

# The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr

Waterloo, Ontario  
www.stedmund.ca

## UPDATE

The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada / The Traditional Anglican Communion

October 21, 2009 - **St. John Cantius**

### November Schedule

November 1	Sunday	All Saints' Day
November 3	Tuesday	All Souls' Day
November 8	Sunday	Remembrance Day
November 15	Sunday	St. Edmund, King and Martyr
November 22	Sunday	Christ the King / The Sunday next before Advent
November 29	Sunday	The First Sunday in Advent

### 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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- 1) Right worship feeds right faith - **THE REBELLION AGAINST THE SELF-EVIDENT** - this page. parts - please, no comments until you have read the whole article - page 5.
- 2) **Reminiscences: Australia - ROBERT'S RAMBLINGS** - page 4. 4) Father Marriott makes - **A VISIT TO L'ABBAYE DE LA SAINTE MADELEINE** - page 8.
- 3) **DEALING WITH ISLAMISM** - the second of three 5) On homosexual unions - the second of four parts - **CONSIDERATIONS** - page 9.

## THE REBELLION AGAINST THE SELF-EVIDENT

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It is a not uncommon issue in modern times that those who put forward that the external aspects of our sacred rites are important and therefore worthy of attention, that beauty matters and therefore the beautiful should be pursued, and that these things are so because they are fundamentally tied to the interior aspects of our Faith (moving heart, mind and soul toward God), that these people and ideas are viewed with a certain amount of suspicion. Often there are intimations (if not direct statements) of being mere aesthetes whose concern is merely for aesthetics and liturgical "show." Others might simply suggest that those who give this any focus or weight are at very least exhibiting misplaced priorities; focusing upon accidentals rather than that which "really matters".

The matter is spoken to by Martin Mosebach in *The Heresy of Formlessness: The Roman Liturgy and Its Enemy*:

In Germany, whenever there is a debate about the great Catholic liturgical tradition, it only needs someone to utter the accusation of 'aestheticism', and it is all over.

[...]

The German vice - philosophy - has firmly fixed the idea of a distinction between content and form in the minds of very diverse people. According to this doctrine, the content and form can be separated from one another. What it regards as the authentic reality it calls the content: abstraction, the theoretical abstract. By contrast, it regards bodies of flesh and blood, physical and tangible structures, as mere form, expendable and shadowy images. The idea is that those who occupy themselves with this external form remain at the peripheral level, the level of accidents, whereas those who go beyond the form reach the realm of eternal abstractions and so attain the light of truth. In this view, forms

have become something arbitrary . . . Anyone who perceives the form and takes it seriously is in danger of being deceived. This is the trouble with the aesthete. He looks for truth in the wrong place, that is, in the realm of what can be seen, and he looks for it with the wrong (and forbidden!) means, that is, with his senses, taste, experience and intellect. This philosophical rebellion against everything self-evident has given birth to the basic attitude of our generation, namely, an all-pervading distrust of every kind of beauty and perfection. Nowadays, the most withering condemnation is to say that something is 'merely beautiful'.

[...]

The crushing power of this contemporary attitude has inhibited Catholics and made them fearful and uncertain, faced with the task of defending their traditional form of prayer and sacrifice. This form, this mighty architecture composed of language, music, and gesture was too visual, too full of concrete significance: it was bound to provoke the vehement opposition of our contemporaries.

[...]

We cannot just laugh this off. It is difficult, if not impossible, to break out from one's time, and sometimes it seems as if there is hardly anyone left unscathed, untouched by this guilt feeling on account of liturgical beauty.

Another quote which is pertinent to our consideration, found via a paper of Dr. Alcuin Reid, comes from Dom Lambert Beauduin, OSB, one of the "founding fathers" of the original Liturgical Movement. He wrote early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century:

The whole priestly influence is exercised on the members of the Church only by means of

sensible, authentic forms, which are its vehicle. Formulas, readings, chants, rites, material elements, in short, all the externals of the Liturgy, are indispensable for sharing in the thoughts, the teachings, the acts of adoration, the sentiments, the graces which Christ and His visible priesthood destine for us. Hence, to minimize this visible contact under the pretext that the soul can then better achieve something interior, or that invisible communion suffices, is at the same time to diminish the priestly influence of the hierarchy and consequently the action of Christ in our souls. (*Liturgy the Life of the Church*)

