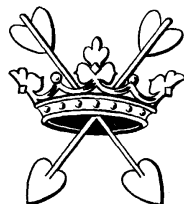


The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr

(Waterloo, Ontario)
www.stedmund.ca



The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada
(A member of the worldwide Traditional Anglican Communion)

UPDATE

October 8, 2007 - St. Denys

November Schedule

November 1	Thursday	All Saints' Day
November 2	Friday	All Souls' Day
November 4	Sunday	The Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity
November 11	Sunday	Remembrance Day
November 18	Sunday	The Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity
November 22	Thursday	St. Edmund, King and Martyr
November 25	Sunday	Christ the King / The Sunday next before Advent
November 30	Friday	St. Andrew the Apostle

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

1) **St. Edmund's Day** - Thursday, November 22 - please mark your calendar - Mass at 7:00 p.m. and dinner immediately following. (Transferred from November 20.)

2) **Pilgrimage 2008** - a note from Father David Marriott:

Dear All,

This is a first 'testing of the waters' for this possible project for 2008.

I have been asked to consider arranging a pilgrimage to Jordan and Syria: this would be led by an experienced company based here in Vancouver, with all travel and hotel arrangements made by them. At the Primate's request, that we maintain our visits to Walsingham, there would be an initial stay at Our Lady of Walsingham: this would add very little to the overall cost of the programme, as flight rules allow you to make a 'stopover' en route.

However, the cost would be substantial: with an initial estimate of some \$3700.00 (including airfares and accommodation, but not incidental costs) - and there would need to be a minimum number to make this feasible. Dates would most likely be with a departure at the end of August for approximately 16 days.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could make this idea known to your parishes, with the request that if any may be interested in this project, to please contact me at drm274@hotmail.com, or 604-551-4660.

In Christ,
David+

3) A note from **Bishop Mercer**:

Trinity XVI

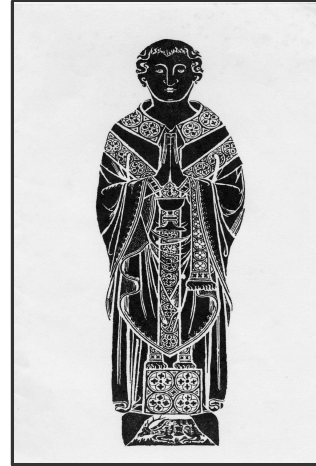
Dear Sir,

The article about the Prayer Book in the UPDATE for September was fair enough. The American (and Canadian) Prayer Books say nothing about what the clergy are to wear in church. The English Book, however, is explicit. In the rubric before mattins it says: "The ornaments of the church and of the ministers thereof shall be as were in use in

the second year of King Edward the Sixth." Enclosed is an illustration of the same.

Yours etc,

+ Robert Mercer CR



4) truth or Truth? - **Two incompatible religions** - see page 3.

5) For **Robert's Ramblings - Book Review** - "In Search of the Lost" - see page 3.

6) **Claims every Catholic should be able to answer** - the eighth of twelve parts - see page 5.

7) Comments on an article by Archbishop Rowan Williams - **The Church, the Bible, and the Body of Christ** - see page 6.

8) **Qs and As about the term 'Faithful' Departed** - see page 8.

9) Science versus religion? - Not so! - **The Language of God** - see page 9.

St. Denys

The first mention we have of this martyr, who died around 258 A.D., comes in the sixth century in the writings of St. Gregory of Tours.

Denys (or Denis) was born and raised in Italy. Circa 250 he was sent as a missionary to Gaul (now France) by Pope St. Clement.

Denys made his base of missionary activity an island in the Seine near the city of Lutetia

Parisiorium - what would become Paris. For this reason he is known as the first bishop of Paris and the Apostle of France. There he was captured by the Parisians along with Rusticus and Eleutherius. Later writers have referred to these as Denis' priest and deacon, or his deacon and subdeacon, but we have no further information on them.

After a long imprisonment and several aborted executions, the three martyrs were beheaded with a sword and their bodies were thrown into the river. Denis' body was retrieved from the Seine by his converts and buried. The chapel that was built over his tomb grew into the abbey of Saint-Denis.

Denis is pictured as he was martyred - headless (with a vine growing over the neck) and carrying his own mitred head.

