

Antonello da Messina, Christ Crucified 1475

THE EPISTLE

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Easter Joy, Easter Challenges

Dear Friends:

I write to you with a joy and enthusiasm that can come only through a St Paul's Holy Week and Triduum! Being with you and walking alongside you through Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the Vigil - on, of course, into Easter Sunday - truly took my breath away. And now I believe with renewed certainty that this kind of experience stands at the heart of our mission to this city: our liturgy, music, and catholic faith combine to form this beauty of holiness. And in this beauty souls find their rest, and the world's deepest truths fill our hearts.

All this, of course, comes from a church united in focus - and all around I saw countless parishioners and ministries working together well. My heartfelt thanks - and admiration - to each and every one of you - for your skill, for your gifts of time - but first and foremost for your faith. Thank you to our assistant clergy; musicians and parish choir; acolytes; altar guild; ushers; flower guild; lectors; hospitality teams. Thank you to our dear friend Bishop Rod Michel; and thank you to those Baptized, Confirmed, and Received for your confidence in both Christ, and your new commitment to St Paul's. The danger of expressing thanks is, of course, that I undoubtedly forget so many: let me simply thank this entire parish, and particularly for calling me to be in this place with you.

A retired priest in my last parish liked to remark that once Jesus has left



THE REV'D RICHARD WALL

the tomb, the clergy are ready to crawl into it. And so off I go on a post-Easter break, spending a couple of weeks in my homeland, and hopefully enjoying a glorious spring in Middle England. Clergy vacations seem generally to be busman's holidays, and I'm excited to be preaching Easter III at St Paul's Knightsbridge, and meeting Fr. Gyle and all the good people of that place, as we work to strengthen and enrich our bonds in Christ.

During my absence Fr. Strout will serve as senior staff member, and Senior Warden Laurel Malson will take lead responsibility for all vestry matters. To accommodate being without a rector, weekday evening Mass will not be celebrated again until week beginning Monday 18th April.

Whether in London or DC, we are part of one Body, one Communion. And throughout the year we hear largely the same appointed readings at

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Mass: during Eastertide, account after account of the Resurrected Christ appearing. As we allow these appearances to wash over us, notice that Jesus does not appear to disciples in isolation: he appears to those who are gathered, and particularly when disciples are sharing a meal. In other words, the Risen Lord appears to his fledgling Church - and in these lections we see how He forms a disparate, scattered group of disciples into a Body sent forth to preach the Gospel to all nations.

It's reminds me once more that Christ does not call us into isolation, but into fellowship - into a community of discipleship, which we name the Church. Christian community is perhaps one of the hardest challenges in life - a testing and a trying sometimes beyond all imagining. And yet there is perhaps nothing deeper or richer, as together we find Christ in each other.

Eastertide is a season for considering the purpose and mission of our church - strong in our knowledge that St Paul's stands and lives and breathes because Christ has called us into being, and sets before us a particular mission and a ministry: the Risen Lord whose first words of new life echo still today - *be not afraid*.

Elsewhere in these publications I have written on the special purpose and ministry of this place - at least through my own eyes. Without simply repeating, our life begins and ends in worship - our offering to God of all that we are; our receiving of Christ's body and blood in the form of bread and wine; our sending out into the world. And, while we all may look for something different from a church, on this point we must all agree: we are here to meet the Risen Jesus; here to receive His word of peace in our hearts; here to know Christ, and to learn to make Christ known. Christ does not call us into being to worship our worship or our various ministries - but so countless seeking souls may

kneel and adore; find and receive.

Of course, this can be said about any Episcopal Church. So let me next add our Anglo-Catholic identity and practice. In a sea of Episcopal Churches, this is our special character. We celebrate the Sacraments according to the traditional rites and rhythms of the Church; we offer worship, devotions, and a piety that cannot easily be found elsewhere. I base my own vision for this parish on these Anglo-Catholic traditions being our chief tool of evangelism.

Of course, the worth of our liturgical style can be measured only in the lives it creates. Every member of this parish must actively honor our corporate faith in the Incarnation by - somehow, in some way - working to alleviate poverty, and serving the poor. If the beauty of our worship does not guide and push us into service and mission, then it is but idolatry. Let me commend once again the work of the Commission on Mission, and the Grate Patrol - this church offers a variety of opportunities for service. Please take advantage of these, and worship the Christ we greet in the Sacrament by serving the Christ we meet in those desperately needing your help.

