

The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr

Waterloo, Ontario
www.stedmund.ca

UPDATE

The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada / The Traditional Anglican Communion

June 6, 2011 - **St. Norbert**

July Schedule

July 3	Sunday	The Second Sunday after Trinity
July 10	Sunday	The Third Sunday after Trinity
July 17	Sunday	The Fourth Sunday after Trinity
July 22	Friday	St. Mary Magdalene
July 24	Sunday	The Fifth Sunday after Trinity
July 25	Monday	St. James the Apostle
July 26	Tuesday	St. Anne, Mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary
July 31	Sunday	The Sixth Sunday after Trinity

Service Times and Location

- (1) All Services are held in the Chapel at Luther Village on the Park - 139 Father David Bauer Drive in Waterloo.
- (2) On Sundays, Matins is sung at 10:00 a.m. (The Litany on the first Sunday of the month), and the Holy Eucharist is celebrated (sung) at 10:30 a.m.
- (3) On weekdays - Major Holy Days - the Holy Eucharist is usually celebrated at 7:00 p.m., 10:00 a.m. on Saturday.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

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BRITISH ORDINARIATE WELCOMES FIRST MEMBERS

Rather than being 'disaffected,' they are stepping 'deeper into the fullness of the Body of Christ'

They were received into full communion not at the Easter Vigil, as normally happens when people become Catholic, but in low-key ceremonies during Holy Week. The first 1,000-odd members of the *Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham* - 950 laypeople and 64 clergy in 27 groups across the United Kingdom - are former Anglicans who have responded to Pope Benedict XVI's historic creation of a means by which former Anglicans can be received as groups, together with their clergy, while retaining their distinctive traditions.

Unifying move

Although described in media reports as "disaffected Anglicans" who are jumping ship in exasperation at divisions within the Church of England over homosexuality and women's ordination, the members of the ordinariate see themselves very differently - as pioneers of Christian unity.

Mark Crane, 23, was one of 16 received April 20 at the Catholic university chaplaincy in central London. When the pope issued the Apostolic Constitution *Anglicanorum coetibus* in November 2009, "I remember sitting and reading it and thinking: This is it. I can no longer stay in the Church of England and call myself Catholic if the pope is now offering what we've always been praying for."

Crane, who once considered training as an Anglican priest, had always prayed for Anglican-Catholic corporate unity. But after the vote of the Church of England Synod in 2008 to proceed with the ordination of women as bishops, he realized that "there was going to be no further place for people of my persuasion in the Church of England." But he held back. "I felt very strongly that we should do it as a group. It's fine for you to do it as an individual, but what does it say about what we all did before?" he told *Our Sunday Visitor*. "For me it was about that corporate vision, because I think we have been

living an authentically Christian life up till now."

"Disaffected Anglicans" implies they are angrily rejecting Anglican positions on homosexuality or female ordination. But those are the presenting issues that have brought home the impossibility of the whole Anglican Communion ever being reconciled to Rome. "It's about the fact that we have always wanted unity with the Catholic Church, we want to put behind us all this bickering and do what our Lord asked us to do, which is to go and make disciples of all nations."

Coming home

Diana Murphey, a Londoner originally from Australia, had for some years realized that "the anchor had gone" from the Church of England. She was considering being received into the Catholic Church when the ordinariate was announced, but was skeptical about how long it would take. Then came Pope Benedict's visit last September.

"The papal visit was incredibly key," she said. "To me, he embodied Christianity in this country. I felt I belong here. I'm going home."

Shortly after the pope's departure, the timetable for the ordinariate was announced and she joined the central London group for three months of weekly study, tutored by an Anglican clergyman who will be ordained as a Catholic priest in June, and the Catholic chaplain, Father Peter Wilson, who received the group on April 20.

Afterward, she told OSV: "The last few months I feel as if I've been sitting at an airport with endless pieces of luggage that I honestly don't want to take with me, but the flight's not being called. Suddenly, I feel today as if the flight's been called, and now I'm here. It feels fantastic."

Authentic communion

But the whole point of the ordinariate, Father Wilson - himself a former Anglican - told them in his homily, is that the Church recognized that this is not a "rejection, an abjuration," for as Catholic Anglicans "you have already been incorporated. This is a step deeper into the fullness of the Body of Christ."

