



A section of the Anglican Journal

NIAGARA ANGLICAN

A Gathering Place and a Sounding Board for the People of the Diocese of Niagara

MARCH 2015

Niagara: “In the beginning”

MARNI NANCEKIVELL

In the middle of the 19th century Bishop John Strachan, first Bishop of Toronto, who had served both the State and the Church in his time in Upper Canada, recognized that the demands of the growth of his Diocese (“as large as the whole of England”) were beyond even his ability to adequately serve.

By this time, Strachan was in his 75th year. Continuous summer travels to congregations involved rough roads and inadequate accommodations.

In 1857, the Diocese of Huron was founded, followed in 1861 by the eastern part of the Diocese of Toronto becoming the Diocese of Ontario.

Strachan died in 1867, and did not live to see the foundation of what we now know as the Diocese of Niagara. It was his coadjutor, Bishop A. N. Bethune, who upon his ordination as bishop, briefly assumed the title Bishop of Niagara. He held the title for only nine months before becoming the Bishop of Toronto upon Strachan's death.

In this brief period, he was

ably assisted by the Archdeacon of Niagara Thomas Brock Fuller and Dr. Palmer, Rector of St. George's Guelph.

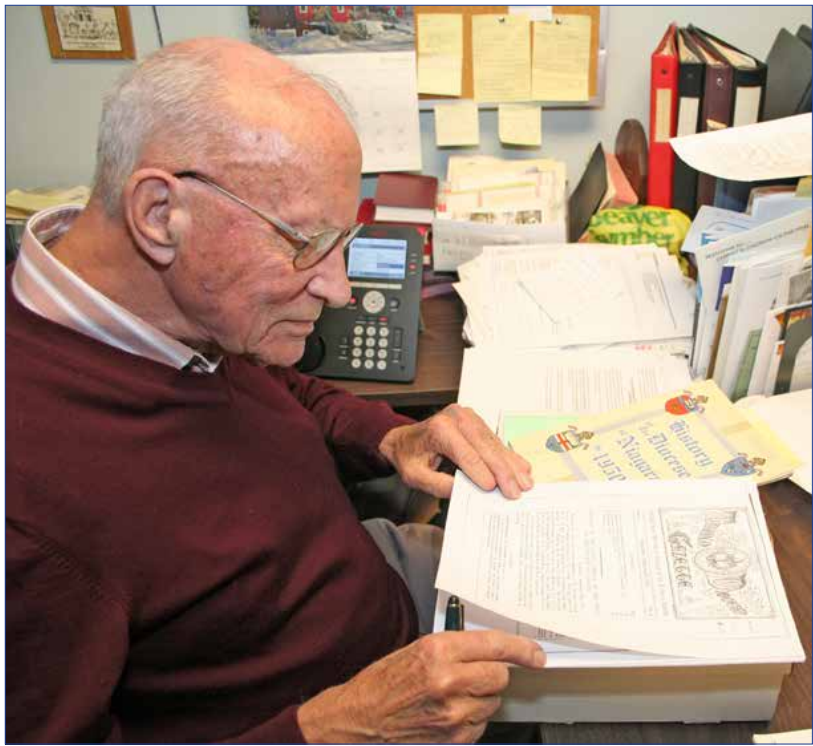
In the Synod of the Diocese of Toronto in 1872, it was resolved that the current Diocese of Toronto was “too extensive for the supervision of one bishop”. In 1875, the House of Bishops “constituted and appointed the counties of Haldimand, Lincoln (which by implication included Wentworth, Halton and Wellington) to be a diocese, set off from the Diocese of Toronto.”

The summons to the first electoral Synod read:

“The Lord Bishop of Toronto, requires ... attendance at the school house of Christ's Church Cathedral Hamilton on Wednesday, March 17 at 3:00 p.m. for the purpose of selecting one godly and well-learned man to be Bishop of the said new Western Diocese”.

The initial proposal for Niagara was for it to be called: the “Western Diocese”. Later it was suggested the new Diocese might be called the Diocese of

—See *BEGINNINGS* Page 5



▲ Diocesan Archivist John Rathbone reads a copy of the February 1875 Toronto Diocesan Gazette calling for the organization of the proposed new diocese of Niagara.

Photo: Hollis Hiscock

BIBLE VERSE OF THE MONTH

“Come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest,” said Jesus. *Matthew 11:28*

Spend LENT with MARK

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In conversation ...

About Anti-racism with Catherine Hughes and Elizabeth Huether
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Christ's Church Cathedral
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The Right Reverend Michael A. Bird
Bishop of Niagara

The Very Reverend Peter A. Wall
Rector of the Cathedral and Dean of Niagara

LENT AND SUNDAY OF THE PASSION at the Cathedral

<p>SUNDAY, MARCH 1 LENT 2</p> <p>SUNDAY, MARCH 8 LENT 3</p>	<p>8:30 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Choral Eucharist</p> <p>8:30 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Choral Eucharist</p>	<p>President: The Rev. Dr. Canon Sharyn Hall Preacher: The Dean</p> <p>President: The Rev. Canon Bill Thomas Preacher: The Rev. Canon Dr. Sharyn Hall</p>
<p>SUNDAY, MARCH 15 LENT 4 MOTHERING SUNDAY</p>	<p>8:30 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Choral Eucharist</p>	<p>President: The Dean Preacher: The Rev. Canon J. Lefebvre</p>
<p>SUNDAY, MARCH 22 LENT 5</p>	<p>8:30 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Choral Eucharist</p>	<p>President: The Rev. Dr. Canon Sharyn Hall Preacher: Bishop R. Ralph Spence</p>
<p>SUNDAY, MARCH 29 SUNDAY OF THE PASSION WITH BLESSING AND DISTRIBUTION OF PALMS</p>	<p>8:30 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Choral Eucharist</p>	<p>President: Bishop R. Ralph Spence Preacher: The Dean</p>
<p>WEEKDAY EUCHARIST</p>	<p>12:15 pm Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays 7:30 am Tuesdays</p>	

What it means to be an Anglican

What being Anglican means to me

WILLIAM C. THOMAS, DUNDAS

Practicing moderation in all things—including moderation!

I'm not a cradle Anglican—I was formed in a huge, largely Scottish, Presbyterian community in Windsor, where I grew up in the 40's and 50's thinking St. Andrew's church building was my family home, and everybody in it part of the family. Growing up in a household with three grandparents living and dying there meant children were to be respectful, obedient and calmly quiet. It was Anglicans who taught me the benefits of carrying that behaviour into adult life—and that at times, it was also helpful to blow the lid off and PARTY!

Worshipping not only with my mind and heart, but with my body ...

Sunday School introduced me to regularly reading all of scripture and learning from it, but it was the Anglican community which taught me that doubt and questioning are not the enemies of faith. Rather, they are tools by which understanding is increased, faith deepened and belief clarified and enriched.

My early days in St. George's Guelph introduced me to the richness of language and thought in the BCP (*Book of Common Prayer*), and to the deep emotions that can accompany the very best of Anglican music and liturgy. But it took a long while to give up my Presbyterian stiff-necked avoidance of kneeling, crossing and drinking from a

common cup. Finally I realized that they enhanced, rather than detracted from, a sense of the holy in worship. In seminary at Huron College, I experienced that belief is not communicated, nor the faith spread, by convincing words or ecstatic experience, but by compassionate and challenging actions that engage people and draw them into relationship, not only with each other, but with God.

Being a Christian, and part of a worldwide community that works hard and faithfully to remember who it follows and how it began ...

I did not choose when or in what culture and faith I was born. Yet they are a part of why I am a Christian, and I ignore them at my peril. Like a tree, I cannot abandon my roots and live. Being Anglican is a unique expression of Christianity which arose in the British Isles during the first four centuries, and is unique in its Celtic roots and synodical government. But it is also a tree that has sown its seeds around the world, seeds which have been shaped by different environments. That growth and diversity could easily lead to separate and isolated churches unable to see beyond themselves. In my understanding, being Anglican means being led by the Spirit to discern benefits in diversity, and to continually seek and celebrate the common spark of humanity and divinity in every one I meet.

Bill Thomas is Honorary Assistant at Christ's Church Cathedral Hamilton.

My happy memories

PATRICIA ING, GUELPH

I grew up during the 1940's in a small village, Christon, in Somerset, England. We had a beautiful old Church, St. Mary's, built in the 12th century. We shared the minister, Canon Christalow, with the next village of Loxton, which also had a beautiful old Church, St. Andrew's, built in the 13th century. Both churches are still standing in good repair today.

