this year; its 2008 annual budget is \$26,900.

"It's really important," said Downing, when asked how much the pantry depends on Episcopal Charities. "Episcopal Charities is our biggest grant source."

The Episcopal Charities grant allows us to help the working poor, people who are having trouble making ends meet because of high fuel and other cost, but who are ineligible for food stamps and it also allows us to help undocumented immigrants. HPNAP grants don't cover the working poor or undocumented immigrants, she said.

Downing added that Sullivan County is a very poor county to begin with. Owning a car in Sullivan County is not a luxury, people are trying to buy gas and get oil for the house. "Last year we ran out of money and the Mid-Hudson region stepped in with a \$2,000 grant to carry us through," she said.

Caring Hands operates four Tuesdays and one Saturday a month, with lines out the door, Downing said.

— Lynette Wilson, ENY editor

THE FOLLOWING FEEDING PROGRAMS

will receive support from Episcopal Charities in 2008:

Cathedral Community Cares, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Manhattan	\$19,675
Community Ministry at St. Bartholomew's, Manhattan	\$10,000
Brown Bag Lunch Program, Trinity-St. Paul's New Rochelle	\$ 5,000
Food Pantry at St. Peter's, Chelsea	\$ 5,000
Food Pantry at Zion Church, Wappingers Falls	\$ 6,000
Friday Soup Kitchen, Holyrood Church, Washington Heights	\$3,000
Fed By Grace, Port Jervis	\$ 7,000
Grace Church Soup Kitchen, Middletown	\$10,000
Grace Church Community Center Soup Kitchen, White Plains	\$ 9,000
Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen	\$16,000
Holy Trinity, Inwood Food Pantry	\$8,000
Iglesia San Andres Food Pantry	\$16,000
Michael Fender Food Pantry, Ascension Church, Manhattan	\$ 6,000
Neighborhood Dinner Soup Kitchen at St. Peter's Port Chester	\$ 8,000
Our Lord's Soup Kitchen, Grace Episcopal Church, West Farms	\$17,500
Pathways, All Angels Church, Manhattan	\$6,600
Roundout Valley Food Pantry	\$4,000
St. John's Monticello Food Pantry	\$11,000
St. Margaret's Longwood Feeding Ministry	\$ 8,000
St. Michael's Outreach, Manhattan	\$5,000
St. Peter's Love Kitchen, Westchester Square	\$ 10,000
St. Simon's Sitdown, Holy Cross, Kingston	\$ 7,000
Soup Kitchen at Christ Church, Ramapo	\$ 9,000
Soup Kitchen & Food Pantry at St. Mary's Manhattanville	\$ 7,500
St. John, Paul & Clement's Food Pantry, Mount Vernon	\$ 2,000
St. Mary's Food Pantry, Mohegan Lake	\$8,000
Trinity Church, Mt. Vernon Community Center	\$4,500
Wednesday Homeless Dinner Program, Epiphany Church, Manhattan	\$5,000
TOTAL:	\$233,775

Pray and Act for Peace

By the Rev. Canon Daniel J. Webster

Spirit of God, why have the 'Christian nations' been so prone to war? Something must have gone horribly wrong with our way of living the gospel." Thus begins a prayer in the daily Lenten meditation book, *A Season for the Spirit*, by the Rev. Martin L. Smith. It comes at the end of a chapter titled, "A tree is known by its fruit." He goes on to say the "entire credibility of the Church now stands or falls" as it seeks "a spirituality of reconciliation."

Before the Christian faith became the religion of the empire 16 centuries ago the followers of Jesus could not serve in armies. Those early Christians took seriously the words of the gospel about loving your neighbor and loving your enemy.

The example of the actions and words of Jesus in the gospels gives us overwhelming evidence of a man of peace who did not resort to violent solutions when given the choice.

When Jesus' cousin, John the baptizer, was executed Jesus tried to slip away in a boat "to a deserted place." But crowds of people followed him, so many so that Matthew's gospel tells us there were "five thousand men besides women and children."

If ever there was a time when Jesus had the opportunity to raise up an army against the oppressive Roman Empire occupying his homeland there it was. He was looking at men who were willing to follow him, who had heard of one more treacherous act of public murder in the beheading of John.

But there was no call to arms. There was no effort to incite an uprising. Instead, we are told, Jesus sat down with these thousands, thanked God for the food they had, "blessed and broke" the bread and everyone ate their fill.

When one of his followers draws a sword and slices off a man's ear to stop Jesus from being arrested, Jesus ordered him to put away the sword. Then he healed the injured man.

The words of Jesus also seem pretty clear about loving your enemies and even praying for them. And the first words of the risen Jesus to the disciples in the locked room were "Peace be with you." In one gospel he says it twice.

It is this nonviolent Jesus who leaders of our church and other denominations have prayed to, studied and sought guidance from as they have discerned their positions on war and conflict over many years. In the last century when our nation had seen what it had done with nuclear weapons to human beings, our church's governing authority spoke up.

"Believers in a God of Justice and Love as revealed in Christ cannot concede that war is inevitable; and voices are occasionally raised suggesting that a preventive war

would afford a shortcut through our present dilemma; and if this advice were accepted, the United States would be placed in an indefensible moral position before the world, as well as violate the fundamental teaching of Christ. Therefore...we unalterably oppose the idea of so-called 'preventive war'."

That action of The Episcopal Church's governing authority came in 1952.

Fifty years later there were voices in our land again seeking support to justify "a so-called preventive war." Leaders of The Episcopal Church and every major Christian faith group in the United States, as well as the pope in Rome, voiced opposition to an invasion of Iraq. Only the Southern Baptist Convention and the Mormon Church called the Iraq war justified.

Episcopalians in this diocese have joined with thousands of Christians across the country to pray and act for peace. They have connected in local communities for peace vigils and public protests. They have traveled to Washington, D.C. on anniversaries of the invasion to protest the continued prosecution of a war they believe to be illegal, immoral and unjust.

Some have protested the "extraordinary rendition" and torture of human beings by the U.S. government. They have asked if Jesus would approve of kidnapping suspected terrorists and spiriting them to secret prisons subjecting some to unspeakable horrors.

They have called upon The Episcopal Church to live up to its proclaimed mission of reconciliation. They have called upon the wider church to work for peace and always advocate for government leaders to seek nonviolent solutions.

Martin Smith's words, written a full decade before 9/11 became a battle cry, have proved prophetic. The credibility of the Christian church and how we choose to live out the gospel of Jesus are at stake.

Webster is vicar of St. Andrew's Chapel in Montgomery and a canon for congregational development. He is a member of the Mid-Hudson chapter of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship and the Nyack-based Fellowship of Reconciliation.

EPISCOPAL PEACE FELLOWSHIP is a national organization with state and local chapters. It strives to work for peace and justice in communities, the church and the world. For more information or to become a member, visit www.epfnational.org.

Honor Those Who Stand Upon the Wall

By the Rev. Patrick Ward

I got my first Marine Corps tattoo, the requisite Bull-dog, in 1970 soon after finishing boot camp at Parris Island, South Carolina. My second one was inked in 2005 when my son did the same. In fact when he got home we went to the tattoo parlor together. He got his bulldog and I got a saber with a caption that reads: "Once a Marine always a Marine."

I proudly display the familiar Marine Corps logo – the Eagle, Globe and Anchor – on my car, in my office and from a flag that flies at the rectory at St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Scarborough. You'll also find a Vietnam

Campaign Ribbon displayed on my car, a reminder of the time I spent in Southeast Asia. It goes without saying that I am deeply proud of my time in uniform and I cherish the camaraderie of those who have earned the title "Marine."

— If I were called to Iraq or Afghanistan tomorrow to serve beside the brave young men and women who do our country proud, I would gladly go. It would be a privilege to serve as their priest and chaplain, ministering to their emotional and spiritual needs. Not because I believe in this current war but because I believe in them.

I would be honored to stand alongside these men and women who are willing to make the ultimate sacrifice.

— I get chills every time I see the movie *A Few Good Men*, and hear a particular bit of dialogue where one attorney asks another about the two Marines on trial: "Why do you like them so much?" The response brings tears to my eyes, "Because they stand upon a wall and say 'Nothing's going to hurt you tonight, not on my watch.'"

— Men and women who are willing "to stand upon a wall" deserve our respect and support even when we despise the politicians and the policies that put them

The Campaign For Innocent Victims in Conflict

Contemporary wars present humanitarian agencies with new challenges

By Anne Nelson

It is difficult to use the words “war” and “progress” in the same sentence. Many of the innovations that come about in warfare have the effect of causing more misery. Modern technology means that attacks can take place by remote control, without any personal contact with the victims on the ground. Modern medicine may save the lives of more wounded soldiers than ever before, but civilian victims in poor countries rarely enjoy the same care and many die from their injuries. The casual destruction of a hut, a vehicle, or a farm animal can cripple the survivors’ livelihood.

In 2001, at the outset of the war in Afghanistan, Marla Ruzick, a young activist from California, went into the field and observed these truths. She realized that civilian victims of war were left out of military strategy and defense spending policy debates. And that her firsthand testimony could make irrefutable points for victims’ rights, so she created the Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict (CIVIC).

She worked closely with U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vermont) to help pass legislation to create a special fund for victims in Iraq and Afghanistan. A congressional aide later commented, “She’d actually seen what we’d only read about, namely U.S. bombs dropped in the wrong place, which had wiped out whole communities. Marla gave us on-the-ground information about these people and told us that nothing was being done to help them.”

In 2005, Ruzicka, 28, and the director of CIVIC’s Iraq program, Faiz Salim, were killed in a suicide bombing outside Baghdad. But CIVIC didn’t die with them; it has continued and expanded Ruzicka’s mission. Sarah Holewinski, an international affairs expert, now runs CIVIC, lobbying officials in Washington and other world capitals, and traveling to war zones to document the needs of wounded civilians and survivors.

Holewinski says that some of her strongest supporters have been U.S. military personnel, many of whom are grieved by the unintentional harm that results from their operations and frustrated by the red tape that accompanies their efforts to help.

CIVIC’s lobbying efforts in Washington have helped to create legislation to fund compensation and Holewinski is now working with NATO towards the same goals. CIVIC is also pressing the U.S. government to design more effective aid programs and keep



Sarah Holewinski, executive director, CIVIC—Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict—and Cpt. Chris Kuzio.

Photo courtesy of CIVIC

better records of payments to civilian victims, to increase their tangible benefits.

(CIVIC is working with developing countries to compensate civilian victims of their own military actions. And Holewinski is currently promoting an accountability project that holds U.S. contractors responsible for harm to civilians in the field.)

Skeptics argue that CIVIC’s offerings amount to little within the overwhelming and brutal context of war. It is true that CIVIC consciously avoids the broader debates, including the question of what constitutes a just war. Marla Ruzicka began as a peace activist, but learned early on that if she was going to be truly helpful to civilian victims, she had to accept the reality of war, and find ways to improve their conditions within it. Mixing aid and politics didn’t work.

Most Americans know nothing of the poverty that exists in rural areas of Iraq and Afghanistan or of the desperation widows and orphans in these societies face. A compensation payment can make the difference between absolute destitution and the ability to raise children with some sense of a future. In such cases, the contribution of a thousand dollars, a sewing machine, and a goat can rescue a family from starvation, and a survivor from the paralysis of despair.

But CIVIC’s idea is broader than simply material assistance. The organization reminds us that, no matter what the motives, every war has a dolorous human cost, with names, faces and families. CIVIC’s ultimate service may be to help the world come to grips with the reality of war, and seek other means to address its problems.

Nelson is an author and a playwright and she is a member of the ENY editorial board.

there. I can respect those who are willing to serve even as I resent the commander in chief who has, I believe, blundered in setting us on this course of war in Iraq.

— I was sitting in the airport in Shannon, Ireland, in October 2006 and overheard two Irishmen discussing Thomas Rick’s book *Fiasco*, which *The New York Times* review described as “his (Rick’s) portrait of that war as a misguided exercise in hubris, incompetence and folly...” During a pause in their conversation I ventured forth with a comment of my own and told them that some of us in America refer to the war not as a “fiasco” but as a “FUBAR.” Although I was able to explain to them what “FUBAR” means, I will leave it to the reader to decipher the term.

— I am not a pacifist, and I believe that there is a place

for Christians in the military. In fact I came to a saving faith in Jesus while serving in the Marine Corps on Okinawa. Another Marine, a gunnery sergeant by the name of George Coggins, showed me the incredible love of Jesus during a difficult time in my life. His life and witness showed me for the first time that Jesus was real. That he loved me and wanted the best for me. Thirty-seven years later I strive to do the same for others.

— In this season of presidential politics, I am interested in hearing the candidates discuss a variety of issues. The state of the economy is very im-



Pvt. Patrick Ward in 1970 when he graduated from boot camp.

portant to me, but I am most interested in hearing about their intentions in Iraq. We need to bring this war to an end as quickly as possible. It needs to end in a way that looks not only to our own security but also to the security of the Iraqi people who have paid a terrible price for this “fiasco” or “FUBAR.” And it must end in a way that does not dishonor those “who stand upon walls.”

Ward is rector of St. Mary’s in Scarborough and a Vietnam veteran. He spent four years in the U.S. Marine Corps, making sergeant.

Bishop George E. Packard

The role of chaplains and life reflected in war

Interview by Lynette Wilson

Shortly after graduating from college in 1966, Bishop George E. Packard enlisted in the Army and served as a lieutenant with the 1st Division Infantry setting up ambushes in Vietnam. In a profile that ran in the *The New York Times* in December 2002 Packard said he stopped counting the number of men and women he and his men killed. He was awarded the Silver Star and two Bronze Stars for valor. While continuing to serve in the Army Reserves, Packard enrolled in seminary in 1971, as he said in the *Times*, “to study the ethical and moral issues that confronted me in Vietnam.”

Packard was ordained a priest in 1974. After ordination, he transferred out of the infantry and served as a chaplain. He has also served a parish priest and was Canon to the Ordinary in this diocese from 1989-1995. He served as chaplain to the Pentagon in 1991 during the Gulf War. The House of Bishops elected Packard Bishop Suffragan for Chaplaincies in 1999.

All told, Packard served six years active duty and 20 in the Army Reserve.

I spoke with him by telephone.

ENY: What do military chaplains do?

PACKARD: Provide pastoral support and a faith experience for those in need.

ENY: Are there enough chaplains?

PACKARD: No. Every unit commander wants a chaplain; they act as a morale officer. When people are uncertain or afraid, they think differently, more philosophically, more self-reflectively. Units that have chaplains suffer less despair and have fewer suicidal thoughts.