And, of course, I could write an entire volume on the importance everything else - sacred music; formation; evangelism; spiritual growth. But let me leave these to both previous and future editions. What I hope you see is both the general tasks set before each church, alongside an understanding of the particular mission God places in our hands.

Part of this means accepting that we are not called to meet all possible spiritual needs - for that is surely impossible. Discernment work in a church context often calls for delicate balancing - an understanding of priorities, of emphases, of understanding what is and is not possible in any particular season. Perhaps one of our own primary challenges is the gap

between our expectations and our capabilities - bluntly, what we want, versus what we can afford - along with a holistic view of the needs of the entire parish, and an understanding that pretty much all our operating expenses are funded by parishioner pledges. This speaks to our being here as brothers and sisters in Christ - united in our worship - rather than customers seeking our own brand of personal satisfaction.

At times it seems as if our programs and ministries find themselves in competition, rather than in harmony: a dollar for Ministry A, being a dollar away for Ministry B. Or, "my" needs, "my" priorities are surely right for everyone, and so must be somehow found and funded. Community does not mean uniformity - but, even so, the strength of faith and discipleship I find in this place convinces me that greater coherence is within our reach. And so I will be speaking with Vestry about the need for strategic planning - of a visioning process for the future - and a sense of how we intend to reach wherever we hope we are going. It's time to step back and, in a spirit of prayer and fellowship, look at the ministries that build this church, and ask how, in each respect, God calls us to be faithful. Part of this will involve each of us learning to be honest and courageous in accepting the reality of church finances - and then learning to be comfortable, joyful, and hopeful in this our skin. Our eyes need to be set in the same direction - and that focal point is, of course, Christ. As our patron puts it: *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.*

I have been here with you now for eight months. From the day I entered this place good, well-meaning people have, in their different ways, been apologetic to me - and especially in the last few weeks. Regret has been expressed for the challenges this parish faces, and for difficult situations wait-

ing for the new rector's attention. I've been asked more times than I care to remember if I would have come had I known what I now know.

And the answer, is, of course, a clear Yes. I am convinced that God has called me to be here among you, and I am not only happy, but also honoured to be here in this magnificent place. As I think about the future of this place, my perspective is long term. Challenges are not daunting - but, I believe, opportunities. Of course, challenges must be faced, conventional wisdom sometimes disrupted, and an awareness maintained of how easily we can mistake our own perspective or experience for universal truth. God does not call us to lives and ministries of comfort and plain sailing - but, sometimes, of walking hard roads. Equally, we can find rest and peace in our worship and faith; we can devote the time and the prayer that good discernment work requires. As one new bishop once said: you may grow impatient with my patience.

Every evening I find myself alone in our dark sanctuary. I find and fumble my way inside, carefully avoid colliding with wood, and then stop and kneel and breathe. As my gaze lifts I suddenly see a candle shining brightly in darkness - light signifying that this great temple is first and foremost a home for a tabernacle: a place where Jesus truly lives. It is my very own condensed Easter Vigil, repeated day after day. Suddenly I see the presence of Jesus once again: the mystery of the Cross and the joy of Resurrection, brought together in small pieces of bread reserved for our adoration. Kneeling and praying I think of the countless souls who, like me, enter this place, kneel, pray, and somehow grip in each hand the reality of death and the joy of new life. I think of those drawn inside in good times and bad - in happiness and tremendous sorrow - and have here found, in the presence of the Eucharistic Sacri-

face, the peace passing all understanding.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet... Before this man - before this single flame burning in the midst of darkness - our thoughts and actions are both exposed and assessed, our best aspirations, and our worst failures. Simeon was right: in him the thoughts of many are revealed. Yet this man comes with both judgment and forgiveness. Ultimately all our worship, programs, and ministries are

but one more part of following this lonely figure, as he walks first to Jerusalem, but then on into Galilee. It is here to this place - to this community - that God first calls you and me, and it is here that our discipleship will be fulfilled. Here we are constantly reminded of the needs of our each and every neighbour; and constantly confronted by our own failures. Day by day at our altars we offer all that we are - ourselves, our souls and bodies. By the mysterious workings of the

Holy Ghost this is taken, consecrated, redeemed, and placed back into our hands. And in this gift of divine love we commit ourselves once again to loving this our common life, supporting one another in our journey through this great and terrible world: the world God made, and for whom He died.