Of course, many more such statements could be culled from innumerable authors. However, the issue here is not to provide an exhaustive series of quotations on the subject, but rather to invoke reflection upon one of the issues we face in the Church today: the problematic tendency to view valuation of these things, or to give them any practical concern, with suspicion and generally to view these aspects in a diminutive way; and as regards those who hold them, of being a mere aesthete, of only being concerned for show and pomp, or of having misplaced priorities in the face of the "more serious business" of the day. But these suggestions are both too general (since there is no such necessity) and also fail to understand or give sufficient weight to the serious business that is the sacred liturgy - a business, let's recall, that particularly touches and forms all of the faithful, day by day and week by week, including our future priests and bishops - and it most certainly fails to consider the sacred liturgy in all its parts and aspects; parts and aspects that are intimately woven together.

Ironically, it is a problem which seems to have heightened precisely at the time of (and possibly, in some cases, in response to) the pontificate of Benedict XVI, a Pope who in both practice and discourse, evidently understands the importance of both aspects, as well as the central importance of the liturgy generally.

Let's be fair though. Could someone hold a skewed view of these things? Absolutely. But let's remember that the skewed view of the outer aspects of the liturgy can cut two ways. The way of the aesthete, yes indeed, who intentionally pushes aside what the outer things relate to. This is wrong. But on the opposite end of the spectrum, those who fail to recognize or acknowledge the influence of these things and diminish their value and relevance, seeing them as unimportant and shallow, ironically, because they are looking at the matter itself far too shallowly. That too is wrong.

In both cases, we have a problem, and the common root is an improper divorce of the interior and exterior dimensions of the Faith which fails to recognize not only that there is an intimate relationship, but which perhaps fails to comprehend how the outer aspects, even down to its details, have a profound influence upon us and are a gateway to the inner aspects - aspects that they wish to (rightly) give importance. (For those who would debate the issue of details, one must ask themselves why the Church legislates on these matters if they are inconsequential, shallow, or without importance and influence? One specific example to consider in this regard is how the Church mandates the use of "precious" and "noble" materials for a chalice. This is not only for pragmatic reasons - less possibility of breakage - but also because the noble materials both benefit and visually speak to the invisible mystery contained within: the Precious Blood. Many other similar examples can be cited.)

Such a divorce between the outer and inner aspects could be understood to amount to a kind of liturgical dualism, because it places a division where there is not properly one, and where instead there is an intimate, intertwined relationship. Of course, not all who object to a consideration of externals are, strictly speaking, suggesting there is no relationship whatsoever, but they are perhaps not giving sufficient weight to that relationship, and thus there is something of a dualistic tendency that is arguably present to some greater or lesser degree - to what degree could only be evaluated on a case by case, argument by argument basis. However, if one accepts the reality of this fundamental relationship, that the outer aspects are a "gateway" to the inner aspects, the visible speaking to the invisible, which in turn reaches back out to and influences the other aspects of the practice of our Christian life, then the concern as to whether this is not a misplaced emphasis should quickly be resolved, with our only concern being to ensure that, in our pursuit of these projects (which should be pursued), we concurrently work against any form of liturgical reductionism, including mere, narcissistic aestheticism on the one hand, and liturgical minimalism on the other.

That our experiences, actions and other external dimensions of life generally have a profound influence upon us, forming us, moving us and so forth, is really a matter of common sense and our lived experience. We are creatures both of body and soul; material and spiritual. We live accordingly and respond accordingly. What is true in life is also true in liturgical and ecclesiastical life. To thus deny or minimize their relevance and importance, even in the face of our lived-experience which speaks so

poignantly to their influence upon us in so many regards, is, to paraphrase Mosebach, to rebel against the self-evident. By **Shawn Tribe** - February 16, 2009 - [www.newliturgicalmovement.org](http://www.newliturgicalmovement.org)

## ROBERT'S RAMBLINGS

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### *Reminiscences: Australia*

Albert Haley began life as a Baptist and was actually a student in one of their seminaries, the principal of which handed him a book, "I want you to read this". "What is it, sir?" "Oh, an Anglican thing called the Book of Common Prayer". When in due course the young man returned the book he said, "This is beaut". "I thought you'd find it so. You are an instinctive Anglican. You had better join them."