Two incompatible religions

Many clergy and laity want to preserve the orthodoxy of Anglicanism, but emerging within the Anglican Communion are two incompatible and competing religions. The authority of experience, the basis of liberalism, is set against the authority of divine revelation, fundamental to orthodoxy. For liberalism, belief is a matter of personal opinion based on contemporary experience; an experience in which Scripture and liturgy and engagement with various social causes provide data for reflection. Religion then becomes not so much a matter of Truth (with a capital T) but of truths that are subject to continual change, revision and adjustment, to make them relevant to contemporary secular culture. The Church in a democratic world must decide their truths by majority vote of representative councils, synods, or other political mechanisms.

For the orthodox, Truth (with a capital T) has been definitively revealed in holy Scripture, and authoritatively interpreted in the Christian tradition. The Christian responds in belief, understanding and obedience. Relevance is a matter of seeking to apply established doctrinal and moral standards to the situation in which the Church is. Here the Church is divinely commissioned in faith and order, to maintain the faith 'once for all delivered to the saints,' and is responsible for maintaining those standards, essentially unchanged from one age to another. The dividing line is not a bold black or white but carries grey areas where some have tried to compromise their accommodation on one side or

the other. Its mission is to convert the culture, not to be accommodated to it.

Authority is fundamental, resting upon the revelation of God in Jesus Christ that has not been delegated to a consensus in meetings, synods or among bishops. In the absence of an Ecumenical Council, the Book of Common Prayer has defined us as Anglicans in worship and as the basis of our theological method. It has been the standard of doctrine and practice. Anglicans hitherto have held and maintained the doctrine, sacraments and discipline of Christ as the Lord has commanded in holy Scripture and as the Church of England has received and set out in the Prayer Book and the Thirty-Nine Articles.

It would not have occurred to most Anglicans that serious questions of doctrine and worship could be decided by local, provincial or even national synods. The Prayer Book tradition was the standard. Today, liturgy is used to introduce theological changes incompatible with the doctrine expressed in the Book of Common Prayer, making polarization within the church sharper and widespread. Laity becomes demoralized when unable to accommodate to the new religion emerging in their parishes and the shepherd's attitude of 'take it or leave it.' Dean Inge pointed out that the church that is married to the present age is a widow in the next.

This new emergent, fashionable religion is out-of-date in a profound sense because it is theologically inflexible and narrow, expressive of a school of thought which has already passed its peak. Even Harvey Cox realized that he got it wrong in *The Secular City*, so that the secularization of the Church is expressive of a generation now passing away. Nevertheless, though the Church of England is a few steps behind America and Canada, recent trends in General Synod indicate the presence of two incompatible religions in England.

By Canon Arthur Middleton

Robert's Ramblings

Book Review

"In Search of the Lost"

by Richard Carter

published by Canterbury Press (U.K)

256 pp. No index. £12.99.

Clear clean warm water in varying shades of blue and turquoise, golden sands, palm trees, South Sea islands. Paradise! Bare feet, minimal clothing as in Eden even after fig leaves had become de rigueur. Just the place to be, far from the maddening Western world with its attendant evils: cold grey depressing concrete, carbon emissions, over crowding, slum housing, unemployment. The cover picture of this book shows a paradisaal island. The author says that his own father when yet a schoolboy and "not particularly Christian", used to read the "*Southern Cross Log*", journal for supporters of the Melanesian Mission, because of its romantic appeal. But no place is untouched by original sin. The author describes Melanesian history, "blood feuds, tribal wars, head hunting, pagan practices." And so also on the cover is a near naked man with arms outstretched in such a way that he forms a cross, and that his shadow on the beach behind him forms a cross.

"As far as the bishops are concerned, we could not wish them a more splendid termination of their course than the spoiling of their goods, and martyrdom". So wrote Tractarian John Henry Newman in September 1833 in *Tract No. 1* in *Tracts for the Times*. Englishmen did not normally think of their lord bishops in terms of suffering, mission and martyrdom. (Do they so think of them now?) Yet in 1841 George Augustus Selwyn became founder Bishop of New Zealand diocese, now grown into a province. By September 1871 John Coleridge Patteson who owned few goods anyway, founder Bishop of Melanesia diocese, now grown into a province, was clubbed to death by South Sea islanders in revenge for raids carried out by Western slavers: five wounds on his body in retribution for the five slaves taken. In our fallen world it is standard practice for the innocent to suffer because of the guilty.