This comes, as always, with my love and friendship,

Fr Richard



Middle East Update from American Friends

Ann Korky

Members of the Commission on Mission and our Vestry Stewards, Jeanne Smith and Ed Loucks, met with Anne Lynn, President of the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (AFEDJ) March 1 for an update on the Middle East ministries St. Paul's supports through AFEDJ. The Friends Trustees held a Board meeting in Jerusalem in January and visited many of the Diocese's humanitarian institutions, including both al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza and St. Savior's School in Zarka, Jordan—the two main recipients of the funds sent to the region on the parish's behalf by the CoM.

Al-Ahli continues to provide vitally needed medical care to people in Gaza, a coastal enclave of 1.5 million people who are shut in by the closure of its borders with both Israel and Egypt. The poverty and isolation of the people of Gaza underscore the importance of al-Ahli's commitment to providing medical assistance to all in need, irrespective of religion, ethnicity or ability to pay. There is a special focus on the needs of children and women. Thanks to a special grant and

dogged efforts by AFEDJ to comply with US and Israeli export controls, al-Ahli is now home to the only mammography center in Gaza, offering potentially life-saving cancer screening otherwise unavailable to its population. St. Paul's donations have helped to keep al-Ahli's doors open and the hospital functioning even during periods of military conflict between Israel and Hamas.

At St. Savior's in Jordan, the Trustees were able to see many of the physical improvements to the school that have been funded by St. Paul's donations. The need for scholarship funds remains acute as Jordan copes with the influx of over 680,000 refugees from the civil war in neighboring Syria. Most live not in refugee camps but outside them, where they compete with the Jordanian population for jobs, housing and other necessities. With wages down and prices up as a result, St. Savior's parents find it increasingly difficult to pay their children's tuition. Participants in the parish pilgrimage to the Holy Land this fall will have the chance to visit St. Savior's and see firsthand the difference the parish has been able to make to this co-educational

K-12 school where boys and girls, Muslims and Christians, and blind and sighted children learn side-by-side.

Archbishop Dawani told the AFEDJ Trustees that he and his staff have identified four of the Diocese's institutions as top priorities for the next three years. Both al-Ahli and St. Savior's are on that list, as is the Princess Basma Center for Disabled Children in Jerusalem to which St. Paul's has also contributed.

In thanking the parish for its generous support, Anne Lynn made clear that our donations have made an important difference, not just in the lives of those these institutions serve but to the Christian community that operates them. The tangible demonstration of our solidarity and support is deeply felt and greatly appreciated. Again this year, the parish's Good Friday collection will be sent to the Diocese of Jerusalem via AFEDJ so its important humanitarian work can continue in the same region where Our Lord himself both taught and healed.



Praying with the Tractarians

Professor John Orens

Our parish church stands on a foundation laid by the brave pioneers of the Catholic revival in Anglicanism we know as the Tractarians. Our sung mass, our vestments our incense, all the beautiful things we offer to God, would be unthinkable without their labors. And so it is natural that we should look to them for spiritual guidance, especially as we journey from Lent to Easter.

If we listen to Keble and the other Tractarians, we discover that the God to whom they point, is no remote potentate. He shares our human nature. From our baptism we have been joined to him so intimately that Edward Bouverie Pusey had to coin a new word; we have, he said, been “in-Godded.” To empty ourselves is to be filled with overflowing life. It is this divine life that is the source and fruit of prayer, for as Pusey insisted, true prayer is simply “union with God.” Allow me to offer seven stations of Tractarian prayer, seven graces for our pilgrimage towards Easter.

The first is *the grace of tangibility*, the grace of ordinariness. Consider baptism. It is a sacrament - an outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual grace. The Tractarians were sometimes excessively otherworldly, but they insisted that grace is often communicated through the humblest realities of our earthly lives. Keble, for example, noted that it is the unspiritual who refuse to believe that something as tangible, as ordinary, as water can administer new birth. And so he argued that when we pray we should pay heed to the spiritual influence our bodies wield, whether bowing our heads, bending our knees, or making the sign of the cross. Tangible acts like these do more than acknowledge

God’s grace. In their very outwardness they are vehicles of that grace, penetrating the inward domain of our souls. Indeed, the Tractarians argued that Christian prayer is a daily discipline that should be habitual, not something done because we are in the mood or because we are stirred by religious feeling.