I had been christened in Winscombe, Somerset (my birth place) in St. James' Church, built in the 11th century.

From day one I have enjoyed going to church and love tradition, having learned by heart a great deal of the *Book of Common Prayer* (the Church of England Prayer book) before being confirmed at age twelve in 1946 by Bishop Harold Bradfield of Bath and Wells in Saint Emmanuel's Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset. I made my own white dress. I remember it being a very special and solemn but very exciting occasion too, as now I would be able to take Communion.

We attended many classes after school for this great day. As a family, we went to church every Sunday morning and evening and Sunday school in the afternoon—wearing our Sunday best clothes.

The Vicar's wife played a big part in church activities and when I attended classes she would serve tea and biscuits. I still have my prayer book, given to me for my confirmation by the Reverend Buttars, who taught Sunday school.

It was very important to attend Church as I was growing up and to this day it is still very much a big part of my life. I try to live daily all the things I learned from the various rectors, preachers and my parents.



Wells Cathedral: Special memories

Photo: DAVID ILLIFF. License: CC-BY-SA 3.0

During my nursing training and career, being an Anglican has helped me cope with many situations, especially helping people in difficult circumstances; the power of prayer being very important to me.

It had always been my dream to be married in Wells Cathedral, a huge church to a little girl and so beautiful. That came true when I married Haydn in St. George's Guelph and had a blessing of our marriage in Wells Cathedral by Dean John Clarke the same year—a wonderful memory.

Today I am adjusting to some changes, but do not like many that are taking place in our churches. But my Anglican faith will always be with me.

I believe a lot of the old ways of my Anglican religious upbringing were better: the way we kept Sundays special for church and family, the words of the Prayer Book, the old hymns and music, wearing our Sunday best clothes, being good neighbours and teaching our children about love and friendship.

The fellowship I enjoy in my church and doing well in the community to me is all important as an Anglican.

Book Review

What is the future of religion?

Christianity After Religion
by Diana Butler Bass
(Harper One 2012)

ROB ROI

We have all become aware of the closing of many Christian churches over the past few years, not only in our Niagara Diocese but also throughout the world.

This is due to declining congregations and revenue. Statistics tell us that over the past 40 years 41% of Anglicans have stopped coming to church. So why have Christians stopped coming to

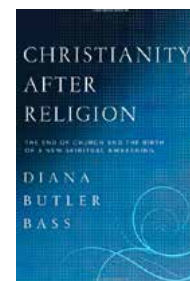
church, and what will the future of religion become?

In her book *Christianity After Religion*, Diana Butler Bass answers these questions. She writes that people find church boring in all aspects. On Sundays other things are far more interesting – sports, shopping, Facebook, family time, biking, hiking and some people are employed on Sundays. This decline is happening in every denomination.

Bass writes "Many philosophers and theologians have explored the shift in Western

culture away from beliefs toward experience, a move from rationalism toward practice." She continues, "If the Age of Faith was a time of 'faith in Jesus' and the Age of Belief a period of 'belief about Christ,' the Age of the Spirit is best understood as Christianity based on the 'experience of Jesus.'" She finds that spirituality is more appealing to people than religion. However, spirituality is about me, whereas religion is about us.

In her chapter called The Great Reversal, she claims that we must turn around the order:



"instead, we need to reverse believing, behaving and belonging, we need to reverse the order to belonging, behaving and believing."

That's the difference, she claims, between religion as an institute and religion as spiritual faith. She points out that Jesus didn't start his ministry with questions of belief, but started

when he formed a community. He didn't tell his disciples to have faith; instead he pushed them into the world to practice faith.

Bass thinks that maybe the ancient yet simple recipe for local church will return: where people will gather often, read scriptures, worship intently, pray fervently, led by servants, live authentically and honour the Sacraments.

This certainly will be creative and inventive.

The Reverend Rob Roi is a parish deacon at St. James' Dundas. EMAIL: margrob1@sympatico.ca

HOLLISitorial

Read to the end to understand the beginning... maybe



"Septuagesima, Sexagesima, Quinquagesima."
 The words rolled off their tongues like beautiful clouds. Parents and friends much-admired their mastery of Latin.
 The Sunday school presentation played out:
 "What does each word mean?" challenged a 10-year-old male.
 "Test me," echoed his year older classmate.
 "Septuagesima?" shot the question.
 "Roughly 70 days before Easter," she responded instantly.
 "Sexagesima?" shouted a redhead across the stage.
 "Roughly 60 days before Easter," she replied with confidence.
 "Quinquagesima?" queried the dramatic one perched in the rafters.
 "Roughly 50 days before Easter," she echoed.
 The concert concluded with the singing of a hymn written, a century before they were born, by Katherine Hankey to teach her Sunday school class the meaning of each season in the

Church's year.
 They paused poignantly after highlighting ...
 "These three Sundays before Lent will prepare us ..."
 "Prepare us for what?" all the actors boomed in unison.
 Following an energetic standing ovation, three panelists awaited questions from the audience.
 "Why call these Sundays - Septuagesima, Sexagesima, Quinquagesima?" enquired a woman from the front row.
 The professor responded, "To catch people's attention and announce something special was about to happen - in this case, Lent. The Bible speaks of the 'clarion call' when God chose a person to deliver a message of encouragement or warning. Moses did it on Mount Sinai with the Ten Commandments, and Jesus gathered people on another mountain to introduce God's new law - love God and love your neighbour. Today we rely more on the internet and social media."
 Struggling to his feet a senior

asked, "Why define each Latin word?"
 The priest offered her take, "By counting the 70, 60 and 50 days before Easter, the leaders were asking people to look beyond the fasting and austere days of Lent and to focus on the great celebration of Easter with its new beginning, new life and new hope."
 "It was like saying, while going through the dry valley of Lent, which is not a fun time, you can keep your motivation by concentrating on the mountain top experience of Easter," added panelist three.
 A teenager piped up, "Like can the same be applied to situations in life?"
 "Every individual here faces troubles, temptations, struggles, challenges, disasters, pain and more," replied the priest, "I've seen it all. I suggest people should try and keep the end result or goal constantly in their mind. In this way, they don't get bogged down or swamped by what they are going through. It's like looking beyond the darkness

to the light ..."
 As she paused for effect a choir member started singing from Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical Carousel ...
 "When you walk through a storm, hold your head up high
 And don't be afraid of the dark,
 At the end of the storm, there's a golden sky
 And the sweet, silver song of the lark
 Walk on, walk on
 With hope in your heart
 You'll never walk alone."
 The priest mused, "Perhaps they based their lyrics on Jesus' words. He said his followers would experience distress, perplexities, natural disasters and fear. But in the midst of such calamities, he counselled them to lift up their heads and look past what they were suffering in order to see God travelling with them."
 The audience processed this lofty thought in silence.
 A grey haired lady, eliciting a ripple of laughter, asked, "I am cramming for the finals, what message is there for me?"

Panelist three looked around before responding, "I think Septuagesima, Sexagesima and Quinquagesima denote the beginning or turning point in our relationship with God. Easter signifies when we die and enter eternal life and the 70, 60 and 50 days symbolise the years we spend living on earth."
 "It's all in the Book of Revelation," acknowledged the professor. "Banished to Patmos, John wanted to send a message of encouragement to the Christians back home. He knew his captors would censor his letters so he wrote in code. He told them 'I know that you are going through hell. Do not be afraid, remain faithful, you will endure and eternal life will be yours.'"
 The young girl who had answered the questions at the beginning walked to centre stage and summarized the evening's message: "Joy and success often follow our struggles in life. Sometimes we need a reminder or wake up call. This is yours."

To the Editor

Thanks from Cuba

I want it to thank you very much for the excellent idea of including the new "Better know your partners" column in the Niagara Anglican.
 As an Archdeacon I have to speak for my diocese and let you know how privileged and honored we feel with this new possibility of sharing our Companion Relationship through your paper.
 And as the priest in charge of San Pablo in Bolondrón, there are no words to express my

gratitude.
 Please know how much we appreciate it here in Cuba.
 We are very excited to know if there is something we can do to support the continuing of this.
 My true blessings are with you.
 Venerable Andreis Diaz Dorta
 Arcediano de Occidente
 Capellán de Jóvenes Episcopales
 Rector de "San Pablo" y "El Buen Pastor"

Anglican music duo nominated for prestigious award

Christian music duo, Infinitely More, is nominated for their first East Coast Music Award (ECMA)!
 Their latest CD, *How The Light Gets In*, is nominated for 2015 Gospel Recording of the Year.
 Allison Lynn and Gerald Flemming offer a fusion of folk, pop, jazz, hymns and worship that soothes the heart and ignites the soul.
 Last year, Infinitely More performed almost 100 events in churches and other venues



throughout central and eastern Canada, including Niagara Diocese. This upcoming September and October, the duo is planning their first tour of the Prairie Provinces.