ENY: With soldiers facing longer and more frequent deployments, how do chaplains help soldiers deal with combat and family commitments and the tensions that likely come up?

PACKARD: That’s the number one thing that everyone thinks about. People ask “how are the troops? What are they feeling?” It doesn’t work like that. The background worry is about the people at home and how they are doing, concurrently they are thinking about how they are functioning with their unit. Say you are in Mosul or Baghdad, your sense of the mission or how the operation is going will be related to how your unit is doing. That is the first lens through which people perceive reality.

The wise chaplain doesn’t try to do reconciliation [between home and mission]. There is a bipolar truth to being in the military: the fact is you will be separated from your loved ones. If you are on active duty, every three years or so you rotate... it’s the manner of the military and that’s the way it is supposed to be.

ENY: Have advances in communication technology changed things?

PACKARD: There is specialness to this war. Some soldiers call or email family every day. Little Johnny is mad and dad calls from Iraq thousands of miles away and is plopped down smack in the middle of family life. That has its own stresses. In the old days you didn’t hear from them; they were removed. Maybe there was some health to that... that had its own challenges. This is a different war.

ENY: For a generation, the chaplain who exemplified military chaplains, was Father Mulcahy, the Roman Catholic chaplain on M.A.S.H. How close is his portrayal to military chaplaincy?

PACKARD: He was a Hollywood version of a chaplain. There is a high level of anxiety in this battle space.

ENY: How does one become a chaplain? Does the church recruit?

PACKARD: You have to be good with youth, in good shape. If married, his/her family can’t mind that he/she would be

committed to these environments. When it comes to being liturgical, you have to be able to celebrate the Eucharist on the back of a humvee or most anywhere. There are lots of Guard and Reserve people in their 40s and 50s and kids 18, 19, 20. The people who come to us tend to like structure, are well centered and grounded. You have to be able to get along ecumenically because you will be covering for others and supporting and sustaining people. You also have to be able to function in a constantly changing environment. A lot of what I just said is true of other chaplaincies—hospitals, emergency responders, too. You get a buzz from the adventure of it and you have to like to care for people.

ENY: Do you prefer to recruit chaplains with prior military service?

PACKARD: Those people tend to think of themselves in terms of their former branch... if you are former infantry, the military thinks of you as a line officer. We prefer to have someone come in as a chaplain and not have to overcome the predisposition of how they understand the military. They come to the military differently: chaplains belong to Jesus Christ. It’s important that they know who they are; it’s easy to lose a sense of who you are. Things can get pretty heady and you might be assigned to a heavy-duty commander—you have to be able to keep your wits about you. Some chaplains might get intimidated by a strong commander.

ENY: I can’t imagine it’s easy.

PACKARD: I was in a situation with a chaplain where we saw a one-star general across the mess hall in Iraq and was told you cannot speak to the general. You need to speak to power when it’s appropriate and tell it when it’s in error. The lethality of the battlefield is so high these days. The environment is filled with noncombatants. There was a situation in Bosnia where a chaplain had to bring a commander to task... there was a family in one of the huts that would have been killed because too much ordnance would have been used.

I worry about today’s battlefields. Just War principles of Thomas Aquinas don’t function in an asymmetrical war environment where there is no proportionality to measure force, keeping noncombatants safe. When you pound the crap out of the other side, you don’t come out on the

side of Just War principles.

Chaplains have to be on the balls of their feet working the field as a moral presence in an immoral environment, where he or she can make a difference. You can’t be sitting around drinking coffee.

ENY: What can churches and communities do to help soldiers’ families and returning soldiers?

PACKARD: They can link up with the H.O.S.T. program. Let’s not make it an Episcopal problem...go to other churches, the temple, the mosque and find out what Reserve and Guard people go there. See how they are doing and how the family is doing. Be particularly sensitive to veterans who might be homeless; the percentage of homeless veterans is rising. The Home Support Team offers models for what you can do. For instance, a bunch of churches in D.C. got together and held covered-dish suppers for families, mowed lawns and babysat for kids. It’s a great scandal that we’re at war and the amount of sacrifice at home is zero. I’m not trying to make people feel guilty for guilt’s

sake. There are lots of ways to engage with people when they go and when they come back. A lot of these families, especially the Guard families, are invisible. Many people don’t know there are Guard families living in the vicinity, it’s not like they don’t care.

ENY: Do you ever get over having killed another human being?

PACKARD: I don’t think you do. It is something you carry with

you. In these kinds of wars, you’re not really sure where the goodness is, there is a guilt that needles and bothers people after the war is over. It has to do with the Ten Commandments; the pure idea of this is that you would defend the defenseless, as in St. Augustine’s theology. But opening fire on a passenger car that doesn’t stop soon enough at a checkpoint and killing a family of three because the driver couldn’t understand the signal... it’s an ugly time. A soldier can’t just wave this away... it is something he will process throughout his lifetime. Hopefully we have a merciful God. I hope.

ENY: You said in an interview with *Religion and Ethics Newsweekly*, that you don’t spend your days in atonement. Looking back on your life, would you change anything?

PACKARD: I wouldn’t change the commitments I made to the military. I was just recently blogging about the camaraderie; I’ve had some very sweet moments. I was a platoon leader in a war that made no sense but... that’s the kind of cosmic question I didn’t think through. God takes our mistakes, foibles and vulnerabilities and molds them and we grope toward salvation. If I had made different choices I would still have made mistakes and have asked God to help me.

My college roommate joined the Peace Corps as a pacifist, a believer, and taught school in Micronesia while I was busting bush in Vietnam. A lot of times you don’t have as much choice as you think you do. The draft board was after me and then I was in the big green machine. Today I believe I have found hope in Christ, revealed. He has spared me from judgment and urges me on. My roommate is still searching, God bless him.

Wilson is ENY editor.



Bishop George E. Packard assisting Chaplain Reese Hutcheson with his body armor in Baghdad, Iraq.

The Aftermath of War

Soldiers and their families continue to feel the effects of war when the tour ends

By the Rev. Frank E. Wismer III

The following scenarios depict actual events that have occurred since the United States became engaged in the Global War on Terrorism. Military families in your parish or your community may be struggling to keep it together, when the soldier is at war, and often when the soldier returns home.

In many cases soldiers are being asked to deploy two, three and four times, which places added stress on already estranged families. It's highly likely that scenarios like these will continue to play out in light of the fact that the strategic plan for the utilization of Army Reserve and National Guard forces projects units to be deployed once every five years.

- A member of your congregation has just returned home from a 12-month deployment to Afghanistan. While deployed he made an important decision: he wants to start his life over. He plans to leave his job, his wife and his two young sons and move to California. He wants to know if he is doing the right thing. How do you respond?
- A young man who grew up next door to you has just returned after serving 15 months in Iraq with the Army. Shortly before his unit came home, he was standing guard when one day at 0400 hours a civilian car sped toward his checkpoint. He signaled for the car to stop, but it didn't. He fired his weapon in the air, but the car continued to race in his direction. He then fired on the vehicle, killing the passenger. An investigation into the incident exonerated him from any wrongdoing and his buddies assured him that he had done the right thing. The problem is the car's driver. He didn't intend any harm; he was in the wrong place at the wrong time and didn't understand the signal. This young man comes to visit you and wants to know if God still loves him. What do you say?
- A parishioner has been having difficulty coping with issues of stress since his wife deployed to Kuwait with the Navy. He has been under the treatment of a psychiatrist and his doctor has recommended that he contact the Navy to see if his wife can be sent home. To that end, the psychiatrist has written a letter on his behalf. Unfortunately, the Navy has been unwilling to release her because she has only been deployed for three months of her six-month tour. What can you do to assist this parishioner?
- Your junior warden has recently returned from the Horn of Africa. He returned to work yesterday and was informed by his employer that he no longer has a job. He has a few weeks of accrued leave, but after that he will have no income. He wants to know if there is anything that can be done to right the wrong

done to him by his employer. Is there?

- A lay reader in your congregation has just returned from a year in the Persian Gulf. While he was deployed, he gained a renewed interest in his faith and the church. He is 52 years old and now wants to become an Episcopal priest. His wife thinks that he has lost his mind. What counsel do you give him?

What can you do?

The first thing you can do if a fellow parishioner, neighbor or friend returning from or reacting to a loved one's deployment approaches you with a crisis or is mulling a major life change is to listen carefully and, perhaps, help them consider other approaches/possibilities. The next thing you can do is help them find help.

The Office of the Bishop Suffragan for Chaplaincies of The Episcopal Church can be helpful in many ways. The bishop's office offers resources for military spouses and families, tips on how to talk to children, information on recognizing and dealing with combat stress, a prayer list and more.

You will also find information regarding resources available to military personnel and their families, resources for clergy and parishes on dealing with issues and problems arising out of military service, and tips on what congregations can do to mitigate the effects of deployment upon military personnel and their families within and outside the parish community.

The military is a complex institutional system that can be "worked" in order to assist military personnel and their families. Make friends with military chaplains and unit commanders. They know (or can quickly find out) who to contact to resolve certain issues. Establishing good rapport with "decision makers" goes a long way in working the system. Today's military is intent on supporting its personnel. In a system as complex as the military, the key is learning who has the expertise and resources to help.

The Army Chief of Chaplains Office offers resources for clergy, which can be useful for lay people as well at www.chapnet.army.mil.

Wismer is a chaplain and retired Army colonel.

SOLDIERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

continue to suffer the war even when the tour ends. What can you do to help?

The Office of the Bishop Suffragan for Chaplaincies, Episcopal Church USA, offers deployment information and resources on its website, www.ecusa-chaplain.org/Deployment_Resources.html. ECUSA also has formed H.O.S.T, or Home Support Team, which is an ecumenical, interfaith organization that reaches out to families and individuals affected by war.

MORE THAN 150,000 American troops and civilian contract personnel are deployed in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait. More than 4,000 have died and 20,000 have returned home wounded, including many with amputated limbs or otherwise maimed for life. Every American community, large and small, is being impacted by the deployment of local National Guard and Reserve personnel in addition to the large number of Active Duty (full time) troops who are away from family and community.

Epiphany's 175th Anniversary

Sunday April 27th, 2008

11:00 am

We continue to celebrate our 175th Anniversary with a Festive Eucharist and special guest, Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori. Please join us.



THE CHURCH OF THE

Epiphany

1393 York Avenue at East 74th Street New York, NY 10021
Tel: 212.737.2720 Fax: 212.737.3217 www.epiphanynyc.org
The Reverend Canon Andrew J.W. Mullins, Rector

ALL ARE WELCOME

On Duty in Iraq

By John Bourges Edited by Lynette Wilson

Army 1st Lt. John Bourges of the 325th Combat Support Hospital, a cradle Episcopalian and a member of Holy Communion in Mahopac was born and raised in New York City and served 20 years with the New York City Police Department. He retired as a detective a few weeks before 9/11, and had already enrolled in nursing school. I asked John to write about his decision to join the Army Reserve and what it has been like for him to work as a critical care nurse in Iraq. John deployed to Iraq in September.

John's decision

I watched, as millions did, the events that unfolded on 9/11. I looked at my pocket calendar and saw that my team in Manhattan North Homicide would be working. In my 20 years I thought that I had attended enough funerals for officers killed in the line of duty. I thought I knew enough firemen and their families that you could understand their loss of one of their own. I had dealt with enough death in my years as a detective to harden me to life's quick ending. Nothing prepared me or I think anyone for that day. I am not a September 10th person. That date changed me.

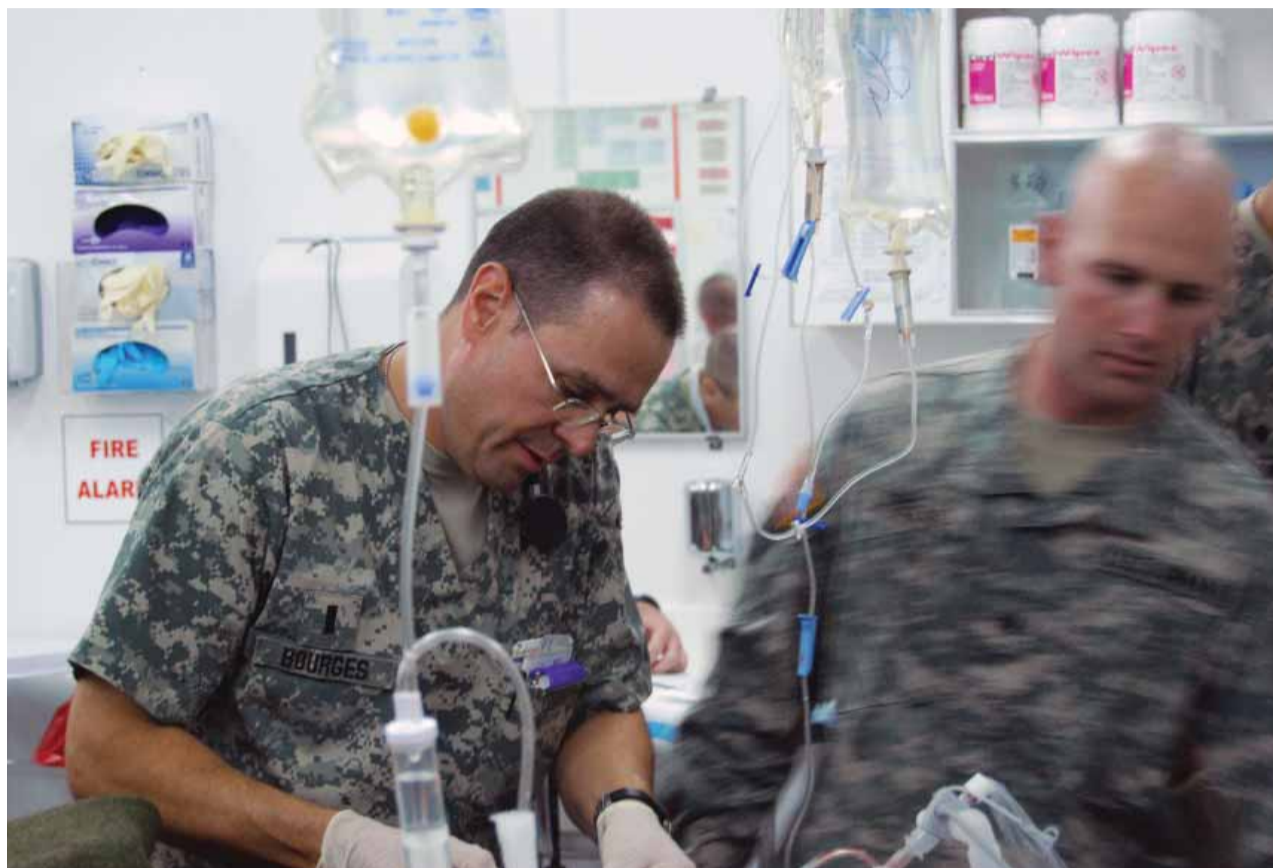
It is hard to put into words my feelings on that day. I knew then that I was going to be doing something. I believe in God's grace and asked for his guidance. I asked to be led in whatever direction He had for me, just give me the wisdom to recognize it. As I looked at the TV screen, I knew I could not let this go, I had to do something.