And so the roll continues. In 1885 James Hannington, founder Bishop of Uganda diocese, now grown into a province, was speared to death by tribesmen. In the late 1970's Adolph Schmidt, Roman Catholic Bishop of Bulawayo in Zimbabwe, was gunned down by freedom fighters. The inscription on a memorial to Bishop Patteson, "His life was taken by those for whom he would gladly have given it" might be said of many missionaries and martyrs. Incidentally, on different occasions some of Bishop Patteson's converts and colleagues were also killed. The Christians of, say, Sudan, Solomon Islands, Torres Straits, Papua New Guinea, do not share the scorn

for missionaries sometimes shown by missiologists in the comfort of their studies. In Torres Strait, for example, there is a national festival called The Coming of the Light.

Bishop Patteson was anxious for the Solomon Islands to be evangelized by islanders. The Melanesian Brotherhood was founded in 1925 by a layman of the islands for this very purpose. It is just possible for a Brother to be a priest and to make life profession but it is expected that most Brothers will be laymen and that they will make temporary vows. It is assumed that the majority will leave the Brotherhood after some years of service in order to marry. By 2000 there were 450 Brothers and 180 novices, working as evangelists in their own Solomon Islands and further afield in Australia, Torres Strait, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines. Normally the Brothers are sent out in pairs, without food, money, shoes or much clothing, perhaps even without knowledge of the local language. Their work has been blessed with conversions, exorcisms, healings, reconciliations of former enemies. At least one Filipino was moved to join them even though he suffered culture shock. The author of this book, Father Richard Carter, an Englishman, was engaged by the Brothers to minister as their chaplain and tutor. In due course he too felt moved to join the Brothers. In 2002 he and one of his Brothers spent a year at the College of the Resurrection doing a post ordination sabbatical. In his acknowledgments at the front of the book he thanks two CR brethren for help received at Mirfield.

Not all modern martyrdoms are at the hands of Marxists or Muslims, though Voice of the Martyrs in Canada and the Barnabas ministry in the UK can give up to date statistics about tortures and killings. There are civil wars and ethnic cleansings which criminals and politicians exploit for their own ambitions. Even as I am writing this book review a military coup is taking place in Fiji. Guadalcanal, site of fierce battles between Americans and Japanese during the Second World War, is one of the larger Solomon Islands. On it the Brothers have their Mother House and novitiate. In recent years tension broke out on this island between two different peoples, which escalated into attempted ethnic cleansings. The Brothers in their non cerebral adherence to the gospel attempted to restore peace. They made appeals to individuals and to crowds, transported women and children to non combat zones, tended the injured of both sides, buried the dead,

negotiated the release of prisoners. They persuaded combatants to lay down their arms. They dumped those arms far out at sea. They even counseled with the gospel of forgiveness those who had participated in atrocities. But as normally happens in such situations, the Brothers were accused by both sides of not sticking to spiritual matters, of interfering in politics, of siding with the others. Some of the Brothers were beaten up. In 2003 seven Brothers were taken hostage and then murdered.

They died, not for believing in Jesus, but for trying to persuade fellow Christians and fellow countrymen to love their neighbours. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. For example, in the Roman Catholic diocese of Bulawayo there are now African vocations to the diocesan priesthood and to the religious life with the Marianhill Missionaries, to whom Bishop Schmidt belonged. The Melanesian Brotherhood grows and thrives.

It was a privilege to read this book and it is a privilege to recommend it to you.

+Robert Mercer CR

The retired, Third Bishop of The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada

Claims every Catholic should be able to answer - 8 of 12

Freedom of speech is a great thing. Unfortunately, it comes at an unavoidable price: When citizens are free to say what they want, they'll sometimes use that freedom to say some pretty silly things. And that's the case with the 12 claims we're about to cover. Some of them are made over and over, others are rare (though worth addressing). Either way, while the proponents of these errors are free to promote them, we as Catholics have a duty to respond. These errors are widespread, and it's our responsibility to correct them. So, at long last, I present to you 12 claims EVERY Catholic should be able to answer.

8. "Properly interpreted, the Bible does not condemn homosexuality. Rather, it weighs against promiscuity - whether homosexual or heterosexual. Therefore, we have no reason to oppose loving homosexual relationships."