Infinitely More will travel to St. John's Newfoundland to attend the ECMA gala ceremony on April 9, 2015.
 From there, they will head out for their 5th annual East Coast Tour. They are currently booking concerts in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI, Quebec, and Eastern Ontario.
 To bring the music and ministry of Infinitely More to your community, please visit [www. InfinitelyMore.ca](http://www.InfinitelyMore.ca)

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www.niagaraanglican.ca



Where there's a will there's a way

Technology enabled Joe Parton to attend and sponsor his godchild Graecyn Curtis for baptism in Oakville, even though he was in Vancouver, over 4,000 kilometres away.

Born in that west coast city, she and her parents, Gillian and Richard Curtis, were visiting her grandparents, Pearl and Ken Moffat, in Oakville over Christmas. Everyone agreed it would be a great idea to have Graecyn baptized at her grandparents' parish, the Church of the Incarnation.

The only problem; Joe Parton would not be making the trip from Vancouver.

Rather than abandon the plan, Ken decided to see if technology could save the day. With Rector Michael Patterson's consent and Joe Parton's agreement to get up early on the Sunday morning, plans were made for Ken to use the Facetime application on

his iPad to link up with Joe in Vancouver over Incarnation's WiFi network.

The idea worked like a charm. Even though he was in Vancouver, on December 28 Joe helped present Graecyn for baptism and made his sponsor's promises on her behalf in Oakville.

Joe was able to see and hear the ceremony and parishioners at Incarnation could see and hear Joe, thus creating the sense that he was actually in the sanctuary with them.

Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:19-20)

This use of technology at the Church of the Incarnation showed that "gathered together" can and does have an entirely new meaning in our modern age.

Submitted by Ken Moffatt.



▲ Participating in the long distance baptism were (l to r) grandfather Ken Moffat "holding" godfather Joe Parton, parents Richard and Gillian Curtis, godmother Michelle Fullerton holding Graecyn, and Rector Michael Patterson.

Photo: Heather Tozzi

Palermo Village

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Beginnings of the Diocese of Niagara: Our story

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Hamilton; however at the election of our first true Diocesan Bishop, Thomas Brock Fuller, Bishop Bethune announced the new diocese would be known as the Diocese of Niagara.

When the Diocese of Niagara was formed, there were 47 churches and missions, but by 1883—only eight years later—there were 27 more congregations.

Bishop Fuller encouraged lay involvement in the church, a distinctive attribute that is woven throughout Niagara's history. His time as Bishop was one of relative calm during a time of significant "party controversies" of High Church and Low Church influences during the day in the church beyond Niagara.

Fuller was succeeded by Bishop Charles Hamilton, who was not as fortunate in avoiding

the turbulent spirit of the day. Considered by many to be a "high churchman", one of the marks of his episcopacy was to eschew the ecclesiastical partisan controversies, and by the end of his time as Bishop in 1896, a far calmer spirit pervaded Niagara. Hamilton left Niagara to become first Bishop of Ottawa. During his time as Bishop of Niagara, he exhorted the laity to visit prisoners, upheld the cause of temperance, discussed labour problems and was a guardian of the rites of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Matrimony.

The bishop whose episcopacy bridged the 19th and 20th centuries was Bishop Philip DuMoulin, whose body reposes in the sanctuary of Christ's Church Cathedral. He was a man of compassion, but also a man of wit. On one occasion, impatient with

the florid music that preceded the sermon he was to deliver, he began his oration with: "At last, dear friends, I am here; I was beginning to think that I should never get here."

A hallmark of his ministry was his ability to reconcile opposing points of view. Perhaps it was his influence that Niagara in his day, "became a place where those of tenaciously held and widely differing views could dwell together in unity."

First in a three part series by Canon Marni Nancekivell, Secretary of Synod, highlighting the 140 years of Niagara Diocese. Her sources include History of the Diocese of Niagara to 1950, Bishops of Niagara by Richard Ruggles and documents from the personal collection of Ralph Malashevsky.

Diocese celebrates milestone by sponsoring refugees

As Niagara Diocese celebrates the countless number of lives transformed throughout its 140 year history, people are being encouraged to come together and celebrate by transforming lives today.

The need to sponsor refugee families is of epic proportion worldwide: nearly 17 million people have fled their home countries and millions more are displaced but continue to live in their own country. Sponsoring a refugee family doesn't just change their lives; it changes everyone's life.

On average it costs approximately \$25,000 to sponsor a refugee family of four in Canada.

The 140th Anniversary Committee is asking each Anglican to give a gift according to their ability, with the recommendation that the donation be "\$140 or some multiple of it" in recognition of the 140 years since Niagara Diocese came into existence in 1875.

In addition, parishes are being asked to approach local businesses seeking donations of \$1,400 to support its refugee sponsorship initiative.

With such support, the Diocese hopes to underwrite the cost of interested parishes sponsoring up to 50 refugees. Any extra monies will be directed toward a trust fund to support family-linked refugee resettlement where the local Canadian relatives are not able to raise the necessary funds to start a sponsorship.

For more information about this and other 140th anniversary plans or events, or to donate, visit: www.niagaraanglican.ca/140anniversary

Ways YOU can celebrate Niagara's 140th anniversary

TERRY DEFOREST

Who are we? What are our values? Where are we going? Knowing how to respond to these questions is helped greatly by knowing our past—where have we been?

With one another and those of Jesus' disciples who have gone before, we the Diocese of Niagara have been in some very interesting places and times!

In the *Niagara Anglican* (an

important part of our history) and elsewhere, we will be reflecting on God's journey with us during the 140 years since Niagara's first Synod on March 17, 1875.

In addition to that engaging story-telling, how will we celebrate 140 years? Together.

With local lay and clergy initiatives. Receiving the gifts of all ages. In every region. Liturgically. Festively. Creatively. Faithfully. Justly.

Tradition tells us what gifts

are fitting for various wedding anniversaries; I know of no traditional gift for this milestone. It will be up to us to forge a new tradition, being true to who we are and the enduring values which have guided us along the way.

This anniversary invites us to share with one another: stories, photos, sermons, drawings, dances, plays, poems, prayers, hymns, *et cetera*. If you have a historical gem or a new creation

to share, do so.

This anniversary challenges us to pick up the best threads of our history and weave a beautiful new tapestry.

The 140th anniversary campaign—Celebrating Lives Transformed, Transforming Lives Together—picks up one thread and invites us to take up afresh the act of making room for refugees.

How will we respond to this campaign's invitation to generos-

ity and hospitality? And how else will we—our groups, parishes or regions—build on our 140 year legacy? Now is a moment in which we can turn to the joy of answering these questions.

Canons Marni Nancekivell and Terry DeForest, Co-chairs of the 140th Anniversary Committee, ask you to keep them aware of your local and regional anniversary activities.

The Word is very near you

A Lenten retreat workshop exploring the spiritual discipline of Biblical storytelling takes place on Saturday, March 7, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Renison University College.

Leader Canon Susan Wilson, a trained Spiritual Director and gifted Biblical Storyteller, is passionate about the power of story to transform lives and communities.

The event also includes time for quiet prayer and reflection, worship and conversation, as well as an opportunity to learn a biblical story by heart.

Registration and information at uwaterloo.ca/renison-ministry-centre/institute-ministry/register-courses-and-events



Angels everywhere

The ninth annual "Angels ... Everywhere" program, presented by several schools, brought some 114 students—choirs, soloists, art creators, poets and dancers—together for an evening performance in Niagara Falls, Ontario. The event also had an international flavour with schools from Niagara Falls, New York participating.

Sponsored by Christ Church Niagara Falls, the church was "filled to the rafters" with almost 300 parents and friends in attendance.

Each school received a certifi-

cate for participating and donations went to Project Share and the local community kitchen.

Rector Paul Maynard said, "This was a wonderfully happy occasion, bringing the joyful spirit of Christmas early."

Plans have begun for the 2015 program in the fall.

"I saw an angel taking my cat Lacy away when she died."

Lauren (age 7).

"My angel listens when I pray, My angel watches me every day."

Zoe (age 7).

