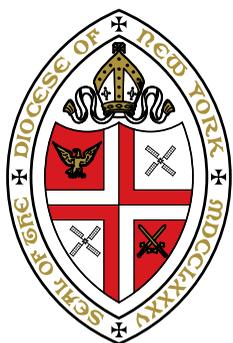


The Fear Issue

THE EPISCOPAL NEW YORKER

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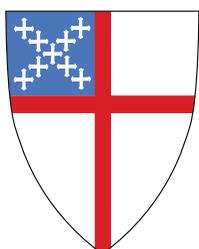
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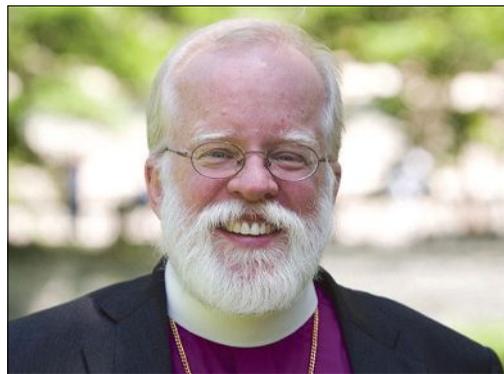
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Let Us Be The Church and Face the Future Without Fear

By the Rt. Rev. Andrew ML Dietsche



On June 22, 1930, C.S. Lewis wrote to a friend of a conversation he had had with the writer J.R.R. Tolkien. “Tolkien,” Lewis wrote, “once remarked to me that the feeling about home must have been quite different in the days when the family had fed on the produce of the same few miles of country for six generations, and that perhaps this was why they saw nymphs in the fountains and dryads in the wood – they were not mistaken for there was in a sense a real (not metaphorical) connection between them and the countryside. What had been earth and air & later corn, and later still bread, really was in them. We of course who live on a standardised international diet (you may have had Canadian flour, English meat, Scotch oatmeal, African oranges, & Australian wine today) are really artificial beings and have no connection (save in sentiment) with any place on earth. We are synthetic men, uprooted. The strength of the hills is not ours.”

The strength of the hills is not ours. That lament lies behind what I think James Joyce meant by the word “dislocation.” The silence of the lost. “How can I sing the Lord’s song in a strange land?” asks the psalmist. In times past, any person or people caught in the gears of history might find themselves dislocated, and therefore dislocated, landless and voiceless in periods of exile or removal from their homes. But until the twentieth century it was not a condition which so many would choose for themselves. Before the first world war, most people never traveled in their whole lives more than fifty miles from the place where they were born. People lived through all their years with the same people, told and heard the same stories, fished in the same rivers, walked the same hills. They knew where their bread and meat and oatmeal came from. And when they came to their end, they were buried beside their ancestors under the same ancient tree.

In our day we are a fantastically mobile people. My parents both moved away from their parents. Our children have moved away from us. My grandchildren are many hundreds of miles away, and as I talk to others I find that to be most common. Ask a person where their children live and you are likely to get an answer like “Orlando, Seattle, Houston and London.” I do not want to over-romanticize an earlier time of greater rootedness, but I will note how moved I was by a writer recently who observed that the idea that most people today do not know where they will be buried, and will almost certainly not be buried among their ancestors, would be shocking and all but incomprehensible to virtually any culture which has ever lived.

So many of us are separated from our pasts and our own histories. The popularity of DNA-based genealogical services like ancestry.com and 23andMe and Henry Louis Gates’ “Finding Your Roots,” and even the mass flocking to the ersatz false digital communities promised by social media, testify to the need people have to connect and reconnect and find or fashion communities which will link us to something that is real and lasting and larger than ourselves. Because there are spiritual dangers inherent in this uprootedness and this loneliness. If the strength of the hills is not ours, if we have forgotten or never knew where we have come from, or to whom we belong, it is very hard to see with any confidence where we are going or how we will get there. Earlier generations perhaps were able to face existential crises and ruinous wars and the uncertainty of unraveling futures with the confidence born of shared lives, and communities which had real depth and history and character. There was an inherent understanding of what it meant to be “us”; to be together.

Today the world faces a future as or more uncertain than we ever have, and we do that without the deep bonds forged out of long-lived community, and without the shared fabric of religious or philosophical convictions. Lying just beyond the political and social upheaval which covers the world looms the increasingly urgent threat of climate change. There is a growing sense among many, and we hear it especially in the young, represented by voices like Greta Thunberg, that the world as we have known it, or as we took it for granted, is in its last days. That our past unfaithfulness has risen back up to call us to account. We have become a society gripped by an existential fear, and that fear divides us from one another, and propels us into the arms of the political extremes of the right and the left. Seeking a savior as much as a leader. As William Butler Yeats has it, “The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity.”

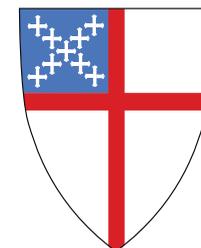
You have heard me say that the world needs the Church to be the Church. In a time of these daunting, corrosive fears, there is something which the Church knows how to do. It is our special gift. We know how to form communities of character founded on abiding and enduring principles which transcend past and future and the shifting ground of any particular time or day. In Christ we receive the grace to discover or rediscover our rootedness in God and our common brotherhood and sisterhood across race and culture and geography, which redefines for a culturally uprooted people our “us-ness,” our “together-ness.” And in Christ we are taught what it means to look out into and reach out into a world of neighbor, enemy, and the stranger at the gate with compassion and love and grace and the reconciliation of peoples which comes from the forgiveness of sin. So we can cross the divides which separate us. And stand together. And face the future without fear, as a people who know who we are, and a people of God. This is what it means to be the Church; it is the healing of the world. It is the strength of the new hills.

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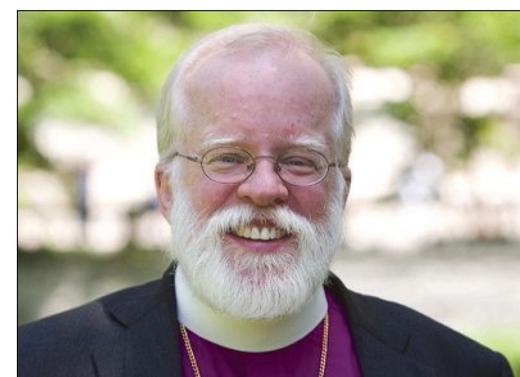
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Seamos la Iglesia y Encaremos el Futuro sin Miedo

Por el Revdmo. Obispo Andrew ML Dietsche



El 22 de junio de 1930, CS Lewis escribió a un amigo sobre una conversación que había tenido con el escritor J.R.R. Tolkien. “Tolkien”, escribió Lewis, “una vez me comentó que el sentimiento sobre el hogar debe haber sido muy diferente en los días en que la familia se había alimentado de los productos de las mismas millas del campo durante seis generaciones, y tal vez es por eso que vieron ninfas en las fuentes y dríades en el bosque; no se equivocaron porque en cierto sentido había una conexión real (no metafórica) entre ellas y el campo. Lo que había sido tierra, aire y luego maíz, y más tarde pan, realmente estaba en ellos. Nosotros, por supuesto, que vivimos con una dieta internacional estandarizada (puede que hayas tenido harina canadiense, carne inglesa, avena escocesa, naranjas africanas y vino australiano hoy) somos seres realmente artificiales y no tenemos conexión (salvo en el sentimiento) con ningún lugar de la tierra. Somos hombres sintéticos, desarraigados. La fuerza de las colinas no es nuestra”.

La fuerza de las colinas no es nuestra. Ese lamento yace detrás de lo que creo que James Joyce quiso decir con la palabra “dislocución”. El silencio de los perdidos. “¿Cómo puedo cantar la canción del Señor en una tierra extraña?” pregunta el salmista. En el pasado, cualquier persona o personas atrapadas en los engranajes de la historia podrían verse dislocadas y, por lo tanto, desalojadas, sin tierra y sin voz en períodos de exilio o expulsión de sus hogares. Pero hasta el siglo XX no era una condición que muchos elegirían por sí mismos. Antes de la primera guerra mundial, la mayoría de la gente nunca viajó en toda su vida a más de cincuenta millas del lugar donde nacieron. La gente vivió todos sus años con las mismas personas, contó y escuchó las mismas historias, pescó en los mismos ríos, caminó por las mismas colinas. Sabían de dónde provenían su pan, carne y avena. Y cuando llegaron a su fin, fueron enterrados junto a sus antepasados bajo el mismo árbol antiguo.

En nuestros días somos una gente fantásticamente móvil. Mis padres se alejaron de sus padres. Mis hijos se han alejado de nosotros. Mis nietos están a cientos de millas de distancia, y cuando hablo con otros, encuentro que eso es lo más común. Pregúntele a una persona dónde viven sus hijos y es probable que obtenga una respuesta como “Orlando, Seattle, Houston y Londres”. No quiero ser demasiado romántico sobre un tiempo anterior de mayor arraigo, pero mencionaré cuán conmovido me sentí recientemente por un escritor que observó que la idea de que la mayoría de la gente hoy no sabe dónde serán enterrados, y casi con certeza no será enterrados entre sus antepasados, sería impactante y casi incomprensible para prácticamente cualquier cultura que haya existido.

Muchos de nosotros estamos separados de nuestro pasado y de nuestras propias historias. La popularidad de los servicios genealógicos basados en el ADN como ancestry.com y 23andMe y Henry Louis Gates “Finding Your Roots” (“Encontrando Tus Raíces”), e incluso la multitud que acude a comunidades digitales falsas fraudulentas prometidas por las redes sociales, dan testimonio de la

necesidad que las personas tienen de conectarse y reconectarse y encontrar o crear comunidades que nos unan a algo que sea real, duradero y más grande que nosotros. Porque hay peligros espirituales inherentes a este desarraigo y esta soledad. Si la fuerza de las colinas no es nuestra, si hemos olvidado o nunca supimos de dónde venimos, ni a quién pertenecemos, es muy difícil ver con confianza a dónde vamos o cómo llegaremos allí. Las generaciones anteriores tal vez pudieron enfrentar crisis existenciales y guerras ruinosas y la incertidumbre de desentrañar futuros con la confianza de vidas compartidas y comunidades que tenían profundidad, historia y carácter reales. Había una comprensión inherente de lo que significaba ser “nosotros”; estar juntos.

Hoy el mundo enfrenta un futuro tan incierto o más incierto que nunca, y lo hacemos sin los lazos profundos forjados por la comunidad de larga vida, y sin el tejido compartido de convicciones religiosas o filosóficas. Yaciendo un poco más allá de la agitación política y social que cubre el mundo se vislumbra la amenaza cada vez más urgente del cambio climático. Hay una sensación creciente entre muchos, y lo escuchamos especialmente en los jóvenes, representados por voces como la de Greta Thunberg, que el mundo como lo hemos conocido, o como lo damos por sentado, está en sus últimos días. Que nuestra infidelidad ha vuelto del pasado para exigirnos que rindamos cuentas. Nos hemos convertido en una sociedad atrapada por un miedo existencial, y ese miedo nos separa unos de otros y nos impulsa a los brazos de los extremos políticos de la derecha y la izquierda. Buscando tanto a un salvador como a un líder. “Los mejores carecen de toda convicción, mientras que los peores están llenos de intensidad apasionada”.

Me has oído decir que el mundo necesita que la iglesia sea la iglesia. En tiempos de miedos corrosivos y desalentadores, hay algo que la iglesia sabe hacer. Es nuestro don especial. Sabemos cómo formar comunidades de carácter basadas en principios permanentes y duraderos que trasciendan el pasado y el futuro y el terreno cambiante de cualquier momento o día en particular. En Cristo, recibimos la gracia de descubrir o redescubrir nuestro arraigo en Dios y nuestra hermandad común a través de la raza, la cultura y la geografía, lo que redefine nuestra “identidad”, nuestra “unión” para un pueblo culturalmente desarraigado. Y en Cristo se nos enseña lo que significa mirar y alcanzar un mundo de vecinos, enemigos y extranjeros en la puerta con compasión, amor y gracia y la reconciliación de los pueblos que proviene del perdón del pecado. Entonces podemos cruzar las divisiones que nos separan. Y permanecer unidos. Y enfrentar el futuro sin miedo, como personas que saben quiénes somos y como un pueblo de Dios. Esto es lo que significa ser la iglesia; es la sanación del mundo. Es la fuerza de las nuevas colinas.

+Andy

What If You Had No Fear?

By the Rt. Rev. Allen K. Shin

For my seminary chaplaincy internship, I worked at a hospital specializing in cancer treatment. On arriving my first day, the nurse grabbed me, saying, “Oh, good. You are here. There is a patient who is about to be moved to hospice care. His family is with him and they need you,” and shoved me into the patient’s room.

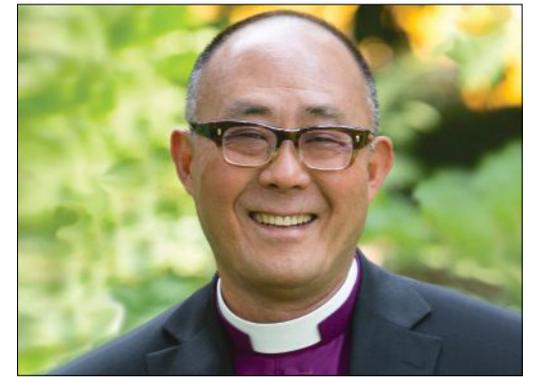
I had no time to think. I saw this man standing by the bed, thin to the bones with skin turned brownish yellow. I was paralyzed with fear: It was the first time I had ever come face to face with death in such a way. I felt the eyes of everyone in the room on me, and said something like, “It’s alright. Don’t give up. Don’t lose hope.”

“Do you think there is still hope?” he asked.

Oh, did I ever feel foolish! Fear had made me deny reality—would rather have me cocooned in shame and an illusion of safety. But there was nowhere to hide from the stares of disbelief.

Fear is a primal instinct for self-protection. It makes me stop in uncertain situations to assess the consequences of my plan of action—and if that’s its function, it’s not a bad instinct to have. But fear can also stop me taking positive action or, worse, turn me to hatred and violence—and that is *not* a good thing.

The deepest fear is the fear of death, of which all other fears are extensions or variations. “I often wonder if I would still be a Christian,” Rachel Held Evans



wrote, “were it not for my fear of death.”¹ In the same blogpost, she asked: How would you live your life if you had no fear? It’s an intriguing question. Without fear, would I have no need of God and faith, as an atheist like Bertrand Russell might suggest? Fear is the basis of religion and “the parent of cruelty,” Russell asserts in his 1927 essay, *Why I Am Not a Christian*, “and therefore it is no wonder cruelty and religion have gone hand in hand.” Would a world without religion be a world without cruelty, then? I doubt that. Cruelty is part of human nature; both religion and science have been used to justify it. Or would a world without fear be a world without cruelty? I doubt that, too. What would a world of narcissistic “selfish genes” with no fear of accountability of their evil acts be like?

Evans ends her blogpost, saying, “I wonder if to deny the role that fear plays in our art, our faith, and our theology is to deny one of those dark but universal things that, deep down, we all have in common.” The only way to deal with fear is to face it head on with courage—the courage of faith, hope and love. And what more powerful antidote is there to fear of death than faith in God, hope of resurrection and trust in the transforming power of love?

+ Allen

¿Y si no Tuvieras Miedo?

Por el Revdmo. Obispo Allen K. Shin

Para mi puesto como interno de capellanía en el seminario, trabajé en un hospital especializado en el tratamiento del cáncer. Al llegar, en mi primer día, la enfermera me tomó y me dijo: “Oh, qué bueno, estás aquí. Hay un paciente que está a punto de ser trasladado a un hospicio. Su familia está con él y te necesitan”, y me metió a la habitación del paciente.

No tuve tiempo para pensar. Vi a este hombre de pie junto a la cama, delgado hasta los huesos con la piel amarillenta. Yo estaba paralizado de miedo: era la primera vez que me encontraba cara a cara con la muerte de esa manera. Sentí las miradas de todos en la habitación sobre mí y dije algo como: “Está bien. No te des por vencido. No pierdas la esperanza”.

“¿Crees que todavía hay esperanza?” me preguntó.

¡Oh, nunca me había sentido tan tonto! El miedo me había hecho negar la realidad—hubiera querido ocultarme de vergüenza y en una ilusión de seguridad. Pero no había ningún lugar donde esconderse de las miradas de incredulidad.

El miedo es un instinto primario de autoprotección. Me hace detenerme en situaciones inciertas para evaluar las consecuencias de mi plan de acción—y si esa es su función, no es un mal instinto. Pero el miedo también puede impedir que tome medidas positivas o, lo que es peor, volverme al odio y a la violencia, y eso *no* es algo bueno.

El miedo más profundo es el miedo a la muerte, todos los demás miedos son extensiones o variaciones de éste. Rachel Held Evans escribió: “A menudo me pre-

gunto si seguiría siendo cristiana si no fuera por mi miedo a la muerte”.¹ En el mismo blog, ella preguntó: ¿cómo vivirías tu vida si no tuvieras miedo? Es una pregunta intrigante. Acaso sin miedo, ¿no tendría necesidad de Dios y de la fe, según lo sugeriría el ateo Bertrand Russell? El miedo es la base de la religión y “el padre de la crueldad”, afirma Russell en su ensayo de 1927 llamado, *Por qué no soy cristiano*, “y por lo tanto no es de extrañar que la crueldad y la religión hayan ido de la mano”.

Entonces un mundo sin religión, ¿sería un mundo sin crueldad? Lo dudo. La crueldad es parte de la naturaleza humana; tanto la religión como la ciencia se han utilizado para justificarla. O un mundo sin miedo, ¿sería un mundo sin crueldad? También lo dudo. ¿Cómo sería un mundo de “genes egoístas” narcisistas sin temor a la responsabilidad de sus actos malvados?

Evans termina su blog, diciendo: “Me pregunto si negar el papel que juega el miedo en nuestro arte, nuestra fe y nuestra teología es negar una de esas cosas oscuras pero universales que, en el fondo, todos tenemos en común”. La única forma de lidiar con el miedo es enfrentarlo con coraje—el coraje de la fe, la esperanza y el amor. ¿Y qué antídoto más poderoso existe para el temor a la muerte si no es la fe en Dios, la esperanza de la resurrección y la confianza en el poder transformador del amor?

+ Allen

¹<https://rachelheldevans.com/blog/fear>

We Are Not Alone

By the Rt. Rev. Mary D. Glasspool

In human life, a little fear is a good thing. There are some things about life that we'd be foolish not to be afraid of. Just as pain can be a physical alarm system that tells us vividly that something is wrong in our body and causes us to seek help, fear can be an emotional alarm system alerting us to defend ourselves against some very real threat.

But fear has another less positive side. When we are afraid, we may exaggerate what we are afraid of; we may blame someone else for not doing something about it; or we may exaggerate our fears to the point of immobilizing ourselves, thereby losing our ability to deal with the very fears that trouble us.

In his classic book, *Your Inner Child of the Past*, Dr. W. Hugh Missildine reported on his study of newborn infants and what makes them afraid. All fears, he said, fall into three categories: the fear of falling, the fear of loud noises, and the fear of being abandoned. When we become adults, the fear of falling becomes the fear of failing—in our job, in our marriage, in some very basic human relationship—or the fear of losing the esteem of others. The fear of loud noises becomes the fear that a catastrophic event will destroy everything we have. And the fear of being abandoned becomes the fear that major, personal, internal resources—our creativity, our foresight and ability to analyze and think—will dry up, and that we will be left alone and empty.



The phrase “Do not be afraid” occurs frequently in scripture. Jesus says it to his disciples on several occasions. In a passage from Matthew’s Gospel, after describing hardships the disciples will probably encounter, Jesus says to them: “So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.” (Matthew 10:31)

You may be familiar with the little triad: “Fear knocked on the door. Faith answered. There was no one there.” What is our faith if not the assurance that we are never alone, that God, who cares even for the sparrow, is always with us—either to transform our situation, or to enable us to endure it without being destroyed by it? God never promised us a rose garden, where nothing painful or destructive happens. But God did, and does, promise us companionship, no matter what; and that nothing can ultimately separate us from God and so destroy us. God said through Jesus Christ, that *We’re all in this together*—and God meant it. The heart of the Gospel is this truth about Jesus and about us. That no matter what our circumstances, no matter what our fears, *there is nothing, absolutely nothing, in all creation (that is) able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.* (Romans 8:39)

No Estamos Solos

Por la Revdma. Obispa Mary D. Glasspool

En la vida humana, un poco de miedo es algo bueno. Hay algunas cosas sobre la vida de las que estaríamos locos si no les tuviéramos miedo. Así como el dolor puede ser un sistema de alarma física que nos dice vívidamente que algo está mal en nuestro cuerpo y nos hace buscar ayuda, el miedo puede ser un sistema de alarma emocional que nos alerta para defendernos de una amenaza muy real.

Pero el miedo tiene otro lado menos positivo. Cuando tenemos miedo, podemos exagerar a lo que le tememos; podemos culpar a alguien más por no hacer algo al respecto; o podemos exagerar nuestros miedos hasta el punto de inmovilizarnos, perdiendo así nuestra capacidad de lidiar con los miedos que nos preocupan.

En su libro clásico, *Your Inner Child of the Past*, el Dr. W. Hugh Missildine informó sobre su estudio de los recién nacidos y lo que les da miedo. Todos los miedos, dijo, se dividen en tres categorías: el miedo a caerse, el miedo a los ruidos fuertes y el miedo a ser abandonado. Cuando nos convertimos en adultos, el miedo a caerse se convierte en el miedo a fracasar (en nuestro trabajo, en nuestro matrimonio, en alguna relación humana muy básica) o en el miedo a perder la estima de los demás. El miedo a los ruidos fuertes se convierte en el miedo a que un evento catastrófico destruya todo lo que tenemos. Y el miedo a ser abandonado se convierte en el miedo a que los recursos internos, personales e importantes—nuestra creatividad, previsión y capacidad de analizar y pensar—se agoten y nos quedemos solos y vacíos.