Bowing, bending, signing, running, being splashed with water: these tangible human gestures help bind us to Christ. And this conjunction of the natural and the supernatural, of the seen and the unseen, points to our second grace: *the deep grace of our seemingly ordinary humanity*. The Tractarians complained that we skim over the surface of life as if we were no more than passing shadows. They remind us, we are made in the image of God and, if baptized, plunged anew into the divine life and perfect humanity of Jesus Christ. Each human being, said John Henry Newman, “has a depth within him unfathomable, an infinite abyss of existence...” To pray, then, to plumb the depths of Christ, is to discover the depths of our own souls, and this is a considerable grace on our pilgrim’s way.

But, as the Tractarians point out, it is not a solitary grace. We may enter the waters of baptism as individuals, but we emerge as members of Christ’s body, the Church, and thus members of one another. Here our third grace begins. Prayer, the Tractarians taught, is *sharing the life of God*. And since Christ is forever interceding for us, in our prayers we must intercede for one another. In this mutual embrace, we enter most deeply into the mystery of the holy Catholic Church.

We cannot be content with praying *for* one another if we are not praying *with* one another. This is one of the reasons why the Tractarians were

insistent that churches be open every day for public worship. And here their efforts were remarkably successful. By 1864 there were more than a thousand Churches open in London alone. How many, I wonder, are open in the city of Washington today?

The Tractarians would agree that we at St. Paul’s do quite well at common prayer, were it not for the absence of so many common people. Where, they would ask, are the dispossessed and the destitute, the men and women who live in the shadows of your frantically meritocratic society? We are not praying with one another as Christ would have us pray, if we are not praying with them. Their tangible presence—*the presence of the ordinary humanity they share with us—is the fourth grace* that we seek. As we pray, we might ask ourselves what barriers we have unwittingly erected, individually and corporately, between ourselves and those suffering in “body, mind, or estate.” As Pusey pointed out, it was in the life of the poor that God joined our human nature to his. We cannot know him fully, which is the point of prayer, unless we know them.

Of course, this is a grace is a gift from which we often flee. Rather than open our hearts to the claims of love, we close them up; shutting out others, shutting out God, and shutting out our true selves. And if we are hiding from God, how can we pray as we ought? It was to deliver the faithful from this spiritual quandary that the Tractarians revived the ancient Catholic practice of sacramental confession and absolution. Unfortunately, the Tractarian literature on confession is severe; at times, it is downright morbid. But the heart of their message is more inviting. In confession, they said, we open ourselves to ourselves

and to God, and so begin the journey out of darkness into light. In the confessional the ordinariness of life, with all its pettiness and idolatries, is exposed so that its very ordinariness may be redeemed.

And *this redemption is our fifth grace*, one that the Tractarians believed encapsulates the whole life of prayer. Frederick Oakeley, the first priest to serve at what would become the Church of All Saints, Margaret Street in London, explained the gift this way: "Confession...offers not merely a shelter, but an asylum for the wounded spirit; not merely a home, but a sanctuary for those inmost feelings of the soul which the repulses of the world have driven to their narrow cheerless hiding place."

What this betokens is more than a momentary consummation. We are, Newman observed, continually being called; summoned, as Pusey noted, to a life of deepening grace and deepening love whose earthly seal, and the seal of all our prayers, is the holy Eucharist. At the altar, the bonds of love that unite us to Christ and to one another take on flesh and blood. Here the mysterious grace of tangibility with which our journey began with a splash of water, is infused with life, "penetrating us," said Pusey, "soul, and body, and spirit, and irradiating and transforming us into [Christ's] own light and life..."

But listen yet again. We discover that within the grace of the Blessed Sacrament there is another and *sixth grace*. In 1848 John Keble preached a remarkable sermon telling his parishioners that he would be celebrating the Eucharist every week and he urged them to communicate regularly. To receive is to "partake of Christ," he explained. "How can you live without it?" The sacrament, he explained, is nothing less than "the tree of life in the midst of the garden," and to come to the altar is to enter the gates of the heavenly city.