As homosexual activity gains greater acceptance in

our culture, there'll be more pressure among Christians to explain away the Bible's clear prohibition against it. It's now the standard liberal party line to claim that the Bible - when understood correctly - doesn't disallow homosexual activity.

But this claim flies in the face of clear passages in both the Old and New Testaments. The first, of course, is the famous story of Sodom and Gomorrah. If you recall, two angels were sent by God to Sodom to visit Lot:

"But before [the angels] lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house; and they called to Lot, 'Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may know them.' Lot went out of the door to the men, shut the door after him, and said, 'I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly. Behold, I have two daughters who have not known man; let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you please; only do nothing to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof.' But they said, 'Stand back!' And they said, 'This fellow came to sojourn, and he would play the judge! Now we will deal worse with you than with them.' Then they pressed hard against the man Lot, and drew near to break the door. But the men put forth their hands and brought Lot into the house to them, and shut the door." (Genesis 19:4-10)

The message of this passage is pretty clear. The men of Sodom were homosexuals who wanted to have relations with the men inside the house. Lot offered them his daughters, but they weren't interested. Shortly thereafter, Sodom was destroyed by God in payment for the sins of its people - namely, their homosexual acts. This fact is confirmed in the New Testament:

"Just as Sodom and Gomor'rah and the surrounding cities, which likewise acted immorally and indulged in unnatural lust, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire." (Jude 7)

But these certainly aren't the only passages in the Bible that condemn gay activity. The Old Testament contains another unambiguous condemnation: "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination." (Leviticus 18:22).

And these statements aren't reserved to the Old

Testament alone.

"For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. Their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural, and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in their own persons the due penalty for their error." (Romans 1:26-27)

It's awfully hard for a liberal Christian to explain this away. There's simply no mention here merely of gay promiscuity or rape; rather, Paul is weighing against ANY homosexual relations (which he describes as "unnatural," "shameless" and "dishonorable").

Liberal Christians are in a bind. How, after all, does one harmonize homosexuality with the Bible? Their solution, it appears, is to strip the Bible of its moral power, and run in rhetorical circles trying to escape its clear message.

By **Deal W. Hudson**

From here and there

1) Government [is] an illusion the governed should not encourage. **John Updike**

2) All I ask is a chance to prove that money can't make me happy.

3) As a wise sage (Anglican, I think) once responded when asked by a dinner companion to elucidate the "Catholic point of view" on something or other:

"Madam, it's either Catholic, or it's a point of view." Thanks to **Charles Moore**

4) **Lex orandi, lex credendi**

The law of prayer is the law of belief.

The rule of our prayer is the rule of our belief.

What we pray is what we believe.

How we pray, so we believe.

The Church, the Bible, and the Body of Christ

Dr. Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, faces an incredible challenge as he attempts to hold the worldwide Anglican Communion together. The communion is torn apart by debates over sexuality, biblical authority, and a range of related issues. Nevertheless, homosexuality stands as the most divisive issue of contention.

In the current issue of *The Christian Century*, the Archbishop raises some basic issues about the church. Though he offers no developed ecclesiology, his thinking does point to at least two reasons why his communion is having such difficulty holding together - a wrong understanding of diversity and a weak affirmation of Scripture.

Williams refers to the church as "a community we can trust." As he explains, "Just as we can trust God because God has no agenda that is not for our good, so we can trust the church because it is the sort of community it is, a community of active peacemaking and peacekeeping in which no one exists in isolation or grows up in isolation or suffers in isolation." So good, so far, but surely there must be more than this?

The archbishop refers to the New Testament imagery of the church as the body of Christ. Dr. Williams explains this image with eloquence:

The New Testament sees the church as a community in which each person has a gift that only he or she can give into the common life. We Christians are so used to the imagery the Bible uses, especially the great metaphor of Christ's body, that we forget just how radical and comprehensive is the vision of a community of universal giftedness. The ancient world had sometimes used the image of the body to describe a society in which there were different functions, a very natural use for such language. But it was left to Christians to reconceive this in terms of different gifts, and to draw out the further revolutionary implication that the frustration of any one member is the frustration of all because then there is something that is not being properly given. Someone has not been granted the freedom to offer what only that individual can give to the whole.