Some years later Albert was ordained deacon. He went on to do a variety of useful jobs. He was a missionary in Papua New Guinea. His parish, a cluster of islands, after his time grew into a whole diocese called Rabual. He was organizing secretary in the state of Queensland for the Australian Board of Mission, a much larger version of our own IAF. His last post was the rectorship of a city centre parish in Brisbane where he had a notable ministry to drop outs, not least teenagers.

Labour done, handicapped by arthritis, he retired to the seaside where he was able to indulge his genius for gardening. His pride was an orchid house. Retirement was marred by his sadness over the increasing corruption of Anglicanism. He and his wife Grace had a married daughter then living in British Columbia, whom they would occasionally visit. They found their way to Bishop Crawley's doorstep, who fired them up with the idea of Continuing Anglicanism (and eventual wider ecumenical goals).

Back home in Oz Albert phoned friends, wrote letters, went to visit folk, took soundings. Others were interested. In December 1987 I was in BC, completing my first tour of Central and Western Canada (as yet we had no folk East of Montreal.) Bishop Crawley said, "From here you'll fly to Brisbane to begin a month long tour of Down Under". As the plane circled the spread out city of Sydney, I looked down on square brick houses with verandahs in their older suburbs, tin roofs shining silver, their gardens full of familiar trees and shrubs, I thought, "No wonder so many South Africans and Rhodesians feel instantly at home here". When eventually I got to the Haleys' home after a further flight to Brisbane, I found Albert to be an even harder taskmaster than Bishop Robert. "Early tomorrow there's a radio interview, then you conduct a quiet

day for a suburban parish (three services, three addresses), then in the evening you face a public meeting".

On and on it went, other cities, other states, planes, buses, trains, cars, confirmations, other services, public gatherings, many one on one meetings, Archbishop Donald Robinson of Sydney, Bishop John Hazlewood of Ballarat and his Assistant, Graham Walden, retired Bishop Ian Shevill from North Queensland, Assistant Bishop Lionel Renfrey of Adelaide. But at least Albert had the grace to ask, "Is there anything you'd like to do?" Of course there was. A swim in warm sea, a look at Australian animals. The zoo proved safe enough. Kangaroos were tame and liked having their heads scratched. But Albert warned about the dangers of the ocean: sharks, sea crocodiles, sea snakes, fatal jellyfish. He therefore took me to a beach with shark nets and special guards.

The land mass has its share of dangers too: more snakes, fatal spiders, fresh water crocodiles. But oh the beauties of nature! The many varieties of eucalyptus or gum tree, fascinating wild flowers, beautiful parks and domestic gardens, flowering trees, vast open spaces full of scrub, shimmering heat and bright light, dust, blue mountains in the distance. (We'll pass over the subject of flies.)

I remain incredulous about the birds, flocks of brilliant parrots of every hue imaginable. You should see lorikeets descending en masse upon a shrub to drink nectar from its flowers. Each bird is yellow, orange, scarlet, blue, green, turquoise. Dean Melvin McLenaghan and young Mr Carl Reid of Ottawa were themselves to take a holiday in Oz (and New Zealand). Mel was chatting up a pet parrot in its cage, sulphur crested, pure white except for this dash of deep yellow on its head. He stuck in a finger to scratch that head with the "pretty Polly routine", as though it were Rover, his budgerigar back home. He almost lost a digit to a sharp beak. I was told about a flock of these sulphur cresteds which once descended on the wooden verandah of a house and chewed it to pieces. They were angry with the owner because he had stopped feeding them. Incidentally, budgies also swoop about in flocks.

The Ozzies organized themselves. On the advice of Primate Louis Falk in the USA they temporarily placed themselves under the oversight of our Bishop Alfred Woolcock. Some of them even used the Canadian Prayer Book for a while. They had a postal vote to elect their founding Bishop. They chose Father Haley. Their votes were sent to Oshawa for counting by Bishop Alfred and me under the watchful eye of Fr Clem lngs, diocesan secretary and registrar. And in due course the Haleys came to Ottawa for his consecration by Bishop Alfred, assisted by Bishops Falk, Crawley, Chamberlain of New England and me. Bishop Anselm Genders CR happened to be in Canada at the time, who conducted a pre consecration retreat for the new bishop. Since then the Australian diocese has grown like one of that country's legendary bush fires.