I graduated from Westchester Community College two years later and began work as a nurse in an ICU at White Plains Hospital where I became a critical care registered nurse (CCRN). And then as an ER nurse working at Putnam Hospital Center where I would earn my certified emergency nurse (CEN). My last day working at White Plains Hospital I met a recruiter for the U.S. Army Reserve, who was seeking critical care nurses. The something I would do was taking shape. At 50 I joined the Army as a nurse, a year later I deployed to Iraq.

Here, 6,000 miles away from friends and family I can do one of the things I am trained and skilled at doing. I can be a nurse to the men and women of our armed forces. The arguments for and against war have existed since man first waged war. The common thread is that we as a country have asked a small part of its population to undertake a great burden and to step into that ring. We are also a good people. You just have to look at our history in dealing with friend and foe alike.

As our young men and women step up the least I can do is stand with them, to treat their wounds and help heal their injuries. To also treat our enemies as we treat ourselves; to show our compassion as a country.

John keeps friends and family informed (sometimes entertained) by writing emails describing his day-to-day experiences in Iraq. Reading a soldier's daily diary offers an insight into the war that cannot be matched by mainstream news coverage. Here are excerpts from Feb. 25 and March



1st Lt. John Bourges of the 325th Combat Support Hospital at work in a makeshift hospital constructed of trailers in Iraq.

Photo courtesy of John Bourges.

6. (For security reasons, specific locations are marked with dashes.)

Feb. 25 – John was recently assigned to a new hospital

I walk through the main gate. The hospital has a “mortar roof” above it. The idea is that when a mortar hits it, the round explodes about 10 feet above the actual structure. I walk into the 20 bed ICU where I will be working and meet and greet the staff.

Holy crap...names and faces too numerous to remember, except some of the patients. The closest to the door was the victim of an IED (Improvised Explosive Device) blast. He is missing his right lower arm and has a lot of facial burns. Both eyes are open, damaged and unseeing. To his right the next patient is missing his entire right arm up to the shoulder. The next two have been there awhile and are “status post” IED blasts. During their stay they acquired pneumonia or didn't do well for some time. They look like they will be leaving soon to “the ward” down the hall. And so it goes for almost all of the beds are full. All are traumas. IED blasts, gunshot wounds, burns you name it. This is THE trauma center for Iraq. If you are too sick or injured to stay in country you stop here. If you can't be treated someplace else, you come here. This hospital is busier than Baghdad. Some say the numbers support the statement that this is the busiest trauma center in the world. It is heady stuff.

All of the operating rooms are working. It is not uncommon for them to run 24 hours a day. The regular ward is almost full. Some are starting to complain that the mission has changed from that of a combat hospi-

tal to a “humanitarian” mission. Many of the injured are Iraqis. Enemy and civilian alike, lay in the beds side-by-side. Blown up or shot, hit by a car, no difference. Open wounds “closed” with the --- Pack, something invented here. The only hint is that here and there soldiers are noted guarding a patient. The only one they didn't was a quadriplegic who was shot after he shot a soldier. The civilian health care system is broken and no one knows how to fix it. Patients leave here doing well and arrive at the Iraqi hospital called “Med City” with medications and supplies to last 20 days. What isn't stolen is used by others. It is not uncommon to have a healthy patient leave the hospital only to die because of poor care or a new infection acquired in their local hospital. The sad ones are the kids.

In one of the ICU beds was a kid burned over 50 percent of his body. He is in the isolation room. Taped to the glass window where the nurse sits looking in is a picture of the kid as he once was, about 10 years old with a frown. He had a sad look about him. Almost like he knew what lay ahead. They are trying to get a sponsor for him in America.

Many of the patients are kids with either burns or neurological trauma. It seems that kids are the favorite target of snipers. Shoot a kid and the Americans come. The American soldier knows this, but still they come to the rescue. So the scene is usually a kid gets shot in the head and the Americans come only to get themselves shot. God bless them. They ALWAYS come. But the kids keep getting shot. Think about it: Could you not go running to the rescue in the hopes that snipers would eventually stop using them as targets? What kind of person shoots a kid randomly? Heaven help the sniper when he is caught.

Outside helicopters are continuously flying. The helicopter is used far more often than the one in ---. Across the road F-16s take off in the distance. The afterburner lights up the sky. It is strange to hear the sound and realize the plane is actually in front of the noise, they travel so fast. They travel in pairs, the “wingman” taking off after the first. I watch, it is cool, the roar and the light and off they go. ALL DAY AND NIGHT!

Things here are different. I’m not going to have as much time. The ICU is busy. The hospital is busy. It is dark when I go to work and dark when I leave. My access to phones and computers is limited. I work four, 12-hour shifts and then one off. That is a 72-hour work-week in the busiest trauma center in the world. No wonder they only do three month stints here. I couldn’t last longer than that.

March 6 – John describes his new home

My new hooch is nicer than the one I used to live in. For one thing it is larger. The room is for two but the space is large enough to fit four back in ---. God bless the Air Force. The only problem is that the toilets and showers, in what are called Cadillacs, are about 100 yards away over gravel or mud. Closer are a few latrines or porta-potties. I’m grateful for those and empty plastic bottles kept at the bedside. Use your imagination.

There is a lovely smell here every few days. It is the burn pit. I think that this is responsible for my creeping crud that I have acquired. They burn everything. All the medical waste and probably anything else that is toxic is burned... upwind. I believe that there is a little addendum attached to my record that while I have been assigned to the --- mission I have been exposed to toxic fumes. You would figure by now that the burn pit would have been moved downwind from all of us. I’m sure there is a reason, but this is the military and who knows. So you wake up, hey somebody is burning something! Then you remember what is being burned and you try and hold your breath, but it doesn’t work.

There is a pool and gym here. The pool is warm but the building is not as nice as the one in ---. It is open longer, only being closed from 1 a.m. to 4 a.m. But there is no dedicated lap swimming time. I’ve been going after work when it’s crowded and sometimes I’ve had to wait to swim my laps. The water is warm, so there is no risk of sudden cardiac arrest when you jump in like in ---.

There is an outside pool that is open during the summer, which begins in a few weeks. We actually have the A/C on now. Anyway the pool is the favorite flight path of helicopters and planes coming into ---. I wonder why? Oh, yeah, women are allowed to wear bikinis. Once again, you have to love the Air Force. The gym is a little on the skimpy side. What they need is the hard core Marines from --- to add some testosterone to the mix.

... There are a few more of those “booms” heard off in the distance than at ---. A few more times the chimes come over the PA with the “Attention in the hospital, attention in the hospital. There has been an indirect fire attack, I repeat there has been an indirect fire attack.” No one is concerned. We listen for the “Trauma call to ED [emergency department]” followed by the number of casualties... a different kind of expectation.

Wilson is ENY editor.



Left: 1st Lt. John Bourges and his daughter Samantha standing next to “Clifford the Big Red Truck,” while Bourges was home on leave in January. Samantha has taken over her dad’s beloved truck. Right: Samantha (left) and Phyllis Bourges.

Photos courtesy of Phyllis Bourges.

Notes from an Army Wife

By Phyllis Bourges

I am an Army wife. I have to say, I never thought those words would be coming from me. In June 2006, at the ripe old age of 50, my husband became a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army Reserve and would soon deploy to Iraq. I have been asked many times how I feel about that and depending on the day, the weather, and any other number of things the answer varies. When John first told me he wanted to join the Army Reserve, I truly thought he had lost his mind or was having a delayed mid-life crisis or both.

Fate or as some have suggested, maybe even the hand of God, touched our lives one day. My husband was at work at White Plains Hospital, it was his last day there as he was leaving for another job closer to home. Maybe I should back up a little bit. After working for 20 years in the New York City Police Department John retired as a homicide detective. Yeah! I thought, all those years of worry, long hours and working holidays are over! Then John decided to go to nursing school and become a registered nurse. It is a good profession, and although he didn’t get away from the long hours and working holidays, I was thankful it wasn’t as dangerous as his previous profession.

So there he was at White Plains Hospital working in the Critical Care Unit and fate stepped in. He met a recruiter for the U.S. Army Reserve Medical Division. He immediately knew he wanted to join although he said he wouldn’t go unless I said it was OK. It wasn’t “OK” with me and for about a year we discussed it. And by discussing it, I mean that I refused to talk about it, shouted about it and finally cried about it. All he would say was: “You know that it is the right thing to do.” I kept thinking, “I am too old for this.”

Finally, I came to realize that I couldn’t

stand in his way. He felt such a commitment and passion for “doing the right thing.” I had married a man who truly believed in stepping up to the plate. I had always admired that about him, but now that quality was turning my life upside down. The fact that he would be serving as a nurse helped me accept his decision. I

I had married a man who truly believed in stepping up to the plate. I had always admired that about him, but now that quality was turning my life upside down.

thought of our soldiers, so many of whom are so young; those he might be able to help. I knew he had to go.

So, I guess the answer today, to the question: *How does it feel to be an Army wife?* Is that I feel very proud of him. It has not been easy for him, me or our daughter to have him so far from home. I am lucky that I have been blessed with family, friends, co-workers and even strangers who have made things a little easier for me.

One day I went into the post office to mail a package to him for the first time since he was deployed. After waiting on line I handed my package to the clerk who after just glancing at the address shouted into the back, “Bob, hold the truck, I have a package for a soldier!” Then Bob shouted in the distance, “Hold the truck!” That incident really struck me and somehow made me feel less alone in this. On my subsequent weekly visits to the post office Karen, the clerk, never fails to ask how my husband is doing. It is these simple courtesies that have made a difference to me.

Bourges is a member of Holy Communion in Mahopac.



Holy Trinity, Inwood, adopted the 2nd Platoon, 57th Transportation Company, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) of the U.S. Army, Fort Drum, Watertown. Photo courtesy of Holy Trinity

Outreach as Obedience

By the Rev. Johanna-Karen Johannson

In spring 2007, our Outreach Committee, “Loaves and Fishes,” asked me to write an essay for our website (holymountaininwood.org) expanding slightly, a sermon I had preached outlining the reasons why a largely anti-Iraq-war parish would adopt a soon-to-be deployed army platoon. I’ve struggled with that essay, yet the core of it has consistently eluded me. Then I realized I was asking the wrong question. The question wasn’t why would Holy Trinity adopt a platoon, but rather why was Spirit presenting us with this opportunity at this time?

After many years of parish “inreach” and healing, the vestry felt it was time to form an outreach committee. Their first task was to poll the parish for outreach ideas and

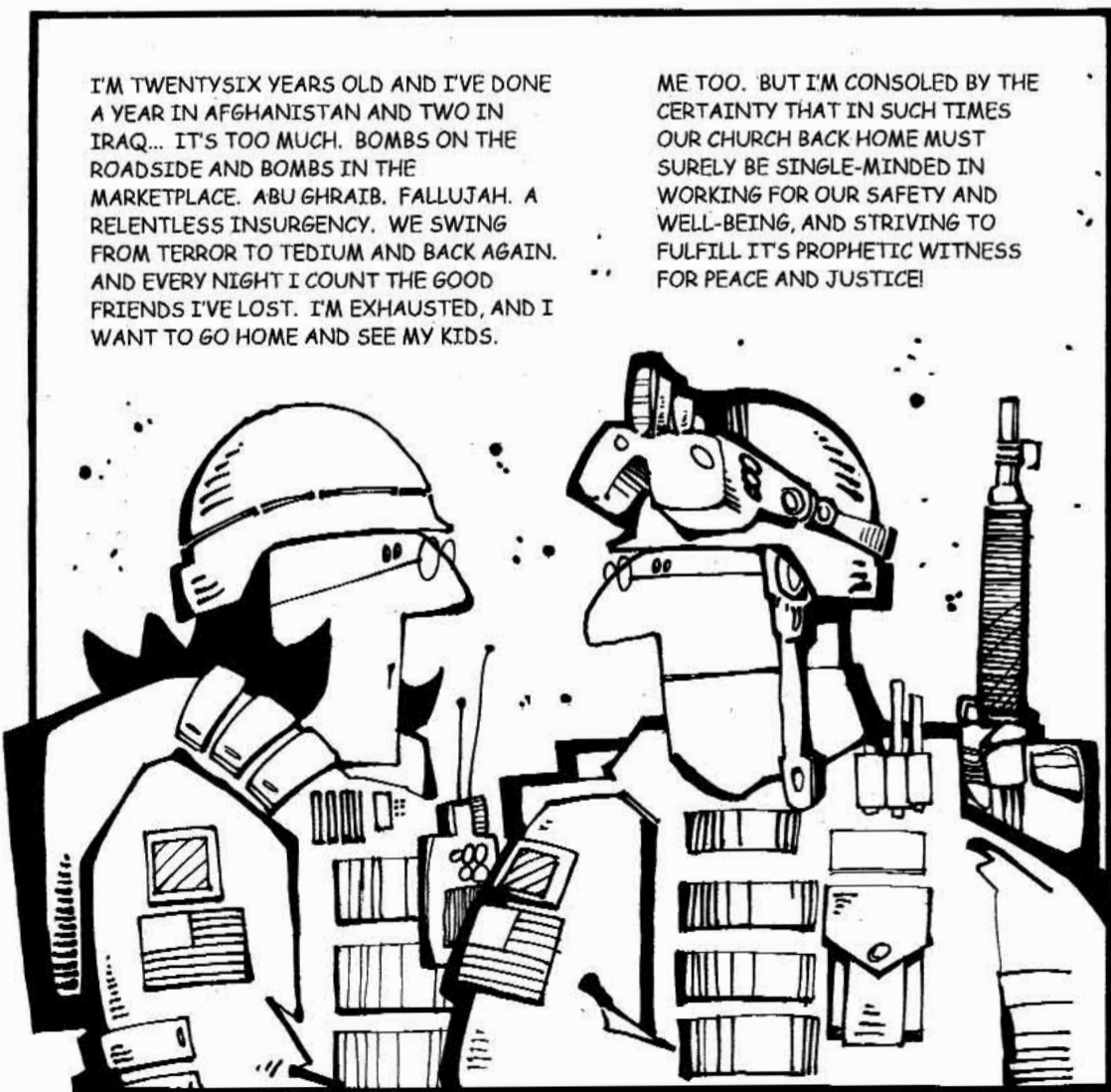
choose three options upon which Holy Trinity would focus their outreach efforts. Smack in the middle of that process, the possibility of adopting a platoon was dropped into the mix. In a sermon, I presented this opportunity and articulated the reasons why I might want to participate in this initiative. First, I had lost a dear relative and a beloved childhood friend to the war in Vietnam. Second, the son of a parishioner was fighting in Iraq and asked us to pray for a member of his platoon who had lost both arms up to the elbows while rescuing another soldier. Third, I was deeply frustrated that elected officials consistently ignored voices of protest, caution and outrage over the inception and conduct of the war in Iraq. However, I made it clear that this outreach effort would be a parish decision and not a manifestation of my own anguish.