But that very powerful statement is followed by

this:

When St. Paul speaks about the church as the body of Christ, especially in his letters to Christians in Rome and Corinth, this is what is at the forefront of his mind. The church is a diverse community, but its diversity is not just a natural diversity of temperaments or preferences - we trivialize the idea if that's all there is to it. It has a diversity of gifts given by the Spirit, a diversity of relationships with God, we might say, out of which come diverse perspectives on God and diverse ways of making God's work real for each other.

The problem does not lie with the idea of diversity itself. Indeed, the New Testament presents the grand vision that God delights in bringing persons from a diversity of racial, ethnic, social, and linguistic identities into the Church. When the Church denies or forgets this it forgets or denies its own identity as the body of Christ.

The problem is found in Dr. Williams' celebration of "diverse perspectives on God and diverse ways of making God's work real for each other."

What exactly does this mean? At face value, it is a celebration of theological diversity. Just how diverse can our "perspectives on God" be and we remain part of the Church? The following language is less clear ("diverse ways of making God's work real for each other"), but it also seems to imply a celebration of theological and doctrinal diversity.

While the New Testament revels in the bringing together of persons from different nations, ethnicities, races, and languages into the one body of the redeemed, it does not celebrate theological diversity. To the contrary, the church is warned to protect the pattern of sound words, to contend for the faith once for all delivered, and to stand unified by our allegiance to one God, one faith, and one baptism.

Does Dr. Williams mean that the church should celebrate the fact that some members believe in a God who hates the practice of homosexuality while others believe that God has no problem with the same? This is no abstract question. Indeed, it is the question that is tearing his communion asunder.

The archbishop also addressed the authority and inspiration of the Bible:

It's worth taking a moment to clarify some of the misunderstandings that can arise for Christians about the Bible. It is, we often say, the Word of God; but it is the Word of God not because it is the primary and central witness in history to God - Jesus Christ is that - but because it is the primary witness to Jesus Christ. And when it is read in the community of believers, it is used by the Spirit to bring God's calling alive for us. In other words, it is not a sort of magical text, supernaturally giving us guaranteed information about everything under the sun. What we call its "inspiration" is its capacity to be the vehicle of the Holy Spirit, making Jesus vividly present to our minds and hearts, and so making his challenge and invitation immediate for us.

The problem with this statement is that it wrongly divides the question. Dr. Williams argues that the Bible is the Word of God "because it is the primary witness to Jesus Christ" and not because "it is the primary and central witness in history to God." Would it not be better to suggest that the Bible is the primary witness to Jesus Christ *because* it is first the Word of God?

What Dr. Williams avoids - and this is no small matter - is the question of the Bible's essential truth status. Furthermore, even as the Bible is indeed our primary witness to Christ, it is not a mere witness, and the Bible also reveals God's will to us concerning a host of issues - including morality and sin.

Archbishop Williams helpfully reminds us that the Bible is to be read within the community of the church, not as a privatized text.

But he then argues that the notion of the Bible as a set of books is an essentially modern idea. This is a strange and eccentric argument. Dr. Williams is an established scholar of the early church and he is thoroughly familiar with the history of the canon. So his point must be that modern persons are tempted to read the Bible in isolation from the Church because its availability in a compact book makes it appear like any other book. These words then follow:

Incidentally, this throws a little light on some of the vexing questions about what the inspiration of the Bible implies. If the Bible is first and foremost a single book between covers - a modern book, essentially - and a book that is there for individuals to read, it is possible to get very agitated about whether it is completely reliable.

Its inspiration has to be proved and defended in terms of its obvious correctness about every detail of history or science. If it is shown not to be accurate about this sort of thing, its whole credibility is affected.

But if, on the other hand, it is a collection of texts consistently used by the Holy Spirit to renew and convert the church, something to which the church constantly refers to test its own integrity as it meets and thinks together, the issue of whether it is all totally accurate by modern standards of history or science becomes less important. Genesis may not tell us how the world began in the way a modern cosmologist would, but it tells us what God wants us to know - that we are made by his love and freedom alone. The book of Daniel may be at odds with what we know about Babylonian history, but it tells us what God wants us to know about the imperative of faithfulness in a tyrannical and ungodly empire.