La frase “No tengas miedo” aparece con frecuencia en las Escrituras. Jesús se la

dice a sus discípulos en varias ocasiones. En un pasaje del Evangelio de Mateo, después de describir las dificultades que probablemente los discípulos encontrarán, Jesús les dice: “Así que no tengan miedo; ustedes son más valiosos que muchos gorriones”. (Mateo 10:31)

Puede que estén familiarizados con la pequeña tríada: “El miedo llamó a la puerta. La fe respondió. Y no encontró a nadie.” ¿Cuál es nuestra fe, si no es la seguridad de que nunca estamos solos, de que Dios, que se preocupa incluso por el gorrion, está siempre con nosotros —ya sea para cambiar nuestra situación o para permitirnos soportarla sin ser destruidos por ella? Dios nunca nos prometió un jardín de rosas, donde nada doloroso o destructivo sucede. Pero Dios nos prometió, y nos promete, compañía, pase lo que pase; y que finalmente nada puede separarnos de Dios y así destruirnos. Dios dijo a través de Jesucristo, que todos estamos juntos en esto—y Dios lo dijo en serio. El corazón del Evangelio es esta verdad sobre Jesús y sobre nosotros. Que no importa cuáles sean nuestras circunstancias, no importa cuáles sean nuestros miedos, no hay *nada, absolutamente nada, en toda la creación (que sea) capaz de separarnos del amor de Dios en Cristo Jesús, nuestro Señor.* (Romanos 8:39)

Sustainable Development Goals Grant Recipients from the Episcopal Diocese of New York

2016 Recipients

Christ Church, San Marcos Tarrytown \$12,000

Cristosal, El Salvador

Two Sustainable Development Goals: Sustainable Cities and Communities; Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions

India Network of the Diocese of New York \$12,000

Ewarts College for Women Madras, India

Three Sustainable Development Goals: Quality Education; Gender Equality; Reduced Inequalities

Haitian Congregation of the Good Samaritan, The Bronx \$15,000

New York Haiti Project / St. Lukes Episcopal Church & School, Haiti

Three Sustainable Development Goals: No Poverty; Zero Hunger; Decent Work & Economic Growth

2017 Recipients

All Saints Episcopal Church, Valley Cottage \$15,000

Bishop Ninan Memorial Mission, India

Five Sustainable Development Goals: Good Health & Well Being; Gender Equality; Clean Air & Sanitation;

Sustainable Cities & Communities; Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions

2018 Recipients

St. John's Episcopal Church, Yonkers \$15,000

Familnadu Theological Seminary, India

Four Sustainable Development Goals: Good Health & Well Being; Quality Education; Reduced Inequalities;

Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions

St. James' Church, Upper East Side \$10,000

St. Vincent's Center for Handicapped Children, Haiti

Two Sustainable Development Goals: Quality Education; Reduced Inequalities

St. Luke's Episcopal Church, The Bronx \$7,500

Diocese of Jamaica / Cayman Islands, Jamaica

Three Sustainable Development Goals: Affordable & Clean Energy; Sustainable Cities & Communities; Combat Climate Change

Holyrood Church / Iglesia Santa Cruz,

Washington Heights \$7,500

Mision San Felipe y Santiago Apostoles, Puerto Rico

Five Sustainable Development Goals: No Poverty; Zero Hunger; Decent Work & Economic Growth;

Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure; Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions

St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, Lower East Side \$7,500

École Primaire St. Thomas, Haiti

Three Sustainable Development Goals: Quality Education; Gender Equality; Decent Work & Economic Growth

Christ Church, Riverdale, The Bronx \$1,200

Diocese of Central Tanganyika, Tanzania

Two Sustainable Development Goals: Clean Water & Sanitation; Sustainable Cities & Communities

2019 Recipients

The Church of the Epiphany, Upper East Side \$15,000

St. George's Anglican Church, Iraq

Six Sustainable Development Goals: No Poverty; Zero Hunger; Good Health & Well Being;

Decent Work & Economic Growth; Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure; Responsible Consumption & Production

French Church du Saint Esprit, Upper East Side \$15,480

BDC Goma Anglican Diocese, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Seven Sustainable Development Goals: Good Health & Well Being; Quality Education; Gender Equality;

Decent Work & Economic Growth; Reduced Inequalities; Sustainable Cities and Communities;

Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions



Surviving It

By the Rev. Deacon Bill Cusano

Fear plays an important role in our lives. It is built into our nature. Without it, we would only have one response, to fight rather than flee. Fear gives us an awareness of danger.

While pain teaches us to avoid what has hurt us before, fear provides us with a premonition, a warning that something may lead to pain or worse.

I know, there are a ton of self-help psychology books and articles about overcoming our fears. Fears hold us back, they say. They keep us from becoming who we could be. But what would it be like to have no fear at all?

An article in *Psychology Today* from 2010 described two cases of women who suffer from “the curse of living with no sense of danger.” Neuroscientists discovered that these women lived with non-functioning amygdalae, the parts of their brains that control the switches that analyze external threats. In one of the women, one amygdala was removed to try to control her violent seizures. While the seizures did become less severe when she had them, she would exhibit unusual behavior for one or two hours afterwards. She lost all control, experiencing extremes ranging from eating binges to inappropriate sexual conduct in public.

If you had a child who was diagnosed with this abnormality, chances are you would be afraid to leave them alone. Who knows what danger they could get into, and since they have no fear, you would experience that fear for them every moment of every day.

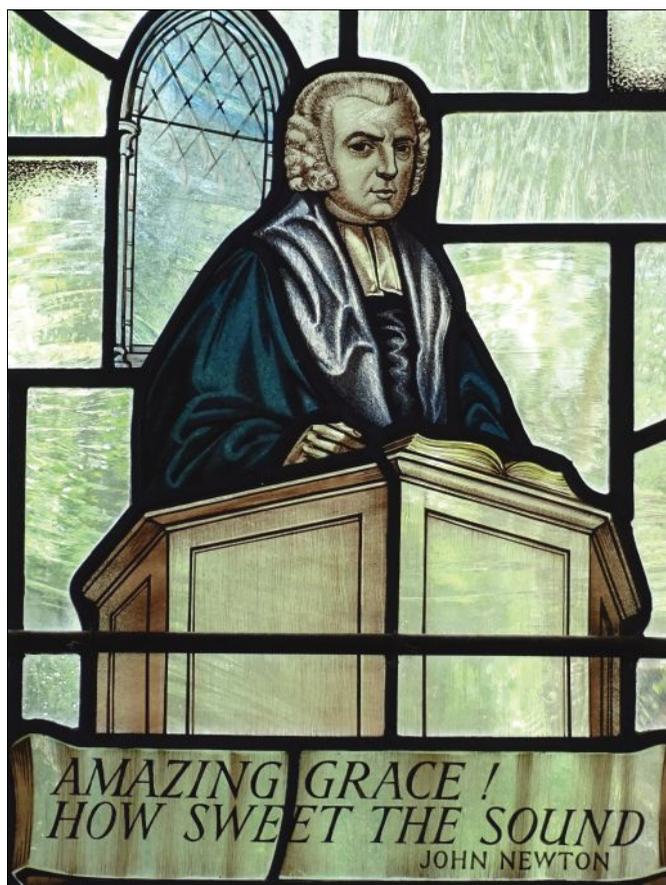
The second verse of John Newton’s hymn “Amazing Grace” talks about fear.

*’Twas Grace that taught my heart to fear
And Grace, my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed*

Newton gives us a glimpse of a turnaround. Before he accepted God’s grace, he had no fear of God, no appreciation for His power, majesty, and unbounded love for Creation. But God through grace, helped Newton fear a life without God—a life that he, Newton, had no idea was empty and meaningless.

I always thought that “Fear of God” had to do with punishment and eternal damnation. And that posed a problem for me. If, as Jesus tells us, God is forgiving, loving, accepting of our flaws and faults, why do we need to be afraid of God?

We have the free will to harden our hearts, to block the natural attraction and



Stained-glass window of John Newton at St. Peter and Paul Church, Olney, Bucks, England, where Newton served as parish priest.
Photo: Adam Jones / Wikimedia commons.

longing for God’s love and grace. And when our hearts are too hard for anything to get in, it takes God’s grace to crack open the shell.

Newton tells us that grace didn’t appear precious to him until he believed, but grace was the means of his belief, by unlocking the heart to fear a life in exile.

In my daily encounters with people who are homeless I hear stories of what life is like for them, and it sends chills down my spine. I could not imagine living each day dealing with what they have to deal with. Everything I take for granted becomes a major challenge, an insurmountable obstacle for someone living on the street. I have to admit that it is very hard to wrap my head around all the things that someone with nothing needs.

Where does one sleep? How does one stay safe?

If someone I love was facing those issues alone, I would be living in fear for them.

That, I think is the point. If we can imagine what it might be like to live with such fearful uncertainty, maybe, just maybe, we can appreciate the words repeated so often in the Bible, “Do not be afraid.”

God has given us a sense of fear to protect us. And He has called us to Him for comfort and protection from all that threatens us in this world. The fear of God is a fear of not having God in our lives. The fear keeps us connected with God and all God’s children.

When we focus on how God may see his children in need, we begin to fear disappointing him. I would hate to go before God and be asked, “How could you see so much suffering and do nothing?”

James talks about faith and works this way: “If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,’ and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that?”

When we love our neighbor, we feel for them, and we feel what we think they may be feeling. That feeling is fear, fear of being abandoned, fear of being in their shoes, fear of becoming invisible to everyone who could help.

The more we fear a life in the conditions they encounter, the more likely we will do something to help, and that is God’s grace working through us, providing the fear that keeps us connected. For it is in being connected that we truly live, knowing God is with us. It is why He came to be among us, to show us what we are missing without love of one another.

Do not be afraid.

The author is executive director of Caritas of Port Chester and deacon on staff at St. John’s Church, Wilmot in New Rochelle.

Dark Shadows: Scared for Life?

By Yvonne Davies

Barnabas Collins the vampire and Quentin the werewolf were the characters of the 1960s horror soap opera, *Dark Shadows*, and they called out to me each day after school. I ran home, grabbed a snack and headed for the TV. No one was home to say, “Do your homework” or “Go out and play.” Being eight or nine, I didn’t recognize the campy acting; this dark world both terrified and absorbed me and I believed it was real. Collingswood, the great mansion with its wide carpeted staircase, came to me at night and Barnabas and his love, Angelique, made me sleep with the covers completely over my head, convinced that each night would be my last. I didn’t wonder if a monster would creep into my room, I knew as an absolute certainty it would slip in and attack. I lived in a household that didn’t monitor my TV viewing. Did my parents wonder why I had recurring nightmares or question why I kept asking if vampires were real? Were my teachers concerned that I wrote plays about *Dark Shadows* and convinced my classmates to perform in them rather than play tether ball or four square?

As a teen and a member of my church youth group I had no difficulty engaging in the frightening new world presented to me. It was the early 70s, and the demon possession genre of movies was making its rounds in church basements. I suppose these movies were evangelical Christianity’s answer to the popular culture’s interest in the occult, following the release of *The Exorcist*. Seeking to be relevant, our elders capitalized on the idea of demon possession and tried to scare us into salvation. I thought it far better to be a child of God than of the devil. If God was not in your heart, then a demon could be. I can still see the campfire scene: the young boy wandering off, a demon entering him, and the growling voice he used after that. Movie after movie had the same theme—happy teens; a demon entered some unsuspecting soul; ensuing chaos. I felt the evil, and the covers continued to be on top of my head each night, even in the summer without air conditioning. How did one get through this life with demons just waiting around every corner? What evil would they make us do? I answered the call, knelt at the altar and asked Jesus into my heart. I wasn’t taking any chances.

As a college student I realized horror was not a healthy genre for me to watch if I wanted a good night’s sleep. I sensed a presence of evil in the world and God fighting the battle—but not always winning, as far as I could tell. Fear was my constant companion and I had no assurance of God’s protection. A trip to the altar out of fear had not done the trick. A freshman college essay on fears in an English class was returned with some red marks on it. I looked for a letter grade and corrections but instead saw a short sentence. “Maybe you should see a psychologist.” Perhaps it was that I wrote that I still slept on my left side so that vampires couldn’t get the main artery that made her think I was in a bit of trouble.

The monsters were different as I aged, but no less real. You needed to know where and when and even how to walk to stay safe in a big city. Your heart could be destroyed by loving the wrong person. People could treat you unkindly and even violently. It was still hard to be home alone or even to walk to my car in the dark. Night continued to bring terrors. My fears still surrounded me. I had been scared into salvation but did not have any depth of faith to draw from. Life was not safe.

Wanting relief from life’s fears led me to a little parish in Westchester. I attended on Sunday, sang in the choir but tiptoed through life. The eager new priest stopped me one day and asked, “How are you? If you want, come and talk to me sometime about how you are doing.” Was I giving off some aura from

which people could see the chaos at home and the darkness that inhabited my thoughts? I found myself calling this priest later that week and with skillful questioning, my fears tumbled out. The monsters from the past and the present, the void that left those fears ruling life each day. Tears were shed, prayers were said and then a Bible was brought forth.

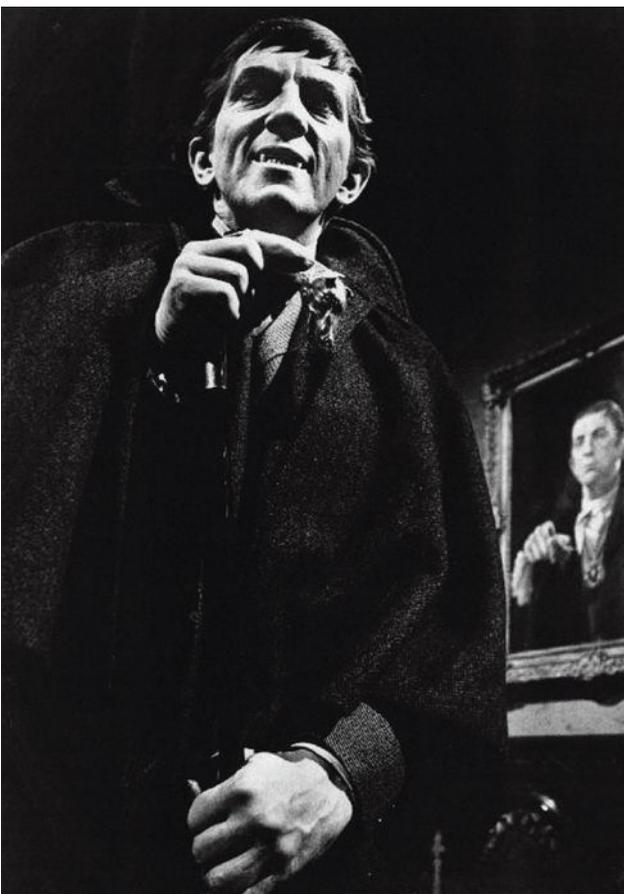
“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels or demons, neither the present or the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38,39)

Words, just words. But somehow powerful words that reached into my soul and I really heard them for the first time. God’s words? This did not sound like a god who was constantly fighting battles and often losing. This sounded like a God that could not be touched. More powerful than angels and demons, than anything else in all creation. Stand back, Barnabas Collins and anyone or anything else that sought to hold me back or crush my spirit. This was a God who would fight for my soul.

“Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” (Ephesians 6: 10 – 12)

This Bible seemed to know what I had been up against all my life. It wasn’t laughing at me and saying I had a vivid imagination. It *knew*. It understood *me*. I memorized the next part.

“Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.”



Jonathan Frid as Barnabas Collins, a 200-year-old vampire, in the ABC daytime drama series *Dark Shadows*, 1968.

Photo: Wikimedia commons.

WHEN the day of evil comes. Again, this Bible understood. Not if, but WHEN. With Romans and Ephesians under my belt, I went forth. I clung to these verses and repeated them to myself when I was scared. I said them as a prayer each day. I whispered those words to myself frequently for many months. The repetition eventually slowed and then stopped. It was no longer needed. The fear had receded and was replaced with a calm and peaceful interior.

Many years have passed and as I enter my 60th year, I happily sleep in any position I choose and my vivid dreams are often very mundane. I haven’t seen a horror movie since the seventies and have no desire to. Sharing my fears now can seem ludicrous, but they were so real and vivid. Even today scary music can bring me back to a time when I walked in fear, but as an adult I know to turn the music off and just a few words brings me back to my senses. “*For I am convinced....*” Memorizing and internalizing bible verses can have such a profound place in your life. Use them to meditate, pray them, let them help you to put one foot in front of the other, or even to help keep the covers off your head.

The author is a member of Christ Church, Tarrytown.

Fear Less

By *Juanita Dugdale*

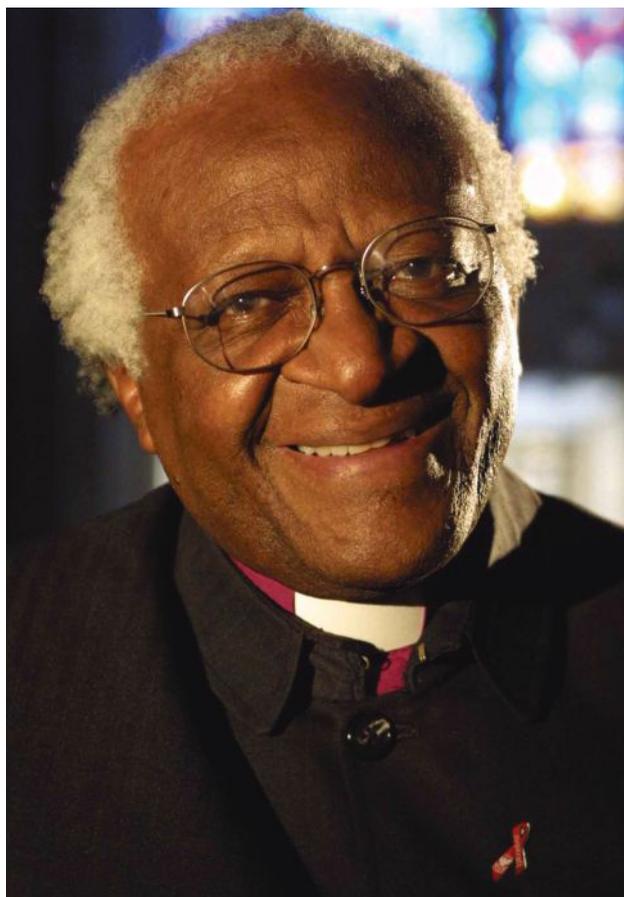
In the 1980s, New York's Asia Society invited the Dalai Lama to talk during the Year of Tibet celebrations. When he graciously accepted questions, a young man jumped up to ask, "What is the meaning of life?" At first, this seemed audacious and confrontational, but he was likely practicing Tibetan Buddhist ritual debate. The Dalai Lama quickly rebutted, "The meaning of life is happiness." The man, assuming the role of Challenger, pressed on, "Then what is happiness?" As Defender, the Dalai Lama replied, "Happiness is the absence of fear."

I've never forgotten this event, where I was moved by the presence of a renowned holy man and impressed by such confident answers to seemingly unanswerable questions. While the Dalai Lama didn't explain how to banish fear, at least he seemed to offer the possibility this could happen. As a Christian, however, I found it hard to associate happiness with the notion of absence or nothingness.

Years later, the Dalai Lama spent a week with the South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu in a lively exchange of ideas facilitated by Douglas Carlton Abrams and published as *The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World* (2016). In one place Archbishop Tutu admits, "We all have fears... Fear and anxiety are mechanisms that have helped us to survive... The problem is when fear is exaggerated or when it is provoked by something that is really insignificant." Both Tutu and the Dalai Lama experienced significant personal trauma when political upheavals and violence in their homelands forced them to confront real fear. As a young man, the Dalai Lama fled Tibet in 1959 to escape Chinese oppression, emigrating permanently to India, where he still upholds his faith's tradition of compassion and nonviolence.

Archbishop Tutu endured years of apartheid in South Africa, as did Nelson Mandela, who was imprisoned for nearly thirty years. Both are quoted almost verbatim in *Book of Joy* with words that echo the Dalai Lama's phrasing, if not his exact meaning. Mandela: "I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. I felt fear more times than I can remember, but I hid it behind a mask of boldness." The Archbishop: "Courage is not the absence of fear, but the ability to act despite it."

While courage is expected of great leaders, ordinary people can also display extraordinary spiritual strength. During the recent Civil Rights Pilgrimage offered by Manhattan's St. James' Church, our group of parishioners followed the path of key figures and the movement's time line. Every stop served as a reminder of how common people of both races displayed uncommon bravery in the face of adversity and violent confrontation. Their achievements, which often began as individual first steps, inspired a groundswell. At Martin Luther King Jr.'s childhood home in Atlanta, we learned his less well-known father and grandfather had started preaching against social injustice decades earlier. MLK's speeches and martyrdom were widely broadcast during the early era of television, making civil rights a national topic. Today, monuments,



Archbishop Desmond Tutu: "The problem is when fear is exaggerated or when it is provoked by something that is really insignificant."
Photo: Wikimedia commons.

museums, and landmarks enhance better understanding of the movement's history and offer even more immersive experiences than possible through media alone.

In Birmingham, we stopped at Kelly Ingram Park on the way to the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church where four girls had perished in a white supremacist bombing. Gorgeous winter sunshine cruelly exposed horrific scenes commemorated by the public art installations depicting attacks on protestors by local authorities. I've been phobic about German Shepherds ever since being randomly bitten as a child, so the sight of sculptures of them with bared jaws and teeth, deliberately unleashed on children in May, 1963, was particularly chilling.