I was stunned when nearly every member of Holy Trinity signed up to support the initiative. As I write this, I find myself still asking why Spirit put this kind of challenge in our path at the beginning of a new initiative.

Acts of outreach do not belong to us and are not in our control. They are acts of obedience to Spirit. The years of work building up a solid spiritual base in this community were not in vain. Holy Trinity needed to have spiritual muscles sufficiently strong that a difficult outreach effort would not tear us apart but, rather, continue to build us up. Also, our struggle to let go of control and stay surrendered to the will of Spirit is bearing fruit. Outreach can become a source of pride rather than a gesture of gratitude and humility. It’s become clear to me that we are not reaching out to this platoon. Instead, Spirit has prepared us for them to reach in and draw on what this parish has become. It is less about the cards and packages we send our platoon than it is that we offer a stable source of spiritual nourishment to those soldiers who choose to access that nourishment.

This is not really an outreach effort we chose. Instead, it seems to have chosen us. God help us stay open to the grace we need to fulfill this work.

Johannson is vicar of Holy Trinity, Inwood.



West Point Cadets Express Thoughts on War

Compiled by the Rev. Judy Ferguson



West Point Canterbury Club cadets on winter retreat.

Photo by Cadet Doug Hexel

On the weekend of Feb. 8-10, West Point Canterbury Club went to the Warwick Center for a winter retreat led by the Rev. Judy Ferguson, rector of Holy Innocents in Highland Falls and civilian chaplain to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

On the first night of the retreat the cadets, males and females ages 19-22, plebes (freshman) through cows (juniors) watched the documentary film *The War Tapes*, and then discussed spirituality and faith during war. At the end of that discussion the cadets were asked to anonymously write their comments in response to two questions

1. What do you think about war in general?
2. What do you think about going to war yourself, personally, emotionally?

Twelve cadets responded. Here is what they wrote.

CADET 1

1: Unfortunately warfare is necessary and has been for thousands of years.

2: I realize that I may be called upon to fight and I may be called by God while at war. I accept that should my time come, God will accept that I fought, as many others have done in the past.

CADET 2

1: War is a tragic and hopefully unnecessary part of life. I pray that militaries may become deterrent forces only.

2: I graduate in May 2008 and will possibly deploy as early as 2009. While it is frightening personally, it is my duty and responsibility to serve my country and lead my soldiers.

CADET 3

1: War is a necessary evil.

2: Will I live up to my responsibilities and not be afraid?

CADET 4

1: While war may appear to be the least beneficial thing to mankind and society in general, there are numerous aspects of it which further our development. Whether it be the liberation of oppressed peoples or simply the co-operation of two very different peoples, which results in new friendships between cultures, many positives are found amongst the tragedies.

2: Before I go to war I would explain to my family that I am doing this so that others may have the opportunity to live in a nation free from tyranny and oppression. And that if I perish over there I died doing what I love, for those that I love.

CADET 5

1: War is the most effective way to get things done.

2: I think that God will take care of me. That if I die it will be God's will.

CADET 6

1: War is about protecting the innocent and fighting so others don't have to.

2: No one wants to go to war but we do it anyway. Our faith is what keeps us strong no matter what our battle.

CADET 7

1: Fear leads to hatred and hatred leads to war.

2: I have never been to war, but hope to be an Army doctor. I believe during war I will be thinking about how I can minimize suffering and death using God's gifts.

CADET 8

1: It is a horrible and necessary thing. We may as well be the best at it.

2: Yes, I have been in war. I died when I left for Iraq. I was reborn when I got back.

CADET 9

1: I believe war is a necessary evil if there is a good enough reason (e.g., World War II).

2: I trust in God that if a round hits me then it was meant to be and my time to join God in heaven.

CADET 10

1: War is that in which humans grow most.

2: I'm going to war so others don't, and to help my country grow. What else do I need to know?

CADET 11

1: I think war is a way to strengthen our country. It shows other countries that our country will not be stepped on and we WILL defend our country.

2: I think about defending my country when I am in war.

CADET 12

1: War is a failure of diplomacy. As soldiers and officers we will manage and control the application of violence in order to protect the United States.

2: I'm afraid that being deployed will change me to the point where my loved ones will not recognize me. In another way I look forward to deployment because of the challenges... and the good that the Army is doing now. I believe that the security that we are trying to provide to the Iraqi and Afghani people is a basic human right.

Ferguson is the rector of Holy Innocents in Highland Falls and civilian chaplain to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

HOLY INNOCENTS provides campus ministry to cadets at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, the nation's undergraduate academy dedicated to educating officers for careers of service in the U.S. Army. Canterbury Club is the name given to Episcopal campus ministries. If you are an Episcopal college student and you see a Canterbury Club sign on campus, you know you are welcome.

THE WAR TAPES is a documentary film shot in Iraq by National Guardsman using hand-held digital cameras. Editors worked with more than 1,000 hours of raw footage. The film was released in 2006. Watch the film's trailer at www.thewartapes.com.



Left: Built in 1936, today the church stands behind concrete blast walls and razor wire.

Right: The Rev. Canon Andrew White and the children of St. George's at Christmas. Because of death threats against him, Canon White travels in an armored vehicle and with armed guards. He said his guards were among the biggest shoppers at St. George's Christmas bazaar.



Photos courtesy of St. George's Baghdad

How Iraq's Only Episcopal Church Battles the War

(continued from the cover)

ENY: What is the mission of St. George's?

WHITE: Our mission is to love, serve and worship God and love and serve all the people around us. Whether they are Christians, Muslims, Yazidis or Mandians, we are there to make known the love of God and serve them.

ENY: Where have you made the most progress (if any)?

WHITE: We do not function like a normal church. We are now the largest church in Baghdad with over 1,500 (the congregation grows by more than 100 each month) members. We have very few men left; most have been killed or kidnapped including all our original church leadership team. We have to provide for every aspect of our people's lives, not just worship but food, water, medicine, health care and education. Everything is difficult, I cannot tell our people that we will not be killed but we start every service with the words from the Eucharist, "The Lord is here, his Spirit is with us." This is the most loving and wonderful church I have ever been part of. I love my people like I have never loved another congregation; they love me in an incredible way. So despite the war outside, despite having to be taken to church by about 40 members of the Iraqi Army, we are a loving growing church—the most suc-

cessful church I have ever been part of.

Our website is being redone at the moment, but you can see a picture of our bomb-barricades Church at www.frrme.org.

ENY: What is it like to be a Christian in Iraq?

WHITE: To be a Christian in Iraq today is about being and practicing your faith in one of the most dangerous places in the world. They are murdered, kidnapped, threatened and yet they still come and worship. They have no money, no income, little food, so church has taken on looking after everything. It is like no other place in the world. Yet people still come to church not just on Sunday but almost every day. The church has become their hope, provider and sustainer. It will not change soon, and in the meantime the Episcopal Church in Baghdad will continue to provide, support and help the people in Baghdad. They are not traditional Episcopalians/Anglicans: they are Syrians, Catholics, Orthodox, Chaldean, Presbyterian and others. It now costs \$30,000 (increases since Scott's letter in Dec. 2007) a month to support these people. We have no reserves, we never know where the money is coming from, but God does and He always provides.

ENY: How can people help?

WHITE: We just need prayer and money.

In researching St. George's I ran across U.S. Navy Cmdr. Scott Rye who is an Episcopalian and member of Trinity Church in Mobile, Ala. Rye is currently serving in Iraq and is involved with St. George's. He sent this letter to friends and family in December and it has made the rounds. He has raised more than \$8,000.

**Commander Scott Rye, USN
MNF-I, STRATEFF/COMMS DIV
APO AE 09316**

12 December 2007

An Open Letter to Fellow Episcopalians

I am taking this opportunity to write to fellow Episcopalians to share with you the story of a remarkable parish in the midst of what some call "the most dangerous city in the world," Baghdad, Iraq, where I am currently deployed.

St. George's, Baghdad, is the only Anglican Church in Iraq. Originally built in 1936, the church was forcibly closed for 10 years during Saddam Hussein's rule. St. George's was looted in 2003, when all of its furniture—including pews and the church organ—were stolen. The building was also heavily damaged by rocket fire. And while there is not a full-time rector, the Reverend Canon Andrew White serves as the Vicar of Baghdad and ministers to the parishioners.

The congregation of St. George's is about 1,300—almost exclusively women and children, as most of the men have all been killed or kidnapped. And yet their faith remains strong, even during these trying conditions. Services typically last several hours and are joyous occasions.

There are many good causes at home and abroad, but during this season of Advent, I would ask you to make a one-time donation to assist our Iraqi brothers and sisters in Christ. St. George's has expenses of between \$8,000 and \$10,000 per month.

Checks should be made out to the Center for Conflict Relief and Reconciliation and noted "For St. George's, Baghdad." Please send your check to me at the address above, and I will deliver your donation to Canon White. Please note that the Center for Conflict Relief and Reconciliation is a 501 (c) (3) charity, and all donations are tax-exempt. The CCRR works for peace and reconciliation in Iraq, Israel and Palestine, and Canon White serves as the international advisor for CCRR.

Thank you in advance for your generous gift that will make a difference in the lives of Christians here in Iraq.

Yours in Christ,
Scott

You can also donate to St. George's online at www.frrme.org/howtogive.html

Or mail your donation to:
**The Foundation for Relief and Reconciliation
in the Middle East
100 New Kings Road
London, SW6 4LX
United Kingdom**

New Yorkers Walk Against Gun Violence

Interview by Lynette Wilson

Although gun-related deaths have decreased dramatically since crime and drug-related crime peaked in the 1980s and 1990s, gun violence continues to destroy lives and wreak havoc on New York City neighborhoods.

On Saturday, May 10, at 11 a.m. the Bronx Chapter of New Yorkers Against Gun Violence's will hold its Third Walk Against Gun Violence, beginning at the intersection 139th Street and Brook Avenue. A press conference at St. Ann's Church, 140th Street and St. Ann's Avenue, will follow the rally. For more information, contact Gloria Cruz, the organizer of the Bronx N.Y.A.G.V. chapter, at (718) 585-5632.

The Walk is sponsored by the diocese, New York City Million Mom March Chapter and Save Our Children.

The *ENY* sat down with Cruz, who was awarded the Bishop's Cross in 2007, to talk about N.Y.A.G.V. and gun violence.

ENY: How did you get involved with New Yorkers Against Gun Violence?

CRUZ: On Labor Day 2005 my niece was shot and killed during a picnic in the South Bronx. Two men had been arguing earlier in the day, one of them left and later returned with a gun for retaliation. The other was fixing my niece's bicycle tire. He was shot five times and survived. A single bullet went through Naishea's side and pierced her heart. She lost too much blood and died on the operating table. She was 10 years old. The shooter got 50 years in prison. Two lives are destroyed.

After the shooting there was a lot of media attention and the community was upset. Eventually the media attention died down. The objective was to help other people who were going through this. Parents are distraught and need a voice, so I started the Bronx chapter of New Yorkers Against Gun Violence at St. Ann's with the help of a Trinity grant.

NEW YORKERS AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE

is a nonprofit, statewide advocacy group that works to reduce gun violence through education and building public awareness of its devastating impact in New York and nationwide; NYAGV advocates for sensible gun legislation at local, state and federal government levels. For more information visit,

ENY: How does it work?

CRUZ: We work to get the laws changed and make it harder to get a gun; to reduce gun violence through tighter gun restrictions and educa-

tion; and to get the children and innocent victims recognized. We hold gun violence prevention and education meetings and school seminars.

ENY: How easy is it to get a gun?

CRUZ: It depends on how much money you have. You can go down the block and say you are looking for a gun and someone will get it for a couple hundred dollars on the black market. Interstate 95 is called the "iron pipeline." You can go to a gun show in Virginia and buy 10-20 guns. There is no 30-day waiting period. New York has some of the toughest gun laws, including background checks and a waiting period, but you can still go to other states and easily buy a gun.

ENY: And obviously there is no such thing as a gun safety course on the street.

CRUZ: The young man who shot my niece had never touched a gun or learned how to use one before that day. The people using these guns are not sharpshooters, the bullets go everywhere. They are ignorant. And for them it is about survival: you are the bigger, stronger person because you pick up the firearm.

ENY: What is your wish?

CRUZ: I would like to see every home in the Bronx gun free. And I'd like to see conflict resolution taught in schools to help children deal with anger; you have to catch them in the middle schools.

FACTS

- Gun violence kills nearly 30,000 people nationwide annually
- On average, eight young people die every day because of gun violence
- Americans own an estimated 200 million guns (U.S. population is about 303 million)
- In the United States a child is 12 times more likely to die from gun fire than children in the next 25 largest industrialized countries combined
- Eighty-five percent of NYC crime guns and 40 percent of crime guns upstate come from states with weak gun laws
- Guns are the only consumer product exempt from federal safety standards

Source: *New Yorkers Against Gun Violence.*

Wilson is ENY editor.

COMMENTARY

Law and Religion in the Western Liberal Tradition *By Mark Welton*

The Archbishop of Canterbury's recent lecture and BBC radio interview on "Civil and Religious Law," which suggested opening greater room for Islamic law (the Shariah) in the English legal system, has engendered much debate (e.g., "Defining the Limits of Exceptionalism," *The Economist*, Feb. 16, 2008; "When God and the Law Don't Square," *The New York Times*, Feb. 17, 2008). Bishop Sisk's comments (On Faith, http://newsweek.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/mark_s_sisk/) on the archbishop's remarks, noting that the archbishop was not advocating a separate Islamic legal system, emphasized the balance between religious freedom and the constraints of law that prevails in the United States. It can be helpful in understanding this issue further to consider the intersection of several important concepts: the Shariah, the rule of law and constitutionalism, and religion's role in civil society.