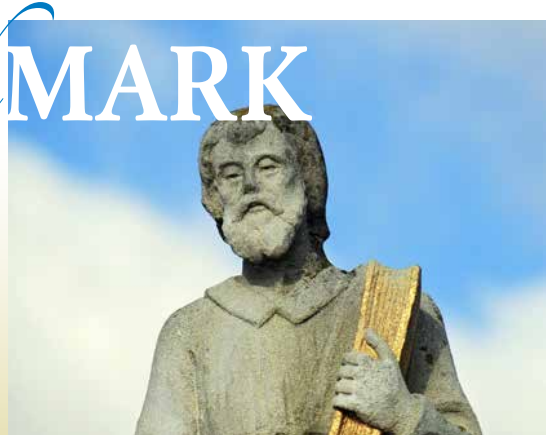


Spend LENT *with* MARK

You will notice that there are no readings for Sundays, which traditionally are not part of Lent, so you can follow the Bible readings at Church or read any you missed during the week.

Feedback ... We appreciate your comments, suggestions or questions. Contact Hollis Hiscock at editor@niagaraanglican.ca or 905-635-9463 or 710 Ashley Ave, Burlington, ON, L7R2Z3.

Remember, the newspaper is available for download from www.niagaraanglican.ca/newspaper so you can have this feature handy on your favourite device.



Part Two – Monday, March 16 to Holy Saturday, April 4, 2015

Monday, March 16 Mark 8:27- 9:1 Peter's Claim and First Prediction

I had a disconnect with Jesus. I cherished his words and parables but did not accept his forgiveness: I was always a step behind.

Recently, I went on a silent prayer weekend because my spiritual eyesight was cloudy and I needed time away from everyday life. I was asked by my weekend spiritual director, "Who and what is Jesus to you?" Funny that 8:29 says the same thing when Jesus asks, "But who do you say that I am?"

I prayed that weekend honestly and earnestly, and I was rewarded. In a small chapel on the grounds in sunny solitude I asked for Jesus' friendship and forgiveness, and I asked for the joy of walking in the Holy Spirit. When I finally looked up from my prayers, there on the wall was a figurine that to me appeared to be Jesus jumping for joy, arms in the air, saying to me "at last" hallelujah! I laughed out loud!

Recently I was asked to write my reflections on Mark's passages. Coincidence? I think not. Am I ready for the journey? Surely with God's greatest messenger at my side I'm as equipped as I ever can be: merely have to ask in prayer.

Colin Shutt, Warden, St Paul's Shelburne

Tuesday, March 17 Mark 9:2-13 Transfiguration

This passage from Mark deals with the Transfiguration of Christ. The transfiguration is an event in which Jesus bestows on us a foretaste of the heavenly kingdom. In this moment Christ allows us to see him in his full glory. He takes with him only three of the twelve apostles.

When they get there Elijah and Moses are on both sides of Jesus and for just this moment the full reality of heaven is presented to the disciples. Peter is so overcome with joy and terror that he wants to make a tent for each and to stay there. Then they hear God's voice and he reaffirms the ministry and authority of his son. The disciples find themselves only with Jesus, and the beatific vision has ended.

Then Jesus gives them a reminder of the suffering of Elijah, and then a prophecy of what he is to endure in the near future.

A trip to Boston served as a reminder to me of the wonderful and happy times my family had, and it served as a sign or promise of better days ahead. The Transfiguration serves as a reminder of the ultimate reality: we shall all see Christ in his full glory, but before we do we have to go and make our way through the crucifixion.

There is pain, sorrow and heartbreak ahead on the road at some point for all of us. Jesus has been able to give us just a little foretaste of the reality that is to come, which is better than anything we can even imagine.

Philip Shearin, Divinity Student

Wednesday, March 18 Mark 9:14-29 Boy Healed

Too me this reading is about faith and prayer more than it is about healing.

I find it encouraging that here we have the disciples trying to cure the boy and failing! Then they end up arguing with the scribes. How

human! I am sure we all can relate to the frustration the disciples must have felt when things were not going their way. Like them, we think our belief should be enough.

This passage shows we don't have to get it right all the time either. If even his disciples didn't get it right then neither do we, and God will not fault us.

Jesus teaches them, and me, that faith is not enough. Sometimes you need help, and you can get that help through prayer as Jesus just demonstrated. I know that you and I have faith, but how often do we forget to ask for help by praying to God, not to fix the problem, but to help us find his way to the solution!

James Gould, Lay Reader, St. Paul's Shelburne

Thursday, March 19 Mark 9:30-37 Second Prediction and Teaching About Servanthood

Last autumn I visited Nuremberg. The city is rightly proud of Albrecht Durer. His bronze statue adorns a main square; another of his "rabbit" delights children and adults. When Albrecht came to the city he had to work during the day so he could pay for rent and food, and study art at night. He came to know an older man who also studied with the art teacher. "Why don't you move in with me Albert? We'll both save money that way."

Living together in the shabby attic, they hoped things would go easier. But after a hard day's work Albert was so tired that he tumbled into bed when he wanted to paint. "This isn't working", said the older man. "One of us ought to work and the other study art. When the art starts to sell, the one working can have a chance."

Albert nodded, "All right, I'm younger and stronger, so earning our keep is up to me."

"No, no!" cried the friend. "I have a better paying job and you have more talent."

Albert embraced his studies with enthusiasm while his friend scrubbed floors and washed dishes in a cafe. No matter how gray the day or how tired he was, his old friend whistled cheerfully and told Albert he would be a great artist.

When Albert sold a wood carving, he threw the money on the table and said, "Now I can earn money from art. It is your time to study art again."

The old man set up his easel, but his fingers had grown gnarled and twisted, his arms stiff and his joints enlarged. He tried to keep Albert from finding out he would never be able to control a brush again.

Another day, when Albert came home, he found the old man seated at the table, head bowed, his rough twisted hands folded in prayer. Albert wanted the whole world to see the hands of this man who had sacrificed so much for him to become an artist. And so Albert Durer portrayed the hands most of us recognize simply as PRAYING HANDS.

Albert Durer was called to be a great painter of the Early Renaissance, but his friend was no less called in his service of the artistic genius.

Barbara Sykes, Honorary Assistant, St. George's Guelph

Friday, March 20 Mark 9:38-50 Temptation to Sin

At first glance this saying of Jesus is frightening with its talk of cutting off hands and feet and plucking out eyes, but in reality it is also "good news." As Gloria Steinem succinctly put it, "The truth will set you free, but first it will 'tick' you off."

I have known many people who are good, contributing people who lack a hand or foot or are blind in one eye. I have known significantly more people with two hands and feet and eyes who are diminished, incapacitated by a sin that "owns" them and they cannot envision a life without that all-consuming sin.

The fear of letting go of a way of being that has become familiar and comfortable leaves them clinging desperately to a life of spiritual poverty. The resolve to cut off what seems a part of them terrifies them. The need to walk through that shadow of a mini death seems beyond their resolve. So it is, without the help of God.

Each of us, in truth, has stumbling blocks to some degree. The good news is that none of us is beyond the love and the help that God offers.

Nancy Rowe, Priest Associate, St George's Georgetown

Saturday, March 21 Mark 10:1-12 Teaching about Divorce

Lent brings challenges and challenges are good.

My job today is to struggle with Jesus' harsh sayings about divorce, and this is a challenge for a twentieth century Anglican who has come to accept divorce in the Church.

There can be little doubt that Jesus, like the Essenes of his time, did not like divorce, although he recognized it happened. The passage from Mark's gospel comes from a larger debate he held with the biblical lawyers of his own day. It was about the problem of their substituting legalism for the basic principles of God's law, just as in his pronouncement about escaping the obligation to parents by making gifts to the church (Mark 7:6-13) based on human traditions; or the substitution of attention to legalisms about outward cleanliness for attention to the condition of human hearts (Mark 7:14-23).

The point is made clearly in Jesus' saying "what God has joined together, human beings are not to break apart" (Mark 4:9), which we have incorporated into our marriage service, or "you abandon the commandments of God and hold to human tradition" (Mark 7:8,13). Many rabbis of his own time understood that when two people bound themselves together in vows of marriage, God's grace was there; St. Augustine calls it a "union of friendship" and the Prayer Book speaks of "mutual society".

But sometimes human beings reject God's grace. People fail in their marriages; marriages break down, and I suppose that is what divorce is really all about, not the search for legal weaknesses, nor the legalism of contract-breaking acts. Marriage breakdown happens in the human heart where God's graces are given, not in the courtroom.