If I am prejudiced in favour of Oz, you must blame my Australian godmother (married to an Irish priest in South Africa). Their home was full of paintings, children's books, grown ups' books. From an early age I was attuned to the accent. When in real life I saw a kookaburra or a lyre bird for the first time, or the flowers of banksia proteas, when I heard a bell bird, I recognized them at once. Place names like Geelong or Paramatta or Warrawee came as no surprise. I knew that Melbourne and Sydney were rivals, that the former is pronounced Melbin.

It's been a privilege and a happiness to return to Down Under three more times. (1) There was the consecration of a bishop, for which to take the retreat and preach the sermon. (2) There was the consecration of two bishops for the new diocese of the Torres Strait, a grouping of islands above the sharp point in the far north east. What an

experience that was! Such tropical sunrises! Many of the Islanders wore traditional costume, warriors in ferocious masks and paint. So intensive is the humidity that the coral walls of the church are perforated, very perforated, to let through any gentle sea breeze there might be. For the feasting afterwards giant green turtles were served. I looked the other way. I was warned not to stroll on the beach in the evening because of the sea crocs, "Oh, and be careful of the fresh water fellers on the way back to your hosts". (3) There was a meeting of our international College of Bishops. We gathered in St Stephen's College, that very fine school belonging to the diocese, the children of which have such good manners, "Good morning, m'am or sir, welcome to our College", as they raise their Ozzie bush hats to visitors. A synod is a synod is a synod even if comprised of bishops and consultants, but one afternoon off we strolled across a golf course to buy some cool drinks, negotiating our way among both kangaroos and golfers, careful not to step on a serpent sunning itself on the path.

When I fantasize about retiring in OZ - though of course I shall not - it's hard to decide on the ideal place. Everywhere is gorgeous in summer, but in winter the South Coast gets icy blasts up from the Antarctic, just as Canada gets icy blasts down from the Arctic. So I'd head North to stay warm all the year, Perth perhaps or Cairns. But for the whole country I'm happy enough to say in the words of their national anthem, "Advance Australia fair", even if I still hope that the Springboks beat them at rugger and cricket.

**+Robert Mercer CR**

## **DEALING WITH ISLAMISM**

### ***The second of three parts***

In the eyes of those who subscribe to this extreme brand of Islam, such murderous activity is justified by their tendentious interpretation of religious doctrine. The West is seen as an infidel, decadent society given to excesses that are offensive to Islam; it can only be saved by being brought into the Islamic fold. In executing this religious imperative, the extremists feel none of the behavioural constraints, legal or moral, that qualify our own activity. Suicide attacks in the name of Allah are glorified and encouraged with promises of Qur'anic paradise. Beheadings are justified through an interpretation of the Prophet Muhammed's entreaty that "When you meet the unbelievers, strike off their heads".<sup>1</sup> International humanitarian law is utterly

disregarded in their conduct of military operations. Non-combatants are legitimate targets. Even the killing of innocent Muslims - a frequent outcome - is excused.<sup>2</sup>

Such radical thinking is not a recent development. In the words of a 14<sup>th</sup> century historian and philosopher, Abdel Rahman ibn Khaldun,

"In the Muslim community, the jihad is a religious duty because of the universalism of the Islamic mission and the obligation (to convert) everybody to Islam either by persuasion or by force."<sup>3</sup>

It might be argued that this is not very different from

the 15<sup>th</sup> century Spanish Inquisition, but that was centuries ago, and the comparison with today's Islamist zealotry is hardly valid. Such excesses in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as the gleeful beheading of "infidels" and the execution of apostates set Islamists apart. It is important to understand, in trying to make sense of their heinous behaviour, that they have their own logic and reference frame, a grossly distorting window through which they in fact see us as the aberrant society, justifying their actions.

A very important question, in all of this, is the extent to which their radical world view is representative of thinking in the mainstream of Islam. Moderate Muslim leaders tell us that, on the contrary, theirs is a peaceful, non-violent religion; this is certainly the general impression that prevailed before 9/11. In the wake of that event it is fair to say that there has emerged a notion in our society that all of the world's one and a half billion Muslims fall into either one or the other of two categories, namely the mainstream, moderate and peaceful version on the one hand, or the extremist version on the other.