Another former Anglican at the altar April 20, Father Mark Woodruff, describes the ordinariate as the fulfilment of the ambition of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission. What derailed that ambition was the Church of England's unilateral decisions, fruit of the democratic decision-making processes which, in the absence of a magisterium, the Church has used to contain divergent theologies. But the ordinariate is also a rejection of a particular version of what that unity should look like. As Pope Benedict said at Westminster Abbey during his visit, the goal is "visible, organic unity," an authentic communion united by apostolic faith, rather than a "reconciled diversity" that can settle only for a loose amalgamation. The ordinariate, said Father Woodruff, "is genuinely a reconciliation of an ecclesial community."

It also recognizes what is not always obvious to Catholics - that "If we are the universal Church, why do we limit ourselves to being one manifestation of it? If we are universal, then it's no skin off our noses to create an additional space or to give space so that other kinds of Christians can be the Christians they are within our fellowship. Are we saying that when, say, the Methodists are united with us and we with them in the great Church of the future, they all have to belong to a Roman Catholic diocese?"

Canon law, he points out, has an endless flexibility to accommodate all kinds of different forms of belonging: religious orders, ecclesial movements, personal prelatures such as *Opus Dei*. "Our distinctiveness is a richness which God has given us; we don't need schism for it to be there."

Forging ahead

The ordinariate in this way offers a glimpse of what the unity of Christians will in the future look like - an opportunity for a "mutual exchange of gifts" by expanding the boundaries of the universal Church. Although not a "ritual Church" like that of Eastern-rite Catholics, before the end of the year Rome is expected to approve its distinctive liturgies and prayers drawn from the *Book of Common Prayer*. The ordinariate will look and feel different - not least because two-thirds of former Anglican clergy being ordained within it at Pentecost are married. (But this remains a dispensation reserved to converted married clergy; in the future, Catholics seeking ordination will need to be celibate). Although most ordinariate groups will use Catholic churches, they will have their own Mass, and belong to a non-territorial entity - a personal ordinariate - rather than a diocese. Its ordinary, Father Keith Newton, a former Anglican bishop, will need the approval of his pastoral council for key decisions. His successor will not be appointed by Rome but by that council, which is made up of priests, religious and laity. [?]

The ordinariate is being closely watched abroad; plans to create ordinariates in the United States, Canada and Australia are already far advanced. In the United Kingdom, said Crane, "a lot of people are watching, almost with bated breath, to see what happens and how it works out." He is confident that in a year's time the group will have doubled.

"My hope is that there would be a solid, committed group - and we'd start bringing other people with us," said Murphew. She is conducting a "talent audit" of the group in preparation to serve the community once their priest is ordained and they are allocated a church. The ordinariate is not a tribal refuge, but a means of reaching out - a distinctive *ecclesiola* ("little church") within the universal Church.

"Once we're in a place," she said. "we can start doing mission."

By **Austen Ivereigh** - *Our Sunday Visitor* - May 8, 2011

ROBERT'S RAMBLINGS

Go, make disciples of all nations.

(Matthew 28, 19)

Once upon a time there were a Scotsman, a Welshman and a Yorkshireman.

The Scot was Mr John Moffat, son of the famous Robert Moffat, nicknamed the Apostle of Botswana.

When I wonder why in the chaos of Africa, Botswana should be such an exception, such an example of democracy and economic prosperity. I suspect that the country's early and real conversion to Christianity, is part of the explanation. There is still a

Fr Howard Moffat in Botswana, Anglican priest and doctor of medicine, a descendant of the above. Occasionally you find mention of Howard in the who dun its about the *Number One Ladies' Detective Agency* written by Alexander McCall Smith, a Zimbabwean doctor now living in Scotland.