Each location that we visited serves as a reminder that progress is often made by people who stand firm with conviction but without aspiration of fame. Unlike Rosa Parks, who inadvertently rose to public attention by remaining in a whites-only bus seat, countless others on the front lines remain anonymous. Our pilgrimage followed the route of the 1965 voting rights march from Selma to Montgomery in Alabama, which mixed black leaders with ordinary citizens. Starting at the base of Edmund Pettus Bridge where the Bloody Sunday beatings took place, we noticed how its slow rise blocks views of the other side. Reaching the crest, it's possible to imagine the shock marchers felt at first glimpse of armed authorities waiting there.

Among final stops were the Legacy Museum and National Memorial for Peace and Justice, both in Montgomery. The museum, which chronicles the city's legacy as a slave trade capital, sits on the former site of an antebellum slavery market. There Maya Angelou's words fill a wall: "History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again." About a mile away, the six-acre memorial site identifies more than 4,000 African Americans lynched in Alabama between 1877 and 1950. Each of about 800 metal slabs, honoring victims by county, has a twin lying in a nearby field. The hope is that every locality represented will claim its slab for a local memorial. MLK's words mark entrance and exit: "True peace is not merely the absence of tension. It is the presence of justice."

The pilgrimage reinforced Jesus' teachings about tolerance and empathy. By loving our neighbors and respecting them, we come closer to banishing fears which drive humans to commit unconscionable acts. A first action can be as simple as challenging someone's "innocent" remark that reveals obvious bias. Even more can be accomplished by nurturing relationships with the larger community. Archbishop Tutu and the Dalai Lama both emphasize the power of inter-connectedness. The archbishop believes that the best way to handle fear is "to think about others who are in a similar situation, but who have survived, even thrived. It does help quite a lot to see yourself as part of a greater whole."

The author is a member of St. James' Church in Manhattan.

St. Mary's, Manhattanville, the “We Are Not Afraid” Episcopal Church

By the Rev. Dr. Mary L. Foulke

The Rev. Robert Castle (rector 1987-2000) coined the motto of St. Mary's as the “We are not afraid” Episcopal Church, but St. Mary's fearlessness in service to the community has roots in its earliest history. As soon as it was founded (1823), St. Mary's served the poor in West Harlem, starting a “free” school for girls and boys of “all denominations.” St. Mary's first rector, the Rev. William Richmond, aided by Mrs. Reid, a nurse, stayed in the city when all who were able left during the cholera epidemic of 1832. At one point up to 100 people were dying every day, and Mr. Richmond was put in charge of all of northern Manhattan by the City of New York, with funding for supplies for their ministry to “relieve the distress of the famine stricken and suffering poor.”

Fearless service to the poor in the community is accompanied by standing up for justice. In the early 1970s St. Mary's elected its first female warden, and sponsored two women deacons for ordination to the priesthood before it was canonically permissible. Members of the church travelled to Philadelphia in 1974, where those two deacons, Emily Hewitt and Carter Heyward, were irregularly ordained with nine other women, an action that pushed General Convention to approve women's priestly ordination. St. Mary's members have been involved with the Civil Rights Movement, the anti-war movement, LBGT rights, food justice, housing justice, advocacy/care for people with HIV & AIDS and healthcare for all.

Currently we support asylum seekers, police reform (especially to stop the killing of people with mental illness), and advocacy against the closing of mental health care programs. Most recently, St. Mary's vestry has endorsed the platforms of the Black Lives Matter Movement (<https://policy.m4bl.org/platform/>), Jubilee USA (<http://www.jubileeusa.org/>), and the New Sanctuary Movement (<http://www.newsanctuarynyc.org/>).

One member says, “we would be stupid not to feel fear with all that is going on in the world! When we say ‘we are not afraid,’ it means that we do not let fear stop us from following the Gospel.” Cultivating fearlessness is a spiritual journey. Last year the parish collected quotes from scripture, tradition and popular culture for a Lenten devotional. One was from Gregory the Great: “Holy scripture presents a kind of mirror to the eyes of the mind, so that our inner face may be seen in it. There we learn our own ugliness, there our own beauty. There our own fear, our own courage.” In September we created a ribbon art project declaring what we were “not afraid” to be and do. This colorful collection remains on the fence for all who pass by to see: I am not afraid to be one of a kind, to speak up at work, to let go, to be afraid, to be creative, to be me; I am not afraid of the darkness, of change, of love, of bullies and haters, of death, of living.

The author is the rector of St. Mary's Church, Manhattanville, in Manhattan.



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Fear (or Not) of the End

By Judith Mason

The fear of death can start very early. The October I turned four, I began to notice the leaves starting to die as the weather turned colder. I concluded they were freezing to death and began bringing as many as I could gather inside to keep them warm.

When my mother returned to find leaves in various states of decay strewn across her living room rug, she began to reason with me. If I brought the leaves out onto the screened-in porch, that would keep them warm enough. In my heart of hearts, I knew that that was not true; but I submitted to the compromise.

As the leaves continued to decay over the next week or so, I had to accept reality: I was living with a mass murderer. Even worse, I had to swallow my own complicity in this slaughter.

It was another year or two before I could come to terms with the irrevocable inevitability of the demise of all the leaves on the tree of life. Except possibly (fingers crossed) my own.

My father's sudden death when I was twelve and he was forty-three blew to smithereens that hope together with the rest of the world of my childhood.

I was in my twenties, with over two decades of burnt-up leaves ground into my forehead on winter Wednesdays, before I began to understand the rightness of our deaths. But I continued to imagine them as something that arbitrarily happens or is done to us.

It was still another decade before I started to see how, consciously or unconsciously, we cooperate with or co-create our deaths. By that time, too, I had known people who out of physical, psychological, spiritual, moral or social pain decided the time was right to actively engage their dying process. They found it surprisingly hard work.

I was in my forties, though, before I met Millicent who made the best use of that hard work I have encountered in my long life. She was the only person I ever knew with no discernible fear of death.

A devout, half-Maori Episcopalian, she was a patient on the geriatric floor of St. Luke's Hospital, for which I was the chaplain. Her whole existence had been one of

adventure (she had been an airplane pilot during the First World War). And her attitude towards her dying was also one of adventure: "I've never done this before, I can't wait to see what it is like."

She refused any kind of medication or painkillers because she wanted nothing to get in the way of her "adventure." She liked me to read her the Psalms. I would watch Millicent day after day—sweat glistening on her face from the agony of her struggle—and wonder what the point was. Why go through all this? As the flesh began to fall away from the body of this slender woman, the sharp angles of her strong, almost androgynous frame increasingly showed forth. It was as if she were coming, in every aspect of her being, more and more fully into her singular, bred-in-the-bone essence.

At the same time, though, as her outer self was falling away, her inner world was becoming larger. She greeted me one morning with a report of the freedom and joy she had felt the night before as she had journeyed among the stars. I stopped in my tracks. Was she hallucinating? No, if anything she was hyper-oriented to the details of her room, what was going on beyond it in the hall of the hospital, and also in the world outside her window on the sidewalks of Amsterdam Avenue.

Many, perhaps most, people are visited by dead relatives when they themselves are dying. But Millicent's reported guests came to encompass those with no ties of kinship whom she had also never known—including a child who had died in 1868. The boundaries of space and time were dissolving simultaneously. Millicent told me that the Berlin Wall would be falling a full three years before it did.

I experienced a small shock when I went in as usual one Monday to see her and found an empty bed. What had it all been about? What was it I had witnessed? It was as if the distillation of her particularity to its essence had triggered some sort of exponential universality. As Millicent *qua* Millicent faded from existence, she had coalesced with the tree of life itself.

I had encountered the inevitable irrevocability of that life. Even for me.

Ichtheology

By Heidi Thorsen

Is this faith
the subtle ripple of a fin
cutting waves

a splash here,
a shadow there

the peculiar fear
of a ringing buoy
in dark water
at night

Wade in the water children,
we don't know what
swims underneath

We're going to need a bigger boat

Is this faith
a triangle,
the tip of something bigger
skimming the surface

a massive thing that floats
in empty space

a voracious thing
consuming old boots,
license plates,
wedding rings

a plastic thing
with marble eyes

Will I believe it
when I see it
sure as I believe now:

fin coming towards me
rising from water

sweat on my neck
the same taste
as the sea

The author is a member of the Church of St. Luke in the Fields, Manhattan and a candidate for ordination to the priesthood.



Autumn leaves, annual slaughter.

Photo: Jeremy Thomas, Unsplash

The author is a member of St. Bartholomew's Church in Manhattan.

Wiping Out Fear by Buying Medical Debt

By the Rev. Carol D. Gadsden, James Minnerly, and Michael Ford

You're facing the loss of your house and perhaps personal bankruptcy. The thought is horrifying, frightening. At the same time, you are angry, because this situation is not one of your own making. It's significant medical debt, created by an unforeseen medical emergency that blew through your eligible insurance coverage, and then out of your pocket. You simply do not have the funds to cover these expenses and maintain a household. You are filled with dread for your future.

Here are some sobering facts. In 2018, medical expenses were a factor in nearly 60% of bankruptcy filings. Nearly 43 million Americans have a total of \$75 billion in past-due medical debt. An April 2nd, 2019 article in the *New York Times* reported the results of a survey conducted by Gallup and the nonprofit West Health that found that Americans borrowed an estimated \$88 billion over the last year to pay for health care.

These statistics were front and center in the minds of the rector and the chairs of the Christmas Fair at St. Thomas, Mamaroneck, when it came to determining this year's beneficiary of the proceeds from our annual fair. We agreed that the money should be given to RIP Medical Debt, a company that uses the funds it raises from donors to purchase bundled financial portfolios of medical debt which it then forgives, generally resulting in the forgiveness of \$100 in debt for every dol-

lar donated. The minimum dollar amount to open a portfolio is \$15,000.

The initial hope was to provide debt relief locally, but we discovered we were unable to purchase local or even greater NYC area counties' debts, as the debt collectors find it more advantageous and lucrative to pursue debt in this area than sell it for pennies on the dollar. We were told that Oneida County—home to Utica, Rome, Colgate University and Hamilton College—had a massive medical debt burden in addition to a 14.8% unemployment rate; we agreed to take on as much of their debt as our Christmas Fair money could retire.

We assumed our \$18,000 would purchase approximately \$1.8 million in debt. We were stunned to learn that it did far more than that: our money purchased and retired \$9,864,923.75 in medical debt! 10,157 people / families were relieved of their burden, all with no tax consequences or strings attached. *This was the entire medical debt for Oneida County.*

If your church or a coalition of houses of worship in your area can pull together \$15,000, we urge you to invest in the relief of medical debt. So very little can do so very, very much.

The authors are the rector, outreach chair, and Christmas Fair chair of St. Thomas Church, Mamaroneck.



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“Give to the Winds Your Fears”

By the Rev. Pamela Cooper-White, PhD

*Give to the winds your fears; hope, and be undismayed;
God hears your sighs and counts your tears, God shall lift up your head.*

We sang these words in the hymn “Put All Your Trust in God” not too long ago at the Cathedral during Advent. The words “Be not afraid” appear in the Bible at least 70 times! “Give to the winds your fears”; hope, and be undismayed; God hears your sighs—and then that beautiful little phrase, “and counts your tears.” God not only counts the hairs on your head, as Jesus famously said in the Gospel of Luke (12:7), but in the words of this poet, *God counts your tears*. What a wonderful image of God’s loving and strength-giving care!

The daily news has been dire: raging fires devastating Australia; “wars and rumors of wars”; global climate change; racism and antisemitism; gun violence. There is seemingly much to fear at the start of 2020, and our vision seems anything but 20/20! We live now in a time that, as some Christians would point out, qualifies quite nicely for the destruction preceding an apocalypse. We see despots arising all around the globe, with mass shootings, racist violence, hate crimes increasing across our American towns and cities, and the seemingly endless battle of the #metoo movement to bring abusers to justice (as the Harvey Weinstein court case begins here in New York). And to top it all off, we have the capacity to destroy the entire planet either by nuclear warfare or simply a lack of will to address the dire climate crisis world-wide. So we may believe it’s never been as bad as now.

But for the earliest Christians, in their own time, it couldn’t have felt any worse. Christians in the ancient world were being fed to lions for sport, burned at the stake, hanged, drawn and quartered, crucified! The general population was starving, sick, and disenfranchised throughout the Roman world while a few Caligulas feasted at their seaside villas, and Nero eventually fiddled while Rome burned, thinking that, as self-appointed gods, they were invincible.

As I write this, Advent is now over, the Lord for whom we wait has been born to us again not in splendor and glory (however glorious our liturgies have been!). He came, as he does every year, amid the muck and mire of a humble stable—and hopefully born anew in our hearts this midwinter season. The time for scripture readings about the apocalypse is over for now. Advent is over, but still we wait. Every Sunday we repeat the “mystery of faith” in the Eucharist in some form: “Christ has died. Christ is risen. *Christ will come again.*” Our hope is always for a time when the risen Christ will come again in

glory and put all things to rights: the lion and the lamb really will, at long last, lie down together, the hungry will be fed, the sick healed, and all the world will live in peace under God’s loving protection. But I’m sure you may have wondered, as I do, and that you sometimes argue with God like Teyve in “Fiddler on the Roof” and like the Psalmist: “How long O Lord!?” How long must we wait?

I want to suggest that Advent is not the only season for waiting, and also that our waiting is not passive. I’m reminded of the powerful little book that Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote back in 1964, *Why We Can’t Wait*. It was a call to action during the peak of the civil rights movement, and his call to action is no less compelling today. The season of Epiphany will give way to Lent around the time that you read this, and we will hear the scripture passage from Isaiah that reminds us that God is not terribly impressed with our rituals of atonement, but rather seeks “a broken and contrite heart.” True contrition means *teshuvah* in biblical Hebrew—turning around—and *metanoia* in New Testament Greek—a transformation of life. I’m not thinking of this necessarily as just our individual intentions to behave better in the world—although we are always called to the love of God and neighbor, to love kindness, do justice and walk humbly with our God (Micah 6:8). But beyond individual repentance, in a world that groans for justice and healing of creation, our *metanoia* is also corporate and communal. Our waiting is active, not passive, as we join with other Christians in our diocese and across the globe, to actively partner with God’s desire for the earth, to work for

justice, care for the earth, and seek reconciliation where there is war and hatred.

We are not alone. Just like the early Christians, *every* generation has its own pre-apocalyptic moments of war, famine, and natural disaster. As the poet James Russell Lowell wrote (we know it as another great hymn):

Once to every [soul] and nation comes the moment to decide,

In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side;

Some great cause, God’s new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,

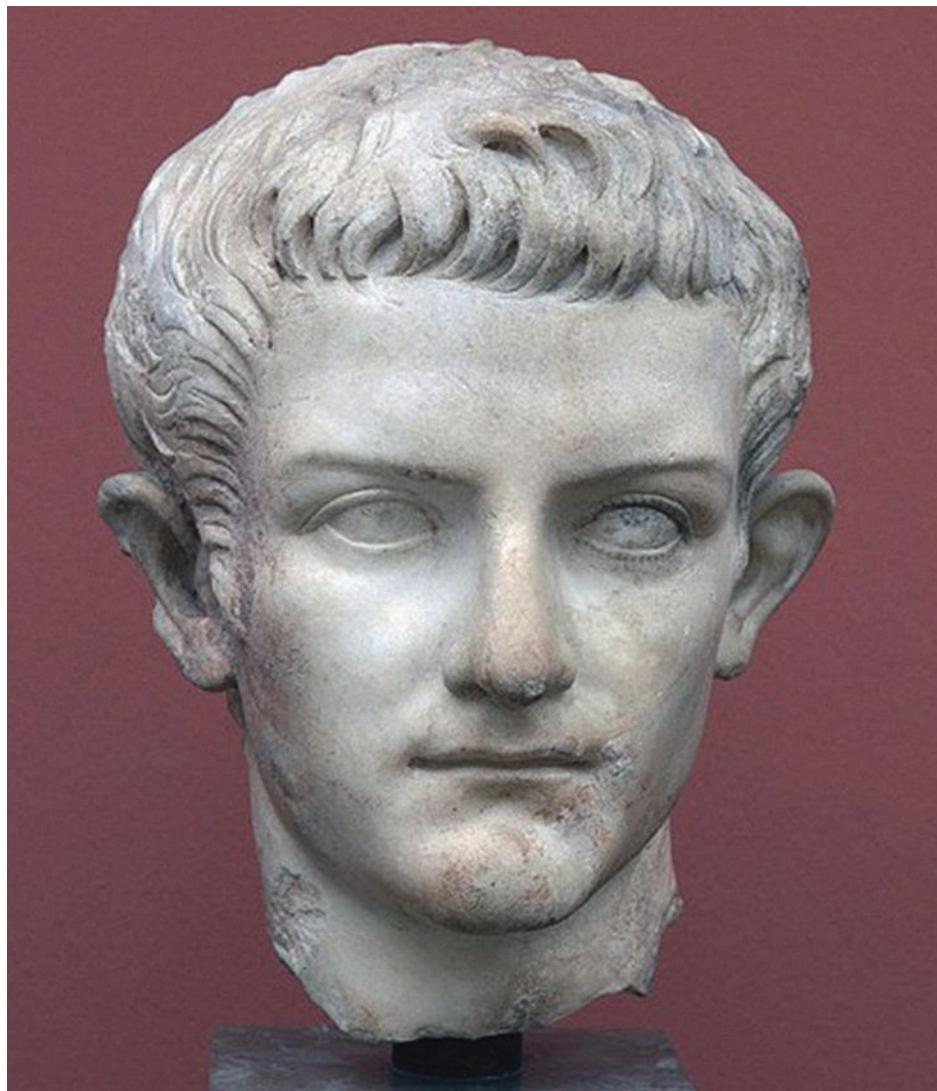
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,

And the choice goes by forever ‘twixt that darkness and that light.

So let us hold hands, and be brave:

Give to the winds your fears; hope, and be undismayed;

God hears your sighs and counts your tears, God shall lift up your head.



Seaside feaster ~ the emperor Gaius Julius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, commonly known as Caligula. Photo: Wikimedia commons.

The author is dean and vice president for academic affairs and Christiane Brooks Johnson Professor of psychology and religion, Union Theological Seminary and assisting priest, Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

The Price of Righteousness

By Susan Fowler

Dorothy R. called me. Dorothy lived at the Cassidy Coles NYCHA Houses, which is all seniors. She and her friend Enid, both immigrants from the Caribbean, helped Victor and me each month at the Trinity Lutheran soup kitchen, and we'd become good church friends.

"I have been trying to pay my rent," she said calmly.

"Oh?" I said.

"But they won't accept it," she said.

"Why not?" I asked.

"I was late by a few days, and then they refused to take my check."

"Oh?"

"They want to evict me."

"Oh!" I said.

"Can you come with me to the NYCHA office?"

"Sure," I said, "but why?"

"Because I think it might help."

So we made a date to go midweek, midday. I put on my good clothes and picked up Dorothy at her apartment. We drove over to the NYCHA office on Jersey Street, just a few blocks away.

We went into the office. Behind the desk was the office manager, a well-dressed, well-spoken middle-aged woman. Dorothy told her, "I'm here to pay my rent." The office manager looked at Dorothy and glanced at me. I smiled, told her my name, and shook her hand. Neither Dorothy nor I said why I was there.

"Do you have the check?" the woman asked.

"Yes," Dorothy said, and handed it over.

There was a flurry of paperwork and finally it was done. No mention of evictions.

Dorothy and I left, her clasping her receipts.

"That went well," I said.

"Yes," said Dorothy, calmly.

We got back into my car and headed down Jersey Street to Richmond Terrace.

When we got to the intersection, I stopped and looked both ways. Seeing no traffic on the Terrace, I started through the intersection. What I didn't see was the car right in front of me. Bump. Oops.

I got out of my car and the woman in the car in front of me got out of her car, and we both looked at her bumper. Nothing.

"Are you okay?" I asked.

"Yes," she said.

We got back in our cars and left. Dorothy was a little surprised by what had happened, but I don't remember her saying anything. However, I shook all the way to Dorothy's and all the way home.

Why was I shaking? More to the point, why did I bump the car ahead of me?

It was not anxiety, anger, or adrenaline, the usual New York City emotional trifecta. Rather, I was blindsided by simple everyday fear.

Why did I go with Dorothy if it made me so uncomfortable? Well, the answer goes way back.

When I was in high school, I read about the Holocaust, and in college I learned about the people that hid or rescued Jewish people out of what seemed to be plain stubbornness, since they rarely seemed to be religious, kind, or even pro-Semitic. Many of these people are memorialized in the Yad Vashem, or Garden of the Righteousness among the Nations, in Jerusalem. Later, I studied the Underground Railroad, a similar rescue project that ran for at least 200 years in this country and involved the same sorts of people.

I decided early on that I would try to be one of them: If a situation arose, I said to myself, I would stand up and rescue anyone who needed my help.

Sometimes I managed to; sometimes I didn't. Each time, though, I was afraid.

The author is a member of Christ Church, New Brighton, Staten Island.



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The Church Can Do Better

By Neil Winward

Heaven and Hell should be reimagined as unscientific, historical myths alongside angels, demons, original sin and the virgin birth. One life is surely enough. It is arrogant to assume otherwise. One lives on in the legacies of loved ones and good works. Nothing we do or have done—good or evil—is interred with our bones. Our actions persist and we should be careful. The promise of eternal life after death is a crude attempt to address life’s injustices; it undermines the need to fix the world—*now*.

The Church is caught on the horns of a dilemma: it promotes the love of God and the fear of God in equal parts. The former is an act of freewill; the latter a doctrine of control. Which is it to be?

Courage is the ability to overcome fear to achieve right actions. Congregants need courage to overthrow the tyranny of doctrine and break free from the prison of fear. It will not be easy, but the future relevance of the church depends on it.