Now an altar is a place of sacrifice, and especially during Lent we are aware that our altar is, as it were, another Calvary. Keble reminds us that it is also another Eden; it is Paradise restored. To it we bring our hopes and labors for God's new world, around it we share the life of God's new world, and from it we are sent to bear witness to God's new world. *The seventh grace the Tractarians would give us is heaven, a Kingdom that is already blossoming in our midst*. Our pilgrimage, even in Lent, is thus not to a distant Easter when we may at last enjoy God's presence. The life of prayer invites us to find God's presence here and now in the tangible ordinariness of our daily lives and in the tangible ordinariness of the sacraments; to find God's presence in the depths of our souls, in our intercessions, and in our common prayer; to find God's presence in our communion with the suffering and the forgotten; to find God's presence in our willingness to forgive and to be forgiven; to find God's presence in the sacrament of the altar and in the mystery of heaven on earth. All this is prayer; all this is grace.

Our Tractarian journey now draws to an end, but our own journey has just begun. And as we set off, there is a Tractarian prayer that may help point us on our way. It comes from Pusey. "*Good Jesus, Fountain of Love, fill us with thy love; compass us with thy love, that we may see all things in the light of thy love, receive all things as tokens of thy love, speak all things inwards breathing of thy love, win through thy love others for thy love, until we be fitted to enter into thine everlasting love, to adore thy love and adore thee, our God and all. Even so come, O Lord Jesus.*" Amen.



Robert McCormick's Sabbatical Plans

Robert McCormick

Many have asked about plans for my sabbatical, which begins just after Easter and continues through the end of July. First, I am very grateful for the opportunity to have a sabbatical, and very much appreciate all that has gone into making it possible!

I will be doing a fair bit of traveling. On the weekend after Easter, I'll be in Dallas, Texas, leading a hymn festival and workshops in hymn and service playing for the local chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

Shortly after that, I will spend a few weeks in the U.K. visiting friends, as well as renewing connections in St. Albans (a 30-minute train journey from London King's Cross Station), where I'll spend about 10 days. Their director of music will be on sabbatical as well, so I'll be doing a bit of playing at the Cathedral to help them fill in some gaps.

After I return from England, I'll be in Colorado Springs for the first Sunday in May, where I will lead a workshop with the choir of Grace and St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, conduct them in Sunday Evensong, and play a recital.

A little later in May, I'll travel to Portland, Oregon, where distinguished colleague Bruce Neswick has kindly invited me to guest conduct the choir of Trinity Cathedral. I've never been to the Pacific Northwest, so I hope to do a bit of sight-seeing and drive up to Seattle as well.

I will then travel to North Carolina shortly thereafter, where my youngest brother is getting married, and I won't have to worry about rushing back in

Continued on p. 8

time for Sunday morning, for a change! In June I'll attend the national conference of the Association of Anglican Musicians, as I usually do.

Interspersed with all this, I hope to be able to worship in many differ-

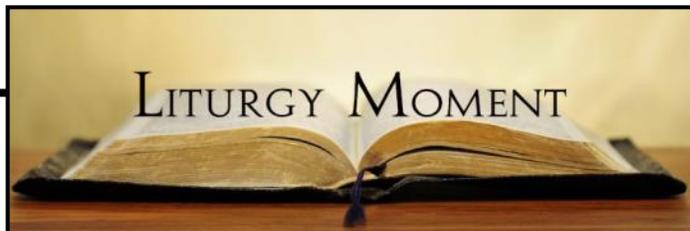
ent churches, including some Lutheran parishes. Don't worry; I'm not thinking of converting, but I have realized that I know very little about current Lutheran liturgical or musical practices, and I'd like to know more.

I hope to work in a little non-professional R&R as well, and to spend some time visiting family. I will miss everyone at St. Paul's very much!



What is Liturgy?

[Editors Note: Beginning this month, Fr. Shawn will offer a short article on liturgical history and theology in each issue of the Epistle. Fr. Shawn welcomes any questions you might like considered in this article. Please email him with questions or comments at strout@stpauls-kst.com.]



Fr. Shawn Strout

When we consider the liturgy, we might ask a very basic question, "What is liturgy?" It is one of those words that we often use but may not fully understand what it means. On a very basic level, liturgy is the various rites of the Church. Of course, this would include the Mass (aka Holy Eucharist, Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper and the Divine Liturgy). It also includes other sacraments and sacramental rites of the Church, such as baptism, confirmation, marriage, reconciliation of a penitent, ministrations to the sick, and ordination. Furthermore, it includes the Daily Office of morning prayer, noon prayer, evening prayer and compline. However, liturgy would not include devotional practices such as reciting the holy rosary, adoration of the Holy

Sacrament and Stations of the Cross. While these devotional practices are powerful spiritual practices and are to be encouraged, the Church has not recognized them as liturgy *per se*.