The Welshman was Mr Thomas Morgan Thomas, formerly a farmer. The Yorkshireman was Mr William Sykes, formerly a grocer in Mirfield. Both these men still have (had?) descendants living in Southern Africa. In 1859 the three of them with their wives went to what is now Zimbabwe as missionaries of the London Missionary Society, an interdenominational organization which did heroic work round the world. Most of its members were Congregationalist or Presbyterian. One of the places where the LMS worked was the Torres Strait Islands off the North East of Australia. The descendants of those Island converts now constitute our Continuing Anglican diocese of Torres Strait under Bishop Nona. The Islanders describe the arrival of the LMS as the Coming of the Light.

Things were tougher in Zim. King Mzilikazi of the Matabele permitted the missionaries to make their settlement on the fringe of his capital, Nyathi (buffalo), but he would not permit any of his people to become Christian. The Matabele lived by raiding other tribes, killing males, enslaving women and children, taking cattle and grain. War was the occupation of the Matabele. The whole nation was an army, with every male enlisted in a regiment, with every regiment having its own name and pride. Uniforms were minimal, not much more than loin cloths and anklets. The king had absolute power of life and death over his people. Whatever they thought they owned ultimately belonged to him. No man might marry without his permission, and that permission was not given until the man had washed his spear in enemy blood. Marriage took place by regiment, "Now that the Insukameni have been victorious they will marry". In the unlikely event of a regiment losing a battle, its surviving members would all be executed.

The missionary families were never harmed. But they never integrated with such a society. How could they? Imagine three Victorian ladies in long dresses and stays, giving birth to their children without benefit of doctors, trying hard to keep their children clean and tidy, trying to grow fresh vegetables, cooking over open fires. Nor did they make a single convert. Polygamy, nakedness, bloodshed on a gigantic scale, witchcraft. A particular horror was "smelling out". All ills which befell society were attributed to evil spirits. Clearly somebody must have been in league with the spirits.

Ngangas, medicine men, would hold a public ceremony, throw bones, dance about, and so smell out the culprit responsible for the witchcraft. The culprit then had his brains bashed out.

Frustration, sense of failure, feelings of horror, homesickness, boredom, lack of recreation or vacation, took their toll on the psyches of the foreigners. Since they dare not become angry with the Matabele or with God, their anger transferred itself to each other, a common enough psychological problem in small enclosed communities. They ceased speaking to each other. Instead they wrote notes c/o head office in London. The notes had to go twelve hundred miles to London, first by ox wagon to Cape Town, then by sailing ship to England, and then be returned to Nyathi by the same route. Moffat returned to Botswana. Thomas went off and founded a rival mission called Shilo (1 *Samuel* 1,3). Not that he made converts. Sykes died.

In 1870 after sibling rivalry among half brothers and after civil war, King Lobengula succeeded his father. He moved his capital to Bulawayo (my home town) which translates as Place of Killing. After all, it is the nature of kings to kill. The new ruler allowed a fresh group of LMS missionaries to make their settlement nearby. They had found a spring of clean water, a rare blessing in Africa, and so called their place Hope Fountain. Unfortunately they planted thirsty trees nearby which drank up most of the water. Still no converts.

Then in 1879, oh horror of horrors, three Jesuit Fathers arrived as rival missionaries. They set up shop nearby. They were part of a larger mission to several other parts of Central Africa, such as Zambia, all of which had ended in death for the missionaries. The three newcomers in Matabeleland made no converts except for two or three lepers expelled from the tribe, who had nowhere else to go. The three Jesuits were Europeans, ie they were not Brits. They knew little about, were not interested in, RC - Anglican - Protestant controversies and atrocities in the British Isles in days long gone. One afternoon they rode over to Hope Fountain to drink a dish of tea with the Protestants. Well, why ever not. Friendship blossomed, to say nothing of mutual respect.

Before I left home in 1987 I paid visits to Nyathi and Hope Fountain. Both are now (were? Let's not forget the Mugabe factor.) conventional missions with primary and high schools, churches and historic graveyards. The LMS has morphed into the Congregationalist church. On the inside walls of a church I saw watercolour pictures hanging, which

looked to be in danger from termites or white ants. "They ought to be in archives", I thought. I was moved they were paintings of Hope Fountain done by one of the Jesuits, a man with a difficult Belgian surname, if I remember rightly.