There is a mosaic in the beautiful cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta on the island of Torcello, a short boat ride from Venice. It is a beautiful summary of Christian mythology. Its general title is “The Last Judgement.” The description, by David Low, an art historian from Cambridge, goes, in part, as follows:

The lowest register depicts a number of scenes: in the centre is the Virgin Orans with the Archangel Michael and the Devil weighing souls. To the left are the Blessed in Paradise. In a garden below is Abraham receiving the souls of the saved. He is accompanied by the Madonna, the Good Thief and Saint Peter. To the right are the damned amidst various gruesome scenes from Hell.

The church has known the power of fear for a long time: fear of judgement; fear of damnation; fear of burning in the eternal fires of hell. It has weaponized fear to control its followers. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 9:10) sets the stage. This is the same travelling companion as the God of the 23rd Psalm: “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me” (Psalm 23:4). Confusing.

Heaven and Hell, the carrot and stick of religious observance, are baked into the psyche of God-fearing followers. Paired with Pascal’s wager,* Heaven and



Mosaic of the Last Judgment in the cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, Torcello. Photo: Wikimedia commons.

Hell represent a potent tool for control of the faithful.

It is convenient that the construct cannot be proved or disproved: it is a matter of faith; but one on which the church has an unshakeable monopoly.

Fear is a powerful motivator. In many cases, it is a force for good, closely aligned with survival. Fear of danger promotes caution. Fear of failure may temper reckless behavior. It may also paralyze. It is a sword with two edges.

It is not only the church that has capitalized on the power of fear. Deterrence relies on the fear of punishment for breaking a rule or law. In the secular realm, the punishment is largely known, certain and quantifiable—fairness requires it. In the spiritual realm, with rules codified in the Ten Commandments, the sentence is severe and eternal in duration. It also preys on the deeper fear that no doubt drives many therapy sessions: fear of inadequacy, of not measuring up.

The Ten Commandments are overrated. The first four are narcissistic; the last six are illustrations of the Golden Rule—which is better as a cornerstone. The essence of morality is the ability to perceive and empathize with suffering, wherever it is found. Morality is not the exclusive domain of the church. The church does, however, provide an excellent environment for teaching and reinforcing the values that promote

healthy living. It reminds its congregants they are part of something larger than themselves and provides a community that supports its members—a trouble shared through collective prayer, is a trouble divided. The message of love is transformative; the legacy of fear undermines it.

Overcoming fear requires courage, fear’s antonym. Courage comes in many varieties—physical, intellectual, moral—and is generally a very good thing. Moral courage usually means a willingness to suffer for one’s beliefs. Dietrich Bonhoeffer exhibited great courage in defending the Confessing Church in the face of Nazi oppression. Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus.

Pascal’s Wager is not the act of a rational person. It is a bet made from fear with the Church as bookmaker. The courageous bet—in the valley of the shadow of death—is on a church that promotes a loving community, dependent not on a corrupt bargain, but on the value and dignity of every human being.

The author is a member of the Church of St. James the Less in Scarsdale.

*Blaise Pascal, a 17th Century mathematician, argued that a rational person should live as though God exists and seek to believe in God. If God does not actually exist, such a person will have only a finite loss (some pleasures, luxury, etc.), whereas that person stands to receive infinite gains (as represented by eternity in Heaven) and avoid infinite losses (eternity in Hell).

Fearing Fear Itself

By *Andrea Strout*

Climate despair. Democracy grief. These are new terms of art for what's ailing so many of us, including plenty of those in denial. At the bottom of it all is fear. And while the manifestations of fear are multiform, they come in two basic shapes: a desire to strike out at others (or inward, at ourselves) and an inability to act. Destructiveness and paralysis. The yin and yin of this particular moment.

Unfortunately, we have plenty to fear from fear itself. With our institutions under assault, our very planet threatened, we don't have the luxury of doing nothing. Nor, certainly, can we afford to double-down on the destructive impulses that divide us. And so, the question for people of (good) faith: how do we turn fear into loving action?

I don't have any answers but plenty of strategies I've tried over the past several years. They include talk therapy, environmental activism, tutoring kids and a few months ago adding a low dose of generic Zoloft to my morning pill line-up. All of those efforts continue. Some days, they seem to be helping. Yet I can't help feeling I wouldn't need that little blue pill if only my faith were stronger.

This past Christmas, I took my fear off to Holy Cross Monastery for a couple of days. More to the point, I took my life off—leaving my laptop behind, leaving the news behind, silencing and ignoring my phone. But, of course, I didn't leave myself behind. What is the old saying: "Wherever we go, there we are"? During matins and diurnum, meal times and the Great Silence, there I was.

But that's the funny thing about creating interior space through the reduction of distractions. You never know what might creep in.

This was driven home to me during my first retreat, almost a quarter-century ago, at a Benedictine monastery in Massachusetts. I had gone there for the weekend with a handful of others from my parish in Manhattan. It was a particularly fraught time in my life. I was a few months away from adopting a baby, sight-unseen, from an orphanage 7,400 miles away. And I was terrified.

Fear isn't always destructive. It can be life-saving, as when a small voice in your head whispers, "Don't dive off that cliff, you don't know what's beneath the water." But you need to know when to listen, and when not to. In the late spring of 1995, with my adoption papers complete, I teetered on such a cliff. I was 43 and unmarried, living in a Tinker-Toy-sized apartment, putting in obscenely long hours at work. Money was going to be a problem. Exhaustion was going to be a problem. Most of all, I feared, I was going to be a problem. I needed time to think through my decision in the enveloping silence of St. Benedict Abbey. Before I took the plunge.

But try as I might, I couldn't focus on the "problem" at hand during my time in Massachusetts. In my walks around the abbey grounds, in the chapel and back in my room, my thoughts kept returning to...my parents. Not to this unknown baby. Not to the logistics of child care and maternity leave, the end of my single life or even whether it was right to take on another life when my own was so ragged. Instead, it was my parents, both dead before I turned 35, who dogged my thoughts.

Before I left that weekend, I had my answer. I wasn't in conflict about the adoption. I had already made up my mind about that. It was my relationship with my long-dead parents that needed to be healed before I could successfully parent. But the biggest revelation was this: it wasn't

too late. I could ask for their forgiveness, and forgive them in turn. Our relationship could and would continue to evolve beyond our too-short time together.

My daughter turns 25 this year. Our relationship continues to change in ways that astonish and delight me. I'm so proud of the woman she's become. Once again, thousands of miles separate us. This time, as she finishes up two years in the U.S. Peace Corps, working in rural Botswana.

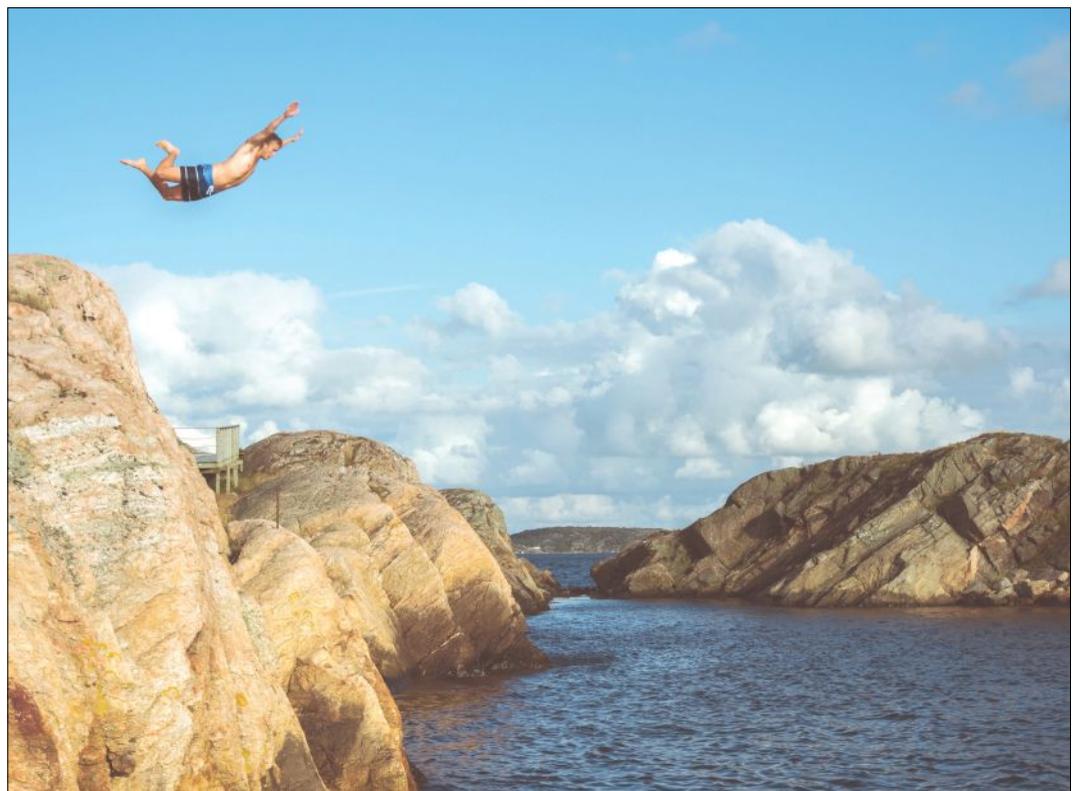
But I fear for her future; indeed, for the futures of all our children and children to come. Climate despair. Democracy grief. You name it: my fears often get the best of me. And while naming them and knowing that others share them helps, it takes me only so far. Then Thursday rolls around. The day I tutor kids in language arts. As "my" girls, age nine and 11, burst through the door, so excited and full of plans, I think: How dare I not be hopeful when they are?

Back at Holy Cross this past Christmas, I had the time and silence to wrestle with these things, then let go of them, sort of. I'll keep trying to do what I can in my small slice of the world. I'll try to remember I'm not in charge. I'll fight against paralysis, my impulse to despair, the volcanic anger that wants to consume me. And on the days when that doesn't work, I'll look at the small ceramic plaque I bought at the monastery as a Christmas present to myself. On it is the well-known quote from Julian of Norwich, the 14th century anchorite and mystic.

I'm still looking for the perfect place to hang it. Somewhere I can see it every day, throughout the day. Whenever I need to be reminded:

All Shall Be Well.

The author is a former member of the Church of the Resurrection in Manhattan and Zion Church in Dobbs Ferry, and a current member of St. Philip's Church in New Hope, Pennsylvania.



A small voice in your head whispers *Don't dive off that cliff.*

Photo: Carl Cerstrand on Unsplash

Seeing Ourselves in the Outcast: Lessons from Peru

By Isadora Wilkenfeld

Works from Andrew Mroczek and Juan José Barboza-Gubo's series *Virgenes de la Puerta* (*Virgins of the Door*) were included in the *Value of Sanctuary: Building a House Without Walls*, an exhibition on view in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine from February through June, 2019. The works, which combined photographic portraits and delicate sculpture, used the familiar iconography of Christian saints to explore and elevate the self-expression of the artists' transgender models/co-creators. As Mroczek describes in an interview for the Cathedral's blog:

The process of creating the *Virgenes de la Puerta* series began with in-depth conversations with several transgender women in Peru. Aside from the violence and oppression they each experienced, the subject of safe spaces and places of faith were a part of nearly every conversation. Though not all of the women we've collaborated with have experienced rejection from their families because of their gender identity, nearly all were rejected by their churches. ... Faith has a large role in the daily lives of most Peruvians, so this type of rejection not only destroys their sense of community, it virtually cripples their existence by a forced isolation.

The series' title derives from a popular Marian devotion in Peru, the "Virgin of the Door." As legend has it, the people of the city of Otuzco in the Peruvian highlands were menaced by roving pirates. In fear for their safety, the townspeople carried the statue of the Virgin Mary from the side altar of the church to the main road into the city. The threatened marauders never appeared, and the thankful townspeople returned the statue of the Virgin to the church; rather than returning it to the side altar, however, the statue was installed above the main door of the church in a mark of gratitude and devotion.

For Mroczek and Barboza-Gubo, and for the transgender women they worked with in their artistic practice, the legend of the Virgin of the Door carries an additional meaning, alongside its prominence in the religious lives of Catholic Peruvians. Mroczek says,



Denise, Yefri, & Angie from the series *Virgenes de la Puerta*.

Photo: Andrew Mroczek and Juan José Barboza-Gubo.

There is also a lesser-known secondary version [of the legend], which is set sometime in the late 1970s to early 1980s, and was told word-of-mouth within the communities of transgender women who had come together to form their own congregation – a new sanctuary where they can live their true identities and practice their faith openly and without fear or judgment. While it's impossible to confirm the validity of the secondary version, the story is still told, as both fact and fiction, and in many ways acts as an anthem for many transgender women of Peru.

The role of fear in our everyday lives—fear of violence, fear of judgement, fear of incurring punishment—plays a particularly dominant part in the stories of social outcasts, those of us considered somehow “other” by our fellows. But perhaps we are all prey, to some degree, to another sort of fear: a fear of our own hidden natures, of being not how we would like to appear on the outside; a fear of our own difference; a fear that we, too, may become vulnerable to social disapproval.

How do we best oppose this creeping sense of fear—both of others and of ourselves? Perhaps the opposite of fear is spiritual love, as Jonathan Edwards suggests in his *Treatise Concerning the Religious Affections* of 1796. Perhaps the opposite of fear is tolerance, a willingness to accept difference without rejection. Andrew Mroczek, describing his work in the *Virgin of the Door* series, suggests another possible definition:

In this series, we honor the diversity of Peruvian culture by re-incorporating these women into the cultural landscape and history of Peru. We celebrate them by presenting them as relevant iconic figures within the context of their native land. The images... pay homage to the resilience and beauty of these women to strengthen, empower, and embed a sense of pride within current and future generations of Peru's LGBTQ community.

Perhaps, thinking along these lines, and with the example of this ongoing art project as a guide, we may consider the opposite of fear to be something like recognition of ourselves in the other. Our histories and our stories are intertwined and inseparable, like the stories of contemporary transgender women with the legend of the Virgin of the Door. When we recognize our interconnectivity, we overcome fear, incorporating our personal stories, triumphs, and foibles into the larger cultural narrative from which our individual lives originate.

The author is manager of programming and communications for the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine.

fearsomely made

By Kappa Waugh

want to play with us?
you can be the bad guy
the injun the nazi the jew
the princess' slave
we get to lock you up
shoot you slap your face
tie you to a tree
squirt lighter fluid
light it

sit in this desk
stand when I call on you
no, you may not be excused
write fifty times I will not
go to the principal's office
how can you not know
your times table
the state capitol
the pledge of allegiance

go to bed
no dessert
no goodnight kiss
God is waiting to
listen to your woes
dry your tears
laugh at your jokes
delight in you
God's beloved

The author is a member of St. Andrew's Church, New Paltz.

Christianity, Psychotherapy and Fear

By Stanley Weinberg

Christianity and psychotherapy frequently address the emotion of fear—and like fear, they are themselves ambiguous terms that are frequently misunderstood. There are many Christian denominations with many divisions within them, and numerous and diverse schools and systems of psychotherapy; “Christianity” and “psychotherapy” can both mean many different things. We must, therefore, be clear what we mean when we use them.

In my case, I write as an Episcopalian open to knowledge and wisdom from other religions and religious perspectives, and as a psychodynamic psychotherapist who incorporates elements from all schools of thought that contribute to understanding the human condition.

Fear can mean different things in different contexts. It is not in itself necessarily to be feared—as a response to danger it serves to protect us; but fear as a rational cognitive and emotional response to danger is often confused with perceived fear, with anxiety, and with phobias that are not rational.

Christianity and mental health practice, being human institutions and systems, have at different times both used and abused fear. All religions, including ours, have used it in combination with guilt to manipulate, control and exploit—as well as to foment division and conflict. Psychotherapy, meanwhile, has used, and continues to use, fear-inducing methods of treatment that conform to the definition of torture. And at times both systems have succumbed to the temptation to compromise and even betray their mission to protect their institutions.

Far too often, fear has led humankind to turn away from God’s commandments and Christian teaching. Selective excerpts from Scripture and the distortion and exploitation of isolated biblical passages have been used to serve the cause of evil; acts of hatred, torture and murder have been perversely justified as serving the will of God. And since religions, being human institutions, have at times succumbed to acts of evil, many people, sadly, have turned away from God, confusing God with God’s all too human institutions.

At the same time, fear is often the underlying emotion that draws people to God and to our churches, seeking solace, guidance, comfort, and the strength that comes from a supportive community of faith committed to welcoming and helping others. Fear is also one of the major determinants for those who turn to psychotherapy, although it is seldom the presenting reason: in fact, many of the problems that psychotherapists address—addictions, compulsions, mood disorders, and others—themselves originate as ways of dealing with fear.

From Scripture we learn that it is fear, not doubt, that is the opposite of faith; courage is not fear’s absence, but its mastery. Jesus, being both human and divine, experienced both fear and the courage that comes from faith. He was proclaiming the kingdom of God—a direct challenge to an imperial power legitimized by religion and based on violence and exploitation—and when he entered Jerusalem, he passed the terrifying sight of crucifixions, held at the gates of the city to give a clear message of the consequence of challenging Rome’s authority.

Scripture is, indeed, replete with references to fear and its mastery. Mary was told not to fear and demonstrated courage beyond our comprehension, given the consequences of unwed pregnancies at that time. Joseph too was told not to fear and his courage and actions were nothing but amazing. After Jesus was crucified, the disciples hid in fear in the upper room. That fear was all too human and understandable; the courage that they displayed when they left the upper room and ventured out into a very dangerous world to share the Good News was extraordinary.

Jesus brought light and hope for peace and good will into a dark world. We need to learn that wealth and weapons will not help us master our fears, or ultimately keep us safe. Our hope lies in learning to relate well to our own physical, psychosocial, and spiritual needs and to the needs of others and the natural world that supports our lives. We can learn to manage our emotions and appetites, and resolve conflicts without threats, intimidation, or physical and emotional harm. It has happened; it can happen; and it must happen.

The author is a member of the Church of the Ascension in Manhattan.



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God's Love Casts It Out

By the Rev. Br. Robert Pierson, OHC

In the spring of 2012, I was a Roman Catholic priest and Benedictine monk in central Minnesota. The archbishop of St. Paul/Minneapolis was pushing a ballot initiative designed to amend the state constitution, defining marriage as between a man and a woman. He wrote to all the priests in the state, telling them that no one would be allowed to speak against the amendment. If anyone did, they would lose their “faculties” to function as a Catholic priest. He was counting on fear of unemployment to keep everyone who might speak against the amendment from doing so.

I knew that he was over-stepping his authority in telling people how to vote, and forbidding any clergy from making comments against his ballot measure. I knew God was calling me to “speak the truth in love,” and God reassured me, “The truth will set you free.” And so it has.

In April 2012, I was contacted by the Faith Coordinator for Minnesotans United for All Families, the organization formed by LGBT leaders in Minnesota to work against the passage of the proposed Minnesota Marriage Amendment. My friend, Richard Carlbon, who was the campaign director for Minnesotans United, had suggested to the woman working to mobilize supporters from various faith traditions, that I might be a good resource for her in reaching out to the Catholic community. Here was the opportunity I had been looking for. When she asked me if I could recommend any Catholics who could speak against the Marriage Amendment, I said that I was willing to do it.

When Minnesotans United accepted my offer, they asked me to speak on the topic, “Why Catholics Should Vote Against the Marriage Amendment.” I told them I couldn’t do that, but that I was willing to talk on “Why Catholics CAN Vote Against the Marriage Amendment.” In my talk, I emphasized the Church’s teaching on freedom of conscience, quoting both the Catechism of the Catholic Church and a young Catholic theologian named Fr. Joseph Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI) who stated in 1967:

“Over the pope as expression of the binding claim of ecclesiastical authority, there stands one’s own conscience which must be obeyed before all else, even if necessary against the requirement of ecclesiastical authority.”

I gave my ten minute talk on Sunday afternoon, June 10, 2012, to a group of around 200 Catholics gathered in a Methodist church in Edina, Minnesota. The talk was well-received by those who heard it. I told them that, as Catholics, we are called to study the issues involved in any political decision and and that to vote according to what our conscience tells us is the right thing to do. I didn’t tell anyone how to vote, but I did explain my own reasons for voting against the amendment. I knew the talk was being recorded on video, but it never occurred to me how the recording would be used. Later that day, the video was posted on YouTube, and before the week was over, it had “gone viral” as they say. Now over 60,000 people have watched it.

The first really negative reaction I received was from Archbishop Nienstedt himself, and it did not surprise me that he banned me from ministry in his diocese, but I was surprised when my ministry was banned in several other dioceses in Minnesota. The next difficult message came from the Pope himself. In his Angelus talk on Sunday, August 26, 2012, Pope Benedict compared those who disagree with church teaching to Judas, saying it would be better for everyone if they just left the church. When one of my confrères sent me a news report about what the Pope had said, I turned to God and



HQ in Rome of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which questioned the author’s teaching on homosexuality.

Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

asked, “Are these words meant for me?” and I asked God to show me if, in fact, I was being called to leave the Church.

The answer to that prayer came on October 31, 2012, when my abbot called me to his office to talk to me. As I sat down, he handed me a letter written by the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), Archbishop Gerhard Mueller. It said that an unnamed monastery confrère of mine had complained about me to the Vatican and questioned my adherence to the church’s teaching on homosexuality. In that meeting with the abbot on Halloween, I told him about the Pope’s Angelus message and gave him a copy of the news article that the confrère had sent to me. I said that being reported to the CDF was the sign I had been looking for regarding the need to look for another church affiliation. I asked his permission to contact the Order of the Holy Cross, a Benedictine monastery in the Episcopal Church, in West Park, New York.