The Shariah is not a code of legal rules, despite

the efforts of some (termed "modern puritans" by Khaled Abou El Fadl) to reduce it to such. It is rather a dynamic tradition of rigorous interpretation of primary texts, the Quran and the Sunnah, and methods of analysis and disputation by scholars that resulted in a flexible and varied legal "system" based on an enormous and evolving body of secondary legal works and informed by local customs and procedures that, along with secular laws (qanun) promulgated by caliphs, sultans, shahs, and other rulers, well served the legal needs of the Muslim world for much of history. Flexibility and variety are its hallmarks; polygyny (multiple wives) is permitted in Saudi Arabia but not in Tunisia, and hijab (modesty in dress) may mean a burqa (complete covering) in Kandahar, but a hair scarf and manteau (loose-fitting coat) in Tehran.

In its most basic form, suggested by scholars like Lon Fuller and Joseph Raz, the rule of law envisions that legal rules should be relatively clear and stable, changed only in a transparent fashion,

and adjudicated and enforced impartially and consistently. The rule of law means that, regardless of the rules' content—whether a valid will requires one or four witnesses, or whether the punishment for theft is a fine or flogging—people know what the rules are, can expect equitable treatment by courts and police, and so can plan for their futures. While perfect in no society, the rule of law is nevertheless the foundation for liberty in the Western liberal tradition. Related to it is constitutionalism, which limits governmental powers by separating those powers, and commands allegiance by sustaining faith in the system of governance despite the disagreement of some people with some laws some of the time.

The Western liberal tradition also supports liberty by promoting civil society, consisting of institutions outside of government like political organizations, a free press and religion. The U.S. Constitution removes religion from government by the First Amendment's *(Continued on page 26)*

EPISCOPAL SOCIAL SERVICES OF NEW YORK

Annual Spring Benefit



Honoring

Adolfo Carrión, Jr., Bronx Borough President
The Rev. Stephen J. Chinlund Diana and Edmond Nouri
Marion and Roger Gilbert The Rhodebeck Charitable Trust
William H. Wright II

*for their steadfast and generous support and endorsement
of ESS in creating positive change among
disadvantaged children, families, and individuals*

**Tuesday, May 6, 2008, 6:30 p.m.
The Waldorf=Astoria Hotel, New York City**

For more information, or to purchase a table or tickets,
please call 212-886-5604 or email huik@e-s-s.org

Since its founding in 1831 as the "good works arm" of the Diocese of New York, EPISCOPAL SOCIAL SERVICES (ESS) has helped tens of thousands of New Yorkers in need make the most of their lives and opportunities, to build better futures for themselves and their families. Today ESS continues that heritage of outreach through programs in foster care and adoption, early childhood education, after-school programs, group homes for developmentally disabled adults, and community re-integration of the formerly-incarcerated. For more information, visit the ESS website at www.essnyc.org.

Envisioning a 5th UN Women's Conference

Without formal plans, women attempt to take the lead

By Lynette Wilson

It used to be that the feminist movement was populated by stars the likes of Gloria Steinem and Bella Abzug. Not anymore. Today more women have taken the stage, yet the gains women made toward equal rights in the 1960s and 1970s that carried women into the '90s, are dated.

"The world today is so different than what it was then; in many ways the environment is more hostile," said Patricia Licuanan, a social psychologist and an organizer of the 4th United Nations Women's Conference in Beijing. "In retrospect the '90s were a high point in global advocacy. Today there's conflict and conservative backlash. The U.S., Canada... governments are not as progressive. Right-wing governments are making a come back."

Licuanan spoke to more than 200 women (and a few men) mostly in their 50s and older who attended "Envisioning a 5th United Nations Women's World Conference," at the UN Church Center on February 26. Anglican Women's Empowerment (AWE) sponsored the side event to the 52nd U.N. Commission on the Status of Women's Conference held Feb. 25- March 7 at U.N. Headquarters in New York.

More than 10 years have passed since the 1995 Beijing conference without introducing formal plans for a fifth conference. Many excuses have been given: no host country has stepped up, it's too expensive, the U.N. is focused on global conflicts and potential conflicts in a post-9/11 world, etc. The U.N. has typically sponsored international women's conferences every five and then 10 years beginning in 1975 in Mexico City.

The excuses motivated 26 women members of the Millionth Circle Initiative, an international, grassroots initiative, to begin work toward a fifth conference.

"I believe that a 5th United Nations sponsored international women's conference would be a giant step toward a tipping point—in terms of numbers attending, connections made and ripple effect," said Dr. Jean Shinoda Bolen, author, Jungian analyst, member of Millionth Circle and the event's moderator. "Only a U.N.-sponsored conference would allow women to attend who otherwise would not be able to get visas and support from their countries."

Feminist icon Gloria Steinem also spoke at the event and urged the group to stay in the present while it envisions a fifth conference.

"I have a habit of living in the future, I think it's because as a child I wanted to get out of Toledo," Steinem said. "I have to make a constant effort to live in the present... this room is a conference."

The majority of the women attending the UNCSW conference work for NGOs, many of which were not in existence during the Beijing Conference. The number of NGOs in the United States has doubled in the last 10 years, China and Russia now have several hundred thousand and India has half a million NGOs, Shinoda Bolen said.

"Our earth home and all forms of life in it are at grave risk.

We men have had our turn and made a proper mess of things.

We need women to save us."

— Archbishop Desmond Tutu

justice and the promotion of harmful attitudes in boys and men which is carried from the school yard and family to the workplace, to political life and ultimately to international relations," she said. "Without full equality, qualities associated with women are suppressed in men."



Gloria Steinem speaking at the 52nd U.N. Conference on the Status of Women
Photo by Lynette Wilson

New Fountain in the Biblical Garden

By Jonathan Korzen

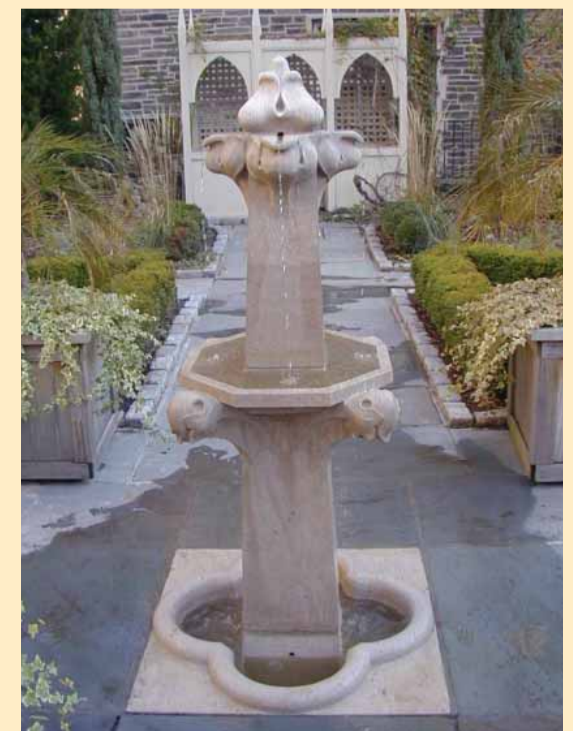
A new fountain has been installed in the Cathedral's Biblical Garden. As spring returns, please consider a visit to this serene corner of the Close. Created by stone carver and Cathedral artist-in-residence Chris Pelletieri, it is based on his original design. It took Chris about three months to carve the elegant limestone structure, which echoes the wind-reducing crockets that protrude from pinnacles found on the Cathedral's roof. The fountain, sponsored by a member of The Cathedral Guild, will soon have a brass plaque affixed to its base reading "James Peter Gallatin, 1918 – 1993."

Each of the more than 60 herbs, plants, flowers, trees and shrubs in the Biblical Garden is mentioned in Scripture, from the Cedars of Lebanon to flax and fig trees. It is the largest garden of its kind in the United States.

The Biblical Garden was started in 1973 under the leadership of writer Sarah Larkin Loening of Southampton, Long Island. In the spirit of building paths to the Cathedral for diverse groups of people, she believed the garden would provide inspiration to Cathedral visitors as well as serve as a garden of study for the children of The Cathedral School and other local schools.

The Garden was refurbished in 1988 as a gift from Mrs. Alexander O. Vietor, in memory of her daughter Barbara Foster Vietor. Local volunteers maintain the garden with oversight by The Cathedral Guild.

Korzen is communication manager for the Cathedral of St. John the Devine



Wilson is ENY editor.

The theme for the 52nd U.N. Commission on the Status of Women was "Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women." For more information visit www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/52sess.htm.

For information and resources on gender equality and empowerment of women, go to WomenWatch, www.un.org/womenwatch.

To sign a petition in favor of a Fifth Women's World Conference, visit www.5wwc.org. Learn more about The Millionth Circle Initiative at www.millionthcircle.org.

Anglican Women's Empowerment intends to be an effective and empowered Anglican voice for women in the United Nations and in Anglican Communion. Visit www.episcopalchurch.org/unsw.htm for more information.



New Organ: East Coast One-of-a-Kind

Christ & Saint Stephen's raises funds for a Schoenstein & Co.

By the Rev. Kathleen Liles

With old buildings come new challenges. In 2004 a portion of plaster vaulting fell to the nave floor at Christ & St. Stephen's Church and revealed a nineteenth-century framework inadequate by today's safety standards, requiring a complete replacement of the ceiling. During demolition, portions of the original Victorian stenciling were discovered. Given the historic importance of the building, the vestry decided to undertake a complete restoration rather than just a repair. Since the collapsed ceiling filled the old, ailing pipe

organ with plaster dust, a new organ was commissioned as well to crown the four-year restoration project.

The 17-rank, 1,042 pipes organ has been completed by one of the nation's premier organ builders, Schoenstein & Co. of San Francisco, and it is the first instrument built by them for a church in the city of New York. This exceptional instrument will enhance worship and allow the parish to offer organ concerts of distinction in the music-loving Lincoln Center neighborhood for generations to come. Bishop Sisk will bless and dedicate the organ on Trinity Sunday, May 18.

Amid all the celebration, the financial realities of such an historic undertaking have been ambitious for a parish the size of Christ & St. Stephen's. A capital campaign to cover the cost of both the restoration and new organ was launched early on and has met with success and enthusiasm from various constituencies. More than a million dollars has been raised, but there is still more needed before the campaign is termed a total success. The church is inviting music lovers throughout the diocese to be part of history by contributing to this campaign. One option for lead donors is the naming of pipes in New York's first Schoenstein & Co. organ – in honor of someone, in memory of a loved one, or in thanksgiving for a blessing.

Now that the organ has arrived and the ceiling above it is in no danger of falling to the floor, plans are being made to offer an annual Master Organist Concert Series at the church, beginning with the 2008 –

Christ & St. Stephen's will host three dedicatory concerts to introduce the new Schoenstein & Co. organ to a wider audience.

Saturday, May 17, 2008

- 3 p.m. A pre-concert discussion will be held, led by Jack Bethards (President of Schoenstein & Co.) and Paul Jacobs, hosted by Nigel Potts.
- 4 p.m. Concert by Paul Jacobs
Gala reception following
- 7:30 p.m. Concert by Paul Jacobs
Gala reception following

Saturday, Oct. 25

- 3 p.m. A pre-concert lecture "The King (of Instruments) Is Back" will be given by Craig Whitney an editor for The New York Times.
- 4 p.m. Concert by Nigel Potts
Gala reception following

Saturday, Nov. 22

- 3 p.m. A pre-concert lecture "Extended Family: other new pipe organs recently installed in New York" will be given by organ consultant and historian, Jonathan Ambrosino.
- 4 p.m. Concert by Thomas Murray
Gala reception following
- 7:30 pm Concert by Thomas Murray
Gala reception following

2009 season. To make a donation, to name a pipe, or to request to be on the mailing list for upcoming organ concerts, please contact the church office at 120 West 69th St., New York, NY 10023, (212) 787-2755, or email Admin@csschurch.org.

Liles is rector of Christ & St. Stephen's in Manhattan.

HISTORIC IMPORTANCE

Nestled on an Upper West Side street of classic brownstones, under the shadow of a towering apartment building, Christ & St. Stephen's Church looks more like a country chapel than urban parish—and there is a good reason for that. Originally built by the Church of the Transfiguration (located on East 29th Street) in 1876 as a chapel, it is the oldest church on the Upper West Side. Members of St. Stephen's (est. 1805) bought the property in 1897 and moved uptown from West 46th Street with the hope of growing a larger congregation in a rapidly developing part of the city. However, their evangelistic enthusiasm was not appreciated by members of Christ Church (est. 1793), located a mere two blocks away on Broadway. When Christ Church's request to the Standing Committee of the Diocese to prevent St. Stephen's from locating on West 69th Street was unsuccessful, they filed a civil suit to no avail. Eventually, after nearly a century, the territorial conflict was healed. Christ Church joined St. Stephen's in the 1876 chapel building when the two congregations merged in 1975 under the guidance of St. Stephen's rector, the Rev. Joseph Zorawick.

Synod says farewell and Godspeed to Bishop Stephen Bouman

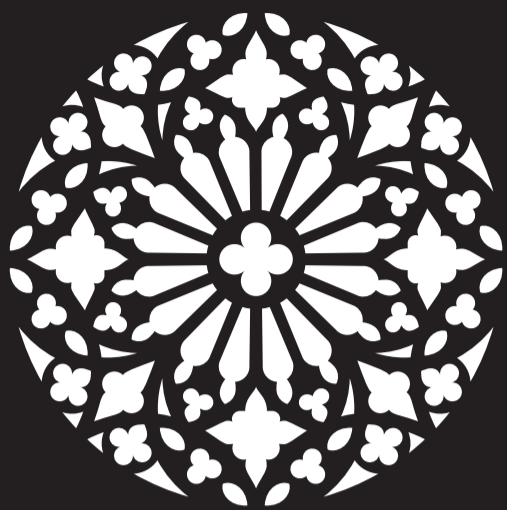
Bishop Mark S. Sisk, left, bids farewell to Bishop Stephen Bouman at a Feb. 2 service held at Saint Peter's Lutheran Church in Manhattan. More than 600 people attended Bouman's final service in New York. Bouman served the Metropolitan New York Synod from 1996 to Feb. 2008. He is now serving as executive director of Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission at Evangelical Lutheran Church in America headquarters in Chicago.



Photos courtesy of St. Peter's Lutheran Church

Cathedral Calendar

APRIL-MAY 2008



The Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine

1047 Amsterdam Avenue at 112th Street
New York, NY 10025
(212) 316-7540

www.stjohndivine.org

The Cathedral is in the midst of an ambitious and comprehensive cleaning and restoration after the 2001 fire. The Cathedral will remain open, but public access will be limited in some areas. We appreciate the cooperation and support of those worshipping and visiting the Cathedral during this exciting time of renewal. Please check the Cathedral's website, www.stjohndivine.org, or call the Visitor Center, (212) 316-7540, for additional information.