In Lent, we can remember that God's gifts in the big principles of love for neighbour and in the constant gifts of grace far outweigh the Church's human by-laws, although the by-laws, and disagreements about them, may steal our attention.

David Neelands, Dean of Divinity with Margaret Fleck, Professor of Anglican Studies, Trinity College, Toronto

Thank you to Canon Susan Wilson and her team of commentators.

Spend LENT *with* MARK



Monday, March 23 Mark 10:13-31
Like Children, Parable of Rich Man

This passage in Mark's gospel appears to be about two separate issues. On the one hand are the children who are brought to Jesus by their family members to be blessed. And the second part is about the rich man who asks Jesus what he must do to receive eternal life.

The disciples still don't seem to understand that children need to be allowed access to him—that there might be much we can learn from these young people. Surely we can depend on our children to be less encumbered with earthly things and to rely more on their creative imagination than we do. Their minds are perhaps clearer and purer than ours which may have become cluttered with the daily importance of paying the mortgage, being on time with the bills, purchasing the upgrade or latest version of the whatever.

Last Advent the Christian world awaited the birth of the Christ child, all the while struggling with the horrific news that 132 children had been killed in a boarding school in Pakistan; in Australia, a mother reportedly had killed seven of her own children and another child; and in Canada, one in seven children live in poverty.

How can we reconcile all these events and make sense of them? In fact, we may not have journeyed very far in the last 2,000 years at all. Have we learned anything?

And the man who ran urgently to Jesus to ask how he could enter into the kingdom - how can we learn over and over again from him? Jesus looked at him and loved him. But the man went away grieving because he was so attached to his "stuff". He was all grown up now. He couldn't part with his gadgets and gizmos. It had seemed like an urgent request when he ran up to Jesus. But now, not so much after all.

"For of such is the kingdom of God" ... how can I remind myself of this simple truth?

Lindsay Ogilvie, Choir Member, All Saints' Erin

Tuesday, March 24 Mark 10:32-45
Third Prediction, the Request of James & John

Most gospels create a positive feeling through warmth, good news, important lessons or tragedy. But I found this passage rather irritating. It shows the weaknesses of the disciples at a time when they should have been more supportive of Jesus.

The disciples were committed followers leaving everything to follow Jesus, but now they seemed convinced everything will collapse with Jesus' arrest, trial and death. They reacted like many Christians, who feel after attending church regularly, helping in many ways and living good lives, that they deserve a better reward than others in the life hereafter.

Jesus rebuked them for seeking a special reward or status, telling them it is not within his power to grant special treatment in advance.

Like many Christians, regrettably churchgoers too, the disciples bickered over status and entitlement ... sound familiar? Jesus' response—you become great by being a servant or a slave.

The spirit has already moved me down the road to faith service rather than seeking status. After reading Mark I am strengthened in my resolve and pray for support in my efforts.

I regret the subject of life after death stirred up further feelings of irritation and how tough it is to be a Christian. Some theologians, scholars and senior church leaders are suggesting beliefs fundamental to the Christian life are misguided and should be changed. One example: there is actually no life after death and the idea is based on fundamental misinterpretation of the Bible.

It is hard enough to be a Christian in this secular world without basic beliefs being undermined. No wonder western societies are drifting away from belief in God and attendance at churches.

Don't chastise me for being disappointed and irritated. I am just telling it as I feel it. It isn't actually the gospel that is irritating; it is the context already in my mind as I read it.

But the spirit is actually converting my downbeat feelings enough to

motivate me to do more to bring people to Jesus, so the result is positive. It seems irritation can be as powerful as inspiration.

I pray that God will hold my faith intact and keep me focused on the teachings of Jesus that are clear, inspiring and good for the entire world.
Doug Hamilton, Parishioner, All Saints' Erin

Wednesday, March 25 Mark 10:46-52
Healing of Bartimaeus

Throughout the gospels we encounter the wonders of Jesus' teachings and healings. Often surrounded by crowds, Jesus revealed his miracles.

Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, obviously knew of these teachings and healings. When he heard that Jesus of Nazareth was near he immediately called out for help. How did Bartimaeus know about the healings of Jesus? Had Bartimaeus always been blind? What were the sights first viewed by Bartimaeus? How was he embraced by the crowd?

As in today's world a level of trust builds when we know of a person's reputation and we may seek advice or help. Bartimaeus knew of Jesus' reputation and despite some crowd disapproval, called forth. The land around Jericho would have been sparse and dry but crowds gathered close.

Today, we also feel crowds. With constant media bombardments relaying conflict and breaches of trust, how do we continue to trust and demonstrate our faith? Do we show disapproval of those less fortunate?

We need to use this Lenten time to look through the eyes of Jesus, to learn, to understand and to reach out to others.

Isobel Boyle, Parishioner, All Saints' Erin

Thursday, March 26 Mark 11:1-33
Entry into Jerusalem

When I think how this will end or seem to end—Jesus executed, his followers in flight or in hiding—it's hard to watch Jesus enter Jerusalem.

When I think of all that pain and fear and confusion, I understand the pleading of Jesus in the garden on Thursday, just before (cut off from the crowd that protected him all week) he is betrayed and arrested.

When I think how often it ends, or seems to end, for so very many of us, in pain, violence, confusion - when I think how it always ends, or seems to end, in death, in the victory of death, I am mindful of the bold and courageous thing that the Father is asking the Son to do, a thing that begins and ends helpless in loving human arms.

Ride on, then. Into the face of fear and hate and the plotting realpolitik of the religious authorities. Into the place where the powerful borrow their power from death. Into the certainty of loss, defeat and your broken wretched body. Ride in the protection that seems like no protection at all, that in the end prevails. In majesty. In love. You ride for all of us.

Michael Thompson, General Secretary, Anglican Church of Canada

Friday, March 27 Mark 12:1-27
Parables and Questions

Do you feel his frustration? Jesus' frustration with the Pharisees and Herodians, who try to trap him. Why? He asks them. Why are you putting me to the test? Have you not read this scripture:

"The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes?"

Do you feel his disappointment? Jesus' disappointment with the Sadducees who ask him about whose wife she will be in the resurrection? Jesus knows from their questions that they too do not know the scriptures.

"Is not this the reason you are wrong, that you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God?"

How easy it is for us to put God to the test when we do not know the scriptures. How can we know the power of God, not of the dead, but of the living if we do not know the scriptures? Jesus is the Word made flesh. Jesus is our eternal teacher. Let us be worthy and faithful students of the gift of God's revelation in Jesus Christ. I invite you therefore, in the name of the Lord, to

observe a holy Lent by reading and meditating on the Word of God.
Connie Phillipson, Priest, Diocese of Niagara

Saturday, March 28 Mark 12:28-34
Greatest Commandment

Sometimes we make living faithfully very difficult! With all good intentions we "church people" set out, explicitly or implicitly, a list of things to do to be a good Anglican.

When asked to prepare a portion of Mark for a biblical storytelling event held in my Episcopal Area in March 2014, I chose Mark 12:28-34 because it takes me back to the heart of what is essential.

The scribes regularly disputed with Jesus, trying to prove he was not faithful to their traditions. In the exchange a scribe asks "which commandment is first of all?" Jesus' answer goes to the very heart of faith - love God with heart, soul, mind and strength and love your neighbour as yourself. On this they agree.

As a bishop my life can be consumed with seemingly important meetings, lengthy discussions or arguments over questions of proper Anglican practice and theology, worries about the sustainability of parishes and clergy and can get mired in a fog of "stuff to do".

This passage clears my head and sends me back to the heart of my faith—do I love God wholeheartedly? If so, how does my life and ministry show it? Do I love my neighbour as myself? If so, what am I doing to live that?

To answer these is enough.

Linda Nicholls, Bishop, Diocese of Toronto

Monday, March 30 Mark 12:35-13:37
Questions and Warnings

I am sitting in our public library, reading Mark's predictions about upcoming disasters and wondering if I should warn those sitting around me.

Maybe I should stand atop a table, and in my most dramatic Moses voice proclaim, "People beware, get ready, coming soon, without warning—wars, earthquakes, famines, violence!"

No doubt, some joker would shout back, "Watched the national news last evening, did we?"

"I have good news too," I would retort. "In the midst of it all God will arrive riding on a cloud with great power and glory to save us!"

While the security guards personally ushered me outside, people would resume their silent pursuits of reading, entertainment and education.

Perhaps later some would react to my warnings, but most would dismiss me as another religious nut looking for attention.

I wonder how Jesus felt when he tried to warn his disciples.

Mark brought these warnings and dire predictions together in one chapter for a reason. Why?