To make a long story short, I was invited by the monks at Holy Cross Monastery in West Park to come for a visit so we could “get to know one another.” A year later, I joined the Episcopal Church, and the Order of the Holy Cross on March 30, 2014. While I am sorry I had to leave my previous monastic community, I have no regrets about leaving the Catholic Church. In the Episcopal Church, I feel like I have arrived home at last.

Instead of being afraid of what the authorities could do to me, I trusted in God’s love for me, and knew that God would not let me down if I did what I believed I was being called to do. Like Peter, I knew that if I climbed out of the boat, Jesus would support me as I walked to him on the water. Unlike Peter, I didn’t doubt God’s love for me in that moment, and I have never been sorry about my decision.

The author is priest-in-charge of the Church of the Ascension and Holy Trinity, West Park and Christ Church, Marlboro, and a member of the Order of the Holy Cross.

Love Beats It

By the Rev. Matthew Hoxsie Mead

The words “fear” or “afraid” or some variant show up more than 125 times in the New Testament.

Fear is powerful. I’m 43 years old and I still have nightmares from time to time. They wake me up, and I wonder what the source of that bad dream was. When I was child, if I couldn’t get back to sleep I’d sometimes go downstairs to my parents’ room and sleep on the floor. Just the proximity to people who loved me seemed to make all the difference in the world when it came to over-powering a bad dream and conquering unseen fear.

We all know that fear isn’t limited to dreams or angelic visions. As a priest, as a pastor, and frankly, as a human being, I hear about the fears people have all the time: fear for our nation; fear for the future of humanity; fear of not making ends meet; fear of losing a job; fear at moving to a new home or town; fear over a health diagnosis; fear as a marriage collapses; fear for the path the children seem to be heading down; fear about facing the future without a loved one; fear of being alone; fear of repeating the same mistakes; fear of failure; fear of dying; fear of living.

Fear can cripple you. But ask God to be present with you to drive out fear, and God will say yes. Remember what the angel said to Mary when she was afraid, “Mary, the Lord is with you... Don’t be afraid.” Remember God loves you and is always with you. God loves you and will stay by your side to get you through this time of fear.

I wrote this at Christmas, when we celebrate the Incarnation, the fact that God became a human being named Jesus, who understood fear but also knew that there is no fear in love, and who knew that perfect love casts out fear. Fear is like darkness. Just as light scatters darkness, fear is cast out by love.

We all know what it is like to seek out a loved one to escape the grip of some nightmare. We’ve all found solace in the midst of a crippling fear from the embrace of a family member, the kind words and presence of a friend, or even the unexpected arrival of someone who is just passing by and, like an angel, provides a kind word or a hug that miraculously drives out the fear.

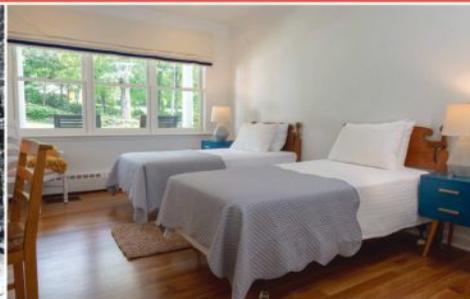
The Light of Christ shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot ever overcome it. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Remember that God loves you and is always with you. In fact, God loves us all so much that he became human, lived as a human, and through his death, resurrection, and ascension promised that nothing would ever separate us from his love.

Share God’s abiding presence with other people. If you see someone, anyone, who is afraid, stay with them, pray with them, and let the light of God that is in you scatter the darkness of fear.

The author is rector of the parish of Christ the Redeemer, Pelham.

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Journey With Love

By the Rev. Stephen C. Holton

This journey to my European roots, so horrifically interrupted as they were by the Holocaust, really began when I was packing at home in Westchester. As I folded my clothes and put them in my suitcase, I thought of my German Jewish grandfather, Werner Bloch, folding his clothes one last time in Germany, in 1936, preparing to go with his wife and my 3 year old mother to New York.

I thought of him thinking: “Am I doing the right thing? It is so far. Yet I cannot raise my daughter in Fascism” (as he said in his diary). So his journey to America began with love—for his daughter. Such love can find courage in the face of any fear, and overcome it.

I thought of him saying goodbye to his own father, and his father saying goodbye to him; uncertain of his own fate, yet too tired to begin again somewhere else, and too proud of himself to need to—for he knew that his son had turned out just fine, and he had raised a good boy, a fine man, who would be a blessing wherever he went.

When we touched down in Vienna, I enjoyed hearing German again, as my mother had used it from time to time. I looked at my beloved wife across the dinner table, and I knew how my grandfather could begin again anywhere, for he was with his beloved wife—and the world between two beloved ones is bigger, and more beautiful, and more full of love, than the most violent and hateful world outside that circle of love can ever defeat.

That night I prepared to go to Theresienstadt concentration camp (at the Czech town of Terezin) the next day. It was here that the Nazis had killed my great grandparents. I sat at the hotel bar. In my jacket pocket I had 9 tiny stones from the stream behind my house in Westchester. An African American friend had told me that 9 is the symbol of completion in the Yoruba religion—the religion of many of the Africans who were taken to be enslaved in America. He said to throw 9 tiny things over my left shoulder when I got to Theresienstadt (left is the side of the spirit).



The entrance to Theresienstadt concentration camp.

Photo: The author.

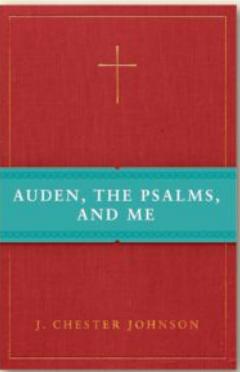
The 9 tiny stones would say to my great grandparents that I was there. They would bring a piece of America to this piece of Europe, and so say that I had arrived—like a bridge in space and time. Washed by the stream, they would bring freshness to this space of ash and pain.

Yet I felt that the circle would not quite feel closed until I took something back, from here near Terezin to Westchester. What would that be?

As I sipped a glass of the local apricot brandy, I suddenly thought: take a 10th tiny stone back home to Westchester, from the place in Theresienstadt where I would leave the other 9. That would be complete.

Putting on my shoes the next morning, I thought suddenly of my great grandfather, as he put on his shoes for his last journey—to the camp. If he was like my grandfather, he was an elegant, dignified man. Looking dignified would be important to him. No reason to stop now.

We take a tram and then a bus. We hear about the building of the camp for political prisoners by the Austro-Hungarian Empire. We drive in through the outer gate. I think: “The Door of No Return,” which is the name of the outer



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The burial field at Theresienstadt: "I knew deep within me that this was the place for my 9 tiny stones." Photo: The author.

gate in the slave forts in Ghana through which Africans were taken to be enslaved, tormented, and brutalized in America.

We go in. We chat with Germans seeking to understand their history. We are told to stand alongside a wall where the captives in my family stood. We are told that they were beaten while standing. We are shown the door to the room where they surrendered their clothes, their identities.

The concentration camp commandant was apparently particularly brutal and was selected for that reason. I think of Pontius Pilate in Judea, similarly chosen.

We go through the bedrooms with the huge bunks, or sleeping platforms, for many, many people. Only one toilet in the corner. A rudimentary surgery in the next room for the sick. My great grandfather, a doctor, would have been appalled. I see the large, public showers. Then we see the places outside to stand for a long period of time, for orders each day—before being sent to forced labor.

I thought of my great grandfather trying to be as dignified as possible.

We see the place where the Jewish musicians were compelled to play for the Nazi officers—yet only compulsory music, not the music they might want to play.

How did I get through this day without being more shaken? Before going into the inner camp, the bus stopped at a large field, where the bones of the prisoners had been buried. First we were ushered into a crematorium. This was not the horror of Auschwitz, for people still living. Rather, it was the "disposal room," if you will, of people who had been worked to death. Their bodies were burned and their bones buried in the field outside.

I knew deep within me that this was the place for my 9 tiny stones. I headed into the field, hoping I would be guided to the right place. A sparrow flew by—"for his eye is on the sparrow, and he watches over me," as the gospel hymn says. It alighted in a large tree, then flew into the woods beside the field. There I found a marker labeled "60." There were numbered markers all over the field—but 1960 is the year of my birth. So I turned my back, threw the 9 stones over my left shoulder, knelt, and picked up a tiny white stone for the stream back home.

So my soul was at peace for this whole journey. And I know their bones are at peace in that land near the trees; no matter the evil of the people who walked there at that time.

I had also planned to look for some beauty after the horror. I had called a Jewish friend before I went and asked: "Help, what do I do; how do I cope with this experience? What have you done?" He said: "Plan to do something beautiful afterwards. Go hear some Bach. His music is a gift to God, from God."

So we went to hear some Bach in his church in Leipzig the next day, and as the music came from the great organ and choir, I felt it heal my heart. Some of it had been broken for generations. It filled to overflowing—with that elixir of love.

When we get back home we tell our sons about the Journey, over apricot brandy! I walk down through the woods to the stream. When I hear the singing of birds, I think of Our Lady of Guadalupe—in these Americas—who spoke during the singing of birds to her disciple, "a most dignified campesino." She called him her "most abandoned one," after the Conquistadors had invaded and destroyed his culture.

We had been those abandoned ones. Many here are those abandoned ones. Guadalupe sent her disciple, and sends us, to our church, the church of the invaders. But this time she calls us to "give to all people my love, my compassion, my help, and my protection," as her revelation says.

When I get to the stream, it is as if I am greeting old neighbors again, like in that garden in Prague. This time the neighbors are old familiar rocks, little birds, the sound of the stream as it flows over the stones. I put the tenth tiny stone among the bigger ones where I got the other nine. The bigger stones shelter and protect it, and soon many other stones gather, scattered from many shores, forming new land.

The larger stones that form the protective pool are like the Holton side of the family—those Ohio Methodists who welcomed these German Jews to this land, when my father David Holton married my mother Dorothy Bloch. I thank God for both sides of my family, and for the love—in dignity, devotion, culture, and creation—which makes all our journeys possible.

The author is a priest in the diocese and director of Warriors of the Dream in Harlem.

Hic Sunt

By the Rev. James L. Burns

"Unto God who is everywhere, we come by love not by navigation."

(St. Augustine)

No pleasure cruise
this voyage of love.

O there are moments of beauty to be sure:
Calm seas, fair winds,
crimson-pastel dawns and dusks,
the wonder of creatures
at sea with us,
things beyond belief.
Fish that fly
and leviathans
that can leap for joy
above the waves.

But there are storms too.
Maelstroms and mistrals
that seize the heart,
windless calms
that deaden the soul,
and tides and currents
that take us from our chosen course.

Hic sunt dracones
is what the ancients wrote
on the edges of their charts,
at the ends of the known land and seas.
Dragons are the gatekeepers of the
unknown.
But we are bound to sail on
to the limits of our axioms
beyond the safer latitudes of faith.

No pleasure cruise
this voyage of love.

At least
until we come to the edge of the known,
and fall,
not into the fiery jaws of dragons,
but into the arms of Love.

The author is a retired priest in the diocese.

Clergy and Delegates Approve \$1.1 Million for Reparations, Pass Anti-Slavery Resolutions Tabled in 1860



Diane B. Pollard proposing the resolutions to reconsider and adopt the tabled John Jay Resolutions of 1860.

Photo: Nicholas Richardson.

On Friday, Nov 8, 2019, clergy and lay delegates approved a resolution calling for the allocation of \$1.1 million from the diocese's endowment towards reparations for slavery, passed a number of anti-slavery resolutions previously brought before the convention in 1860 by John Jay II, when they were tabled in the face of overwhelming opposition from both clergy and laity, and passed a call from the Reparations Committee to live into Apology.

The resolution calling for the \$1.1 million allocation was proposed from the floor of the convention, in response to a request to do so from Bishop Dietsche in his address at the start of the day's business.

Explaining why this is appropriate, the Bishop said "During the eighteenth century the proportion of people in New York owning slaves was the second highest among all of the colonies, after only Charleston, South Carolina. We have records of churches in our diocese which owned men and women as parish servants or as property assets. Churches whose wealth was built on the traffic in human beings. Sojourner Truth was enslaved in this diocese. The State of New York had banned the importation of slaves in 1808, and passed legislation for a gradual emancipation of slaves, and finally freed all slaves in New York in 1827, 201 years after the first slaves arrived in this colony. Yet thirty two years later, in 1859, the year before the John Jay resolution, the London Times declared that New York City remained the largest slave market in the world, because of the ships which sailed from this city to patrol the West Coast of the African continent, continuing to kidnap slaves for the American south, generating untold wealth for the shippers and merchants in this city. New York was all in, and that is why the Episcopal Church, in this diocese, would not condemn slavery on the very eve of the Civil War, and would not accept the John Jay resolution, which, it must be said, was actually quite a modest proposal. We have a great deal to answer for. We are complicit."

In explaining the detail of his request, the Bishop said "I am asking for a

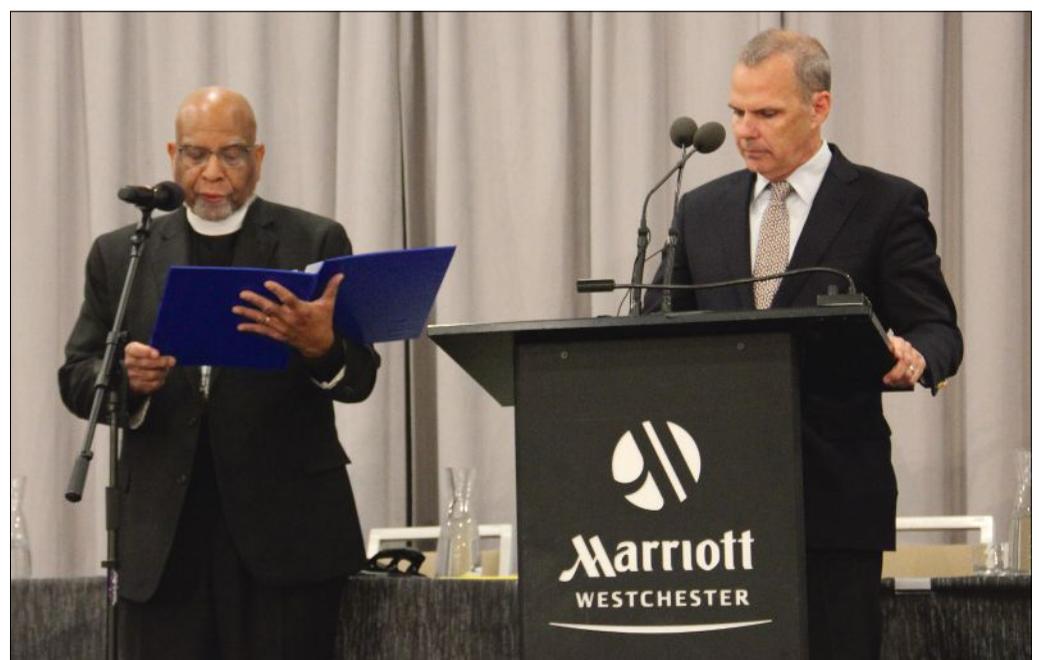
resolution, that this convention direct the trustees of the Diocese of New York to set aside \$1.1 million from the diocesan endowment for the purpose of reparations for slavery. Now I want to talk about how I came up with that number, and why, and what I believe this level of funding might mean as reparation. Right now, we have two examples, both of which have been widely publicized, and which I took as guides for my thinking about this. Earlier this year Virginia Theological Seminary announced that they would reserve \$1.7 million from their endowment to pay reparations to descendants of the slaves who helped to build the seminary. More recently Princeton Seminary announced that they would give \$27 million from their endowment for reparations.

Virginia Seminary has a \$140 million endowment, so the money they have pledged represents 1.1 percent of their endowment. Their endowment is some three and a half times larger than ours, so if we pledged the same 1.1 percent the amount of money which would be created would be too small to be substantive. Princeton Seminary has an endowment of \$1.2 billion, so that their \$27 million pledge represents a two and a quarter percent commitment. With these examples in front of me, I began to think about an appropriate level for this resolution, and arrived at \$1.1 million, which represents two and a half percent of our endowment. Much smaller, and the resources for significant reparation would be insufficient; much larger, and it might not be something we could do."

He then called for, and the resolution that was passed stipulated, the appointment of a task force to work over the next twelve months that will be asked to "enter into a period of dreaming and imagining and hard deep research into what reparations could really mean in the Diocese of New York. What is possible for us? What can we do, with our strengths and our limitations, to address the moral imperative of repair, and the weight of our history."

For the full text of the Bishop's address, please go to <https://episnyd.io/ad2019>.

For a scan of the floor resolution, please go to <https://episnyd.io/slavetrade-res2019>.



The presentation of the John Jay-related resolution was earlier preceded by a reading of excerpts from the 1860 convention at which Jay's initiative was ultimately stymied by denying him a quorum. A video of this reading can be found at <https://episnyd.io/Conv19Vid>. Photo: Nicholas Richardson.

Climate Resolutions Call for Action and Say What It Should Be

Parishes Must Report Annually to the Bishop's Office on Progress

Convention approved a number of resolutions brought to it by the Committee on the Care of Creation of the Social Concerns Commission which called for a comprehensive, practical, and speedy stepping up of the diocesan and congregational response to the climate and ecological emergency.

This includes looking at utilizing church-owned property for new ministries integrating the care of creation; collaborating with others in practical ways such as carbon sequestration through regenerative agriculture, biodiversity conservation, green burial, and habitat restoration; and implementing and supporting tree planting and reforestation programs. The resolutions reminded congregations that ten years had passed since an earlier resolution called for them to audit energy use in their build-

ings and develop a plan for converting to renewable energy sources. They also recalled a 2015 resolution regarding environmentally responsible investing.

An additional set of resolutions brought from the floor in response to the Bishop's address called for the diocese to commit itself to the "New York City Green New Deal" to reduce its carbon footprint by 30% by the year 2030, and mandated that all parishes and congregations conduct the necessary environmental studies of their buildings, and particularly HVAC systems, to achieve this, and report their progress annually to the Bishop's office.

The full texts of these resolutions are at <https://episnyd.io/2019Climate> and <https://episnyd.io/carbon2019>.

Anti-Racism Training Now Required for Anyone Running for Diocesan Office

A resolution brought from the floor in response to the Bishop's address mandates that all persons seeking diocesan office "be required first to have completed anti-racism training, beginning in the year 2020." This resolution brings the diocese into compliance with the Episcopal Church, which in 2000 adopted a resolution requiring the same at a church-wide level. For full text see <https://episnyd.io/antir2019>. Anti-racism training is offered regularly by the diocese's Anti-Racism Committee. Please consult the diocesan calendar at www.diocesenys.org.

Convention Passes Resolution in Response to Exclusion of Same-Sex Spouses from Lambeth Conference

In December 2018, the Archbishop of Canterbury privately notified Bishop Assistant Mary Glasspool that her spouse, Becki Sander, would not be invited to the 2020 Lambeth Conference, as, according to the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, Dr. Josiah Idowu-Fearon, to invite same-sex spouses would be in contravention of the Communion's position on marriage as set out in a resolution of the 1998 Lambeth Conference. The president of the House of Deputies of the Episcopal Church, the Rev. Gay Jennings, has disputed this interpretation of the resolution.

Convention delegates passed a resolution in response to this, and to the pain caused by the decision of the Archbishop of Canterbury "for many people both within and outside of the Episcopal Diocese of New York," calling for every diocesan congregation to offer public prayers for our bishops and their spouses and for all who attend the Lambeth Conference; recommending that the Archbishop of Canterbury reconsider his decision; and directing the Secretary of Convention to communicate the full text of the resolution and its explanation to the Archbishop.

The resolution's explanation pointed out that the Lambeth Conference has historically been a gathering of bishops, at which spouses have had no formal role, whereas for the first time at this conference, from which certain spouses have been disinvented, they have indeed been given such a role—presumably because "issues of human sexuality and marriage have been and continue to challenge the Anglican Communion." The discriminatory act of the disinvitation of same-sex spouses is therefore all the more egregious, the explanation said, for being obviously motivated by a desire to silence those "who can speak most personally and perhaps most powerfully about same-sex marriage and its place in the Church."

For the text of the resolution, including references to the conflicting opinions of Idowu-Fearon and Jennings, please go to <https://episnyd.io/all-welcome>

Minimum Clergy Compensation Raised

The minimum annual stipend for clergy was raised by 2% effective January 1, 2020. For details, please visit <https://episnyd.io/ClergyCom2020>.

2020 Diocesan Budget Passed as Proposed

The proposed 2020 Diocesan Budget, presented to convention with his customary clarity by the chair of the Budget and Finance Committee of Diocesan Council, the Rev. Matthew H. Mead, was passed. Details, including a narrative, may be found at <https://episnyd.io/2020Budget>.

New Secretary of Convention Approved

The Rev. Matthew F. Heyd was elected Secretary of Convention in place of James Forde, Sr., who served with distinction and dedication in this office for many years. For other election results, please visit <https://episnyd.io/ConReport2019>.



The Rt. Rev. Enrique Treviño Cruz, Bishop of Cuernavaca, Mexico, delivers the homily at the Eucharist, while retired Bishop Suffragan Catherine S. Roskam looks on.

Photo: Nicholas Richardson.

Other Convention News

Convention delegates were warmly appreciative of a moving performance by the Red Altar Project—Nancy Wang and Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo—depicting the experiences and trials in the face of prejudice, discrimination and violence of a group of young Chinese immigrants and their descendants who were shipwrecked in Carmel Bay, California in 1850 and began the fishing industry in the Monterey Bay area. For a video of the performance please visit <https://episynd.io/Conv19Vid>.



Nancy Wang and Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo of the Red Altar Project.

Photo: Nicholas Richardson.