There is considerable evidence that this is an oversimplification. In the U.K. following the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, some 35% of Muslims declared in a poll that Al Qaeda's attack was justified. In that country and in Europe in general, there is growing concern that the expanding Muslim population is a threat to traditional values and institutions, a sentiment that is reflected in pointed terms like "Eurabia" and "Londonistan".

And then there was the violent and incomprehensible reaction to the Danish cartoons throughout the Muslim world.

Here in Canada the Muslim community has been

damaged by less-than-categorical statements from certain Islamic associations and their leaders, purporting to represent the attitudes of the community at large. The World Trade Center episode was condemned, but all too often with an added "however". Demands for the superimposition of Sharia law on Canadian Muslims have raised serious concerns, and the appearance on our streets of women dressed in head-to-toe burkas suggests that there are echoes here of the Taliban's dreadful subjugation of women in Afghanistan. There have been calls for the creation of special prayer spaces, meal provisions and reserved times in recreational facilities for Muslim university students. Some of our universities have become hotbeds of anti-Israel sentiment and thinly disguised anti-semitism.

Nevertheless, Canadians recognize that the vast majority of Muslims in this country detest the extremism of Al Qaeda and its worldwide affiliates, including the Taliban. Many Muslim immigrants - perhaps most - came to Canada to escape the conflict and oppression that militant Islam had brought to their countries of origin.

By **General (Ret'd) Paul Manson**, March 16, 2009  
This article originally appeared in *On Track*, the journal of the Conference of Defence Associations Institute. General Manson served as Canada's Chief of Defence Staff from 1986 to 1989. With permission. Thanks to Major General (Ret'd) Norm Freeman for forwarding this article.

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'an, Sura 47:4.

<sup>2</sup> For a fascinating first-hand account, see *The Development of A Jihadist's Mind*, by Tawfiq Hamid, Hudson Institute Center on Islam, Democracy and the Future of the Muslim World, 6 April 2007

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by Efraim Karsh in the Wall Street Journal, 4 April 2006

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## FROM HERE AND THERE

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1) **Did you know?** That Libya, Zimbabwe, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Nigeria, Sudan, China, and Cuba (all bastions of human rights) have all, at one time or other, been members of the United Nations Human Rights Commission/Council!

2) A lie spreads around the world overnight before the truth even gets out of bed. **Benjamin Franklin**

3) **Saint John Cantius** (Polish: Jan Kanty) (June 23, 1390 - December 24, 1473) was a renowned Polish priest, scholastic and theologian. In English he is also known as John of Kanty or John of Kanti.

He was born in Kęty, a small town near Oświęcim, in the diocese of Kraków, Poland, to Stanisław and Anna Kanty. His parents enrolled him in the Kraków Academy, where he eventually graduated as a bachelor, master, and doctor. He was also ordained a priest.

Though he left the Academy for a time after his graduation, he soon returned as professor of Sacrae Scripturae (the Sacred Scriptures), a position he held until his death in 1473. In physics, he helped develop Jean Buridan's theory of "impetus," which anticipated the work of Galileo and Newton.



St John Cantius was noted throughout his life for his good humor and humility. He subsisted only on what was strictly necessary to sustain his life, giving away the rest of his salary to the poor.

He made four pilgrimages to Rome (on foot), and one to Jerusalem - the latter with the intent of suffering martyrdom among the Turks.

#### 4) **I agree with Bishop Spong!**

It is not often that I find myself in agreement with Bishop Jack Spong. According to the *Church of England Newspaper* report of 21 August, the former Bishop of Newark has rejected Presiding Bishop Katharine Schori's contention that nothing had changed as a result of the 76<sup>th</sup> General Convention's votes on gay bishops and blessings. Writing in the *Newsweek* on-line report of 8 August, Jack Spong wrote:

The battle over homosexuality in the Episcopal Church is over. The vote at the last General Convention was overwhelming. The sacred unions of gay and lesbian people are to be blessed and enfolded into liturgical patterns in the same way that the sacred unions of heterosexual people have been honoured for centuries. The ministry of this church is to be open to gay and lesbian people who are qualified and chosen in the process by which this church makes such decisions.