But speaking of liturgy simply as all of the prescribed services of the Church does not really get at the heart of liturgy. To get to the heart of liturgy, we want to look at the Greek. The Greek word for liturgy is *leitourgia*, which is a compound word of two other Greek words, *laos*, which means "people," and *ergon*, which means "work." Perhaps some folk will recognize this etymology of liturgy as being "the work of the people." This understanding of liturgy became quite popular before, during and after the Second Vatican Council as one of the seminal texts promulgated by that Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, calls for "[full] conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations [paragraph 14]." Even in Anglican and Protestant liturgical circles, the call for the liturgy to be "the work of the people" became quite popular.

And yet, liturgy goes even deeper than simply being "the work of the people." The original meaning of *leitourgia* was "a public work of any kind ["Liturgy" in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*]." These public works were done by the civil government on behalf of the people. We might imagine the Great Railroad

Boom of the mid-nineteenth century or the interstate highway system of the mid-twentieth century as examples. The word *leitourgia* was also used in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) for the services performed in the Temple. Thus, we begin to see the meaning of liturgy deepen. Not only is liturgy "the work of the people," but it is even more. It is the work of the people done for the common good of the world. In other words, we as the people of God gather together to offer praise and thanksgiving and to intercede to God on behalf of the entire cosmos. In other words, we do not come to Mass simply to fulfill our personal spiritual needs but to be intercessors – priests – of the entire cosmos! I don't know about you, but I find that to be pretty amazing! In the liturgy, we, as priests of the Church, offer praise and thanksgiving and intercede to God for the entire cosmos! Amazing!

Now, you might have noticed that I said "we, as priests of the Church." I was not referring just to Fr. Richard, Fr. Jeff, myself and our honorary associates. I was referring to all of us! What do I mean by that? Well, stay tuned for next month's Liturgy Moment to learn more!

In Christ,
Fr. Shawn



What is the Commission on Formation Doing These Days?

Edward Loucks

What is the Commission on Formation? The Vestry has a number of commissions focusing attention on various aspects of life at St. Paul's. Each member of the Vestry has responsibility for a commission. They are called "ministry stewards," and they advise and encourage the volunteer parishioners who tend to things like buildings and grounds, administration, evangelization, pastoral care, etc. The Commission on Formation is one of those ministries. The Vestry stewards for this commission are Jeanne Smith and Ed Loucks.

So, what is "formation?" In lower manifestations of the holy catholic church, it is known as "Christian education" or "Sunday school." This commission works with parishioners who volunteer time, talent and commitment to activities such as The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, Pilgrims in Christ, the Rector's Forums, the Adult Discussion Group, the Commission on Mission, and others. The Vestry stewards report to the Vestry issues that will assist parish volunteers to do their job. Membership on these commissions is open to any St. Paul's parishioner.

The Commission on Formation met on Saturday, March 12th, to get acquainted with our new clergyman, Fr. Shawn Strout. Among his duties is to reinvigorate Christian formation, especially adult formation, which has been limping along since Pilgrims in Christ went on sabbatical last year.

It was a joyful, high energy gathering! Fr. Shawn described his vision for us, and let us know that his ideas are still evolving. He appreciated our ideas and our enthusiasm. Those who were present enjoyed being listened to, and were in strong support of his ideas. Here is a summary:

Fr. Shawn is guided by two prin-

ciples. First, *concurrency*. Learning opportunities must be available on multiple tracks, simultaneously—a menu of opportunities from which people can select. We are blessed with several meeting spaces, and many of them are not being used yet. One suggestion: change the name of The Rector's Forum to something that does not appear to be the rector's recommendation.

Second, *multi-modality*. A variety of times and days for meetings, locations (at St. Paul's or in a restaurant private meeting room, or in private homes, for example), small groups with special topics or to meet a short term need (such as bereavement groups), book studies, Bible studies, lay or ordained leaders—any format that meets the overall objectives of fellowship and spiritual growth in community.