I suggest you reread this passage and look for answers; they are interwoven throughout the verses.

Then read Psalm 23, verse 4 and reflect on God's promise to be always with us—no matter what we face in this life.

Hollis Hiscock, Editor, Niagara Anglican

Tuesday, March 31 Mark 14:1-11
Anointing at Bethany

Since Lent last year, I have been incredibly challenged to be "kind".

A Jesuit priest called Father James Martin from American Magazine, set a challenge for Lent on YouTube asking that rather than give something up, we should ... be kind.

He gave three ways to achieve this:

1. Don't be a jerk!
2. Honour the absent.
3. Always give people the benefit of the doubt (from St. Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises).

In this passage from Mark 14, Jesus rebukes the people who were angry with the woman who poured expensive perfume over his head.

Spend LENT *with* MARK



She performed this act from her heart and Jesus honoured her for that by saying she would always be remembered for her act of love and kindness.

He says (verse 7) that the poor will always be with us and that we can show kindness to them whenever we wish, but He would not always be with us.

My questions are: Do we show the poor kindness whenever we can? And not just the poor but everyone we meet? In every action or word?

If every one of us showed kindness with purpose, our world would be turned upside down.

What about making it part of everything you say and do this Lent?

Here is the link to the YouTube video clip from Father James Martin: <http://youtu.be/90g8fVnkPPU>

Wendy Joy, Biblical Storyteller, Belfast, Ireland

Wednesday, April 1 Mark 14:12-72 Passover, Garden and Betrayal

We can speculate on Judas' motivation, but his decision to betray Jesus sets in motion a series of tragic events that will lead to both their deaths. Shadows begin to fall. As much as we associate shadows with darkness, they only exist because of light. Without a light source, there can be no shadow. When faced with shadows we can focus on the object casting the shadow or look to where the light is coming from.

We know Judas as the betrayer, yet who among us hasn't hidden the dark places of our hearts and minds behind a mask of respectability, despising those who can see beneath it? Who among us hasn't profited at the expense of another? I can't believe that given the opportunity, Jesus wouldn't have returned Judas' kiss, saying what he had said to countless others: "Your sins are forgiven."

At some point, we all find ourselves in the valley of the shadow of death; but do we choose to remain there in the darkness, identifying with the shadows or do we turn and look for the light of Christ's forgiveness, knowing that however long the night, the sun (Son) will rise?

Daniel Brereton, Priest Associate, St. John's Dixie Mississauga

Thursday, April 2 Mark 15:1-32 Jesus before Pilate

Shakespeare said it best in Hamlet: "To thine own self be true." So often, when we get caught up in trying to fit in, be popular, be trendy, we are actually letting others define us.

In this passage Jesus gives us the example of authentic living. He does not cede his identity to Pilate's question of title; he does not give in to the peer pressure and taunting of the swept-up-in-the-moment crowds. By contrast, we see Pilate yield to the unsubstantiated whim of the angry mob, demonstrating his intention to appease the masses rather than doing what was right.

In our own lives, we are often faced with similar challenges of identity: are the characteristics we show the world authentic? Do we embrace or deny our individuality in the scrutiny of the public? Do we allow our identity to be influenced by the Spirit or by the media?

While we must answer these questions for ourselves, I share some advice on discernment once given me by a wise priest: "You are a child of God. Be true to yourself, and be true to God."

Laura Marie Piotrowicz, Rector, St. John's Port Dalhousie

Friday, April 3 Mark 15:33-47 Death and Burial of Jesus

One of the common themes among all four Gospels is that Jesus cried out before he died. Two of the Gospels, Mark being one of them, say that Jesus asked God why He had forsaken Him.

This passage has always posed many questions to me, and disconcerting ones at that. It seems that Jesus is asking God why He had chosen not to rescue him from the crucifixion, thus allowing his human form to die.

If Jesus' faith was stronger than all of our faith, then why did he appear to question it at the moment of death? Are we not taught, through the many miracles of Jesus explained by faith, that our faith should be unshakable? Does this imply some sort of fallibility? And how does fallibility translate to our own personal approach to faith?

Even though we have a small ability to exert some influence over the paths we take in our lives, our faith is in the acceptance of God's guidance and that it is ultimately his plan for us.

When my time comes, I wonder if I will ask the same question.
Chuck Williamson, Treasurer, All Saints' Erin

Saturday, April 4 Mark 16:1-8 Resurrection of Jesus

Recalling our celebration of Epiphany and the journey of the Magi who laid their gifts before the Christ-child, as I read this final passage from the gospel according to St. Mark, it struck me that those same gifts of frankincense and myrrh were deeply connected to burials in the ancient world.

They were gifts that pointed to the events that brought Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of Jesus and Salome to an empty tomb. They too made this journey carrying with them spices associated with a burial, but this journey begins, not in the context of wonder and great joy, as it did for the Magi. This time the women were filled with desperate grief, a good measure of fear and I am sure they came not knowing what to believe in any more.

I was left thinking about all the many ways I have come before God over the course of my life and my ministry, and have done so experiencing the whole range of emotions that we find in these two journeys. What has been true for me is what was true for the women as they reached the tomb. We find that we are in the hands of a loving and transforming God who never ceases to surprise us.

In the glory of the Resurrection we encounter the reconciling power of God's love that heals and makes all things new.

Michael Bird, Bishop, Diocese of Niagara

CORRECTION

In the February 2015 issue we referred to the Reverends Ron Pincoe and Roderick McDowell as Vocational Deacon, it should read Deacon.

Also, the latter serves at St. Paul's Fort Erie and St. John's Ridgemount, not St. John's Niagara Falls.

Book Review

Personal testimony to the power of the Holy Spirit to change a human life

New Life in the Boarding House, by Greg R. Elliott

Word Alive Press, Winnipeg, 2014

DOUG FIELD

Had I not spent much of my life in an evangelical church I would have found this book strange and difficult. But because of that experience I recognized it as a lengthy and heartfelt personal testimony to the power of the Holy Spirit to change a human life. Granted, much longer and fuller of imagery than the extemporized witness I heard in church, but no less deeply and sincerely felt.

Greg Elliott's evocation of the Holy Spirit reminded me of how when, returning to Anglicanism, I was struck by the matter-of-fact way in which our priests refer to it, not only in homilies but in conversations about the spiritual life.

Elliott is not a smooth, polished writer (he would have benefitted from a more rigorous editor), but his almost-diarized recounting of transformation from a troubled and failed human being into a forgiven and re-born personality is compelling because we know it is true. The boarding house of the title is his life. At the start of the book it's rundown and cluttered with the detritus of that life and



the cacophony of his anger and confusion. Then one day someone he believes is Jesus knocks at the door. In fact, the caller is the Holy Spirit, who becomes one of his "boarders".

In the midst of his personal turmoil the narrator digs out an old copy of *The Way* translation

of the bible and a daily reading guide, whose references precede each chapter. Reading them in the NRSV translation helps us understand what follows. Through daily readings which inspire him to take the steps necessary to make over his life, our protagonist forms a relationship with the Jesus he finds in *The Way*—a person he was vaguely aware of from Sunday School but someone he had not considered a reality. His is not Saul's Damascus road experience, but rather the gradual understanding that we realize spiritual growth and maturity through daily striving. The job is never finished, but the working at it

can be its own redemption.

I avoid "inspirational" books because, in their worthiness, they rarely reflect reality as I experience it. This is different. This is the story of a real person—not a bad person, but troubled and failing at life—whose encounter with the Holy Spirit literally saves him. Anglicans are reticent about sharing their spiritual lives and Greg Elliott's testimony might make some a little uncomfortable. For those who manage it, this book is a worthwhile read.

Doug Field is a Lay Reader at St. Jude's, Oakville and the Artistic Director of St. Jude's Celebration of the Arts concert series.

Epic reading ...

The Gospel of Mark

Palm Sunday
March 29 at 7:00 p.m.

Christ's Church Cathedral
 252 James Street North
 Hamilton

Anyone interested in being a part of the telling should contact Co-ordinator Susan Wilson at rev.susan.wilson@gmail.com

Complete your [Spend Lent With Mark](#) by attending ... as you journey through Holy Week, Good Friday and Easter.

Celebrating a life well loved



Gloria and Bob Gardner celebrate by cutting his birthday cake.