In other words, he appears to argue that the Bible is not inspired to the extent that it can be trusted to be true in all that it asserts (concerning homosexuality, for example?) but it is true and inspired in that "it tells us what God wants us to know" - which presumably means that God does not want us to know what the Bible reveals about those things we supposedly now know to be wrong.

This is not a theology that can rescue his flock from division. To the contrary, it is a recipe for ecclesiastical disaster. The celebration of theological diversity, added to this very weak view of biblical authority, spells never-ending debates over fundamental doctrines and moral principles.

This cannot be the realization of our Lord's prayer on the night He was betrayed:

"Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me." [John

17:17-23]

By **Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Jr.** - June 22, 2007

Rainy October morning

So dark, it seems the sun
Forgot to rise above the horizon;
As dark as an eclipse,
Or the Plague upon the Egyptians.

Low clouds almost brush tree-tops,
Gray, forbidding, menacing;
The road is shiny with wetness,
While umbrella-covered pedestrians
Slosh through puddles in shoes
Unsuitable for this dank, October morn.

Gloomy outside, gloomy inside,
With moods affected by the elements;
Husband barks at wife as he prepares
To dash towards weather-washed car;
Mother snaps at children innocently eating
Crunchy cereal, before catching school bus;
Siblings sneakily tease one another,
So alien to good-natured banter.

And outside the unrelenting rain
Washes leaves from unresisting branches,
To pile them in sodden, slimy layers
Upon an already puddled ground.

By **Helen E. Glover**

Qs and As about the term 'Faithful' Departed

Qs *The term [Faithful Departed] has always been troublesome for me - I have always believed that it simply refers to 'baptized Christians' who are dead. A troublesome part is - what about those individuals who are not Christian - I have no doubt that we (our Parish) have been asked to pray for departed souls who were not Christian. (Quite frankly, I don't have a problem doing so!) The other troublesome part is the word 'faithful', as though we humans can determine who is faithful! Does going to Mass, regularly, make one faithful? - I don't think so! I would sooner just use the term 'departed'.*

As Here are a few comments on the topic. I have to say that I share your discomfort with the term

"faithful departed."

Strictly speaking, the term "faithful departed" refers to "those who died in the Faith and unity of the Church of God, not being in mortal sin."¹

Even a short definition like that hints at all sorts of problems. Yes, certainly, one would expect the soul prayed for to be a baptized person; but then, what about the thief on the cross beside Jesus who is promised Paradise with Jesus.

You will remember the song by William Cowper in the "Evangelistic Missions" section of the blue Hymn Book - There is a fountain filled with blood.² In the second verse he writes beautifully of how "The dying thief rejoiced to see That fountain in his day". The thief did not make it to the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, but he died in the loving gaze of Jesus. What more could you ask?

A person could have been Baptized, attended Mass and received Holy Communion every day, and still fall into mortal sin. "For a sin to be mortal, three conditions must together be met: "Mortal sin is sin whose object is a grave matter and which is committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent.""³ (It is noted in the Catholic Catechism that "Unintentional ignorance can diminish or even remove the imputability of a grave offense . . .")⁴

It is revealed to us by the Holy Spirit that a person may be lost. Generally speaking, we make assumptions about the state of the departed based on what we know of the person but, like viewing an iceberg, we often see only the tip. As we cannot know with absolute certain the final state of a particular person, we must "err" on the side of charity and give each soul the benefit of the doubt.

When it comes to the dying, we can say with certainty that so and so appears to have died. I suspect that we cannot say with certainty that, while the dying person has passed beyond our ken, God has stopped working with them for their salvation. Perhaps in that final instant just beyond our powers of observation a soul said yes to the loving God. If that be the case, the soul has passed from death to life and has become one of the Faithful for Jesus Himself has told us he "that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."⁵

That so many people who die around us appear not to be among the "faithful" must be a challenge to us. We must pray for them, entrusting them to our

loving and merciful God while not being presumptuous and just praying for the souls after they have departed.

That so many people still living around us appear not to be among the faithful must be also a challenge to us to redouble our evangelistic and intercessory efforts among those who have not yet died.

Hope this is helpful.

By **The Rev. Robert S. H. Mansfield, SSC**

¹ P.4, Hughson, OHC, Rev. S.C.; *Our Beloved Dead*; Holy Cross Press, West Park, NY, 1950 pp. 24

² #766, Book of Common Praise (Canada) 1938/64

³ § 1857 *Catechism of the Catholic Church* quoting *Reconciliatio et paenitentia*

⁴ § 1860 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

⁵ John 6:37 KJV

Ed note: Fr. Mansfield has provided a copy of Fr. Hughson's booklet which we will start serializing next month.