Fr. Shawn then conducted a "popcorn" brainstorming session, on the strengths and challenges we have faced in the past with adult formation:

Pilgrims in Christ: Strengths include (1) the high level of commitment by the teaching team, the participants, and the mentors; (2) multiple opportunities to commit to continuing or exiting; (3) the guidance and support of mentors/sponsors; (4) bonding in community; (5) excellent way to get to know our faith and the work of the church; and (5) the Wednesday evening meeting time seems to work well with all participants and teachers.

Challenges: (1) the length of the commitment—nine months; (2) only one entry point—September; (3) labor intensive, on both teaching team, led by the rector, and the participants; and (4) a tendency to be exclusive.

Jesus Train: Strengths include (1) food, fun and fellowship; (2) inclusiv-

ity—open to all, with no long-term commitment; (2) selection of teaching topics conducted by one or two people instead of a teaching team of up to half a dozen people; (3) short term commitment of six weeks, offered more than once a year.

Challenges: (1) the name and format is "hokey;" (2) moving around three times during an evening is time-consuming and distracting; (3) the meal preparation, including shopping for food, is labor/time intensive.

The main challenge in these programs and others like them is this: what do we do next? Is there something a person can go to after Pilgrims or Jesus Train, to continue growing in the Spirit and in fellowship with other Christians? That is what the Commission on Formation and Fr. Shawn will be working on in the coming months.

In response to a question about mass before formation activities, Fr. Shawn mentioned that the evening low mass schedule is currently in discernment. Morning low masses will remain as they are (with a possible time change for Saturday mornings). One idea being considered for evening low masses is to reduce them to Monday evenings (to correspond with Hic et Nunc) and Wednesday evenings (to correspond with the catechetical program). And a monthly mass before vestry meeting on Tuesday evenings. Of course, major holidays will continue to be celebrated as they appear. Fr. Shawn reiterated that this is still in discernment and that Fr. Richard welcomes feedback on these ideas.

On that note, Fr. Richard is putting together a very short survey on Formation for parishioners to express preferences on times and topics for formation activities. It will be available in early April, both online and in hard copy, probably in a Sunday bulletin. Please let us know your thoughts!

Mission to Syria

Fr. Jeff Hual

It was a balmy night as my friends and I walked through the Vefa neighborhood of Istanbul, heading to a displaced Syrian family's home for tea and conversation. I had travelled to Istanbul intending to engage in a project that would highlight the Syrian crisis, one that would call for Christians and Muslims to work together in charity to help alleviate this suffering. I assumed that such a project would require us to travel to Greece, or at least to Anatolia. Instead, I was confronted by the Syrian crisis some fifty meters away from where I was staying.

As we walked, the neighborhood went from shabby chic to just shabby. It began to take on the appearance of a warzone. We arrived at the building where the family lives and went down two levels below ground to reach their apartment. Here Ahmed greeted us with his wife and three of their grandchildren.

The apartment was small but tidy. We did not know until later that there are fifteen family members living together in this tiny apartment two floors below ground. We sat down and began to engage in conversation.

Ahmed's eloquence and graciousness were obvious. We later learned that his career had been as a professor of philosophy at a baccalaureate college in Aleppo. It was clear from his bearing that he was a man of high station in his hometown. I very much enjoyed getting to know him.

We learned through our conversation that this family's life is not easy. Our video highlights the fact that only one family member has been able to find employment. What's not evident in the video is that this person only makes 900 Turkish lira a month, but the rent for their tiny apartment is 500 lira, leaving them only 400 lira with which to feed fifteen people. The government provides them with free healthcare and has set up an Arabic school for the children where they are being taught both Turkish and English, but beyond this assistance the family must rely on charity to survive.

This became evident several days later, when my friend Hakan Gulerce was driving home from work late at night, around 10:30 PM. Out on the main road he saw two of Ahmed's young grandchildren. They appeared to be begging on the streets for money or food. We now assume that this was

where the rest of Ahmed's family had been the night of our visit: combing the streets, hoping to find enough strangers willing to give them food or money so that they could survive. The night we visited them none of this was evident. The family did their level best to be as hospitable to us as they could possibly be.

Please take the time to watch the video—<https://youtu.be/sZnhwQeZ7I>, and consider sharing it with others.

My prayer is that this little video can put a face on the Syrian crisis for those of us who don't know any Syrians. I know it has for me.