I find Spong's candour a refreshing change from the usual obfuscation of bishops in TEC. Spong has campaigned for this development for over three decades. Readers may remember when Bishop of Newark in 1989 he presided over the first publicly recognised ordination to the priesthood of a practising homosexual deacon. In September 1990, Spong's assistant bishop, Walter Righter, ordained an active homosexual man as deacon. This action brought about the so-called Righter Heresy Trial. When the trial was finally completed in 1996, Bishop Righter was exonerated on the basis that there was 'no clear doctrine' in the Episcopal Church which would prohibit the ordination of a practising homosexual. By 1996 Righter had not only been elected Bishop of Iowa but had since retired! The deacon he ordained was a parish priest in the Diocese of Newark. While it was another seven years before the first practising homosexual was consecrated a bishop, the line of progression is clear for all to see.

Why can't the leadership of TEC publicly recognise this? The game is over. They are going their own way and while they want to stay a part of the

Anglican Communion (for this is intrinsic to their constitution and the retention of their property), they have not only spurned the Anglican Church from which they were brought forth, they have spurned the Son of God, and profaned the blood of the covenant by which they were sanctified and outraged the Spirit of grace (Heb 10:29).

By the Anglican Bishop of North Sydney, Australia - **Glenn Davies** - August 26, 2009

5) Rudeness is the weak man's imitation of strength. **Eric Hoffer**

6) **And you wondered about the state of the Canterbury Communion!** Here's a *creed* found in an Anglican retreat house.

We believe in God, in Jesus Christ, in the holy Spirit, **and in you and me.**

We believe God moves between us,

**and lives in you and me.**

We believe God's spirit works through

**Shouting and silence**

Clear paths & blind alleys,

**Balloons and parties,**

Drama and the unexpected,

**Spontaneity and planning,**

Faith and certainty,

**Leading and supporting,**

Tears and laughter,

**Dancing and stillness,**

Hugging and kneeling,

**Words and listening,**

Holding and letting go,

**Thank you and help me**

Accepting and caring

**Through you and through me,**

**Through love.**

We believe God's Holy Spirit lives in this community of handholding people,

**where lines of age and life-styles are crossed.**

We believe in responding to God's grace & love for all.

**We believe in the poetry within each of us.**

We believe in dreams and visions.

**We believe in a topsy-turvy world**

where the last shall be first.

**We believe in God's kingdom.**

**We believe in God.**

Thanks to **+Robert CR**

7) **Lot's Wife** The Sunday School teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt, when little Jason interrupted, 'My mommy looked back once while she was driving,' he

announced triumphantly, 'and she turned into a telephone pole.'

8) Doubt comes in at the window when inquiry is denied at the door. **Benjamin Jowett**

9) Some **invented words**:

**bananosecond**, noun: the time that elapses between slipping on a banana peel and hitting the ground

**crumbundrum**, noun: the problem of dealing with the fallout from snacking in bed

**egologue**, noun: a speech in which someone goes on at length about himself

**omnipotent**, adjective: all powerless

10) **Christian aid worker murdered in Mauritania**

On 23 June 2009, Chris Leggett, an American Christian living in Mauritania, was killed. Two attackers appeared to try and kidnap him, and when he resisted they shot him several times in the head. Al-Jazeera television later played a recording reportedly from Al-Qaeda, which stated, "Two knights of Islamic Maghreb\* succeeded Tuesday morning at 8 a.m. to kill the infidel American Christopher Leggett for his Christianizing activities."

Despite this taunt his family issued the following statement:

In a spirit of love, we express our forgiveness for those who took away the life of our remarkable son. Chris had a deep love for Mauritania and its people, a love that we share. Despite this terrible event, we harbour no ill will for the Mauritanian people. On a spiritual level, we forgive those responsible, asking only that justice be applied against those who killed our son.

Mauritania's Interior Ministry responded, saying that it was investigating the death and security forces were doing all they could to catch the criminals.