I like to think that the harmonious and generous relations among all denominations in Zim, including Quakers, Salvationists and Seventh Day Adventists, go back to those nineteenth century tea parties. The

Congregationalists, as "first regiment of the line", so to speak, are honoured by all. The RC's are admired by all. Friendships blossom, to say nothing of mutual respect. There is none of the Romanophobia which was (is?) so prevalent in neighbouring South Africa. Perhaps I'll say more about all this in next month's column.

+Robert Mercer CR

FROM HERE AND THERE

1) You used to be a Reformed Protestant . . . when and why did you decide to become a Catholic?

I became a Catholic for the only honest reason anyone should: because it's true. I read my way into the Church in the same way Newman did: I tried to prove to myself that the Church Christ established was Protestant and then went wrong, that is, Catholic, later. I found the opposite. For instance, not one Christian in the world for the first 1000 years ever denied the Real Presence in the Eucharist.

Peter Kreeft, in an interview - a philosopher and Christian apologist

2) Holy Namesake

The personal ordinariate of England and Wales is named for Our Lady of Walsingham, who appeared to Richeldis de Faverches in 1061 and led her in spirit to Nazareth, where she showed her the location where the Annunciation occurred and asked her to build a replica in Walsingham, England. The original shrine was destroyed during the Reformation, but efforts to restore it began in the late 19th century. **Austen Ivereigh**

3) Fr Foote's visit to the Toronto Ordinariate Group

Fr Bill Foote, appointed by Archbishop Collins to visit and mentor groups of Anglicans and Catholics who wish to enter the Ordinariate, visited the Toronto Group on 29 May. As Fr Foote put it, in guiding groups of Anglicans toward entering into the full communion of the Catholic Church, his job is to be "the horse's mouth." Here is what we heard from the horse's mouth:

Anglicanorum coetibus does not propose to establish a kind of Uniate structure, where entire jurisdictions "unite" with Rome. Rather, the Apostolic Constitution provides a bridge or doorway, so that

individuals and groups may journey together to enter into the Catholic Church, and find room within the Latin rite for former Anglicans, now Catholic, to preserve their liturgical, spiritual and pastoral traditions, a gift for the whole Church.

Fr Foote emphasized the necessity of personal choice and commitment. To enter into the full communion of the Catholic Church - to become Catholics - each person must make a profession of faith, to the effect that he or she believes everything that the Catholic Church believes and teaches. If an individual is already baptized, he or she will then be confirmed.

The Toronto Group is relatively small. Our contact list extends to about 30 people, but it is unclear how many have sent letters to Archbishop Collins, and therefore how many are prepared, at present, to be received into the Catholic Church, or (if already Catholic) to enter the Ordinariate. However, Fr Foote stated that very few are needed to constitute a viable worshipping community. Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt 18.20). The 14 people we had gathered to hear Fr Foote on Sunday would be enough to provide the basis for building a parish. (With reference to numbers, Fr Phillips has provided a reflection on little acorns. [<http://www.theanglocatholic.com/2011/05/theres-something-about-little-acorns/>])

Accordingly, an Ordinariate parish in Toronto will be established.

Fr Foote speculated that it would be very possible for the initial group of Anglicans, who wish to enter into the full communion of the Catholic Church, to begin catechetical instruction in September (possibly using the *Evangelium* program), with a view to being received in Advent. This would mean that an Ordinariate parish in Toronto would be able to celebrate its first mass by Christmas.

Importantly, Fr Foote made the point that catechesis

beginning in the fall could accommodate people who aren't yet sure of their decision. To enter a program of preparation does not imply an obligation to be received! At least initially, then, anyone would be welcome who wishes to join catechesis in order to explore the Catholic faith and discern whether God is calling them to enter the Church through the Ordinariate.

Finally, Fr Foote raised the issue of irregular marriages - that is, anyone who has been remarried should consult a Catholic priest to determine what should be done in their situation. He made the point that divorce is not an issue, but that remarriage is potentially a barrier to communion.

We are grateful to Fr Foote for spending time with us, despite the demands of his regular Sunday duties and the concerns of a large parish, and welcome his guidance, and that of Archbishop Collins, as we joyfully seek to respond to the Holy Father's invitation.