The Language of God

(Dr. Francis Collins is a world-famous scientist, the Head of the Human Genome Project that sequenced the entire DNA of human beings. He is currently the Director of the National Human Genome Research Institute, the Senior Investigator of the Genome Technology Branch, and the Head of the Molecular Genetics Branch. He is, in fact, a double doctor, with a Ph.D. in physical chemistry from Yale and an M.D. from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. But even more important, he is an Evangelical Christian, and he's not ashamed to tell the world why in his just-published *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*.)

So often - in fact, with tireless repetition - we are told that the really top-name scientists are not Christians. That intellectual rigor and religious belief cannot coexist in the same person.

We suspect that what is really the case, is that there are many more believers who are scientists, but who fear the inevitable public ridicule (perhaps, headed up by some of their colleagues) for making their beliefs known.

That makes Francis Collins' book, *The Language of God*, all the more extraordinary - as an act of

courage, one that will no doubt empower many other believing scientists to brave the glowering of secular ideologues, and declare their faith as well.

Interestingly enough, Dr. Collins was not always a believer. He grew up, in his own words, "the son of freethinkers" for whom faith "wasn't very important." While he attended an Episcopal church as a young lad, it was more of a social gathering, than a profound act of worship. "Faith was not an important part of my childhood," he remarks. He was, at best, "vaguely aware of the concept of God."

Even this vagueness soon faded. By the time Collins went to the University of Virginia as an undergraduate major in chemistry, "I became convinced that while many religious faiths had inspired interesting traditions of art and culture, they held no foundational truth." He became an agnostic, and then an atheist during his doctoral studies at Yale.

From Yale, he went to the University of North Carolina to get an M.D., and became ever more fascinated in the study of DNA. During his rounds as a doctor, a very simple (but very wise) woman with an incurable disease asked him a disarmingly simple question, "What do you believe?"

Collins was stung. He believed he already had the answers, but suddenly realized he'd never really asked the questions. "I had never really seriously considered the evidence for and against belief."

What brought him out of the muddle? The great Christian apologist C. S. Lewis, who was himself, at first, an atheist. Collins read Lewis' classic *Mere Christianity*, and he realized that "all of my own constructs against the plausibility of faith were those of a schoolboy. . . . Lewis seemed to know all of my objections [against faith], sometimes even before I had quite formulated them. He invariably addressed them within a page or two. When I learned subsequently that Lewis had himself been an atheist, who had set out to disprove faith on the basis of logical argument, I recognized how he could be so insightful about my path. It had been his path as well."

In sum, Lewis argued him into a corner. "Finally, seeing no escape, I leapt." A leap of faith, yes, but by no means irrational or one that conflicts with science, least of all with his own area, the study of DNA. "The God of the Bible is also the God of the genome. He can be worshiped in the cathedral

or in the laboratory. His Creation is majestic, awesome, intricate, and beautiful - and it cannot be at war with itself."

At war with itself? As we mentioned above, many secularist spokesmen (like Richard Dawkins), and many well-intentioned Christians, assume that science and religion are locked in a dual to the death. Collins rejects this. For him, there cannot "be a real conflict between scientific truth and spiritual truth. Truth is truth." The intricacy and beauty of nature, from the amazing and elegant workings of DNA, to glory of the heavens, declare their Maker - a truth Dr. Francis Collins is not afraid to declare himself.

But we must add, Dr. Collins' faith is not of the thin, theistic variety that might be considered respectable among the intelligentsia. It is robust and very Christian. He believes in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, not as a vague principle, but a real person, God become man, who was crucified, died, and resurrected.

There is something more interesting about Dr. Collins. He converted before he became the Head of the Human Genome Project. When he was asked to take over the Project, he did not immediately say "yes." He first "spent a long afternoon praying in a little chapel, seeking guidance about this decision."

One wonders. What if the ACLU were peeking through the windows of that chapel? Would they have tried to stop his appointment on grounds of separation of church and state? If the media had caught him coming out the chapel doors, would they have howled about his intellectual backwardness, and his obvious unfitness for the position?

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