Leggett, his wife and four children lived for seven years in the impoverished El-Kasr neighbourhood of Nouakchott, where he directed an aid agency that provided training in computer skills, sewing and literacy, and he also ran a micro-finance program. His good works as a Christian undertaking humanitarian work could not protect him from this brutal attack, which was, interestingly, justified by his attackers on the basis of the Islamic apostasy law.

From the September/October 2009 issue of **Barnabas Aid**, the magazine of *Barnabas Fund* ("hope and aid for the persecuted church") with offices in 6 countries around the world - its International Headquarters are in the UK

\*Maghreb is a region in North Africa. In 1989, the Maghreb Union was formed - its members are Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya and Mauritania.

## A VISIT TO L'ABBAYE DE LA SAINTE MADELEINE

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L'abbaye de la Sainte Madeleine is just outside the village of Le Barroux in the south of France: from Avignon, the drive is to the town of Carpentras, and then on as if you are going to drive up Mont Ventoux, a great massif rising from the surrounding Rhone valley, and the vineyards of the Côtes du Ventoux. Why dedicated to la Sainte Madeleine? It is because St. Mary Magdalene lived in the south of France, above la Sainte Baume, and has had a colossal influence in the faith of the people of the region.

I collected my rental car at the TGV station in Avignon, and promptly got lost, took wrong turns, missed signs etc: I was, I confess, in a bit of a state as it seemed that our work for the churches in Africa was doomed. The visit, once I finally arrived at the monastery, was very necessary!

When you approach the monastery, it seems that it has been there for centuries: indeed, it is built in traditional style, similar to other churches and cloisters from the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries: but what is truly amazing is that this place was built in the period from 1979, when the foundations were started, to 1991, when the great cloister and novitiate were complete.

The foundation was started in 1970, when Dom Gérard arrived at the little chapel at Bédoin, starting an oratory. Soon after, a young man arrived, announcing that he wished to join Dom Gérard and to be a monk. Having no facilities, Dom Gérard sent him away, but he was to return the next year, and so the monastery started to grow, with the present site acquired in 1978.

What is it that sets this monastery apart from



others? First of all, it follows the traditional pattern of life and work laid down by St. Benedict in his rule. Second, it does this in a style that would be familiar to St. Benedict, in Latin, using the Tridentine rite for the Mass, and the Breviary for the offices.

Concerning life: the main focus is on prayer and worship, with an especial love for the meaning to be gleaned from the psalms. In order to achieve this, the monastic offices are observed, from Mattins at 3.30 am, Lauds at 6.00 am, followed by breakfast, and Prime at 8.00 am. Terce follows at 10.00 am, preceding Mass. At 12.00 is Sext, followed by lunch in the refectory. None is at 2.30 pm, with Vespers at 5.30 pm, followed by dinner, and the day closes with Compline at 7.45 pm. Breakfast was in silence, but in the guest quarters. Lunch and dinner were both eaten in the refectory with the monks: in silence, and with a reader during the meal.

The night I arrived, I was awake as a result of jet-lag, so at 3.30 am I made my way into the church for Mattins: and what a revelation: here were some 30 - 40 brothers, who fulfil that call to be those who watch in the night. And it is you and me for whom they are on watch: maintaining a vigilant and profound prayer life impossible for those outside, in the world, but willingly doing this for the rest of us: I spoke with one of the brothers, with the comment that they are a beacon shining out in what is often a dark world, encouraging all of us who try to let our little glimmer of light, our windblown little candles, witness to our faith: and that the beacon is a most marvellous encouragement for us. And yes, I went to Mattins each morning of my stay: but I confess

that I did not manage the hours of *lectio divina* expected of the monks in the time from Mattins to Lauds!

But what about work? The monks run a full scale farming operation: producing wine and olive oil, as well as various tree fruits: I was able to enjoy the apricots, fresh figs, and nectarines, the fruit of the fields. There is also a bakery, with bread for sale in the extensive book and gift store. You can see the products from the monastery on the website: <http://www.barroux.org/> with links to other monastic products. As you will see from the website, there is also a lot of work in information technology, in administration of a large facility, in catering for the brethren, and the guests. Oh, and the guests are all male: there is an associated convent across the valley for the ladies who visit.