Chancellor George Wade Made Canon of the Diocese; Bishop's Crosses Awarded to the Revs. Brenda Husson and Susan Copley

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Counselor, Advisor, Advocate, Educator and Reconciler
Chancellor of the Diocese of New York

Blessed by grace,
Respected by peers,
Beloved friend;

Man of prayer, peace, humor, truth and charity.

In Recognition of the Notable Servanthood of
our Brother George

as Chancellor and Confidant of

the Fourteenth through Sixteenth Bishops of New York
and Friend and Advisor to Two Hundred Churches

We do confer on this the 9th day of November

in the year of Our Lord 2019

in the Eighth Year of Our Consecration

the Perpetual Honor of

Canon of the Diocese of New York

The Right Reverend Andrew ML Dietsche
XVI Bishop of New York



The Rev. Brenda Husson, with her husband, the Rev. Thomas Faulkner and Bishop Dietsche.
Photo: Nicholas Richardson.

Brenda Gail Husson

Brenda has carried a visionary understanding of the possibilities of the Christian church and the gospel life from the beginning. Her studies in Third World Development and her early work with Bread for the World led to theological studies at Union Seminary and ordination into the Episcopal Church, and a ministry which has been lived entirely within this diocese. After her first priestly ministries in parishes in and around New York City, Brenda came almost two and a half decades ago to Saint James Church on Madison Avenue in New York, a landmark parish of extraordinary distinction across the Episcopal Church.

Her ministry at Saint James has been built around her understanding of the urgency and possibilities of the first experience of the Christian community by a willing seeker, and of the questions people wrestle with. She has made Saint James Church a vibrant center of Christian formation, a standard for excellence in preaching, and a wellspring of spiritual resource. Saint James is one of our largest churches, but it is also one of the most innovative. Here disciples are made for Jesus Christ, the invitation to discover the Christian life is explicitly made, and new priests are formed and mentored for the whole church.

Brenda was the first woman priest called to lead what we sometimes call a “cardinal parish” of the substantial leadership resources of a Saint James anywhere across the Episcopal Church. She is in the earliest generation of women leaders in the Episcopal Church, and soon will be the senior rector in Manhattan. Hers is a record of brilliant accomplishment, of sterling leadership, and of far-reaching vision, as she has invested the deep resources of her community in the shaping of an institution rooted always in excellence. But at heart, the Brenda I am privileged to know is a simple Bible Christian. A disciple of Jesus Christ.

Reflecting on her early formation as a priest in New York, she remembered “a real understanding of the necessity to invite people in and begin from where they are ... trusting that if people have come in, they are seeking God and that is enough to start. I also gained an ability to talk about spiritual subjects in ways that freed people to ask the questions they needed to ask and that invited them into faith.” Therefore, in recognition and gratitude for her confidence that the church is the Kingdom of Heaven, and her dedication to building that kingdom out of the living stones she has been given, offered to the glory of God, we, on this 9th day of November 2019, in the eighth year of our consecration, do award her

The Bishop’s Cross

The Right Reverend Andrew ML Dietsche
XVI Bishop of New York



The Rev. Susan Copley receiving the Bishop’s Cross.
Photo: Nicholas Richardson.

Susan Kay Copley

The Reverend Susan Copley began her adult professional life as a pediatric oncology nurse at Sloan-Kettering Hospital. There, ministering to children with cancer, she experienced first-hand the living presence of God in the midst of pain and suffering, as well as in the unexpected joys of lives lived even in overwhelming circumstances. Her nurse’s heart for people in sometimes desperate need led her into the formative chapter of her life in ministry, as she left for the life of a missionary pediatric nurse in Liberia. Arriving in the second year of that country’s terrible civil war, she took up her work among a people ravaged by war and starvation. For three years she engaged a population so traumatized that even small children used the dolls she gave them to reenact the scenes of public executions and war-time brutality which was the whole experience of their young lives.

But it was also there that she met and married David, a missionary nurse and aid worker from England. They reflected that it was the long-suffering and loving people of Liberia who taught them “what is possible when we seek to be in relationship with God and one another before all else.... even in the midst of conflict and pain, the grace of God is revealed and justice flows from that grace like an ever-flowing stream.”

Mission work in Liberia was followed by mission work in Bolivia, and ultimately to theological studies and ordination in the Episcopal Church. But they remain exemplars among us of the miracles and wonders of the mission field. David is the Director of Mission Personnel for the Episcopal Church. Megan, their daughter born out of the strife and graces of the mission field, is a Young Adult Service Corps intern in Guatemala. And Susan, as the Rector of Christ Church in Tarrytown, has married congregational life and local outreach to the wider global mission network of this diocese, and to the ministry of Cristosal in El Salvador among displaced persons.

“As missionaries,” Susan wrote, “we were privileged to be representatives of the whole Episcopal Church ... to remind others that they are cared for and to remind our church in America that we are connected to a wider communion of people. When we share this love, this connectedness, we also raise the banner of justice... We are all brothers and sisters under God.” Therefore, in recognition and gratitude for her witness to the dignity of every human being, and the love of God for all people through our Lord Jesus Christ, we, on this 9th day of November 2019, in the eighth year of our consecration, do award her

The Bishop’s Cross

The Right Reverend Andrew ML Dietsche
XVI Bishop of New York

Embrace Ubuntu!

By *Michelle Krenzelok*

Immediately before the Diocesan Convention, my mind was swirling. Why did I take the day off from work and commit to go? I am so busy—what was I thinking? I reviewed the agenda and the email noting that we would meet around 12:30 p.m. on Friday. Whew—I had a solid five hours to work in the morning before I left, what a relief! In short, I had committed to go and would follow through; but I was attending Convention from a place of “obligation” rather than openness to what might occur.

Last year was the Year of Lamentation, part of a larger focus on Reparations—the bringing forth and acknowledgement of the sins and wrongs of the past, particularly focused on slavery and the treatment of enslaved peoples. Now, had I done my homework, I would have known more about what was about to transpire. In some ways I feel thankful that I did not, as my mind and heart were fully open to the experience—without expectation.

I watched as there was an approach to the microphone and a request for permission to allow for a brief presentation—permission granted by Bishop Dietsche.

We then watched a dramatic reading from a convention session held on September 27, 1860. Interesting. Individuals representing those earlier delegates took their places around the microphone and began to read from the transcript. The main speaker was John Jay II, a lay delegate just like me, from St. Matthew’s, Bedford. I learned that Jay came from a long line of abolitionists, politicians and prominent New Yorkers who made movements to end slavery, including his grandfather and namesake who was governor of New York and founding member of the New York Manumission Society—an organization that worked to boycott newspapers and merchants who were still involved in the New York City slave trade.

In fact, as governor, Jay’s grandfather had in 1799 signed into law the “Act for Gradual Abolition of Slavery” which called for the eventual emancipation of enslaved peoples in New York—something finally fully achieved in 1827. At the time of the 1860 Convention, however, slavery was still legal in the United States (not abolished until the 13th Amendment was passed in 1865), although the slave trade was not: The trading or importing/exporting of enslaved people had become a crime in 1808. But in 1860, New York City was still, in spite of the law, very active in the slave trade.

Outraged by this, Jay introduced a resolution at Convention calling for the Episcopal Church to stand up against the violation of these laws. He noted that the Church had a duty to act, calling for the bishop to write a letter condemning slavery, and asking for priests to preach against slavery in their parishes across the diocese. Multiple clergy and delegates expressed their views, engaging in a heated discussion. Then, when the resolution was called to vote, the majority of both lay delegates and clergy abstained from voting, with the result that the resolution was tabled. And even though the slave trade diminished, and slavery went on to be abolished, the decades passed, and Jay’s resolution remained there...on the table.

After the reenactment, we were called to do something about this—and so we first voted unanimously to take Jay’s resolution off the table; and then we voted to pass it.

At this, a feeling welled up inside me—catching me off guard. It’s as though there was a release of sorts—a giant exhale. The room and our individual beings were filled with recognition of the hurt, pain, and suffering of the past—something that we often look past, but that still exists today. I ached and knew that this was something important for us to talk about and work through—not just as Christians, but as humans—and that we are in a place and space today where the timing is right to reengage in this conversation, and to call attention to what each of us must do.

When I described my experience to my husband Paul that evening—emotion still brewing inside—he shared with me a quote from Fr. Richard Rohr: “Any wound that is not transformed will always be transmitted.” How true of the world we live in today.

“America is tearing itself to shreds,” Bishop Dietsche’s said in his address. “The divisions among people are deepening, and the fabric of our common life is fraying and coming undone... We in the church, though, are called to make a different kind of witness than we are seeing in the larger society around us... We have a lot of work to do.”

At Convention, we close with the Eucharist, and there is always a guest homilist. This Friday it was the Rt. Rev. Enrique Treviño Cruz, bishop of Cuernavaca in Mexico. He told the story of an anthropologist who had been living with a remote African tribe, studying their culture and habits. He had been there for quite some time, and the day before he left, he was spending time with the children of the tribe. He had a basket filled with local fruits and treats, which he placed at the bottom of a tree. He drew a line in the dirt where the children were standing and told them that when he said to run, they should run to the tree and the first child to reach the tree would win the basket of fruits and treats. He announced “run,” and the children all joined hands and ran together toward the tree, where they sat down and began to enjoy the treats together.

Noticing the anthropologist’s bewilderment, a young girl looked up to him and said, “How can one of us be happy if all the others are sad?”

You may have heard this story before, as years later South African Activist Desmond Tutu referred to this young girl’s thought process as Ubuntu, which means, “I am because we are.”

I call on myself and on all of us to embrace Ubuntu and walk together on this journey, acknowledging the hurt of the past and present, so that we can leverage hope, and begin to heal.

This is an edited version of a homily delivered by the author on the Sunday following the Diocesan Convention.

The author is senior warden of Christ Church, Sparkill.

More New York Parishes Consider London Links

By the Rev. J. Douglas Ousley

The Link Program between the Dioceses of New York and London began in 2006, under Bishops Sisk of New York and Chartres of London, following discussions initiated in 2005 by the Rev. Andrew Mullins. Currently Bishop Shin and I administer the program in conjunction with the office in London of Bishop Sarah Mullally and the Rev. Graham Buckle, vicar of St. Stephen's Church, Westminster. Relations between our bishops across the Atlantic continue to be excellent: Bishop Dietsche was made an honorary canon of St. Paul's Cathedral in 2014; Bishop Shin and I represented our diocese at the installation in 2018 of Bishop Mullally, whom New Yorkers will have opportunities to hear during her visit this May to address the Church Club of New York.

The Diocesan Link program is intended to promote a deeper spiritual relationship between our two dioceses. Linked parishes engage in various activities according to their interests and needs. Usually, the link begins when the priests in charge arrange to preach in each other's parishes. New York parishioners will then visit their link parishes and worship there when they are visiting London. If a parishioner from New York moves to London, or vice versa, the parishioner can join her link church.

Sometimes, there are more extended clergy exchanges. When I was rector of the Church of the Incarnation in Manhattan, my counterpart in London and I swapped jobs for two weeks, living in each other's rectories, taking services, visiting the sick, and so on. Once, groups of parishioners from New York and London went to visit the other parish. These visits took place at different times so that, in many cases, parishioners in the home city could offer accommodation to the visitors in their homes. This year, Incarnation will house the current priest-in-charge of its link parish while he is in New York on sabbatical.

The Church of the Holy Trinity, on East 88th Street in Manhattan, is linked with St. Stephen's, Westminster. Fr. Buckle once arranged to visit a Holy Trinity parishioner who unexpectedly found herself in hospital in London. Holy Trinity's rector, the Rev. John Beddingfield, arranged a joint Bible Study with St. Stephen's via Skype, and, for three years, the two parishes have written a Lenten devotional booklet together.

Some other parishes which have active links, or had links in the past, or are looking for a connection include: Church of the Epiphany, Church of the Transfiguration, Trinity Church, St. Michael's, Calvary/St. George, St. Luke in the Fields, St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. James, St. Mary the Virgin, St. John's in the Village, and Church of the Ascension—all in Manhattan. We are also working on links for parishes in the Bronx and upstate.

Beyond the good feelings generated by this program, such transatlantic contacts remind us that we Episcopalians aren't alone in the Anglican world. After

the election of Gene Robinson as Bishop of New Hampshire in 2003, I was heartened to meet fellow Anglicans in London who expressed their strong support for the election. At a time when many Anglican leaders throughout the world were attacking the American church, the personal support of London priests and laity was very welcome.

At the same time, the Link Program encourages us to embrace the diversity within our branch of Christianity. Like the Diocese of New York, the Diocese of London has parishes reflecting strands liberal and traditionalist, Anglo-Catholic and Evangelical, rich and poor—with many ethnic and cultural backgrounds as well. Indeed, the vast Diocese of London has diversity even within these categories: conservative v. "open" Anglo-Catholics, for instance, or charismatic v. Calvinist Reformed Evangelicals. As for buildings, London has many church buildings centuries older than ours, with the same problems of maintenance and restoration that we have in New York. This is one of the few areas in the Church of England where churches are growing, and we can learn a lot from what works there.

I realize that the link relationship can wax and wane over the years. If you have had a link and it has become inactive, perhaps you could try another link. There have been a few connections between New York and London schools and colleges as well as between hospital and first response chaplains; Fr. Buckle and I are attempting to make further links of these extra-parochial ministries as well. I would be pleased to hear from anyone in the diocese who is interested in this program; you can write to me at ousleyjd@yahoo.com.

The author is a priest in the diocese.

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“Unusual Judgment”

By the Rev. Jake Dell

As Episcopalians, we struggle with how to get the word out about our faith. This is not a problem in other aspects of our lives. Consider how unguarded we are in sharing our views on politics, sports, or the arts. That is because in doing so we are in step with the world around us. Yet when we wish to speak about our faith we are stymied. This is because the world has already distorted what we have to say, even before we say it.

Christianity has been placed out of bounds. Some allowance is made for minority faiths like Islam, while alternative spirituality has merged either with the wellness movement (yoga) or with identity and political movements. As Episcopalians, we are not operating in a neutral theater. If we're honest with ourselves, we are not neutral either. Every day I find that the claims of the gospel compete with my other allegiances.

This is not new. The early Church was afforded no impartial, unbiased venue in which to make its case. Since the Enlightenment, the Christian mind has become increasingly sequestered from the public intellect.

C.S. Lewis did not accept these terms. For him, an intellectual and cultural landscape in which faith was out of bounds had to be reimagined and ultimately replaced. There might be much a Christian has to say that is contrary to the world and much in the world that is strange to the Christian, but faith for Lewis is the continual process of holding contraries together. The Christian must neither seek nor accept the terms of his or her sequester.

To place his faith back in bounds, Lewis built imaginary worlds where faith was integral. His most famous world is Narnia, but he also reinvented Mars and Venus in his Space Trilogy. His mood is neither escapist nor dystopian. He set imagined worlds in contrast to our own to reveal the distortions he found here, especially the exclusion of faith. Faith is a basic principle. Faith explains why this world exists and why we find ourselves in it. But the world cannot access this understanding because the world cannot see the Christian in its midst.

To make the invisible visible requires contrast. If the world cannot see the

Christian, perhaps it is because he or she does not stand in sufficient contrast. This is not because the Christian lacks faith or conforms too much to the world. It is because the world has become blind to the principle of faith. The world needs its sight restored.

To illustrate this point, let me use a well-known character from *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Many non-Christian children have read the story of Aslan with delight and never made the connection with Jesus. Likewise, a faith dulled by rigorism would find it difficult to contemplate the opposite. The Incarnation stands or falls on God becoming a human being, specifically a male human being. To imagine him as a lion seems blasphemous. Jesus is the biblical, canonical formulation of the principle of the Incarnation. Aslan is the imaginative reformulation of the same principle — a principle the world has a hard time seeing in Jesus — but that it can catch a glimpse of in Aslan because Lewis has created enough of a contrast.

It is by this maneuver and operation that Lewis shoves the camel's nose of faith into the world's tent. But Lewis would go further, and by successive maneuvers and operations replace the tent entirely. Or rather he might prefer to say he would enlarge the tent, or have it assumed into an even greater tent: “In my Father's house are many mansions” (John 14:2).

Why engage in this imaginative reformulation of principles? For Lewis it was to bridge divisions and contraries and to reconcile diversity. The world celebrates diversity today in a way it did not in the past, but what is less understood is how to reconcile oneself to this diversity. Again, the Incarnation is the model of a reconciled diversity. The Council of Chalcedon (see BCP, p.864) defined this principal and its canonical formula reads: “our Lord Jesus Christ... recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person.”

I don't know if you truly appreciate what a creative statement that is, or how much imagination it took to craft it! This is not the imagination of fantasy but of theology. Theology is a creative endeavor, and every Christian should be thinking theologically. It takes unusual judgment to think theologically. Unusual because it is creative and unexpected; judgment because it is structured and consistent.

Diversity is not reconciled by saying anything goes. This is why Lewis explored the operations of this unusual judgment in his works. A challenge he faced is one we still grapple with today: understanding when something is a threshold and when it is a boundary. Thresholds can and indeed must be crossed in order to become what one is meant to be, for instance when a boy becomes a man. A boundary must be respected and cannot be crossed without destroying what one is.

All the major controversies in the Church in the past 50 years have been about whether something was a boundary or whether something was a threshold. Take a current proposition: that it is necessary to use more expansive language in our worship. Is the language of “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” a threshold, which by crossing, will allow us to go deeper into the mystery of God, or is it a boundary at which we must stop and go no further, lest we lose the contrast by which we can glimpse at the mystery of the Trinity?

It is a very Anglican thing to say a principle must not be applied in such a way that it violates another principal (see Article XX of the Articles of Religion, BCP, p.871). When the application of a principle appears to violate another principal, applying the operations of Lewis' unusual judgment can help us to think theologically and to imagine a reconciliation.



C.S. Lewis, for whom faith is the “continual process of holding contraries together.”

The author is vicar of Holy Trinity Church Inwood, in Manhattan.

Episcopal Evangelism: A Beautiful State of Christian Being

By the Rev. Dr. Robert D. Flanagan

Episcopal evangelists are becoming more relevant and prevalent these days. I have learned a great deal recently about this growing group, and at the January 2020 “Rooted in Jesus” conference in Atlanta, I reported on my 2019 survey of more than 45 Episcopal evangelists. The data that I presented illustrated the core factors of the Episcopal way of evangelism.

First, what evangelists do is evangelize—meaning they share the good news of Jesus Christ with others. They are not conversionists who convert or make Christians.

Good evangelism requires the correct motivation and direction. The Episcopal evangelists I surveyed had several catalysts, such as “love compels me,” “the Holy Spirit,” “a desire to share,” and “the love of Jesus.” They also reported some impulses that were off track: for example, “making disciples,” “raising awareness about our congregation,” and “growth of the church,” which all point not to evangelism, but to types of mission or formation.

The study also signaled that evangelistic activity must itself be appropriate. Some of the actions that survey participants mentioned were too general or nondescript. For instance, “a table at a farmers’ market” is outreach work, while “bringing people to church,” “inviting people to events,” and “welcoming people” are closer to church growth and hospitality ministries. They also reported more truly evangelistic activities, however, such as “to share my love of God with others,” and “to share examples from my own life where I have seen God at work.” The evangelists also engaged people “as the Holy Spirit leads” them.

Ethics are indispensable to evangelism, and some approaches are out of



Evangelists should not judge. William Blake *The Day of Judgment*. 1808

bounds—such as “judging,” “telling others they’re wrong,” and “yelling.” Those surveyed also identified “discounting other’s experiences,” “pushing beliefs,” and “offering unwanted advice” as improper. When they work ethically, on the other hand, evangelists are “open,” “patient,” “loving,” and “vulnerable.” The root of good evangelism is “one-on-one conversations” where evangelists “listen” and are “completely present.”

The survey also showed that evangelists had powerful feelings about what they did, and gained a sense of accomplishment from it. Most felt energized, alive, excited, joyful, and euphoric; some became loving, cheerful, at peace, and calm; others were humbled, blessed, and filled with gratitude. Although a few were anxious at first, those feelings disappeared once they shared the good news. In a different study, evangelists reported that they relived their experiences of God. For many, evangelism was life-changing. Some feared that sharing would threaten their cherished memories, but found that was not the case: In fact, sharing their experiences heightened their first encounters.

Evangelism involves personal conversations with people known to the evangelist, in which they share experiences of God. It consists of being open and loving, being completely present, and listening to the other person. Our Episcopal evangelists demonstrate that evangelism can play a critical role in the spiritual lives of Episcopalians and that our way of evangelizing has a powerful voice for the Church. Episcopal evangelism is a beautiful state of Christian being.

The author is currently serving as interim priest, St. Peter’s (Lithgow), Millbrook, and is an adjunct professor at General Theological Seminary.

ARTS AND LITERATURE

SHADOW NETWORK: MEDIA, MONEY, AND THE SECRET HUB OF THE RADICAL RIGHT

BY ANNE NELSON

BLOOMSBURY PUBLISHING, 2019

416 PAGES

Reviewed by Nicholas Richardson

Every so often in my capacity as editor of the Episcopal New Yorker, or as the ultimate recipient of emails sent to info@diocesenyc.org, I receive a communication from someone objecting to the breach, as they see it, of the barrier between church and state by the Bishop or Diocesan Convention in addressing issues such as gun violence, racism, poverty, or the mistreatment of minorities. “Stick to your pulpit and the saving of souls,” is the general gist, and leave politics to the politicians. And many within the Episcopal and other mainline Protestant churches do indeed quake at the thought of offending the gods of the Internal Revenue Service, and the loss of tax exemption that they fear might ensue if they do so.

Even a cursory reading of Anne Nelson’s grimly fascinating new book, *Shadow Network*, will make it clear, however, that neither an Episcopal bishop, nor any other imaginable Episcopalian inclined to venture into the “public square” is ever likely to cross whatever line in the sand the Internal Revenue Service might yet pretend to enforce. For as Nelson shows, in their increasingly brazen support of candidates of a single party, fundamentalist and evangelical Christians throughout the United States have stamped across that line so comprehensively that it is now, to all intents and purpose, entirely imaginary.