Sunday Services

8 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Eucharist
9 a.m. Holy Eucharist
11 a.m. Sermon & Choral Eucharist
1 p.m. La Santa Eucaristía en Español
6 p.m. Choral Evensong

Daily Services

Monday–Saturday
8 a.m. Morning Prayer
8:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
12:15 p.m. Holy Eucharist
5:30 p.m. Evening Prayer

APRIL

Diversity United: Spotlight on the Chapels of Tongues

Sunday, April 6, 2 p.m.

The "Chapels of Tongues" honor the diverse immigrant groups most represented in New York City at the turn of the 20th century. Although they are built in Norman, Gothic and Renaissance styles and are the products of two building campaigns and four architectural firms, the seven chapels form a beautiful and harmonious whole. Led by senior guide John Simko.

Spring Recital Series: Musicora

Sunday, April 6, 3 p.m., St. James Chapel

Musicora is a dynamic chamber ensemble consisting of piano, cello, violin, classical guitar and soprano. They perform a diverse repertoire ranging from Mozart to the tangos of Argentine.

Poets and Pediments:

Spotlight on Literature

Sunday, April 13, 2 p.m.

Commemorate National Poetry Month with a literary tour of St. John the Divine. Explore how the Cathedral inspires writers and how writers influenced Cathedral builders in this walk through the East End, focusing on legends, lore and literary devices derived from sculpture, stone and stained glass. Led by senior guide Susan Chute.

Satyagraha Project: A Public Forum

Sunday, April 13, 7 p.m.

As Philip Glass's opera "Satyagraha" opens at Lincoln Center, the Garrison Institute, in cooperation with the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, presents a free, public exploration of Gandhi's concept of satyagraha or "truth force," its links with Thoreau's civil disobedience, Emerson's self reliance, and Martin Luther King Jr.'s agape, and the relevance of this thought lineage today. It inspired the 20th century's most effective social change movements. Can it now inspire us to confront and transform climate change?

Presenters include Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne, founder of Sri Lanka's Sarvodaya movement; Rajmohan Gandhi, Ghandi's biographer and grandson; Philip Glass performing excerpts of his opera Satyagraha; Paul Hawken, author of

"Blessed Unrest;" Sulak Sivaraksa, founder of the Thailand Spirit in Education.

Someone to Watch Over Me:

Spotlight on Saints

Sunday, April 20, 2 p.m.

Study the Cathedral's extraordinary sculptures, and discover the unique attributes that characterize saints, martyrs and angels. Led by guide Becca Earley.

Spring Recital Series: JoSunJari

Sunday, April 20, 3 p.m.,

St. James Chapel

JoSunJari is a sibling trio of classical musicians. JoSunJari have delighted audiences at The Harvard Club, The Jewish Community Center, St. Nick's Pub, The Harlem Arts Alliance, and Calvary Baptist Church.

9th Annual Blessing of the Bikes

Saturday, April 26, 10 a.m.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Medieval Arts Children's Workshop

Saturday, April 5, 10 a.m.–noon

In this signature workshop, children carve a block of limestone, create medieval illuminated letters, design gargoyles, weave and more! Recommended for ages 4 and up. \$5 per child, with accompanying adult.

Warps & Wefts:

A Children's Weaving Workshop

Saturday, April 19, 10 a.m.–noon

Families view textiles in the Cathedral then head to the workshop to explore the stages of weaving. Weave colorful strands of yarn on two different looms, use cardboard for weavings and explore recycled materials. Recommended for ages 4 and up. \$5 per child, with accompanying adult.

MAY

Upper West Fest

May 4–18

The third annual celebration of the best of arts and culture on the Upper West Side. The Cathedral's Public Education Department joins over 20 cultural partners in program offerings during this two-week fest, including three Spotlight Tours and two Children's Workshops. For information on additional programs and

events presented through Upper West Fest, visit www.upperwestfest.com.

Mind, Body, Spirit:

The Rise of Morningside Heights

Sunday, May 4, 2 p.m.

This special tour focuses on the Cathedral's role as a major institution that helped define Morningside Heights. Learn about the development of the neighborhood and the Cathedral's connection to its institutional neighbors, Columbia University and St. Luke's Hospital. Then step outside for a walk through the Cathedral Close featuring the earliest extant building on Morningside Heights. Led by senior guide John Simko.

Spring Recital Series: Orlay Alonso

Sunday, May 4, 3 p.m.,

St. James Chapel

Born in Santa Clara, Cuba, Orlay Alonso began piano studies at the age of 7. He came to New York in 1996 and attended F. LaGuardia High School for the Arts and the Performing Arts. He was awarded the 2003 Artists International Young Artists Piano Award and gave his recital debut at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall. Alonso is a graduate of Mannes College of Music and Yale University where he studied with Claude Frank. He is currently studying with world-renowned Cuban-American pianist Horacio Gutiérrez.

Pentecost

Sunday, May 11, 11 a.m.

Festival Eucharist

Signs and Symbols:

Spotlight on Symbolism

Sunday, May 11, 2 p.m.

Explore the signs and symbols in the Cathedral and discover the paintings, glass and stone. Learn how the legends have inspired artists through the centuries. Led by guide Becca Earley.

Spring Recital Series:

Brittany Palmer, Soprano

Sunday, May 11, 3 p.m., St. James

Chapel

Brittany Palmer lives in New York City and studies with famed soprano, Ruth Golden. Trained at Florida State University and the Eastman

School of Music, her performing career has included solo performances with Opera North, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Western New York Chamber Orchestra, Columbia Collegium, Opera Gaya and Trinity Church, Wall Street.

Compline

Sunday, May 11, 9 p.m.,

St. James Chapel

Compline is a contemplative service of music, readings and silence. Based on the "night prayers" in the monastic tradition, Compline is an opportunity to pause from the sometimes fevered pace of study and work to center on the spirit and to seek God's peace and strength for the days ahead.

What the Portals Promise: Spotlight on the Cathedral Doors

Sunday, May 18, 2 p.m.

Behold scenes sacred and secular and listen to the stories of martyrs and prophets sculpted in stone on the Western Front. Learn how the Portals of Paradise depict and invite New Yorkers and pilgrims from faraway places to enter the Living Cathedral. Led by senior guide Susan Chute.

Spring Recital Series:

Michael Smith, Trumpet

Sunday, May 18, 3 p.m.,

St. James Chapel

Michael Smith is a member of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra and the chamber group, The Charleston Brass. He has performed with the Tokyo Symphony in Japan, and was selected to be a Fellow at the Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, Japan, under the direction of Charles Dutoit. Michael has served as Principal Trumpet of the New York Chamber Sinfonia, under the direction of Glen Barton Cortese, since 1998. He has performed at the Cathedral's New Year's Eve Concert for Peace many times.

New York Philharmonic

Free Memorial Day Concert

Monday, May 26, 8 p.m.

There will be limited seating due to restoration work. Concertgoers are advised to arrive early.

For more information and reservations please call (212) 932-7347.

Not By Books Alone

ARTS AND LITERATURE VIEWS AND REVIEWS

BETRAYED

WRITTEN BY GEORGE PACKER

DIRECTED BY PIPPIN PARKER

RUNNING TIME 1:45

THROUGH APRIL 13 AT THE CULTURE PROJECT IN SOHO

BAGHDAD HOSPITAL: INSIDE THE RED ZONE

HBO DOCUMENTARY

RUNNING TIME: 45 MINUTES

Reviewed by Anne Nelson

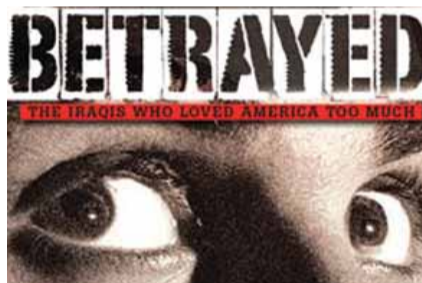
In the early days of the Iraq war, military briefings from the Pentagon and West Point were upbeat and optimistic. Then, several years ago, the tone began to change. Officers started to refer to the “Long War” in Iraq, and to speculate that it will last at least another 10 years.

But many factors have distanced the American public from the details. The war in Iraq is complex and remote, causing few U.S. casualties compared to other conflicts. Journalists have not been able to play their usual role in documenting events, constrained to the Green Zone in Baghdad by very legitimate security concerns. For the roughly one million Americans who read *The New York Times*, this means that war is experienced as random, disassociated news stories that pop-up with little meaning but dismaying frequency: “Twenty killed in market bombing in Karbala.” “More assassinations in Dora.” The roughly twenty-five million Americans who get their news on the AOL homepage are even more cut off, limited to stories along the lines of “Five Marines die in helicopter crash outside Baghdad.”

There are many legitimate opinions about the war and the course that should be pursued. What is not defensible is ignorance. As of March 2008, confirmed U.S. military casualties stand at 4,000. According to the extremely conservative estimates of Iraq Body Count, Iraq has suffered between 80,000 and 90,000 civilian casualties. (Other estimates run several times that.) A disturbing amount of critical information is unknown. How many Iraqi civilians have survived attacks, only to sustain crippling injuries? How many Jordanians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis working for the United States in Iraq have been invisible additions to the casualty list? What do we really know about the Iraqis as people, and how they view this painful chapter in their own history?

It is often the case that, when journalism reaches its limitations, art steps in. There have been a number of attempts to depict the war in Iraq through theater and film, but many of them focus on U.S. soldiers’ experience. The movie *Jarhead* (about the first Gulf War) updates the universal truths and conventions of the traditional war movie. Quiara Hudes’ lyrical play *Elliot, A Soldier’s Fugue* draws on Iraq as the latest chapter of military experience for three generations of a Puerto Rican family.

Now two important new works offer new perspectives on the Iraqi side of the equation. The play *Betrayed*, by journalist George Packer, opened off-Broadway in February at the Culture Project on Mercer Street to sold-out houses. (Its run was recently extended.) Packer based the work on interviews he conducted for *The New Yorker*, where a non-fiction version of the material ran last year. His subject is the fate of Iraqis who serve the vast U.S. infrastructure in the country as local hires. As hostilities rise, they become targets for parties on all sides. Packer focuses on three Iraqis, composite characters of people he has known. For Packer’s characters, loyalty to American ideals can backfire in a country that is experiencing a violent rebellion against a foreign occupier. Packer’s characters argue that the U.S. has a moral obligation to grant these individuals asylum when life in their own country becomes untenable. But, as Packer demonstrates, U.S. asylum law is not set up to honor moral obligations. Other issues are at stake, including the concern that granting Iraqis refugee status would suggest that the policy isn’t working. Packer’s Iraqis are trapped between two cultures and two eras, ever hopeful that Iraq will emerge as a liberal democracy, but fearful that their lives will be too brief to experience it.



Betrayed



Baghdad Hospital

The documentary *Baghdad Hospital* debuted on HBO at the end of January. It was shot by Iraqi physician Omer Mahdi, Packer’s interpreter and the model for his central character in *Betrayed*. Mahdi was stricken by the conditions in the civilian hospital where he worked, and won permission to document its ongoing emergencies. Despite the billions of dollars flowing into the country in defense spending, the hospital lacks even the most basic supplies to treat floods of casualties. Doctors and nurses work under impossible conditions, including targeted death threats, and even the most dedicated are driven to abandon the country. (Mahdi himself is now a journalism student in Indiana.) The film is not artful; its camera work is mostly hand-held with uneven lighting and sound. But it offers a uniquely powerful vision of what war means to the Iraqis on a daily basis. It seems that it is possible to ignore or to rationalize the figure “80,000 Iraqi civilian casualties.” But *Baghdad Hospital* shows you a child with a severe chest wound, and the doctors who lack a child-sized stent to treat it. It is impossible to ignore or forget the child’s agony or the doctors’ distress as they attempt to improvise with materials at hand.

Packer’s play *Betrayed* offers us Westernized Iraqi voices, yearning for the benefits that were supposed to come of the war that is being fought in their name. *Baghdad Hospital* represents the voices of the tens of millions of Iraqi civilians, who never had the opportunity to learn English and have no chance of asylum. All of them deserve our response.

Nelson is an author and a playwright and she is a member of the ENY editorial board.

THE WAR EXPLAINED IN BOOKS AND FILM

Of the myriad books and films related to the current conflict, the following are easy to obtain, and represent a good read/viewing.

Compiled by Anne Nelson

History: Many of the problems of the region can be traced back to the period of history following World War I, when the British and the French redrew the boundaries of their colonial empires. The lives and works of two British scholars and diplomats, Gertrude Bell and T.E. Lawrence (Bell’s protégé, better known as “Lawrence of Arabia”) illuminate the period and how Trans-Jordan was splintered into the unwieldy nations of Iraq and its neighbors.

Desert Queen by Janet Wallach, is an engaging biography of Gertrude Bell.

The Desert and the Sown is Bell’s own report of her 1905 travels through the region.

The Seven Pillars of Wisdom is T.E. Lawrence’s own account of his adventures in the tribal areas of the region.

Current Affairs: A number of recent books focus on the U.S. military experience. A few of them go beyond U.S. policy to look more closely at the lives of the people of the region.

Imperial Life in the Emerald City: Inside Iraq’s Green Zone, by Washington Post editor and reporter Rajiv Chandrasekaran, is a prize-winning account of life in the strange world of the U.S. occupation.

Taliban, by veteran journalist Ahmed Rashid, is a powerful account of how the Taliban consolidated power in Afghanistan after the defeat of the Soviets. It describes the impact of the movement on village life, oil politics and international relations.

Film (available on DVD):

Turtles Can Fly (2004) depicts life in a Kurdish village in Iraq.

The first film to be shot in Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein, it is a touching account of the fortunes of a boy nick-named “Satellite,” as he struggles to earn a living and understand the world-shaking events taking place around his village.

Iraq in Fragments (2006) deals with the ethnic and religious divisions in Iraq by taking them separately – Sunni, Shi’a and Kurdish. The film draws on a vast and impressive store of documentary material to portray three troubled communities.

Lawrence of Arabia (1962) is one of the great films about the region, with magnificent performances and stunning landscapes.

Osama (2003) is a gorgeous and heartbreaking film about a young girl in Afghanistan who must disguise herself as a boy to help support her family.

SOLDIER'S HEART: READING LITERATURE THROUGH WAR AND PEACE AT WEST POINT

ELIZABETH D. SAMET

FARRAR, STRAUS AND GIROUX, 259 PAGES

Reviewed by the Rev. Dr. Richard Sloan and Lynette Wilson

"The nation that will insist upon drawing a broad line of demarcation between the fighting man and the thinking man is liable to find its fighting done by fools and its thinking by cowards."