Jeremiah asks, 'Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?' (Jer. 8.22) I mentioned that my arrival at L'abbaye de la Sainte Madeleine was tempered by my worries and anxiety: we often might think of the balm of Gilead as being some form of ointment: but it was with the monks of Le Barroux that I found true balm: healing for the soul, through the immense power of prayer and a determination to be obedient to God clearly to be seen on the faces of these brethren at prayer, in the middle of the night.

By **The Reverend David Marriott, SSC**, Assistant Curate, The Parish of St. Peter & St. Paul, Vancouver, BC

## **CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING PROPOSALS TO GIVE LEGAL RECOGNITION TO UNIONS BETWEEN HOMOSEXUAL PERSONS - 2 of 4**

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### **II. POSITIONS ON THE PROBLEM OF HOMOSEXUAL UNIONS**

5. Faced with the fact of homosexual unions, civil authorities adopt different positions. At times they simply tolerate the phenomenon; at other times they advocate legal recognition of such unions, under the pretext of avoiding, with regard to certain rights, discrimination against persons who live with someone of the same sex. In other cases, they favour giving homosexual unions legal equivalence to marriage properly so-called, along with the legal possibility of adopting children.

Where the government's policy is de facto tolerance and there is no explicit legal recognition of homosexual unions, it is necessary to distinguish

carefully the various aspects of the problem. Moral

conscience requires that, in every occasion, Christians give witness to the whole moral truth, which is contradicted both by approval of homosexual acts and unjust discrimination against homosexual persons. Therefore, discreet and prudent actions can be effective; these might involve: unmasking the way in which such tolerance might be exploited or used in the service of ideology; stating clearly the immoral nature of these unions; reminding the government of the need to contain the phenomenon within certain limits so as to safeguard public morality and, above all, to avoid exposing young people to erroneous ideas about sexuality and marriage that would deprive them of their necessary defences and contribute to the spread of the phenomenon. Those who would move from

tolerance to the legitimization of specific rights for cohabiting homosexual persons need to be reminded that the approval or legalization of evil is something far different from the toleration of evil.

In those situations where homosexual unions have been legally recognized or have been given the legal status and rights belonging to marriage, clear and emphatic opposition is a duty. One must refrain from any kind of formal cooperation in the enactment or application of such gravely unjust laws and, as far as possible, from material cooperation on the level of their application. In this area, everyone can exercise the right to conscientious objection.

### **III. ARGUMENTS FROM REASON AGAINST LEGAL RECOGNITION OF HOMOSEXUAL UNIONS**

6. To understand why it is necessary to oppose legal recognition of homosexual unions, ethical considerations of different orders need to be taken into consideration.

*From the order of right reason*

The scope of the civil law is certainly more limited than that of the moral law, but civil law cannot contradict right reason without losing its binding force on conscience. Every humanly-created law is legitimate insofar as it is consistent with the natural moral law, recognized by right reason, and insofar as it respects the inalienable rights of every person. Laws in favour of homosexual unions are contrary to right reason because they confer legal guarantees,

analogous to those granted to marriage, to unions between persons of the same sex. Given the values at stake in this question, the State could not grant legal standing to such unions without failing in its duty to promote and defend marriage as an institution essential to the common good.

It might be asked how a law can be contrary to the common good if it does not impose any particular kind of behaviour, but simply gives legal recognition to a de facto reality which does not seem to cause injustice to anyone. In this area, one needs first to reflect on the difference between homosexual behaviour as a private phenomenon and the same behaviour as a relationship in society, foreseen and approved by the law, to the point where it becomes one of the institutions in the legal structure. This second phenomenon is not only more serious, but also assumes a more wide-reaching and profound influence, and would result in changes to the entire organization of society, contrary to the common good. Civil laws are structuring principles of man's life in society, for good or for ill. They "play a very important and sometimes decisive role in influencing patterns of thought and behaviour". Lifestyles and the underlying presuppositions these express not only externally shape the life of society, but also tend to modify the younger generation's perception and evaluation of forms of behaviour. Legal recognition of homosexual unions would obscure certain basic moral values and cause a devaluation of the institution of marriage.

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**Gary S. Freeman**  
102 Frederick Banting Place  
Waterloo, Ontario N2T 1C4  
519-886-3635 (Home)  
519-747-5323 (Fax)  
gfreeman@pwi-insurance.ca  
800-265-2178 or 519-747-3324 (Office)