<http://torontoordinariate.wordpress.com> - May 31, 2011

4) "If you're not a liberal at twenty you have no heart, if you're not a conservative at forty you have no brain." **Winston Churchill**

5) Sign of the Times?

Archbishop John Charles McQuaid, demonised by progressive Catholics and left-wing hacks, is becoming a bit of an unperson, it seems. The Archbishop McQuaid National School in Loughlinstown, County Dublin, has changed its name to St Columbanus National School. The *Minister for Children* Barry Andrews was on hand to cut the ribbon and welcome students and staff into their newly-renamed school.

It seems the late Archbishop of Dublin's reputation for orthodoxy and old-fashioned holiness doesn't project quite the right image. And yet, if the name-changers only knew, he was a pussy-cat when compared with St Columbanus. Anyway, you may be sure that if the school had been called after Martin Luther King or Nelson Mandela, its title would

be sacrosanct. By '**Stramentarius**'

6) Saying grace in a restaurant

Last week, I took my children to the restaurant.

My six-year-old son asked if he could say grace.

As we bowed our heads he said 'God is good, God is great. Thank you for the food, and I would even thank you more if mom gets us ice cream for dessert. And liberty and justice for all! Amen!'

Along with the laughter from the other customers nearby, I heard a woman remark, 'That's what's wrong with this country. Kids today don't even know how to pray. Asking God for ice cream! Why, I never!'

Hearing this, my son burst into tears and asked me, 'Did I do it wrong? Is God mad at me?'

As I held him and assured him that he had done a terrific job, and God was certainly not mad at him, an elderly gentleman approached the table. He winked at my son and said, 'I happen to know that God thought that was a great prayer.'

'Really?' my son asked.

'Cross my heart,' the man replied.

Then, in a theatrical whisper, he added (indicating the woman whose remark had started this whole thing), 'Too bad she never asks God for ice cream. A little ice cream is good for the soul sometimes.'

Naturally, I bought my kids ice cream at the end of the meal. My son stared at his for moment, and then did something I will remember the rest of my life.

He picked up his sundae and, without a word, walked over and placed it in front of the woman. With a big smile he told her, 'Here, this is for you. Ice cream is good for the soul sometimes; and my soul is good already.' From the **Parish magazine of St. Katherine's**, Lincoln, UK

"BUT THAT I CAN'T BELIEVE . . ."

One of the oldest tricks in disputation is to create what is known as "*a straw man*". One's opponent goes out of his way to portray a grotesque depiction of something which he claims you hold dear and then, with a clever comment, destroys what he has just described claiming that he has won the

argument.

It is a technique often used by the 'new' atheists, like *Richard Dawkins*. Describe 'God as a Father Christmas figure with a big white beard, travelling around on a magic carpet!' Then, with a clever

cynical remark, point out that such a ridiculous image is puerile and no serious person ought to believe it.

The fallacy is, of course, that no-one - not even a 12 year old school boy or girl - *actually* believes in such an image; and even they, without difficulty, can see through the ploy. All that has been destroyed is a pretence created by the opponent: not the real thing. The 'real thing' he/she is careful to avoid since they know it has some substance to it.

Whenever someone comes to me to 'explore the faith' (I much prefer the concept of 'exploration' over 'instruction' since it implies a mutual 'sharing of gifts') I always ask, once I feel we are at ease with each other, if there is *anything* about the Catholic faith they find difficult or problematical?

Frequently they come out with statements like: I can't *accept* that the Pope is always right in everything; Is it correct that Catholics have to *worship* the Virgin Mary?

If I become a Catholic is one constantly *compelled* to say The Rosary?; In order to *prove* that you are a good Catholic is it true that you *must* have been to Lourdes or Fatima? **All these statements are 'straw men'!**

Often they are based on what someone (usually not a Catholic), somewhere (and they find it hard to identify the source) assured them was true. There is palpable relief when they are categorically told that these, and similar statements, are false.

A similar, but slightly different, problem arises when they express concern that they cannot *fully understand* certain statements of the faith. They've read, perhaps, *Teach yourself Philosophy* and think they could improve on the Church's teaching on certain things! They seem quite taken aback when I congratulate them that - as they haven't mentioned it as a difficulty - they obviously *fully* understand the doctrine of the Trinity and/or the Hypostatic Union of Christ!