— Sir William Francis

Elizabeth Samet, an English literature professor at West Point and the author of *Soldier's Heart: Reading Literature Through Peace and War at West Point* is often asked: Of what use is a literature course at a military college designed to train Army officers? How can humanities courses help officers leading troops into battle?

In a post-9/11 world, Samet has occasionally struggled with these questions herself. In a world where war is increasingly technical and complicated by religious and cultural differences, it is easy to calculate the value of engineering, military applications of science, international affairs and behavioral psychology. But what is the value of teaching literature to cadets who are most certainly destined for the 21st century battlefield?

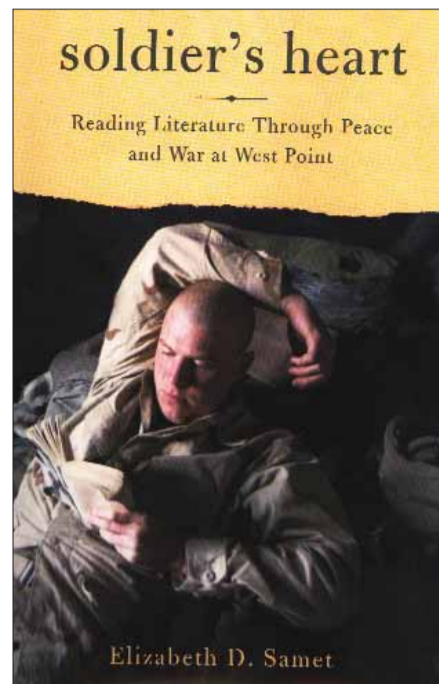
The answer is more personal than practical as evidenced in an experience Samet's friend and colleague Al had while in Kabul in 2006, where Al's appreciation of

the Sufi poet Rumi helped build a cultural bridge.

"[The Colonel] knew Rumi and was pleased to see that I knew Rumi, and [that] gave us a natural point of entry to substantial conversation. We referred to Rumi over and over again. I don't know that I would claim the liaison would have been a bust without Rumi, but it surely wouldn't have been as good as it turned out to be with him. Rumi gave us a point of contact in our respective imaginations."

In Samet's words, which could perhaps be interpreted as a well-deserved slap to American culture, she says: "... it is almost sure to be the case that poetry is more important to the cultures with which U.S. troops will come into contact—to those of our allies and our enemies—than it is to our own. Rumi matters to Afghan colonels in a way that Whitman does not matter to us."

Soldier's Heart tells two stories: the somewhat romantic narrative of Samet's entrance into military culture when she began teaching at West Point in 1997; and the formation of cadets into officers and reconciling what it means to be a man or a woman and a soldier. The latter is far more compelling as it tells us something substantial about our society and ourselves.



Samet insists that if literature is to teach us, and her West Point cadets, anything useful about war—this one crucial arena of human experience and the people who fight it—we must be open to "poetic imagination." War waged on the page differs from that waged in "theater," as the battlefield is called in military jargon. The innocence with which cadets approach war literature quickly disappears when they become firsthand witness to war.

Still, literature offers many lessons on character, courage and cowardice that might be helpful to all of us. In reading the memoirs of Simha Rotem, who at age 19

lead the Warsaw Ghetto uprising of 1943, Samet's cadets, who are mostly Rotem's age, responded most to his self-doubt and meditations on courage.

"They seemed to understand that courage isn't simply a matter of leading charges; sometimes it consists in speaking up, sometimes in stoic silence, sometimes in forging ahead, sometimes in circumspection, and sometimes in nothing less than preserving our own humanity," she says.

Sloan is congregational support plan coordinator and stewardship officer for the diocese. Wilson is editor of the ENY.

PRACTICING RECONCILIATION IN A VIOLENT WORLD

BY MICHAEL BATTLE

MOREHOUSE, 119 PAGES

Reviewed by Sarah Condon

Michael Battle's *Practicing Reconciliation in a Violent World* is a necessary read for Christians living in today's turbulent times. It beckons the reader both as an individual and as a part of the body of Christ to dig deeper and be more honest about why reconciliation is crucial work for God's creation. He lets the reader know up front that "Our work as Christians is to will reconciliation the way that Christ did and to recognize that reconciliation is a slow and arduous process."

Battle acknowledges that it's not easy, but makes no excuses and provides a framework for the reader to get to work. The book begins with a spiritual exercise: Do you identify more with, Gandhi or Bonhoeffer, Peter or John? And then unfolds into a chart where you determine your own "Typology of Reconciliation." It's important to note that from Battle's perspective there is no right or wrong answer, only the redemption that is found in recognizing that all voices are necessary in the process. He goes on to address the radically different approaches to reconciliation writing, saying "the church needs all of them to affirm diverse perspectives and to minister to those caught up in a vortex of con-

flicting needs."

In one exercise, this book shakes up the individual caught up in his own narrow views and the church that seeks an exclusive vision for itself.

Through parables, Biblical narrative and his own experiences, Battle emphasizes repeatedly the need for reconciliation in order for God's people to be in a full, selfless relationship with their Creator. He also pulls a variety of quotes into the book from people as different as the Most Rev. Desmond Tutu (Battle is a former adjutant to Tutu) and Flannery O'Connor. By using such a variety of resources and an inclusive perspective, Battle provides practical ways for a diverse people to find and inhabit reconciliation.

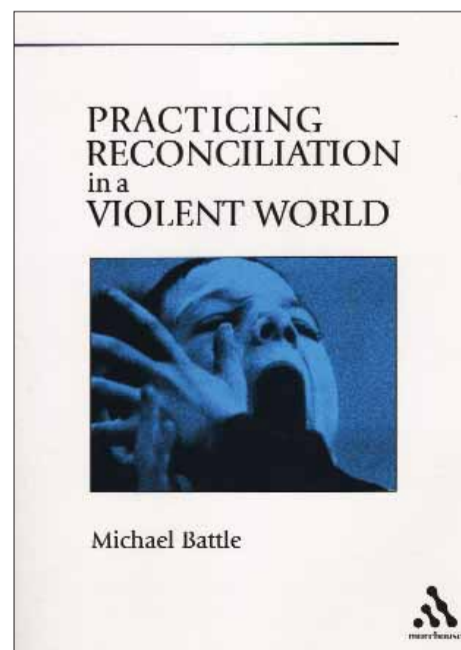
He addresses tough issues that face both the church and the world with the kind of hopefulness and occasional humor that makes his writing valuable to churchgoers. Battle's well-crafted writing leads the reader into his theory: By fully practicing reconciliation, it is possible for Christians to understand the inspiring possibility of God and to make manifest a new heaven and earth.

Obviously the topic of reconciliation is a heavy one and at times Battle's theology is dense enough to require re-reading. Still it is worth the effort. It is an important read for the individual Christian because it provides a new perspective on the way our communal reconciliation directly affects our relationship to God. And throughout, Battle stresses the value of communal reconciliation suggesting that reading the book as a group could have an even bigger impact on a church community.

Amid a church with its own pains and a world struck

by war and disparagement, *Practicing Reconciliation in a Violent World* offers a sense of hope that through faith and hard work we truly can be a complete body of Christ. In one of his final chapters, Battle writes that reconciliation "dares us to imagine a better future, one that is based on the blessed possibility that injury will not be the final word that forecloses the future." His book offers a practical vision that Christians can do the tough work of reconciliation that brings the Kingdom closer.

Condon is the receptionist for the diocese.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS

This article, in your most recent *Episcopal New Yorker*, massively mischaracterizes the issues surrounding illegal immigrants. To say that “we” are afraid of immigrants is a sweeping, and as far as I can observe, inaccurate generalization. Everywhere I go in New York and around the country people live quite comfortably with immigrants from all over the world. People aren’t nearly as uncomfortable with immigrants as they were earlier in the country’s history—Rev. Witt is setting up a straw man. He sneers at the practical, legal considerations, but they do and should control. How can a civil society survive when its governing laws are continuously broken? How can workers be protected when they must by necessity operate outside the legislated protections that are available to citizens?

I also suspect that Rev. Witt is grossly stretching the truth. I would like proof that immigration officers repeatedly stop Amtrak trains between Rochester and Syracuse. I don’t believe it. His other examples also appear exaggerated.

If Reverend Witt believes that citizenship is wrong and there should be no such thing he should come out and say it and make his case. If that is not what he believes then he should suggest remedies that would allow immigrants to enter the US and work on a temporary basis under a legal program. Encouraging Episcopalians to break the law is not, in my opinion, a Christian thing to do and it ultimately hurts the people he claims to want to help. We do not live in a “culture of fear” and Rev. Witt is trying to conduct a political campaign using (and abusing) Christianity as protective coloration.

Carolyn S. Parlato
Communicant of St. John’s Church,
Larchmont, NY

AN APOLOGY TO AFRICA

I read in the February issue of The Epis-

copal New Yorker Bishop Catherine Roskam’s Apology To Africa with mixed emotions. While I recognize the desire to make amends for past unhallowed practices our church and our society have been a part of, I think her “apology” trivializes a tragic chapter of history.

One apologizes for being late for an appointment. One apologizes for stepping on someone’s toes. One apologizes for not remembering the names of high school classmates.

One cannot “apologize” for something of the magnitude and irredeemable suffering of the Anglo-American slave trade. One can express regret and shame, but for Bishop Roskam to think she is in any position to “apologize” for the actions of folk long dead, or that such an “apology” represents collective guilt of all White Americans—that is as presumptuous as it is preposterous.

The problem with assuming this class-structure-based, quasi-Marxian idea of “collective guilt” is that it eclipses personal responsibility and individual accountability. I, as a White Christian male, am not guilty for the slave system that existed long before I was born—and I am not going to waste time apologizing for things I did not do. Instead, I wish to focus on positive present-day action to help eradicate racism and all forms of bigotry. That, I believe, is far more important than issuing well-intentioned but useless and condescending “apologies”. (If Bishop Roskam wants to call herself “a racist”, then she is speaking only for herself, not anyone else. That is her issue to deal with.)

Bill Lynch
The Bronx

Bishop Roskam’s self-flagellating rant “An Apology to Africa” begs to be addressed for its glittering generalities, lack of historic perspective and misrepresentation of facts. Space limits a point by point refutation.

Since ancient times, especially between

the fourth through the sixteenth centuries, the highly developed black empires of Ghana, Mali and Songhai owned and traded slaves to the Arabs of North Africa, Portugal and Spain. Who does Rev. Roskam think ran the slave market she visited in Zanzibar? From whom does she think the Europeans bought or bartered the slaves?

In the course of the sixteenth century, Portugal and Spain followed by England, France and the Netherlands in the 1600’s brought slaves to the Americas with 65% going to South America. Where do those who founded and led Brazil, Cuba, Jamaica, and other sugar colonies figure in her hierarchy of guilt?

Such remarks as “The whole U.S. Economy is based on stolen goods” are fraught with invective so as to give lie to what little good might be attributed to her “Apology.” The idea that Americans are at fault for world problems is an egocentric point of view. One supposes that the Bishop would have no problem in ascribing responsibility for the 20th and 21st Century genocide in Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Darfur, Uganda, Congo, and Ethiopia, to the United States as well?

I am old enough (62) to have seen dramatic improvements in race relations in this country. Certainly the rise of Senator Obama alone should give us reason to be proud.

No, Bishop Roskam, I prefer to look forward with hope and backward with pride at how much we as a nation have accomplished. Is there more to be done? Yes. Will a self serving “I am holier than thou” confession help? No.

James A. Sutton
Yonkers, NY

Response

The fact that other nations and people bought and sold slaves, including Africans, does not absolve us as a nation from centuries of slave trafficking.

I did not say that America was at fault for all the world’s problems, although we have had a hand in a good deal of them. I said our economy was built on stolen goods, and that is true, whether you are talking about land taken from native peoples or the capital made on the free labor of generations of Africans or the natural resources we and other developed nations stole from Africa. In the contemporary catalog of troubled African countries I am old enough to remember the part we played in the assassination of Patrice LaMumba, which led directly to thirty plus years of bloody conflict in the Congo, to name just one instance.

I rejoice in what Senator Obama’s rise means in terms of race relations in this country. But Senator Obama knows his family’s country of origin and what language his ancestors spoke. African-Americans whose ancestors were slaves do not have that privilege.

I too look forward with hope and backward with pride at many things, but slavery is not one of them. I apologize because I benefit still from those centuries of slave labor. And I am sorry.

The Rt. Rev. Catherine S. Roskam
Bishop Suffragan

POET MCEVILY’S

“HAVING THE HOUSE PAINTED”

“Is purgatory a Lenten process?” Wow! What a thought provoking beginning to one’s poem. As a Bapt-Malian (Baptist turned Anglican) I seriously question the validity of purgatory, however, as a constant sinner I certainly welcome the concept.

I found poet McEvily’s interweaving reflections on purgatory, house painting and a child’s fairy tale, interesting – Delightful!

I labored many years in the children’s rooms of the New York Public Library: checked out many copies of Tomie dePaola’s *Strega Nona*. I confess (not without shame) that I never read it. I recently borrowed a copy from my local branch.

Thank you poet McEvily!

Bonnie Phelps
St. Mary’s, Manhattanville

LAW AND RELIGION (Continued from page 19)

Establishment Clause, but also places and protects religion within civil society by the First Amendment’s Free Exercise Clause. Under the rule of law, when either religion or the government intrudes too far into the affairs of the other, such conflicts are expected to be resolved by courts that are independent of control by either of them. Under constitutionalism, people of different (or no) religious beliefs can expect equitable treatment by the government and courts, which in turn helps maintain the body politic in a diverse society.

Considering these concepts together is useful. For instance, segregated from its distinct historical and cultural contexts, what does applying the Shariah mean? U.S. states courts have enforced mahr (dower) provisions in Muslim marriage contracts when consistent with common law contract principles, which are thus clear and stable as required by the rule of law. But should a Somali taxi driver at the Minneapolis airport be allowed to refuse a passenger carrying a bottle of wine (there is disagreement among Muslim scholars about whether the prohibition against consuming alcohol extends to

contact with others possessing it)? A Shariah-based rule that is clear in Somalia, informed by its own tradition of legal scholarship and custom, may be different in Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and Indonesia, and so quite unclear in Minnesota.

Similar to such potential rule of law problems, the creation of distinct religion-based legal institutions and procedures at the least raises important questions of constitutionalism and civil society: separating and shielding religion from government while sustaining the allegiance of religiously diverse peoples to a common and independent framework of laws and governance. These are questions raised not by lack of respect for or prejudice against a particular religious/legal tradition, but by Western liberal principles of the rule of law, constitutionalism, and civil society that allow many religious traditions to coexist and flourish in this country.