NOTE: So far, we've managed to raise about 1,200 Turkish Lira to help the family. I'm hoping that we can do much more.

(<https://www.gofundme.com/SyriansInIstanbul>)

*Thanks for your help,
Father Jeff*



APRIL ON K STREET

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS AT ST. PAUL'S PARISH

| | | | |
|----|---|----|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Kate Eikel Ann Korky Michael Welch Nolan Peters James Stark | 13 | Mark Pierzchala |
| 2 | Louis Husser | 14 | James Melton Sara Lee Menzer |
| 4 | Ella Peters | 16 | Patrick Kalk |
| 5 | Lydia Bakke Linda Stone | 19 | Clarke Cooper |
| 6 | Calvert Whitehurst | 20 | Charles Zakaib |
| 7 | Michael Robinson | 21 | Steven Chlapecka |
| 8 | Andrew Benn James Sanderson | 25 | Jeffrey Coulter |
| 10 | Daniel Oliver Merlin Packard | 26 | Paul Darmstadter |
| 11 | Lucian Purinton Barbara Hollinshead | 27 | Dirk Heron |
| | | 28 | Elaine Kelley |
| | | 29 | Catherine Pham Lynne Walker |



SPECIAL SERVICES/ MAJOR FEAST DAYS

The Annunciation

Monday, April 4, 2016

6:45 a.m.: Morning Prayer

7:00 a.m.: Low Mass

5:30 p.m.: Prayers at the Shrine of our Lady of Walsingham

5:45 p.m.: Evening Prayer

6:45 p.m.: Sung Mass

(The Rev'd Elizabeth Orens preacher)

Easteride Rector's Forums

April 10 - My Ecumenical Life
(Fr Strout)

April 17 - The Jesus Prayer & Prayer Ropes
(Fr Wall)

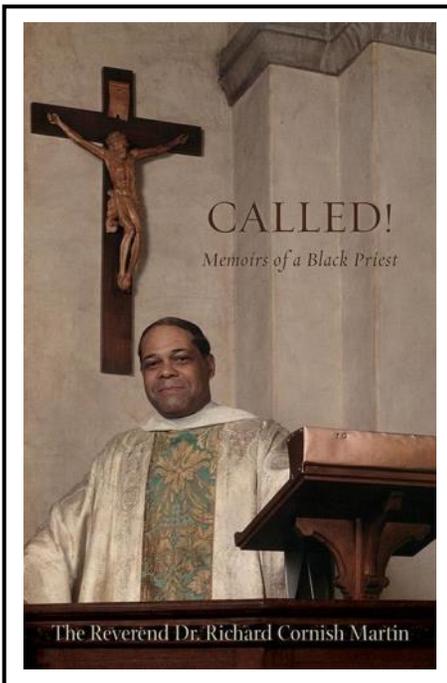
April 24 - The Liturgy & Faith Formation
(Dr Ryan Danker,
Wesley Theological Seminary)

May 1 - My Life in Prayer
(Paul Moberly)

May 8 - The Syrian Crisis: A Call for Interfaith Positive Action
(Fr Hual)

May 15 - Mother Miriam CSM, Superior - Community St Mary (Eastern Province)

We welcome back Mother Miriam, and look forward to hearing news of her community and their work in Greenwich and Malawi



The Reverend Dr. Richard Cornish Martin was ordained to the priesthood in 1962, having served seminarian at St. Paul's K Street while at the Virginia Seminary and

assisted at St. Paul's in 1964-65 while serving as Episcopal Chaplain at George Washington University.

Recognized early on as a gifted and pioneering minister, leader, and healer, Father Martin was called to serve in increasingly prominent positions throughout the Episcopal church over the course of his life and career. He was both honored and humbled by each call, and sought guidance from God in response to every request and opportunity.

Upon learning from doctors that he was nearing the end of his life on Earth, Father Martin set about writing his memoirs with the realization that he would not live to see the published version. This is the story of an extraordinary man who devoted his life to serving the Lord and, in so doing, made lasting positive changes within the church and touched thousands of lives in the process.





SAINT PAUL'S PARISH

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Remember to mark your Calendar:

Feast of the Annunciation, Monday April 4, 2016 at 6:45: Sung Mass



Leonardo Da Vinci, The Annunciation
(1452-1519)