Have they not comprehended the difference between *Understanding* and *Belief*? Or heard the cry of St Anselm: '*Faith seeks understanding*'. Do they not recall the telling words of John Henry Newman - the Patron of the Ordinariate - in his book *Apologia pro vita sua*: "ten thousand difficulties do not make one doubt" (quoted specifically in *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*)?

I ask them (for their homework!) as I do you if this is an area which confuses you, to read slowly and prayerfully the section within *The Catechism* entitled: 'The Characteristics of Faith' §153 - 165. There, clearly set out, is the important relationship - and difference - between faith, reason and understanding. Above all, it emphasises how faith is a 'gift' we receive from God and which we cannot create ourselves.

In trust, pray for that gift; and then, in courage, act on it.

By **Father Peter Geldard** in *The Portal*, April 2011

WOMEN DEACONS?

[An open letter to] Your Holiness:

Forgive me for taking so long to write this letter. As you well know from your many years of service in the *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*, since the late 1960s it has been fashionable for theologians to write open letters critical of the doctrine and discipline of the Catholic Church. Lest you be tempted to despair regarding the state of the theological guild in North America, I write to assure you that not all self-professed Catholic educators agree with these highly publicized diatribes against the perennial teaching and practice of the Church.

The immediate example that has spurred this missive is an open letter [<http://ncronline.org/blogs/just-catholic/your-holiness-it-time-women-deacons>] in which Phyllis Zagano urges you to reconsider the ordination of women to the diaconate.

In a convoluted argument citing ambiguous and anecdotal evidence, Zagano suggests that Your Holiness and members of the Roman curia know that "women can be ordained as deacons" and are paving the way to "the recovery of the tradition of women deacons." Being an avid fan of documents produced by the Magisterium, I have noticed no such trends or signals in them. If you are urging us in that direction, please be clear about it. Moreover, I have read all 16 documents promulgated by the Second Vatican Council, and found therein no advocacy of women deacons.

Zagano further claims that the *International Theological Commission* produced a report concluding that "the Magisterium must decide" whether women can be ordained to the diaconate. I have read the ITC's report, published under the title *From the Diakonia of Christ to the Diakonia of the Apostles*, and found no such conclusion that the

Magisterium can arbitrarily admit women to the diaconate.

The fact that women in various ancient Christian communities were called "deaconesses" is indisputable. Yet this does not mean that deaconesses held holy orders in the Church. In the earliest centuries of Christianity, the words "deacon" and "deaconess" were used as imprecisely as "minister" is used today. Some called deaconesses were simply the wives of deacons; others were female monastics or abbesses.

The specific roles assigned to deaconesses in ancient documents such as the *Didascalia Apostolorum* comprise charitable services for women, the instruction of female catechumens, and the anointing of women at baptism. In other words, deaconesses ministered strictly to women, fulfilling functions that are best performed by women rather than by men, if scandal is to be avoided. Another early Christian document, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, prescribes: "A deaconess does not bless, nor perform anything belonging to the office of presbyters or deacons." Deaconesses manifestly did not have a role at the altar during Eucharistic celebrations. As the ITC states in the study mentioned above, "This ministry was not perceived as simply the feminine equivalent of the masculine diaconate." Those advocating a "restoration" of women deacons must be clear about what they wish to restore, since their arguments are based on historical models.

Yet not all of us are advocating or agitating for such a "restoration." Some of us are mistrustful of archaeological exercises that thinly veil radical

agendas under ostensible calls to restore ancient Christian practices. Many things that took place among early Christians disappeared for good reasons, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and need not be resuscitated today. Please be sure that the Vatican bureaucracy continues to stymie the desires of those calling for change by invoking early Christianity!

Be assured, Your Holiness, that I am not the only Catholic with no interest in women deacons. Millions of women have lived their Catholic faith and have made inestimable contributions to the Church without any desire to prance about the sanctuary in clerical garb. For the most part, they are too busy with service to their families and with works of charity to organize petitions, attend rallies, and write open letters expressing their lack of desire for female ordination.