Nelson’s book isn’t primarily about the profoundly un-American—if, for all that, in some ways utterly American—theocratic ambitions of many fundamentalist and evangelical Christians; but those ambitions—and the fundamentalists’ fear-infused perception of themselves as victims of secular oppression by virtue of having limitations placed on their ability to oppress others—do play a major and undoubtedly crucial part in the story that she tells.

Shadow Network tells of a confluence of interest between libertarians, despoilers of the Earth, minimal taxers, the NRA, the Southern Baptists and others among their non-denominational brothers and sisters, gratuitous system breakers, brazenly politically-partisan Christian broadcasters, and general-issue fanatics (for which read “Constitutional Originalists”). It tells of a web of connections and mutual support among these various groups and individuals of enormous and head-spinning complexity, at the center of which lies a secretive organization with the anodyne name of the Council for National Policy.

It would be wrong to describe all of this as a conspiracy, and Nelson does not use that term. She tells instead of how, over a period of 40 years or more, very conservative—very differently conservative—people founded and built a bewildering range of organizations to promote, ruthlessly and often with little concern for the health of the republic, their different, but consistently

narrow and binary, sets of interests and views of how the world should be. Some of them knew one another, some didn’t. Some bent the rules, and some did not. Some were linked from the beginning and some were not. In many cases they had nothing discernible in common other than a fear that someone, somewhere, was out to take something away from them. Many of them viewed existing national institutions with suspicion, and felt that things had, somewhere along the line, gone wrong. Many clearly felt that a healthy, functioning democracy and cleaving not merely to the letter of the law, but to its spirit, was less important than getting everything they wanted—or even entirely irrelevant.

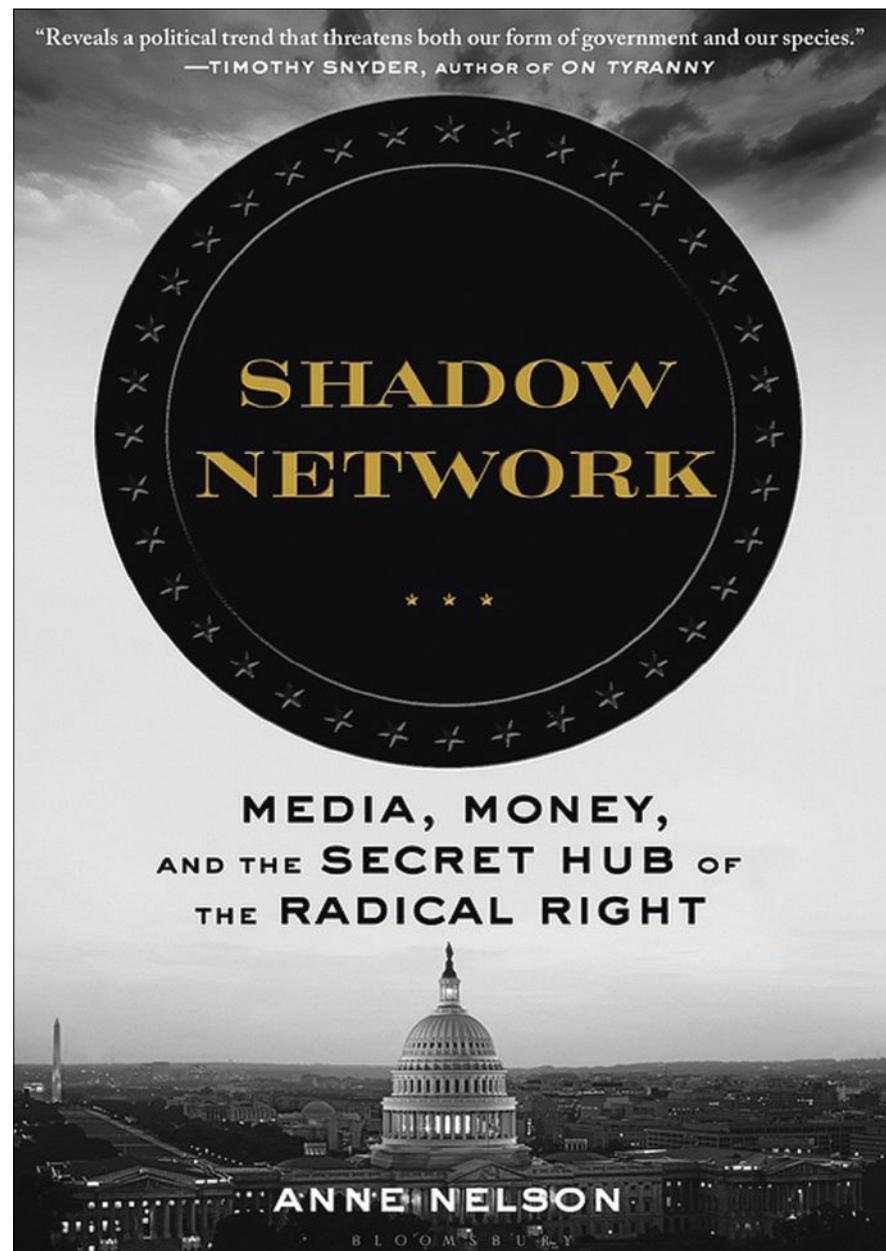
“Our movement will be entirely destructive, and entirely constructive,” Nelson quotes Eric Heubeck as writing in a 2001 essay. “We will not try to reform the existing institutions. We only intend to weaken them, and eventually destroy them....”

“We will use guerrilla tactics to undermine the legitimacy of the dominant regime. We will take advantage of every available opportunity to spread the idea that there is something fundamentally wrong with the existing state of affairs....”

“Most of all, it will contribute to a vague sense of uneasiness and dissatisfaction with existing society. We need this if we hope to start picking people off and bringing them over to our side. *We need to break down before we can build up.*”

Some, like the Koch brothers, brought vast sums of money to the table; others brought organizing ability and a ruthless determination to win; others, their congregations. All were assisted by, and some assisted in, the disintegration of the traditional news industry in large swathes of the country, with local newspapers disappearing, and local radio stations—which, Nelson observes, remain even today the most effective way of influencing people—taken over by conservative Christian networks such as Salem Radio and Trinity Broadcasting Network.

Nelson describes how all this, after periods of mixed success and failure, came together in the fielding of an extraordinarily effective, technically highly-sophisticated vote-getting machine for the 2016 elections that sliced and diced the voter population with terrifying precision to identify individual voters’ deepest anxieties and deliver to them scary, targeted, often misleading or untrue, messages. “The crusade was taken to church sanctuaries....” she writes (noting that 112,000 church-



es, or one third of all the churches in the country, participated), “[delivering] sermon notes to thousands of churches ‘to encourage and assist the pastor in communicating about the election with congregants.’”

Although the author cannot help but betray her liberal inclinations—only a liberal would have written an account of this sort in the first place—*Shadow Network* focuses primarily on the how, when and why of the multifarious, intricately connected, secular and religious organizations that all, or nearly all, have as a common denominator a link to the shadowy Council for National Policy, which acts as the de facto nexus between the different strands of conservatism, connecting the money to the thinkers and the believers.

It’s an extraordinary and sobering—not to say thoroughly alarming—story, replete with a vast cast of characters and an almost equally vast array of organizations, in each case both well-known and obscure, told by someone who, unlike most of us on the coasts, has taken to trouble not only to prize out the facts from the mire, but to spend time with regular folk in the parts of the country that most of us fly over.

The author is editor of the Episcopal New Yorker and director of communications for the diocese.

Anne Nelson serves on the editorial advisory board of the Episcopal New Yorker.

A Cathedral for the 21st Century

We tell ourselves stories in order to live,” frequent visitor to the Cathedral and author Joan Didion tells us, but what happens when we’re no longer around to tell our stories? It’s a fear many of us live with, especially when working at the Cathedral. Every day is filled with moments of historical significance and personal importance. We plan a memorial for Toni Morrison, we laugh at a peacock chasing kale, we stumble upon something from the archives—a speech by one of our personal heroes preaching from the pulpit we had never heard before, a photo of those who worked here years ago smiling in a way that shows true caring and friendship—that remind us that our time here is both important and fleeting. There are so many that have come before and there are so many that will come after. How could you possibly capture it all?

In *A Cathedral for the 21st Century*, a new oral biography compiled by Bill Smith and Wayne Pearson, we’ve set out to capture at least some of the stories from the past and present with a look toward what the future of this great institution might hold. Smith interviewed bishops and deans, artists in residence, current and former employees, and prominent public figures who know and love the Cathedral. He combed the archives with the guidance of Cathedral and Diocesan archivist Wayne Kempton to highlight the voices of people living the moments we now look back on with awe. Photographer in residence Wayne Pearson produced new, elegant photographs of the Cathedral and conducted in depth research to find momentous archival images.

There is no way we could have collected every story, but our hope is to leave a marker in time describing the ideas we’re wrestling with now and how we place ourselves in the narrative of what has already

happened. We’d love to collect even more stories and we invite you to share your favorite memory of the Cathedral, a funny anecdote, or what this place has meant to you by emailing editor@stjohndivine.org. Stories will be included in a digital archive to leave more breadcrumbs for those who come next so we can rest assured that our tales will be told.

The author is manager of programming and communications at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.



Bishop Horace Donegan with Duke Ellington at Ellington’s Second Sacred Concert performed at the Cathedral January 19, 1968. Photo: Cathedral Archives.



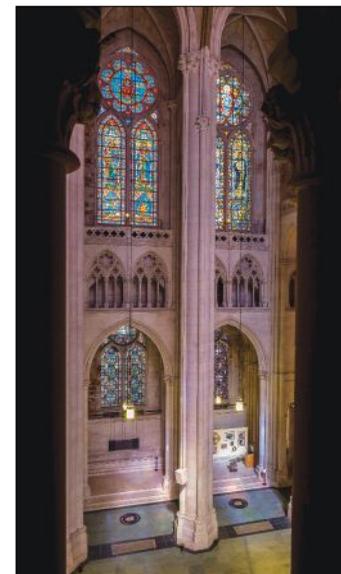
Consecration of the Nave, November 30, 1941. Photo: Cathedral Archives.



Cathedral artist in residence Philippe Petit crossing Amsterdam Avenue to the South Tower launching its construction after a 42 year hiatus. September 29, 1982. Photo: New York Times.



The Cathedral façade, 2018. Photo: Wayne Pearson.



Levels of the Cathedral, 2018. Photo: Wayne Pearson.

To order your copy of *A Cathedral for the 21st Century* please go to www.stjohndivine.org/about/book.

We Christians Must Stand Publicly with Our Jewish Brothers and Sisters

On January 7, the Bishops wrote as follows:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

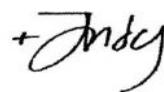
On Sunday thousands of New Yorkers came out and into the streets to walk in solidarity with and loyalty to the one and a half million Jews of the New York City metropolitan region, in outrage and sorrow for the rapidly escalating pattern of anti-Semitic violence across America and in this our own New York. Episcopalians from our diocese participated in the March, and our whole church joins in condemning the rise in incidents of anti-Semitic violence in America. We offer and express to the Jewish Community whom we count as our dear neighbors and friends our love and sorrow, and our promise to stand with them against these rising forces of hate and destruction.

The shootings on a Shabbat morning in October 2018 at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh electrified this country with horror, and with alarm at the evidence of the spreading poison of anti-Semitism in our midst. This past year saw the Passover shootings at a Poway, California synagogue in April, a rising tide of harassment, intimidation and violence against Jews on the sidewalks and streets of Brooklyn, the ubiquity of swastikas and nazi-themed graffiti and hate speech, the murder of five shoppers at a kosher grocery store in Jersey City, and then in the last days of the year the multiple stabbings of people at a Hanukkah celebration at the home of their rabbi in Monsey, a community within the Diocese of New York. Jewish leaders have for some time been raising the alarm about the increase in anti-Semitic rhetoric and violence in America, but it is no longer possible for anyone to ignore or fail to see the evidence and proof of that anti-Semitism right before our eyes. We are witnesses to evil, and that calls us to responsibility and advocacy.

The gospel we profess teaches us the love of neighbor, care and protection of the oppressed, and abhorrence of violence. Prejudice and bigotry against anyone based on religion, race, gender, ethnicity, culture or sexual orientation, is always an eruption of human sin. It is a refutation of Christ, the tenets of our faith, and a betrayal of our common humanity.

The Year of Reparation for the Sin of Slavery in which this diocese is now engaged teaches us and reminds us that evil is never passive, and must be positive-

ly faced and challenged, and that the overcoming of evil demands of all the faithful deliberate, intentional action. We your bishops call on every parish in the Diocese of New York to make a public declaration and witness to your community of the conviction of the Episcopal Church that God loves everyone, that we Christians know that love through our Lord Jesus Christ, and that we claim all people as our own brothers and sisters. Declare in the things you do and the things you say that an attack on the Jewish community is an attack on our own community, and violence against Jews is violence against our own family. Take the time to express to the Jewish organizations and synagogues in your community your love for them, your loyalty to them, and our common rejection of acts of violence and expressions of hate. Let us stand together across our faiths and present before a broken world the faith and strength and courage of one people, all together, brothers and sisters under God.



The Right Reverend Andrew ML Dietsche
Bishop of New York



The Right Reverend Allen K. Shin
Bishop Suffragan of New York



The Right Reverend Mary D. Glasspool
Bishop Assistant of New York

Stewart Pinkerton, Former Chair of the Episcopal New Yorker Editorial Advisory Board, Died Oct 28, 2019 at 76.

By most standards, Stewart Pinkerton's position as the chair of the *Episcopal New Yorker's* advisory board would seem, for a leading professional journalist, to have been among the least of his activities. At *The Wall Street Journal* in the 1980s, he rose to be one of two top editors below managing editor Norman Pearlstine; after that he was managing editor of *Forbes Magazine* for 19 years. But it was clear from his dedication to the *Episcopal New Yorker* that our diocesan publication, modest as it might seem by those standards, held a special place in Stewart's heart—and he brought to it an approach to news and editing which, while it sometimes had to be toned down a touch for a church newspaper, invariably

resulted in a better, more coherent and readable publication. "Stewart was extraordinarily gracious and supportive in the face of my total lack of editorial experience when I became editor by default of the *ENY* in 2009," said current editor and diocesan director of communications, Nicholas Richardson. "He guided me towards good decisions with such a light touch that it was often weeks or months later that I realized that he'd done it all. After he stepped down as chair of the editorial advisory board, he continued to attend meetings and write for the paper—and one of his best stories, about women in the church, was at the printer when he died. We will miss him greatly."



Alice Yurke, Esq. Appointed Chancellor, Joseph Harbeson, Esq. Appointed Vice-Chancellor of the Diocese

Bishop Dietsche recently announced the appointment, effective January 1, 2020, of Alice Yurke, Esq. as the diocese's new Chancellor, and Joseph Harbeson, Esq. as a new Vice-Chancellor. Yurke, who served as Vice-Chancellor from 2007 to 2019, succeeded Canon George Wade, Esq., who stepped down after serving the diocese and its bishops with great distinction and dedication as Chancellor since 1991, and as Vice-Chancellor before that. Bishop Dietsche honored Chancellor Wade for his service by naming him an honorary Canon of the Diocese during the most recent Diocesan Convention in November 2019.

"I am delighted that Alice Yurke has agreed to take on the vital duties of the Chancellorship," Bishop Dietsche said. "For twelve years, she has served the Diocese of New York as Vice-Chancellor with generosity, consummate professionalism, and



Alice Yurke at a Warden's Conference.

humanity; I now look forward to receiving from her the invaluable legal advice and support that I have hitherto received from my dear friend Chancellor George Wade, who was a trusted adviser, counselor, and confidant to three bishops of New York over a span of 28 years."

Yurke, a member of St. Bartholomew's Church in Manhattan and partner in the Dentons law firm, is succeeded as Vice-Chancellor by Joseph Harbeson, Esq., a member of St. John's Church, Tuckahoe, and partner in the firm of Ruskin Moscou



Joseph Harbeson, Esq.

Faltischek in Uniondale, NY. Raymond Vandenberg, Esq., also a member of St. Bartholomew's and recently retired from the practice of law in New York City, stepped down as Vice-Chancellor of the Diocese at the end of 2019 after nine years of service.

"We have been blessed since I became bishop with the wisdom and commitment of three outstanding attorneys in Chancellor Wade and Vice-Chancellors Yurke and Vandenberg," said Bishop Dietsche. "Yet for everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. Now it is time for us to bid farewell and offer heartfelt thanks to our good and faithful friend and servant, George Wade, to congratulate Alice Yurke as she takes on the responsibilities of the Chancellorship, to wish Ray Vandenberg all the joy of new adventures and opportunities in retirement, and to extend a warm welcome to the Vice-Chancellorship to another distinguished lawyer, Joseph Harbeson."

Celebrating 150 Years in Montrose

By Rachael Kikoler

At a special service Sep 29 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Church of the Divine Love in Montrose, Bishop Suffragan Allen K. Shin spoke of the miracle of the raising of Lazarus to illustrate how "because of Jesus's sacrifice, we who have faith in the Lord have been given eternal life and hope."

So too does the Church of the Divine Love continue to be a beacon of hope for its community. From its thriving Christian nursery school, to its very active knitting ministry, Tabitha's Circle, and its Carriage House thrift shop, the church continues to lift up members of its community and beyond. Many of those who have been a part of Divine Love's 150 year history attended a luncheon celebration following the service, where wardens Anthony Giordano and Roseann Prosser graciously accepted a certificate of appreciation from the Town of Cortlandt for the congregation's outreach into the community.



Workshop on Welcoming People with Vision or Hearing Loss

Available to all congregations in the diocese.

The afternoon of Saturday, October 19, St. John's Wilmot in New Rochelle hosted a parish workshop titled "The Stones of Stumbling & Rocks of Offense: Making Church More Accessible." Addressing the challenges of sensory impairments in our congregations, and grounded in our tradition that *The Episcopal Church Welcomes You*, the workshop presented practical, affordable, and achievable solutions for churches with members and visitors who have hearing or vision loss.

Most people, beginning in their 40s, will experience some degree of change; after the age of 65, a third or more of us will have some substantial problems with vision and hearing. In our churches and parish hall buildings, these changes in abilities can be a real problem; and while some parishioners may not feel comfortable expressing concerns, a welcoming and helpful attitude can help make us accessible to all our members.

The diocese's Pastoral Missioner to the Deaf, Deacon Gene Bourquin, presented the 90-minute workshop, encouraging participants to bring their own experiences and observations into the discussion. He emphasized that with basic information and modest efforts, there are many low- and high-tech solutions that churches can implement.

The rector of St. John's, the Rev. Jennie Talley, said those who attended "walked away with some good information and far better educated . . . [We have invited] any in the congregation who might feel challenged by their seeing and hearing abilities to let us know and that we will do our part in improving those things."

This workshop can be offered without charge at any of the churches and facilities in the diocese. The Pastoral Missioner, who worked in the field of vision and hearing loss for more than three decades, can be reached at gbourquin@diocesenyc.org.

The Very Rev. James Parks Morton, 1930-2020

The Very Rev. James Parks Morton, who was Dean of the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine for 25 years from 1972-1997, died on January 4. "Dean Morton was a singular figure in the life of the Cathedral and the Episcopal Church," Bishop Dietsche wrote. "... he shepherded the Cathedral's growing prominence as a religious and cultural center for the city and the nation. Profoundly dedicated to interfaith relations, he brought together people of different religions into respectful dialogue and genuine friendship. He also strengthened the Cathedral's commitment to the arts, environmental advocacy, and outreach to the poor. His leadership brought a renewed flourishing of the Cathedral's life and mission."

The full text of the Bishop's message to the diocese on Dean Morton's death may be read at <https://conta.cc/35zarAn>.

Inwood Property Sale

Feb 4 saw the completion of the sale by the diocese of part of the property of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Manhattan's Inwood neighborhood to developer Artimus for a future residential development. The deal includes the full renovation of Holy Trinity's historic parish house and drill hall as the parish's future home.

The parish house, built in 1929 to a design by John Russell Pope, had significant deferred maintenance costs. This agreement will provide for its gut renovation to provide a multi-purpose sanctuary and performing arts space, meeting spaces available for use by the Inwood community, and an updated rectory. The parish house will remain under the ownership of the diocese. The modest, originally "temporary," structure which had previously been used as the sanctuary has now been demolished.

"This transaction will provide Holy Trinity with a building that is viable for many years (including a much-needed new sanctuary), and the local community with valuable new community space," said Bishop Dietsche. "The proceeds of the sale will make it possible for Holy Trinity to remain in Inwood, and for the Episcopal Church in upper Manhattan to continue Jesus's mission of offering loving, liberating and life-giving relationship with God, with all people, and with the whole of creation."

"We are very pleased to have found in Artimus a partner with a strong record of commitment and sensitivity to the communities in which it works, and long experience of building in Manhattan," said Holy Trinity's vicar, the Rev. Jake W. Dell. "We look forward to working with them in the months ahead to ensure that the



Historic view of Holy Trinity Inwood, showing the parish house in the background, and the "temporary" sanctuary, now being demolished, in the foreground.

Inwood community is kept as fully informed as circumstances permit, and that Holy Trinity's neighbors are treated with every possible consideration consonant with the regrettable but inevitable disruptions of a construction site."



A Requiem Eucharist for the Very Reverend James Parks Morton, seventh Dean of the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine, took place on Saturday, Jan 11.

Photos: The Rev. David M. Rider

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Upcoming Grant Deadlines

For more information, please go to www.diocesenyn.org/upcoming-grant-deadlines and click on the appropriate link.