Photo: Tamora Ferguson

DIANA COEN

On Sunday, Nov 30, 2014, St. Simon's Oakville celebrated the 90th birthday of one of our most beloved parishioners and priests: the Reverend Robert Gardner - or as we affectionately call him, "Father Bob". It was no surprise the event was "sold out". This is a testament to the great love and regard we have for Father Bob. As each speaker reflected on his life, his great legacy of love, family and parish community

became clear.

Darren Hogarth spoke about Father Bob's heritage as a fellow Jamaican. He was born and raised in Jamaica, made a Deacon in October 1948 and ordained Priest in June 1949 at the Cathedral Church of St. Jago de la Vega in Spanish Town. Although being in Canada since 1953, first serving in Montreal and later Ontario, he has maintained a deep love for and loyalty to his home country. True to his sense of community, he opened

his arms to fellow islanders in Oakville, and inspired the growth of our Caribbean Group. Our annual summer-time Caribbean Night and Caribbean Christmas potluck dinners are times of great fun and fellowship, and a testament to the importance of diversity in our community. Darren reminded us how Father Bob is always warm and welcoming, not only to fellow Jamaicans, but to everyone in his church family.

Other speakers, including Marie Decker and Jack Smye, highlighted the various ways Father Bob has woven himself into the vibrant St. Simon's tapestry. He remains at the heart of our Order of St. Luke community, which promotes healing by prayer, love, faith, anointing with oil and laying on of hands. Marie reminded us of his more jovial side. Behind his reserved and serene persona lies a fun-loving personality with a dry wit, who made us chuckle as he impersonated cowboys and other characters at past Cabaret shows. In recent years, Bob fulfilled his dream of joining the choir, where he sings alongside his friends and wife Gloria.

Peter, Bob and Gloria's son, shared stories of their family's journey from Montreal to different communities where Father Bob served in Ontario, such as St. James' Guelph, St. Philip-by-the-Lake Grimsby, St. John the Divine Cayuga, St. John's York and finally as Interim Priest and Honorary Assistant at St. Simon's Oakville.

Our celebration closed with reflections from Father Bob. He emphasized his deep love for both his immediate and church family. He shared his passion for his homeland and his fierce loyalty to both Jamaica and Canada. In reflecting on his profound and abiding faith, he demonstrated what we strive to be at St. Simon's: caring people, committed to building community, growing with God and serving the world through Christ's example.

We are blessed to have Bob and Gloria in our family, and are grateful to have celebrated this great occasion with them.

Diana Coen is Chair of Communications Cluster at St. Simon's Oakville

Facts about Jesus of Nazareth

HEATHER JOY BRINKMAN

It was most interesting to learn about the historical Jesus and the Kingdom of God from two of the world's leading Jesus scholars: John Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg.

They were here on Sundays at our Cathedral (Hamilton) in the cozy Niagara Room as they spoke on location in Jerusalem and throughout Galilee.

Using the DVD series *Living*

the Questions—First Light, the twelve study sessions were led by the well-prepared and engaging Canon Bill Thomas, who introduced a video, facilitated a discussion and provided us with the accompanying reading material for further study.

How exciting it was to learn why Jesus happened on the scene where and when he did, why the imperial titles were taken away from the Roman emperor Caesar Augustus and

given to a Jewish peasant, how the status quo of Roman imperial theology was subverted by this obscure Galilean and how his message continues to indict empires today!

I so looked forward to the warm welcome and enlightening experience beginning and ending with prayer. Light refreshments were served, even hot soup!

What a heart-warming way to stimulate and educate our minds as we continue on our journey.



Heather Joy Brinkman can be reached at heatherjoynowe@yahoo.ca

Photo: Frans Brinkman

Ordained in Niagara ... serving as Chaplain in England

George and Ann Novis, St. George's St. Catharines, had a chance meeting with retired Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams while visiting family in England.

Williams was speaking to about 60 school, hospital, university and prison chaplains at their day-long conference held in Wellington College, Berkshire, where the Novis' son serves as Chaplain.

The Reverend Timothy Novis, ordained in Niagara Diocese, served in the parishes of St. George's Guelph and St. Peter's Hornsby before becoming Chaplain at Ridley College in St. Catharines.

He has been Chaplain at Wellington College, which has over 1,000 students between the ages of 13 and 18, for seven years.



◀ George and Ann Novis with former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams and their son Timothy Novis.

Photo: Submitted.

In Conversation ...

about ANTI-RACISM

with Catherine Hughes and Elizabeth Huether

Catherine Hughes (CH) from the Church of the Nativity Hamilton and Rector Elizabeth Huether (EH) of St. Matthias' Guelph attended a four day consultation on anti-racism sponsored by the Anglican Church of Canada. Some 49 people representing many regions of Canada attended. The Niagara Anglican (NA) posed questions about their experience and received the following replies.



Participants at the national consultation on racism

Photo: Submitted

NA: What was the purpose of the consultation and what is racism?

CH: The purpose was to bring attention to the need within the Anglican Church of Canada, to bring focus to the issues of race in our church and to continue discussions on anti-racism that have taken place in the past around Aboriginal issues.

EH: The purpose was also to invite representatives from various dioceses who might want to be involved in the work of anti-racism training.

Racism, as defined for us at the Consultation, "is the belief, reinforced by power and privilege, that one race is innately superior to other races."

NA: What happened at the consultation?

CH: Not all Canadian dioceses were represented; attendees were primarily from the western provinces and predominately aboriginal regions/communities. There was a mix of races, with both lay and ordained persons.

EH: We attended a consultation, not a conference, and as such it was a time of collaboration with others, to envision ways to educate and raise awareness of racism

in our lives, our church and our communities. We had a brilliant key note address on "Why Decolonization is Important" from Dr. Paulette Regan, Senior Researcher for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

We attended workshops to help us better understand ourselves in relationship to the issue of racism.

We had a day of open space learning with ideas and concerns shared and tentative visions created for what we could do in our specific regions or nationally to keep the work of anti-racism alive.

NA: What was the outcome and were there recommendations?

CH: There were no defined outcomes or recommendations. It was put to the attendees to determine specific outcomes that individuals considered to be relevant. Elizabeth and I agreed that bringing focus to the racism issues in the church, Niagara Diocese and greater secular community is important. We made plans to continue the discussions, and find the ways and means to work especially with the Diocese of Toronto to develop a training plan.

NA: How did the consultation affect you?

CH: It had a profound effect

on me. I was the only black lay woman there and Toronto Bishop Peter Fenty was the only black clergy. The other attendees were very open to frank discussion and learning about the experiences of racially diverse persons in the church.

We took part in small group discussions and interactive games which showed the relevance of "white privilege" in the church, and highlighted its apparent effect and impact on racial minorities. This had the greatest impact on my thinking.

I was sad to have to realize how my own personal circumstances in leadership and employment within in the diocese and the faith based sector have and continue to be influenced by a racial factor.

We are all God's children. Jesus is my brother and I have been given gifts, talents and skills by my Father which I haven't been allowed to use for His own service. That's profoundly hurtful and extremely disappointing. When the issue of "racism" arises, it is usually passed over by white people with a polite excuse, like, "Oh, they didn't mean it that way". Participating at this consultation allowed everyone there to speak openly and from the heart in very frank terms.

It was an opportunity that I have never had before, to be able to tell my experiences, as a marginalized black woman,

with racism in the church and to be heard without being given polite meaningless platitudes as feedback.

It made me wonder if there might be other opportunities for more people to be heard. It was very hurtful to have to tell my story but I wondered if this was my Father's calling.

EH: I too was profoundly impacted by this experience. As a white person and as someone who thought I was not racist, I realized how much more work there is for me and all white people to decolonize ourselves and understand that every word or action has the potential to be hurtful and racist, if I am not aware.

I also learned that there is a great deal of concern about what is going to happen among our indigenous people now that the TRC is over; we have a long way to go to end racism in our church and in our communities. I will do this work until the day I die.

NA: What would you suggest Niagara Diocese and its parishes do to fight racism?

CH: It would be best if the fight against racism were to start with the diocesan leadership and translated into awareness and facilitated training.

It's important to understand, first of all, that racism does exist

within the diocese, and then be committed to eliminate its discriminatory effects within the diocese, the faith community and the secular community, which the church hopes to serve.

It is not a fight that racialized people can lead. We can help in bringing understanding to how racism has impacted not only Christian people but all people of colour. It's not a fight that Aboriginals, blacks or other people of diverse races can lead; it's an internal battle the white people have to overcome within themselves.

There needs to be education and training led by compassion, peace and love.

As Christian people, we can bring light to the world by taking a leadership role in this impactful social justice issue.