Having taught at undergraduate institutions, I can attest that the average young woman has no more interest in being a permanent deacon than the average young man. Not, that is, until the young woman in question has been radicalized by professors such as Zagano and her like-minded colleagues, who dominate theology and religious studies programs in colleges and universities across the country. Our enlightened professors have far more to do with the disaffection of educated young women from the Catholic faith than the fact that the Church does not ordain women.

My family and I continue to pray for you, Your Holiness; please remember us in prayer as well.

Author unknown

A SHORT JOURNEY FROM 'PRO-CHOICE' TO INFANTICIDE

One of abortion's most militant activists and practitioners died last month. At the exact same instant, one of abortion's most, militant critics also died. It wasn't quite the coincidence it appears to be; the pro-abortion and anti-abortion activist were one and the same man.

If you can imagine Dr. Henry Morgentaler experiencing a mid-career epiphany, and spending the rest of his life publicly atoning for the innumerable lives he had snuffed out, you would have a fairly accurate picture of his American *doppelganger*, the extraordinarily influential Dr. Bernard Nathanson.

A secular Jew, Nathanson's gloomy family history offered propitious terrain for psychological extremism. Both a grandfather and his sister

committed suicide; his father (an obstetrician/gynecologist) made at least one attempt. In 1949, while Nathanson was in medical school at McGill, he paid for his girlfriend's illegal abortion. As Father Raymond J. de Souza wrote on these pages shortly after Nathanson's death, the episode galvanized him into activism promoting the legalization of abortion.

Nathanson once said, "I am one of those who ushered in this barbaric age." Just weeks before he died, that "barbaric age" was embodied in the arraignment of Philadelphia abortionist Dr. Kermit Gosnell on eight murder charges: a third-degree charge for a woman who died under his knife, and seven first-degree charges of infanticide for "snipping" the spines of live babies "to ensure fetal demise": i.e. inducing births of viable third trimester

babies, and deliberately killing them post-delivery.

In its 261-page report, the grand jury described the conditions at Gosnell's filthy "clinic" as rivaling those in a Third World country: unwashed instruments spreading venereal disease, cats defecating where they pleased, a padlocked emergency exit, and floors sticky with placental and fetal remains.

Gosnell's gruesome practice was no secret, but the *Pennsylvania Department of Health* had decided to stop inspecting abortion clinics because "officials concluded that inspections would be 'putting a barrier up to women seeking abortions.'" Thus, for 30 years, thanks to activists' remorseless protection of unconstrained abortion access, Gosnell ran his little house of horrors without any oversight whatsoever.

In 1995, according to the *Washington Post*, 56% of

Americans were "pro-choice." In 2010, the number dipped to 45%. Twenty-nine state governors are anti-abortion. Revulsion against unregulated abortion is thus growing, not subsiding in the United States. Here, too? How can we know? The subject is virtually *verboden* in political, academic and media forums.

At his arraignment, Dr. Gosnell was described by one observer as "a little befuddled." He understood the charge for the dead woman, but didn't seem to understand why killing live babies was wrong. Pro-choicers in Canada often say the medical profession could never produce such a monster here. But as Bernard Nathanson discovered, good intentions, amongst doctors as amongst ideologues, can produce the worst monsters of all.

Barbara Kay in the *National Post* - March 23, 2011

TIME TO PROCLAIM THE PRIMACY OF JESUS CHRIST IN CREATION 4 of 7

"The Christian picture of the world is this, that the world in its details is the product of a long process of evolution but that at the most profound level it comes from the Logos. Thus it carries rationality within itself." (Pope Benedict XVI, as Cardinal Ratzinger, God and the World: A Conversation with Peter Seewald. Ignatius 2002 p. 139)

The Letter to the Hebrews

Another passage from the New Testament should be quoted, because it witnesses to this same faith and vision of the first Christians in very succinct and beautiful language:

"At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken through his Son, the Son that he has appointed to *inherit everything and through whom he made everything there is*. He is the radiant light of God's glory and the perfect copy of his nature, sustaining the universe by his powerful command." (Heb 1:1-3)