Property Support Grant/Loan Application
Wed, April 1, 2020

The Diocesan Fund for Critical Clergy Needs Application
Thu, May 28, 2020

Sustainable Development Goals Fund Grants Application
Fri, June 5, 2020

Property Support Grant/Loan Application
Wed, July 1, 2020

Once-in-a-Century Restoration at St. Philip's Church in the Highlands

The 1861 stone Richard Upjohn-designed Gothic Revival church of Garrison's St. Philip's in the Highlands had suffered the inevitable ravages of time—and by three years ago repairs had become urgent.

In response, the vestry's restoration committee, co-chaired by Jan Anderson and Jamie Copeland, planned a multidimensional program of repairs and improvements designed, as senior warden Terri Akbas put it, to “restore the historic aspects of our church and renew the building...to be a home for our congregation, the community, and future generations.”

A new pipe organ was delivered and installed by organ builders Schoenstein & Co. in late 2019; a new columbarium was completed and dedicated by the former rector, the Rev. Frank Geer, in October 2018. A bluestone-paved accessible walkway has been added, ensuring that all can enter the church with ease. In 2019, the bell tower, which had dangerous weaknesses in its stonework, was repointed and reroofed, and the church's cellar area was paved and sealed. In July 2019, the church building was completely emptied of furnishings so that the ceilings and walls could be painted, the floors and pews refinished, and HVAC, sound, and alarm systems installed. “When we opened up the building, we found things that had not been touched for over 150 years,” reports Anderson.

The next project on the horizon is adding a bathroom to the stone church building. Plans are still being developed for the optimum way to add to Upjohn's historic structure. “We only get one chance to do this right,” observes Copeland, “so we want to proceed as carefully as we possibly can.”

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BISHOPS' VISITATION SCHEDULE

MARCH 1 (1 LENT)

Bishop Dietsche:

Good Shepherd, Manhattan

Bishop Shin: Good Shepherd, Bronx

Bishop Glasspool:

Christ Church, Red Hook

MARCH 8 (2 LENT)

Bishop Shin: Resurrection, Manhattan

Bishop Glasspool:

St. Thomas, Amenia Union

MARCH 15 (3 LENT)

Bishop Dietsche: St. James, Hyde Park

Bishop Shin: Trinity, Fishkill

Bishop Glasspool:

Good Shepherd, Roosevelt Island

MARCH 22 (4 LENT)

Bishop Dietsche:

St. John's, Staten Island

Bishop Glasspool:

Divine Love, Montrose

Bishop Andrew St. John:

Good Shepherd, Bronx

MARCH 29 (5 LENT)

Bishop Dietsche: Christ Church,

Marlboro

Bishop Shin: Messiah, Rhinebeck

Bishop Glasspool: Grace Church, West

Farms

APRIL 12 (EASTER)

Bishop Glasspool: Epiphany,

Manhattan

APRIL 19 (2 EASTER)

Bishop Dietsche: Zion Church,

Wappingers Falls

Bishop Shin:

Holy Communion, Mahopac a.m.

La MESA, Dover Plains p.m.

Bishop Glasspool: Trinity, Garnerville

APRIL 25 (SATURDAY)

Bishop Dietsche: Christ's Church, Rye

APRIL 26 (3 EASTER)

Bishop Dietsche:

St Bartholomew's, Manhattan

Bishop Shin: St. James, Goshen

Bishop Glasspool:

Christ Church, Bronxville

MAY 10 (5 EASTER)

Bishop Dietsche:

St. John's, Wilmot, New Rochelle

Bishop Shin: St. James, Manhattan

Bishop Glasspool:

St. John's-in-the-Village, Manhattan

MAY 16 (SATURDAY)

Bishop Dietsche: St. James, Callicoon

MAY 17 (6 EASTER)

Bishop Dietsche:

St. Matthew's, Bedford

Bishop Shin: St. Thomas, Manhattan

MAY 24 (7 EASTER)

Bishop Dietsche:

Christ the Redeemer, Pelham

Bishop Glasspool: St. Luke's, Katonah

MAY 31 (PENTECOST)

Bishop Dietsche: Trinity Wall Street

Bishop Shin: Grace, Manhattan

Bishop Glasspool:

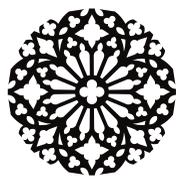
Ascension, Mount Vernon

CLERGY CHANGES

NAME	FROM	TO	DATE
The Rev. Este Gardner	Supply, Diocese of NY	Vicar, Mediator, Bronx	October 15, 2019
The Rev. Varghese Mathew	Supply, Diocese of NY	Priest-in-Charge, St. Barnabas, Ardsley	November 1, 2019
The Rev. Richard Pike	Associate Rector, St. Matthew's, Bedford	Interim Associate, Incarnation, Manhattan	November 1, 2019
The Rev. Steven Y. Lee	Vicar and Pastor, Cathedral Congregation of St. Saviour	Canon Pastor & Vicar, Cathedral Congregation of St. Saviour	November 3, 2019
The Rev. Janet Vincent	Associate Priest, Christ the King, Stone Ridge	Interim Priest, Christ the King, Stone Ridge	November 24, 2019
The Rev. Adrian Dannhauser	Associate Rector, Incarnation, Manhattan	Interim Priest, Incarnation, Manhattan	December 8, 2019
The Rev. James W. Erwin, Jr.	Rector, Christ Church, Warwick	Priest-in-Charge, St Ann's, Bridgehampton, NY	December 31, 2019
The Rev. Dr. Robert Flanagan	Interim Priest, St. Thomas', Amenia Union	Interim Priest, St. Peter's (Lithgow), Millbrook	January 1, 2020
The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze	Supply, Diocese of NY	Haitian Missioner, Diocese of NY	January 1, 2020
The Rev. Dr. William Lupfer	Rector, Trinity Wall Street, Manhattan		January 6, 2020
The Rev. Phillip A. Jackson	Vicar, Trinity Wall Street, Manhattan	Priest-in-Charge and Vicar, Trinity Wall Street, Manhattan	January 6, 2020
The Rev. Daniel Simons	Director for Spiritual Formation, Trinity Wall Street, Manhattan	Provisional Priest-in-Charge, St. Paul's, Norwalk CT	February 1, 2020
The Rev. Dr. Allison Moore	Interim Priest-in-Charge, Christ Church, Manhasset, NY and Chaplain at SUNY New Paltz and SUNY Ulster	Priest-in-Charge, St. Andrew's, New Paltz	February 4, 2020
The Rev. Elise Ashley Hanley	Assistant Rector, Trinity, New Haven, CT	Assistant Rector, Epiphany, Manhattan	February 9, 2020
The Rev. Dustin Trowbridge	Rector, St. George's, Newburgh	Rector, St. James', Danbury, CT	February 16, 2020
The Rev. Donald Davidson	Priest-In-Charge, St. Christopher's, Grand Blanc, MI	Interim Priest, Christ Church, Warwick	February 23, 2020
The Rev. Gene Alan (AJ) Stack, Jr.	Priest-in-Charge, St. Peter's, Gallipolis, OH	Priest-in-Charge, St. Thomas', Amenia Union	February 26, 2020
The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze	Supply, Diocese of NY	Priest-in-Charge, Divine Love, Montrose	March 1, 2020
The Rev. Dr. Anthony Stephens	Supply, Diocese of NY	Vicar, St. John's-in-the-Wilderness, Stony Point	March 1, 2020
The Rev. Tyler Jones	Rector, St. Paul's, Poughkeepsie	Retirement	April 9, 2020
The Rev. Frank Morales	Priest-in-Charge, All Souls', Manhattan	Retirement	June 30, 2020

Cathedral Calendar

MARCH 2020 - MAY 2020



The Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine

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

For details of ongoing programs, tours and workshops at the Cathedral please visit www.stjohndivine.org.

SUNDAY SERVICES

8 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Eucharist
9 a.m. Holy Eucharist
11 a.m. Choral Eucharist
4 p.m. Choral Evensong

DAILY SERVICES

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

of Vows and Consecration of Chrism
5 p.m. Evening Prayer

APRIL 9, MAUNDY THURSDAY

8 a.m. Morning Prayer
5 p.m. Evening Prayer
7 p.m. Maundy Thursday Eucharist & Stripping of the Altar with the Cathedral Choristers and Chorale
9 p.m. The Reading of Dante Alighieri's *Inferno*. After the 7 p.m. liturgy, join poets, actors, and lovers of great literature for the annual American Poets Corner reading of Dante Alighieri's *Inferno*.

APRIL 10, GOOD FRIDAY

8 a.m. Morning Prayer
12 p.m. The Liturgy of Good Friday
The Cathedral Choir tells the story of Jesus' Passion in music.
2:30 p.m. Stations of the Cross or Via Crucis Readings, in Spanish and English, and congregational chanting and hymns take participants through twelve stations, ending in the Biblical Garden. Begins in the Narthex.
7 p.m. Organ Meditation

APRIL 11, HOLY SATURDAY

7 p.m. The Great Vigil of Easter with the Cathedral Chorale
The Cathedral celebrates the Resurrection at this evening service, celebrated by the Bishop of New York, which begins in darkness and candlelight and tells the story of humanity's redemption.

APRIL 12, EASTER DAY

8 a.m. Holy Eucharist
11 a.m. Festal Eucharist for Easter Day with the Choristers, Chorale, and Cathedral Brass
4 p.m. Choral Evensong

RADICAL LOVE LIVE

Sunday, April 26, 7 p.m.
An innovative series of live events and in-depth podcasts exploring human spirituality from a fresh perspective, beyond ideology and institutions. Based at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and produced in partnership with the Congregation of Saint Saviour, each event will consist of presentations and discussions with featured speakers, interstitial music, and spiritual practice.

GREAT ORGAN: RAYMOND NAGEM

Tuesday, April 28, 7:30 p.m.
Associate Director of Music and Organist Raymond Nagem performs a recital of works by women composers, featuring pieces by Clara Schumann, Florence Price, Nadia Boulanger, and Rachel Laurin. For tickets and more information, visit stjohndivine.org. Saturday, December 21 at 2 and 7:30 p.m.

MAY

NIGHTWATCH CROSSROADS: CHRISTIAN

Friday, May 1, 6:30 p.m.
Please see details for March 13.

BLESSING OF THE BICYCLES

Saturday, May 2, 9 a.m.
Open to all.

SPIRIT OF THE CATHEDRAL

Monday, May 4, 6 p.m.
The Cathedral's tribute dinner honoring former Cathedral Trustee President Bruce Macleod and Trustee President Frank Brown. For more information, contact Priscilla Bayley at pbayley@stjohndivine.org or (212) 316-7570.

ORDINATION OF PERMANENT DEACONS

Saturday, May 16, 10:30 a.m.
Visit dioceseny.org for more information.

MEMORIAL DAY CONCERT

Monday, May 25, 7 p.m.
Join us for the New York Philharmonic's first free concert of the season!

TICKETS AND RESERVATIONS

Unless otherwise noted events do not require tickets or reservations. Tickets for all performances other than free or "suggested contribution" events may be purchased directly from the Cathedral's website, stjohndivine.org, or by calling (866) 811-4111

Please visit the Cathedral's website, stjohndivine.org, or call the Visitor Center (212) 316-7540 for updates and additional event and tour information.

ONGOING PROGRAMS, TOURS, WORKSHOPS

Sunday Post-Evensong Organ Recitals

Our Sunday organ series invites established and emerging organists from across the U.S. and around the world to take their turn at the Great Organ and present a free 5 p.m. concert.

PUBLIC EDUCATION & VISITOR SERVICES

ONGOING TOURS & EVENTS

Highlights Tours

Mondays, 11 a.m. – Noon & 2 – 3 p.m.
Tuesdays – Saturdays, 11 a.m. – Noon & 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Explore the many highlights of the Cathedral's history, architecture, and artwork, from the Great Bronze Doors to the seven Chapels of the Tongues. Learn about the Cathedral's services, events, and programs that welcome and inspire visitors from around the world. \$14 per person, \$12 per student/senior. No prior reservation necessary. Meet at Visitor Center.

Vertical Tours

Mondays, 10 – 11 a.m.; Wednesdays & Fridays, Noon – 1 p.m.; Saturdays, Noon – 1 p.m. & 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

On this adventurous, "behind-the-scenes" tour, climb more than 124 feet through spiral staircases to the top of the world's largest cathedral. Learn stories through stained glass windows and sculpture and study the grand architecture of the Cathedral while standing on a buttress. The tour culminates on the roof with a wonderful view of Manhattan. \$20 per person, \$18 per student/senior. All participants must be 12 years of age and older and reservations are recommended. For reservations visit the Cathedral website or call (866) 811-4111. Bring a flashlight and bottle of water. Meet at Visitor Center.

NIGHTWATCH

The Nightwatch series offers two exciting and innovative programs: Nightwatch Crossroads Christian and Nightwatch Crossroads Interspiritual. For more information visit stjohndivine.org or contact: (212) 316-7518 / nightwatch@stjohndivine.org.

ADVANCING THE COMMUNITY OF TOMORROW (A.C.T.)

To learn about the many nurturing year-round programs for young people offered by A.C.T., please call (212) 316-7530 or visit www.act-programs.org.

CHILDREN'S QUEST FUND

Help us to invite children from many countries, religions and economic levels under the shadow of the beloved Cathedral. Please send donations to the Cathedral, designated "A.C.T.'s Children's Quest Fund."

DIVINE SATURDAY CELEBRATIONS

Celebrate good times with ACT's new and improved Divine Saturday Celebrations, with a variety of birthday activities for kids to enjoy! It's a great time for parents and children alike. Speak to a party manager for details at (212) 316-7530.

CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY CARES (CCC)

Please visit www.stjohndivine.org for more information on CCC programs, which include health screenings at the Nutrition, Health and Clothing Center, the Clothing Closet, Sunday Soup Kitchen, SNAP/Food Stamps Program, and Walking Club.

SELECTED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES MARCH

ALJOSCHA: THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT

Sunday, March 1 – Friday, May 15
Inspired by the well-known parable in the Gospel of John, this installation by Ukrainian-born artist Aljoscha assembles 153 compounded, almost weightless, self-contained sculptures in the form of a large biofuturistic organism, seemingly kept afloat from the ceiling of the Nave by an inner impulse. Join us for an opening reception on March 1. For more information, visit stjohndivine.org.

ORDINATION OF TRANSITIONAL DEACONS

Saturday, March 7, 10:30 a.m.
Visit dioceseny.org for more information.

GREAT ORGAN: DAVID BRIGGS

Tuesday, March 10, 7:30 p.m.
Artist in Residence David Briggs returns to the Cathedral for a performance featuring the music of Edward Elgar and Claude Debussy, and the world premiere of Briggs' own organ transcription of Johannes Brahms' Symphony No. 1. There will be a pre-concert talk by David Briggs at 6:30 p.m. For tickets and more information, visit stjohndivine.org.

NIGHTWATCH CROSSROADS: CHRISTIAN

Friday, March 13, 6:30 p.m.
A Friday evening and overnight spiritual retreat for middle and high school age students. For more information and to register, visit stjohndivine.org.

GREAT CHOIR: MUSICA SACRA - BACH, BRAHMS, BRUCKNER, AND RHEINBERGER

Wednesday, March 18, 7:30 p.m.
Rheinberger's stunning Mass for Double Choir in E-Flat Major, "Cantus Missae." Sublime motets of Brahms and Bruckner, plus Bach's Komm, Jesu, Komm. There will be a 7 p.m. pre-concert recital by the Newark Boys Chorus. For tickets and more information, visit stjohndivine.org.

WINDS OF HOPE

Thursday, March 19, 7:30 p.m.
Winds of Hope (formerly *Flutes of Hope*) debuted at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in 2012. This music program was conceived as a tribute to the resilience and compassion of the Japanese people following the devastating earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear reactor calamity of March 2011, an unprecedented triple disaster.

GREAT CHOIR: BACH'S ST. JOHN PASSION

Tuesday, March 31, 7:30 p.m.
Kent Tritle conducts combined Cathedral forces, presenting J. S. Bach's monumental St. John Passion in the Cathedral's Gothic grandeur. For tickets and more information, visit stjohndivine.org.

NIGHTWATCH CROSSROADS: CHRISTIAN

Friday, April 3, 6:30 p.m.
Please see details for March 13.

APRIL

EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA WORKSHOPS

Saturday, April 4, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
Our popular, annual egg decorating workshop. Children can create colorful patterns on their eggs with tissue paper, glitter, glue, and paint, and build a nest for decorated eggs with twigs, feathers, and clay. Please bring two hard-boiled eggs per child. Recommended for children ages 4 – 8 years old. \$10 per child, with accompanying adult. Purchasing tickets in advance is highly suggested for both the 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. workshop as there is limited space in the workshop and can be made online or by calling (866) 811-4111.

BLESSING OF THE PALMS AND HOLY EUCHARIST

Sunday, April 5, 8 a.m., 9 a.m., and 11 a.m.
Please note, the 11 a.m. service will start with the Liturgy of the Palms outside, followed by a procession to the Cathedral.

OBSERVING THE SEASON: HOLY WEEK AT THE CATHEDRAL

APRIL 6 AND 8, HOLY MONDAY AND HOLY WEDNESDAY

8 a.m. Morning Prayer
12:15 p.m. Holy Eucharist
5 p.m. Evening Prayer

APRIL 7, HOLY TUESDAY

8 a.m. Morning Prayer
8:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist with Reaffirmation

Moving Through Fear in the Climate and Ecological Emergency

By the Rev. Canon Jeff Golliber, PhD

Last year, in early November, five scientists published a paper in the journal *Bioscience*. They got to the point in their first two sentences:

“Scientists have a moral obligation to clearly warn humanity of any catastrophic threat and to ‘tell it like it is.’ On the basis of this obligation ... we declare, with more than 11,000 scientist signatories from around the world, clearly and unequivocally that planet Earth is facing a climate emergency.”

Those 11,000+ scientists are from 153 countries. Their warning is not the artifact of opinion polls, marketing, or any agenda that expresses partisan politics. Hoping to be a catalyst for global action, they published it a few weeks before the most recent UN Climate Summit. Greta Thunberg, the well-known Swedish youth activist, put it in a more personal way to member states at the summit:

“You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words. And yet I’m one of the lucky ones. People are suffering. People are dying; entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are in the beginning of a mass extinction and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!”

As a result of strategically disruptive non-actions taken by the United States and Australia (there were others), the summit turned out to be a failure of non-action. Their disruption was surreal. It mirrored—in the sense of Ingmar Bergman’s “through a glass darkly”—the fires burning in Australia and Brazil, drought in Zambia, flooding in south Asia, waves of refugees fleeing from parts of Central America, and melting polar regions. Despite that, those thousands of scientists will not give up or give in, nor will Greta and increasing numbers of young people who speak from the streets.

Are they afraid? They probably are—being reasonable people—yet they’re not letting themselves become frozen by their fear. They know that a lot of difficult changes must be made now, and they’re refusing to let fear, anxiety, apathy, and disenchantment rule their lives.

Here I’m writing mainly for people in our congregations, communities, and holy orders. We all struggle with the strange disorientation that this fear creates. Janet Fedders, Minister Provincial of the Franciscan Third Order, says that we must be willing and faithful enough “to get out of our comfort zones,” knowing how easy it is to want to retreat permanently into whatever gives us feelings of relief. Br. Luis Antonio Rivera, in the Diocese of New York, expressed the same meaning in a different way: we must “fall in love again,” he said, with God and God’s creation. They’re both talking about faith combined with courage.



You have stolen my dreams.

Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

Let me draw upon two quick examples of the beguiling comfort zone, one involving ordinary public conversations, like we might have at coffee hour in church, and the second from more private, pastoral meetings.

The first requires some attentive listening: Lately, I hear people asking questions like *What do you believe about the climate issue?* In a sense, this is a good question. One might assume that the intent is to invite group discussion, and it could actually succeed. But in a society like ours, where education is highly valued, one would think that the better question would be *What do scientists say about the climate crisis?* Our thoughts are increasingly shaped not by facts or science, but by money spent to shape how we think, individually and together. So it’s no surprise that the more frequent question these days would be *What do you believe about ...?* That’s not far from

asking which news broadcasting network we watch in our homes, or which side of a supposed controversy we take. Sometimes, that’s exactly the kind of information that the person asking the question really wants to know: *Are you one of us, or one of them?* It’s an invitation to retreat into a comfort zone, and that usually ends discussions by dividing the group. Some feel secure within the comfort zone; for others, their fear is magnified. In different ways, both have become frozen by their fear.

Here’s the second example. Sitting with a friend in a local diner, he shares some unexpected, private thoughts—essentially his “daydreams,” which involve suddenly discovering that the scientific facts about the climate emergency are all a mistake. We talk about it for a while, and I tell him that the same thing happens to me now and again. I can’t think of anything better than to wake up one morning and discover that it’s not really real. Neither of us wish that it’s a “hoax,” and we both know that these occasional fantasies are not signs of weakness or cowardice. They are a deeply soulful and realistic appreciation for the almost unthinkable severity of what’s going on. It’s only a step away from praying for a miracle. As many of my activist friends say, we are called to facilitate the miracle that we all need—to work through our fear faithfully, finding the courage to love.

It was James Parks Morton, *may his soul rest in peace*, once Dean of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, who helped me understand what this means for the church. Sitting in his office about 25 years ago, he said that what we customarily call “the church” is ultimately “the whole Creation in a process of renewal.” To enter deeply into worship on Sunday mornings is to remember that deeply in the soul. *“Do this in remembrance of me.”* Jesus said. Survival depends on whether we’re willing to do that: to move out of our comfort zones, take up our crosses, and fall in love again with God and God’s Creation.

The author is Sullivan-Rondout Episcopal Missioner and Assisting Minister Provincial for Sacred Ecology Society of Saint Francis, Third Order.