Welton is professor of international and comparative Law at West Point, currently writing a book on Islamic law. He is a member of St. John’s in Cornwall

BISHOPS' VISITATION SCHEDULE

APRIL 13 (4 Easter)

Bishop Sisk: Incarnation, Manhattan
Bishop Roskam: St. Andrew's, Brewster

APRIL 20 (5 Easter)

Bishop Sisk: St. James', North Salem
Bishop Roskam: Trinity, Fishkill
Bishop Taylor: St. Ann's, Bronx

APRIL 27 (5 Easter)

Bishop Sisk: St. Andrew's, New Paltz
Bishop Roskam: St. Bartholomew's, Manhattan

Bishop Taylor: St. David's, Bronx

MAY 1 (Ascension Day)

Bishop Sisk: Transfiguration, Manhattan
Bishop Roskam: Ascension, Manhattan

MAY 4 (7 Easter)

Bishop Sisk: Grace, Hastings
Bishop Roskam: St. Paul's, Poughkeepsie
Bishop Taylor: Trinity, Saugerties

Bishop St. John: St. Thomas, Manhattan

MAY 10 (Saturday)

Bishop Sisk: Cathedral Confirmation Service

MAY 11 (Pentecost)

Bishop Sisk: Trinity Wall Street, Manhattan
Bishop Roskam: St. Matthew's, Bedford
Bishop Taylor: Grace, Manhattan

MAY 18 (Trinity Sunday)

Bishop Sisk: Christ & St. Stephen's, Manhattan

Bishop Roskam: St. John's, Larchmont

Bishop Taylor: St. Philip's, Garrison

MAY 25 (2 Pentecost)

Bishop Sisk: St. John's, Kingston
Bishop Roskam: Zion, Wappingers Falls
Bishop Taylor: Heavenly Rest, Manhattan

CLERGY CHANGES

The Rev. Maria Servellon Deacon, St. Edward the Martyr, Manhattan, NYC/ Assistant, Mediator, Bronx, NYC, January 1, 2008

The Rev. Joade Dauer-Cardasis supply, Episcopal Diocese of New York/Priest in Charge, St. Peter's, the Bronx, NYC, January 6, 2008

The Rev. John Stubbs Dir. Anglican House of Studies, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa/Interim, St. Mary's,

Castleton, Staten Island, NYC, March 1, 2008

The Rev. Rob Schwarz Interim, Ascension, Mount Vernon NY/Priest in Charge, Standing Rock Episcopal Mission and St. James, Mobridge, SD, March 23, 2008

The Rev. Errol A. Harvey Rector, St. Augustine's, Manhattan, NYC/ retirement, March 31, 2008

EL MENSAJE DEL OBISPO (continuo de la paginacion 3)

que hay tiempos en los cuales deben considerar la guerra, aunque siempre deplorable, como una opción aceptable—como el “de dos males el menor”.

Teólogos y especialistas han explorado exhaustivamente el asunto de exactamente cuando los cristianos deben considerar que la guerra es permisible; ellos han expresado sus conclusiones en los clásicos términos de “La Teoría de la Guerra Justa”. Esta teoría dice que para que una guerra califique como “justa” debe satisfacer *simultáneamente* un número de criterios, incluyendo que debe ser:

- el último recurso
- declarada solamente por una autoridad legítima
- defensiva en vez de ofensiva
- decidida por razón substancial (por ejemplo para enmendar un grave error o para prevenir la violación masiva de derechos de todo un pueblo; no serían aprobados ni el deseo de saciar egos heridos ni la apropiación de territorios o recursos)
- conducida con un nivel de violencia proporcional a la amenaza
- dirigida a blancos militares en vez de blancos civiles
- peleada para ganar un objetivo alcanzable

Las preguntas que un gobierno (una “autoridad legítima”) debe hacer son claras si está verdaderamente comprometido a pelear solamente guerras justas. Las respuestas a esas preguntas pueden, por supuesto, estar empañadas por la nebulosa de la política o de la guerra misma. Discernir la verdad será difícil para los gobiernos. No obstante, para el ciudadano individual, entre ellos los cristianos, es todavía más difícil.

La dificultad para los individuos es que nosotros ni declaramos la guerra ni tenemos el derecho de hacerlo, porque ninguno de nosotros individualmente es una “autoridad legítima”. En su lugar, como ciudadanos de una democracia, nosotros le cedemos a nuestros líderes gubernamentales electos (nuestra “autoridad legítima”) el derecho de determinar a nombre nuestro si una circunstancia dada justifica una guerra.

El delegar esta autoridad requiere que nosotros tengamos mucha fe en nuestros líderes electos. Después de todo, debemos tomarlo completamente como un voto de confianza de que esos líderes antes de comprometer a la nación a una guerra encarnizada y cruel, tomarían en cuenta todo lo que nosotros consideraríamos si nosotros

tuviésemos sus poderes. Incluso después que una guerra se ha iniciado, podemos llegar a enterarnos que nuestros líderes ignoraron algunos o muchos de los criterios de una guerra justa, o incluso que suprimieron información contradictoria; en tales casos, el ciudadano con sentido moral, cristiano o no, estaría justificado en ver la guerra, en diversos grados, como un ejercicio ilegítimo de la autoridad legítima—y por lo tanto, también se justificaría el negarle su apoyo.

Finalmente, hay una cuestión más amplia que nosotros los americanos conjuntamente con los ciudadanos de todas las democracias debemos también cuestionar cuando nuestros gobiernos nos llevan a la guerra: ¿lo están haciendo dentro de los parámetros que definen y distinguen a una sociedad abierta y libre? ¿Están, de hecho, nuestros gobiernos guiándose por los principios del ejercicio del poder sobre los cuales basan sus legitimidades? O ¿están menoscabando los mismísimos valores que ellos dicen sostener?

Espero que estos pensamientos sean útiles en tanto luchamos con las cuestiones profundamente difíciles que siempre presenta una guerra para una persona cristiana: una persona que, después de todo, está obligada a creer que el hombre o la mujer atrapados en la mira mortal de los nuevos cohetes que nuestros ejércitos dirigen por láser, es nada menos que nuestro propio hermano o hermana: Cristo enmascarado.

+ Mark

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AN ANGLICAN COVENANT: DIVISIVE OR RECONCILING?

A CONFERENCE AT THE DESMOND TUTU CENTER AT GENERAL SEMINARY IN NEW YORK CITY

APRIL 10 TO APRIL 12, 2008
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A Covenant has been proposed as a way to resolve conflicts in the Anglican Communion, especially in the sexuality controversy.

Will an Anglican Covenant assist or impede reconciliation in the Communion? This is the central question of this gathering, which is designed to engage an upcoming issue of the 2008 Lambeth Conference. The April event will feature stimulating speakers from outside and within the Episcopal Church.

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Why I Love The Episcopal Church

A sermon preached by the Rev. Terence L. Elsberry, Rector, at St. Matthew's Church, Bedford, New York, on the Third Sunday in Lent, Year A, February 24, 2008.

I

I'm preaching this sermon in response to a request. When I told someone a few days ago that at today's ten o'clock service we were going to commission our vestry, the person said, "Terry, why don't you preach a sermon on what the vestry does and where the word comes from in the first place?" My friend went on: "We have all these quirky words in The Episcopal Church—vestry, warden, glebe, verger—but how many of us know what they really mean? Why don't you tell us?" So in response, I have for you this morning not a typical sermon but a teaching of sorts. And I also offer a confession: all the quirky words are part of the reason why I love The Episcopal Church

II

We started out as the Church of England. And so we remained, from the first permanent settlement at Jamestown in 1607 until 1776. But after the Revolution we were struck with a unique dilemma. We couldn't very well continue as the Church of England, having, through bloody warfare, severed all ties with England.

So the Church came up with a new name. From now on, we would call ourselves Episcopal. Here's your first definition. Episcopal is an English word based on the Greek New Testament word *episkopos*, which means bishop. We're governed by bishops. We'll call ourselves Episcopal.

We'd broken with England, but we were essentially still the same church, with a different name (and, of course, no allegiance to England). We even came up with our own Book of Common Prayer, revised to delete prayers for the king, queen and other members of the royal family.

But the Church really didn't change. We still worshiped as we always had: same liturgy, same emphasis on our three foundation stones, which are today what they've been since the sixteenth century—scripture, tradition and reason.

And our parish governance stayed the same, even down to the words we use.

Take vestry. The word vestry originated as the name for the room where clergy change clothes from street wear to vestments, which Bob and I are wearing.

Often churches were small. Rooms did double duty. The governing body of the church would meet in the same room the clergy used for changing. So, with time, the word meant both the room and the body of elected church leaders.

The vestry consists of the rector, the junior and senior wardens and the vestry members.

In Episcopal Church law (called the canons) the breakdown of duties between rector and vestry are clearly defined.

The vestry has responsibility for maintaining the properties and for raising and managing the funds.

The rector (from an old English word based on the Latin "to rule") is responsible for everything that takes place within the buildings and for the so-called "spiritual life" of the parish.

The vestry has a third responsibility: when the time comes, they select the new rector.

And what's a warden?

The word warden comes from the Middle English "wardeim" and the Norman French "warder." It means someone who guards. So our Senior Warden Robert Cummings and our Junior Warden Missy Renwick are charged with guarding the wellbeing of St. Matthew's, to help ensure the wellbeing of our church (which they both do very well) and to guard the rector. And sometimes I need a little guarding!

There are other uniquely Episcopal words that mark our connection with our British roots. Words like undercroft, which means church basement, and rectory, which is obviously where Nancy and I live. And did you know that although we refer to the little front hall here as the vestibule, by rights it should be called the narthex?

Then there's the sacristy, where the Altar Guild stores and cares for all the essentials for celebrating the Eucharist: chalice, paten, linens and altar changings.

We even have in David Seaman our own verger. A verger being a volunteer lay person who helps the rector manage, organize and produce worship services... and what a crucial role he plays!

I love all the old words, used since time immemorial. They're part of our personality as Episcopalians, part of what makes us unique as Christians who follow the Episcopal way. These words help define us. They remind us that we are not part of some insubstantial, fly-by-night sect. We've directly descended by our order of bishops from St. Peter. We've been here a long time. We're not going away anytime soon.

I also love being an Episcopalian because, for me personally, it represents the best way for me to worship the Lord, and live out what it means to be a Christian in today's world.

Maybe I love The Episcopal Church even more than ever now because it's been taking so many hits in the past couple of years.

Not since right after the Revolution in the late 1700s have we been in such a tattered condition as a denomination.

After the war, fifty percent of our clergy had fled the country because they'd stayed loyal to the king. Most of the Episcopal churches were in sorry shape because the money from England was gone, and American dollars had been spent fighting the Revolution, not maintaining churches.

That's why when John Jay retired up the road he gave the seed money to buy our original 40-acre glebe and build this church. Because the original church, which stood where the hospital now stands in Mount Kisco and combined what are today the congregations of St. Mark's and St. Matthew's, had gone to rack and ruin.

Speaking of glebe, do you know what that word means? It's from a Latin word for "earth," because in those days they didn't pay the rector, they gave him a glebe so he could farm, grow food crops and keep livestock. (I've always wanted a few sheep out there.)

With time, the newly-named Episcopal Church grew strong and waxed healthy.

By 1978, in a book called *The Power of Their Glory America's Ruling Class: The Episcopalians*, we read the following:

"Only two percent of Americans are Episcopalians, but as a group they enjoy the highest income. Their influence is extraordinary. Eighteen percent of U.S. senators are Episcopalians. So are 20 percent of the chief executives in the nation's 500 largest corporations. So are one-third of all bank presidents.

"Ever since the Declaration of Independence (two-thirds of the signers were Episcopalians) ... Episcopalians have run our foreign affairs; the foreign service; the CIA."

Of the first forty-two presidents, twelve were Episcopalians. So our church always had more clout in the affairs of the nation than our numbers would indicate.

Now we've fallen on hard times. Our numbers have dwindled even more. Some parishes, including a diocese or two, are leaving the Church to protest the consecration of Gene

Robinson, a practicing homosexual, as Bishop of New Hampshire.

But I love this old Church of ours. And I'm not going to leave it, and I'll tell you why.

I chose this Church. I wasn't born into it; I was raised a Congregationalist, and I was confirmed Episcopalian for reasons which for me are central to what it means to be an Episcopalian.

Among those reasons are:

Our Prayer Book, one of the most beautifully and eloquently crafted books ever written. It was designed to unify Christians in how we worship, not in how we believe. We've always been encouraged to reason out our faith for ourselves. Nobody tells us how to believe, and since I'm kind of a rebel at heart that feels good to me.

Another reason I love The Episcopal Church is our liturgy. Based on the Prayer Book, our Eucharist goes back to the early days of Christianity. Morning Prayer goes back even further to the format practiced daily by ancient Jews.

Yet our worship is fresh and new as the Spirit of Jesus present with us by His Spirit every time we gather in His Name.

I also love the Episcopal approach to life. We're encouraged to celebrate, enjoy and make the most of life in this world and all the gifts we've been given. Not just for our pleasure and delight but also to show the Lord we are grateful recipients of His goodness.

I also love that we tend to see the tough issues, dilemmas and realities of life, not as black and white, but in shades of gray. When you consider the many uncertainties of our world, you can see why the churches experiencing the greatest growth in numbers tend to be the ones that give absolute answers.

It reminds me of the New Yorker cartoon. Two men are walking along a road. One turns to the other and says, "I feel so much better now that I'm back in denial."

But simplistic answers to complicated questions, though psychologically comforting, can be ultimately dangerous. Episcopalians don't deny the harsh realities. But we don't give in to them either.

I love our Episcopal respect for the created order: the natural world around us, all God's creatures ("all things bright and beautiful"). And that respect includes our fellow men and women and expresses itself when we reach out to help those who cannot help themselves.

Maybe someday the pendulum will swing back the other way. Maybe someday more people will welcome a faith tradition that doesn't offer easy answers, that encourages spiritual seeking, that tolerates ambiguity. Maybe over time more people will find reassurance in our thoughtful kind of faith that celebrates diversity, practices tolerance, encourages gratitude, and seeks to make the world a better place.

III

Meanwhile at St. Matthew's we are a people of anticipation, expectation and hope. We're going to keep on being Episcopal Christians, loving and serving God in our uniquely Episcopal way. Which means, among other things, following the beautiful orders of worship set forth for us in the Book of Common Prayer, and—yes—treasuring our quaint old English words, while always seeking the Lord who is always with us, and always urging us on to new understandings of who He is and what it means to be His people in a very real world.