The Magisterium on the Threshold of the Cosmic Christ

In the history of the Church the place of Christ in Creation has never been taught by the Magisterium at the highest level. But in very recent years it has begun to address the question. The first serious references are in *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1992) and in the first chapter of Pope John Paul II's letter for the new millennium *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (1994). In both of the above the title "**Lord of the Cosmos and Lord of History**" given

to Christ is a real development of doctrine. If Jesus Christ is "Lord of the Cosmos" then we are surely right to presume that this is before the advent of sin. Surely he does not just become Lord of the Cosmos as a consequence of sin?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church might be seen as developing upon the seminal Vatican II statement, which it closely paraphrases in paragraph 450, that the Church "holds that in her most benign Lord and Master can be found the key, the focal point and the goal of man, as well as of all human history." (*Gaudium et Spes*, 10).

The Catechism states that:

"God's 'plan of his loving kindness', is conceived by the Father before the foundation of the world, in his beloved Son. This plan is a "grace [which] was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began", stemming immediately from Trinitarian love. It unfolds in the work of creation, the whole history of salvation after the fall, and the missions of the Son and the Spirit, which are continued in the mission of the Church." (257).

It is very difficult to see how a plan conceived in the Trinity before sin could be anything other than Scotist. Are we to believe that our sharing in the life

of the Blessed Trinity only comes about due to original sin?

While not giving this question the prominence it should perhaps deserve *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, gives some remarkable texts that lead to the threshold the cosmic Christ. Some of these important texts are:

"In the creation of the world and of man, God gave the first and universal witness to his almighty love and his wisdom, the first proclamation of the 'plan of his loving goodness', which finds its goal in the new creation in Christ." (315)

"Jesus Christ is Lord: he possesses all power in heaven and on earth. He is 'far above all rule and authority and power and dominion', for the Father 'has put all things under his feet.' (Eph 1:20-22) **Christ is Lord of the cosmos and of history.** In him human history and indeed all creation are 'set forth' and transcendently fulfilled." (668, our emphasis)

"God created the world for the sake of communion with his divine life, a communion brought about by the 'convocation' of men in Christ, and this 'convocation' is the Church. . . . Just as God's will is creation and is called 'the world', so his intention is the salvation of men, and it is called 'the Church'." (760)

"The name 'Jesus' contains all: God and man and the whole economy of creation and salvation." (2666, see also 280)

In *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, Pope John Paul II states:

"Christ, the Son who is of one being with the Father, is therefore the one who reveals God's plan for all creation and for man in particular . . . '[He] fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear . . . By his incarnation

the Son of God united himself in some sense with every man'. (Vat II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 22)" (4).

"Christ, true God and true man, **the Lord of the cosmos, is also the Lord of history**, of which he is 'the Alpha and the Omega', 'the beginning and the end' (Rev 1:8; 21:6). In him the Father has spoken the definitive word about mankind and its history." (5, our emphasis)

In Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Dies Domini* (On the Lord's Day) (1998) he states:

"It is true that the Word was made flesh 'in the fullness of time' (Gal 4:4); but it is also true that, in virtue of the mystery of his identity as the eternal Son of the Father, he is the origin and end of the universe: 'Through him all things were made, and without him was made nothing that was made'. (Jn 1:3) and, 'In him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible . . . All things were created through him and for him'. (Col 1:16) This active presence of the Son in the creative work of God is revealed fully in the Paschal Mystery, in which Christ, rising as 'the first fruits of those who had fallen asleep' (I Cor 15:20), established the new creation and began the process which he himself will bring to completion when he returns in glory to 'deliver the kingdom to God the Father. . . , so that God may be everything to everyone' (I Cor 15: 24,28). Already at the dawn of creation, the plan of God implied Christ's 'cosmic mission'. This Christocentric perspective, embracing the whole arc of time, filled God's well-pleased gaze when, ceasing from all his work, he 'blessed the seventh day and made it holy' (Gen 2:3). Then was born the 'Sabbath', so characteristic of the first covenant, and which foretells the sacred day of the new and final covenant [in Christ]. (8) The Sabbath recalls that the universe and history belong to God. It is a celebration of the marvels which God has wrought in creation and salvation." (15)

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