It's as important as overcoming hunger, eliminating poverty or improving the living wage. These are social concerns where our social justice initiatives have been oriented.

In fact, if the church and its Anglican leaders and parishioners took a more proactive role in fighting racism, many social circumstances that cause poverty such as discrimination in employment, discrimination in affordable adequate housing and access to health care would be eliminated.

EH: I think that Cathy has said it well. I have nothing to add.

NA: Thank you. Blessings on your plans and actions.

If you wish to continue the discussion, you can contact Catherine Hughes at calh@cogeco.ca or Elizabeth Huether at revistmatthias@gmail.com

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Deadlines and Submissions for Niagara Anglican

Deadlines:
May 2015 – March 25
Summer 2015 – April 25
September 2015 – July 25

Submissions:
News – 500 words or less
Articles – 750 words or less
Letters to the Editor – 300

words or less
Reviews (books, films, music, theatre) – 400 words or less
Original cartoons or art – contact the Editor
Photos – very large, high resolution, action pictures (people doing

something). Include name of photographer.

Questions or information:
contact the Editor at editor@niagaraanglican.ca or 905-635-9463

A letter from Cuba

DEAN CORMACK

After my first month in Cuba I have much to report.

I am serving as a deacon at St. Paul's in Bolondron which is a small country town of 7,000 (with 46 sets of twins!) and is about three hours from Havana.

Through the hard work of Archdeacon Andreis Diaz and support from companion Episcopal parishes in the USA and individuals from Canada, the church in Bolondron has been restored and is by far the nicest and largest building in the town. (See February 2015 Niagara Anglican.)

The second church that I serve at is in the town of Guirda, 15 kilometres away. I lead Morning Prayer in Guirda on Wednesdays, and we travel back there on Sunday evenings for an 8:00 p.m. service. As there is no public transportation to speak of, we must go to what I call the NO bus stop, wait for a bus that never comes and then try to flag

a private car, truck or horse cart. Last week it took two hours to make the journey. The church car, a 1972 Lada, is being rebuilt as it was literally falling apart except for the engine – which has been rebuilt thanks to donations from St. Luke's Burlington. The cars here are incredible. It is a living museum!

I have been attending diocesan meetings in Havana, Matanzas seminary, Itabo and Santa Clara. Many American groups, travelling on religious visas, are participating and learning about the Cuban church by touring these different venues. Havana and Matanzas are large centers that have many different options for accommodations and food. The government stores (which are all of them) offer limited goods from China, Russia, Vietnam, Korea and some South American countries. One must realize that everything is state owned - including every cow, pig and chicken. All distribution is controlled and the resort areas

get everything. Rice and beans are the main staples each day in the small towns as there aren't any vegetables or fruit and meat is forbidden.

I want to explain how we prepare for Sunday morning fellowship coffee before our 9:30 a.m. service in Bolondron. The breakfast program is funded by donations from some Canadian parishioners (and supported by St. George's Guelph – see Niagara Anglican Feb. 2015, page one) and works out to 31 cents a person. This funding has run out and we are all praying that breakfasts will be able to continue. For some, this is all they have to eat for the day.

The planning for coffee hour starts on Friday night when I get milk from a farmer. I then boil the milk and after it has cooled, I skim the cream off the top and make butter for the bread. With luck we find chocolate powder from Vietnam to serve hot chocolate and Cuban coffee. At 6:00 a.m. every Sunday a



young parishioner stands on the appointed corner to buy eight loaves of bread that come from another town. Last Sunday I counted 28 people waiting who had enough money to buy this expensive bread. The government only gives four small rolls per day to each person with a food card. I remember being in Havana 20 years ago as a tourist and being told that the lineup I saw was for ice cream. I know now that it was for bread. We are then ready to feed over 30 children and adults and give them something special before we celebrate the Holy Communion. This week we have a half jar of grape jelly to put on the bread for the children.

You would think that through all the shortages and challenges

rural Cuba offers, the people here would be depressed and give up. It is just the opposite. Their joy, compassion and love for God and each other is inspirational. I have seen God at work in every aspect of life here and the church is a place where people come together and offer each other support and love. The Church is an integral part of everyday life here and the mission of this church isn't found in some far off place. It starts in the pew and continues through the front door of the church reaching out into the community.

I hope to have another update before I am repositioned to Itabo in March and April where there is no communication. Thank you all for your support in this exciting new exchange.

Dean Cormack is a Divinity student at Trinity College Toronto, and a postulant in the Diocese of Niagara.

Why God and man?

COLIN C. M. CAMPBELL

“Love came down at Christmas!”

Pagans and Christians worship a god of power. Pagans worship a god with the power to destroy their enemies. Hitler believed in such a god, proclaiming god had saved him from the generals' plot to kill him. For us, however, God's power is the power of love, able to convert our enemies into friends through the Atonement.

This doctrine not only asserts God's love for sinners but also asserts God's holiness. (“Nothing impure can enter Heaven.”)

Any acceptable theory of the Atonement must reconcile God's love for sinners with his rejection of their sin, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Two traditional ways of expressing this are that Jesus paid the price for our sins and God laid on him the punishment of us all. In “Cur Deus Homo?” (“Why God and Man?”), Anselm used these metaphors. Later theology extended their use to develop the theory of penal substitution, still with us today. It has two glaring defects. First,

it emphasizes God's wrath at the expense of his love. Second, it suggests antinomianism, where grace becomes a licence to sin.

This article will rehabilitate substitution by emphasizing God's love and avoiding antinomianism.

God reconciles his love for sinners with his holiness, through his mercy. Mercy does not mean that sin does not matter, for then God would not be holy. Mercy can only be reconciled to holiness if there is a perfect repentance; that is, one which agrees with the claims of holiness.

However, a perfect repentance is something that we cannot do! Sin darkens the mind and hardens the heart. “What is truth?” said Pilate. When truth confronts us in Jesus, like Adam we hide or, like Peter we cry, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful [person].”

These considerations define the two attributes required of a Saviour: sinlessness and strength in “weakness.” Sinlessness is required for Jesus to know perfectly of what we must repent. Strength in weakness is required in order to bear our sin and confront us with it in a non-



Colin C.M. Campbell

Photo: Submitted

judgmental way.

It is in this context that the metaphors of price, punishment and substitution must be interpreted. “Price” means that the Atonement cost Jesus his life. “Punishment” is suffering imposed for wrongdoing. Since Jesus' suffering was imposed for our wrongdoing, in that sense, he bore our punishment. Because he expressed our repentance for us, instead of us, he was our “substitute.” In this understanding of these terms, the traditional language of expiation and propitiation remains appropriate.

Our intuition tells us it is unjust for the righteous to pay the price, be punished and die, as a substitute for the unrighteous, but this thinking is not God's. We

Mercy does not mean that sin does not matter, for then God would not be holy”

value judgment over forgiveness, on the assumption that sinners could fix themselves, if only they would choose to. The whole basis of Christian soteriology is that they cannot. Left to themselves, they are lost! Penal substitution affirms this but values judgment over forgiveness, substituting the just reward owed to Christ for the just punishment owed to us. There is no real mercy in this zero sum balance sheet. An angry, judgmental and ultimately merciless God requires price, punishment and substitution. This is utter nonsense! On the Cross, in his sinlessness, Jesus confronts us with an uncompromising moral standard. In his strength in weakness, he disarms our fear of judgment. We are able to choose, free of coercion, to accept or reject his offer of mercy.

Penal substitution is also wide open to antinomianism. If Christ really has taken my punishment, what is to prevent me

from sinning without regard for God's disapproval? Alternatively, if I truly have received Christ's reward, then should I not now be sinless?

It is correct that our guilt and the responsibility for knowing how to deal with it have been transferred to Christ, by our faith in his saving act. However, faith does not completely negate our responsibility. The very choice to have faith is an exercise of responsibility. Christ saves us by knowing better than we do how we should live. His Holy Spirit inspires us to do this. However, we still have the ongoing responsibility to respond. When we do, we will be transformed, one step at a time, into the pattern of the transforming one, uniting us in a relationship with our God, whose power is love.

Dr. Colin Campbell teaches school in Hamilton.

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Celebrating Niagara's 140th anniversary



Then

Members of the Niagara Synod, which took place at the Scottish Rite Cathedral Hamilton on May 16, 1967, follow the text as the Bishop of Niagara reads the part of his charge dealing with clerical stipends. The next day the all-male synod would vote—by a narrow margin—to permit women to be elected to the Synod.

Source: Niagara Anglican, June 1967



Now

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Source: Niagara Anglican, January 2015

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